



# COMMUNITY PROJECTS NEWS

## **NLC works with Traditional Owners to drive self-determination**

Community Projects is providing Aboriginal groups across the NLC's seven regions with tools to develop and manage their community focused projects.

Aboriginal groups have led the delivery of 51 projects, with an additional 25 under implementation and 19 undergoing feasibility studies.

Approved by Full Council in 2016, the program has grown from five to 23 groups, with hundreds of Traditional Owner groups hungry to learn skills in project and financial management. Projects focus on what's important to community: building stronger culture, creating a proud community, growing enterprise and supporting young people.

A matched funding program was introduced in May 2023, widening the scope for community opportunities. Groups with little to no land use income, who want to do good things for their community can now apply for funding to undertake small projects.

It's an exciting time for Aboriginal groups across the top end as they steer towards self-determination.



## Dukurrdji interpretive signage balance within community

*Welcome to Manayinkarirra: you are here!* Dukurrdji Traditional Owners (TOs) are leading the design and installation of interpretive signs to welcome and educate visitors in their community.

Strong culture and balance are part of Dukurrdji's long term vision. Supporting on country experiences, opportunities and sharing stories about the land is important to the group. The signs assist by illustrating sacred sites, acknowledging important Aboriginal places and communicating traditions.



Dukurrdji TOs showcase their local sign

The project uses artwork created by TO and local artist Joy Garlbin. The artwork signature piece Djomi will be installed on all signs. Calytrix Communication are helping to make strong culture resonate across each sign.

The interpretive signs will appear at the local airport, shops, Bawinanga and council buildings, along with the three sacred site exclusion zones. Ceremonial Stop ceremony and Sorry business signs will be used to inform community of areas to avoided for cultural reasons.

## West Arnhem groups hungry to develop homeland enterprise

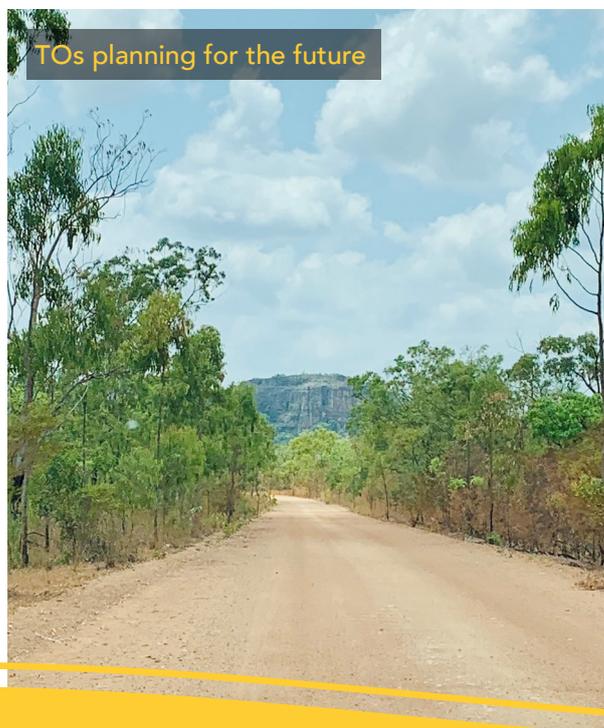
Traditional Owner groups in West Arnhem see local jobs and enterprise as the first step to strengthening their homelands.

The Mankinhkinh homeland has been run-down for many decades, but with several young members of the Madjawarr clan now employed at nearby mining operations, they have a strong appetite to restore homeland amenities. They see their homeland as a perfect base for family members working on the mine. They also see its potential as a base for future mine rehabilitation work and hope to establish a nursery and landscaping business.

Similarly, the Nabegayo family are keen to build-up Mandillbarreng homeland, with a focus on developing their homeland as an arts and cultural tourism destination.

Both groups recognise that homelands aren't just about infrastructure — **meaningful jobs and activities are just as important when it comes to making homelands liveable.**

Both groups have approached the Community Projects team to help them do an assessment of existing infrastructure and work out a development plan to support their homeland enterprise aspirations.



TOs planning for the future

## Proud community: Budal Milwarapara-Yutpundji upgrade Ngukurr airstrip

Budal Milwarapara-Yutpundji TOs have a vision. To be strong, to be proud and to be a recognised group within the wider community. Bringing their vision to life, the TOs recently upgraded the Ngukurr airstrip waiting area, an important project for the whole community.

TOs made this happen by engaging local builder DJC Build Pty Ltd to construct a waiting area large enough to comfortably accommodate 40 people. As part of the design and conditions of the works, the TO led brief included increased shade, air-flow and improved bathrooms.

With assistance from the Community Projects team, TOs successfully sought an ABA NIAA grant to co-fund the airstrip project. Thinking long term, TOs successfully advocated for commitment from local government to undertake ongoing care and maintenance for the facility upgrade.

**Budal Milwarapara-Yutpundji TOs are now planning artwork and an opening ceremony for the new facility.**

This is one of eight projects that Milwarpara have funded to support their community to be strong and feel proud.



## Strong Culture: Diminin restore two cemeteries

Supporting culture, Diminin TOs are contributing towards the management, restoration and improvement of two cemeteries in the West Daly Region.

The cemetery upgrades in Wadeye and Nilinh are a high priority to the Diminin group as they work towards strong culture and supporting ceremony. Along with their own funds, the group used their management skills to acquire additional financial support from the West Daly Regional Council.

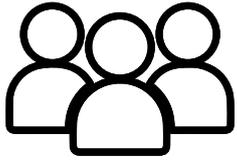


The Aboriginal-led project aims to develop infrastructure at Wadeye cemetery and improve existing infrastructure at Nilinh cemetery. The improvements at Nilinh include installing shade cover, seating and access to clean water to benefit people during ceremony and cultural practices.

Both sites will also be fenced off to assist with maintaining the gravesites.

Strong culture, supporting ceremony and young people are important to Diminin TOs. Joining the Community Project program in 2018, the group have worked hard to implement four projects and plan for future projects that benefit their community.

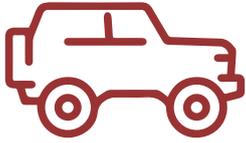
## Community Projects: Fast Facts



Community Projects is working with **23** Aboriginal groups spread across all NLC regions



Community groups are today managing 25 projects with an additional 19 undergoing feasibility studies



To reach 461 Aboriginal people, Community Projects travelled 30,000km – that's equivalent to driving the big lap around Australia twice!



Matched funding has supported 4- new groups in 2023



Aboriginal led projects this year put \$1.3million back into our local economy–\$12.5 million over the life of the program



This time next year, Community Projects aims to meet its milestone of **28** groups, all managed by a project officer at a regional level

### About Community Projects

Community Projects is a free service that works with Aboriginal groups who want to work together to do good things for their communities.

Community Projects, located in Darwin, Katherine and Kununurra, services all seven regions across the NLC.

They assist groups in planning, managing and monitoring their projects. Community Projects can also help groups access grants and partnership opportunities. Each year the team of project officers welcome up to four new groups into the highly successful program.

The Community Projects goal is: **Healthy, resilient and engaged Aboriginal people, groups and communities that are strong in language, culture, connection to Country, health, education and employment.**

Visit [www.nlc.org.au/building-the-bush/planning-and-community-development](http://www.nlc.org.au/building-the-bush/planning-and-community-development) for more information.

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