



Remote Engagement Coordination – Indigenous Evaluation Research (REC-IER)



NORTHERN
INSTITUTE
People. Policy. Place.

Project Evaluation: Ngukurr

Comments by Ian Gumbula, Mercy Gumbula and Gwen Rami reflecting on REC-IER in Ngukurr.

Dictated to Jennifer Macdonald at CDU

We felt this research project was good for us to take part in. One thing that kept us going was the support and connection with CDU. This partnership is really good and we'd like to establish it further for any future work that happens in this community. The partnership is good for us because the communication line was really good and we got support to do the work through materials, like the voice recorders and tablets, and help with reporting. It's really important that we have someone there at CDU that we can talk to. We want what we are saying to the government to be really clear, and we think it's a really good way of getting the story right when we work with CDU in partnership.

It would be very good to have an office space that we could use whenever we need to work. At the moment we have to work at our houses and there is a lot of noise and family interruptions. We are telling you this story sitting outside at Gwen Rami's house and it is very windy and hot. It is hard to concentrate on work when we have to work from home.

We are being asked to do a lot of work here in Ngukurr now and we need a way to organise that work. We could have a calendar in the office which shows movement for all of us, where we are working and who we are working with. It would be better to have discussions in an office than outside around Ngukurr, and then we could take notes on butcher's paper. It would also be easier for planning projects before we undertake that work in the community. We could invite the board members of all the organisations to our office to hear about projects, as well as have meetings with Elders from the seven clans, so the community knows more about what we are working on.



In the community, the work we're doing isn't widely known. We have to always introduce ourselves to organisations and community members about the work we're doing. It would be good for the people in community if they knew more about what we're doing. It would also be good to have connections with other research groups working in Ngukurr (like Ninti One, universities, Batchelor College etc). We don't necessarily know about each other's existence, and our roles and responsibilities and what we're doing for the community. We need to bring everyone together and share information and resources because we're dealing with one group of people here.

When we evaluated the Local Authority meeting they put us on the agenda and that was good. What we hoped for was that they would come up with a plan of engagement. Everyone that was talking to us expected the LA and other government people to respond to the report we wrote. We want to work from just reporting on engagement behaviour to working on projects that actually changes behaviour in that organisation. We could work with the Local Authority on a project to make their engagement with the local people in Ngukurr more productive. We are not only interested in research, but also service delivery and community development in Ngukurr.

REC-IER is a foundation for us to work on. We are happy to keep going to meetings and reporting on government engagement. If the government wants us to tell them how they are going when they come to Ngukurr, and what the community wants from the government, then we can do that.