

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

Phase 2: Electoral Education and Engagement

Stage 1 Report
Sept 2018 - Apr 2019

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Introduction

The Department of Local Government, Housing and Community Development, Northern Territory Government, engaged the Ground Up team at the Northern Institute, Charles Darwin University, to work with local Indigenous research teams in three sites – Ngukurr, Galiwin'ku and Daly River – developing understandings of what constitutes good government engagement, and how this engagement might be evaluated.

The particular focus of this project is electoral engagement, voting and education in the project communities. This research aligns with the current work of the NTG Electoral Education and Engagement Working Group. It also builds on and extends previous research carried out in Phase 1 of the Remote Engagement Coordination – Indigenous Evaluation Research (REC-IER) project (see <http://recier.cdu.edu.au>).

In this interim report, we detail research and coordination work undertaken in Stage 1 of the second of the REC-IER project. The focus of Stage 1, as identified in the project contract, was as following:

Stage One: Engagement and coordination planning

This stage will involve:

- Collaborative identification of engagement and coordination priorities and best practice in each site; with reference to previous REC-IER insights, and in relation to a particular issue or program relevant to community life and participating government agencies;
- Collaborative work with Indigenous researchers/ advisors in each community, scoping some directed consultation with relevant elders/ leaders and community members concerning what counts as good engagement in relation to the selected issue, and how these practices may be supported via means such as mentoring, training and use of available engagement resources;
- Collaborative work with relevant government staff, concerning what is recognised as good engagement in relation to the selected issue, and how these practices may be supported via means such as mentoring, training and use of available engagement resources;
- Iterative development of sharable engagement plans detailing community specific agreed engagement priorities and practices, as well as services and resources supporting this work, i.e. agreement of what will be done and how we will do it in Stage 2.

The following pages provide an overview of project research to date, detailing coordination and research development meetings with government staff and community-based research teams, as well as identified research priorities and preferred practices going forward in each project community.

Where early research insights have emerged, these are also highlighted. However, after completing Stage 2 we will be in a better position to provide clearer and more elaborated research findings.

We are seeking feedback from the Steering Committee and other government staff on these interim findings, as we transition to Stage 2 of the project.

What we did

Scoping discussions:

The early stages of the project involved significant work on the part of our then NTG project coordinator, Peter Gamlin, as he spoke to various people and agencies within government to scope possible issues or programs to ground the project research.

It was following the establishment of the Electoral Engagement and Education Working Group (including 5 trial sites, 3 of which are included in this project) that *electoral engagement and education* was agreed upon as an appropriate and productive focus for the work.

Stage One Research and Coordination:

Moving into Stage 1 of this project, we have worked collaboratively with local researchers and relevant government staff to develop networks of communication participating groups, and to develop our research focus and approach in each project community. This has involved:

- Meetings in Katherine, Galiwin'ku and Darwin/online with the Regional Managers and Community development officers from the East Arnhem and Big Rivers regions (see Katherine Meeting Report Appendix 1 page 12)
- A half-day workshop held in Katherine that included DLGHCD regional staff, NT Electoral Commission Staff, community-based research teams from Galiwin'ku and Ngukurr and a CDU researcher (see report page 5)
- Meetings in Galiwin'ku with the Galiwin'ku community-based research team to develop an engagement plan (see Appendix 2 page 16)
- Meetings in Darwin and by phone with the Ngukurr community-based research team and the development of the Ngukurr Engagement Plan (see Appendix 3 page 19)
- Communication with the AEC to inform them of the project, and to keep them up to date with its activities.

Community-based research teams:

In all project communities, we have sought to work with small teams of locally based Indigenous researchers. These researchers are offered the opportunity to create or update their online research profiles as part of the Indigenous Research Initiative. They have also been offered the opportunity to connect into available CDU research courses, and/or to seek a digital badge recognising their research competencies through an emerging CDU micro-credentialing program.

Galiwin'ku

In Galiwin'ku we have connected with the research organisation Yalu' Marngithinyaraw and worked with two of their senior researchers:

- Rosemary Gundjarranbuy (<https://iri.cdu.edu.au/rosemary-gundjarranbuy/>)
- Stephen Dhamarrandji (<https://iri.cdu.edu.au/stephen-dhamarrandji/>)

And one mentoree:

- Anita Golun (<https://iri.cdu.edu.au/blog/2016/10/30/anita-golun-munyarryun/>)

All of these researchers were involved in Phase 1 of the REC-IER project, and were keen to continue progressing the research.

Rosemary Gundjarranbuy has chosen to enrol in the Diploma of Indigenous Research at CDU. She will use her involvement in this project as the basis for one of her units of study.

Ngukurr

In Ngukurr we have connected with the research organisation Gumbula Consultancies and worked with two of their senior researchers:

- Ian Gumbula (<https://iri.cdu.edu.au/blog/2016/11/21/ian-gumbula/>)
- Mercy Gumbula (<https://iri.cdu.edu.au/blog/2016/11/20/mercy-gumbula/>).

Both of these researchers were involved in Phase 1 of the REC-IER project, and were keen to continue progressing the research.

It is off the back of the relationships developed in this previous work, that Ian and Mercy have both recently been appointed to the position of Lecturer in Indigenous Futures at CDU. This is a part-time role that they carry out in conjunction with other consultancy based research work.

Daly River (exploratory site)

The CDU research team were asked to take on an 'exploratory site' as part of this project contract. This site was to be a place where the CDU team did not have previous research experience, and which was a trial site identified within the Electoral Engagement and Education Working Group. In selecting this site, the purpose was to explore how research and evaluation of government engagement might occur in sites where there were no established collaborative relationships between the CDU project team and local researchers.

Progress in this site has been slow. As a first step, we have sought to engage a local consultant. Ian Gumbula facilitated some initial discussions with William Huddleston (a local consultant/NLC employee in Katherine) who was initially interested in the role, but later withdrew.

We are currently working with Gavin Morris, a CDU lecturer, with close ties to the area who is happy to facilitate a meeting between CDU and local elders and/or potential research consultants. There have been some scheduling difficulties, but a trip to Daly River to continue this work is planned for mid-May.

When we have more to report on progress at this site, we will share with the Steering Committee outside of this report format.

Katherine Workshop

This workshop was held on 27 February at the Katherine Government Centre. It initiated the first meeting and collaborative work between participants in the RECIER Phase 2 project. The meeting focus was on presentations by the NTEC and local community research teams, who raised and discussed past and current issues, current available resources and opportunities for partnership through this project.

The workshop responded to previous REC-IER research and findings that identified:

- Good local engagement and coordination practices based on shared learning and experience make the work of government workers and community representatives easier and more productive.
- The work of '*engagement*', from the community point of view, is most often characterised as sitting down, face to face, talking and listening openly.
- Government work is most successful when government workers build good *coordination* systems *within government* (with colleagues, across levels of government and different agencies), as well as *within communities* (by tracing broad engagement networks, getting to know individuals and groups, dedicating time to visiting with them in community and reporting to them about the progress of government business).

A more detailed workshop report is provided in Appendix 1, Page 12. However, a summary of insights and suggestions raised in the meeting are listed below.

Emerging Research Insights:

- Giving feedback after elections
 - The NTEC could look to offer more significant feedback to communities after each election e.g. via radio, graphically, or by other means
 - Potentially including information about voter levels, and comparative statistics e.g. how many people voted in Galiwin'ku, how many of these were young people, what proportion of the population voted in Galiwin'ku compared to Maningrida...
- Information about who to approach and how
 - The NTEC are interested in better information and guidance around who to engage in particular communities (if not just the Shire)
 - E.g. the Yugul Mangi in Ngukurr, and the emerging TO group in Galiwin'ku (via Yalu' Marngithinyaraw)
- Working with a community development focus
 - NTG DLCHCD regional officers are available to be deployed around engagement and community development work in communities
 - Partnerships between NTEC and these staff may benefit engagement in communities (Note: however, the research teams are clear that local Indigenous

researchers/educators/consultants are best placed to lead community engagement work)

- Developing a big-picture orientation in education
 - Education can target not just the mechanics of voting, but also the ‘why’ of voting
 - This might involve going beyond a community specific focus, to considering broader pictures the whole of Australia, and/or Australian Indigenous affairs
 - This form of education involves a form of ‘citizenship awareness’
- Legislative questions
 - Is it possible to extend the 10-day window between an election announcement and polling to permit greater remote engagement in the lead up to an election?
 - Should nominations be made available to the public before the election closes?

DRAFT

Galiwin'ku

Emerging Research Insights:

- For Yolngu in Galiwin'ku, elections are often seen as a community event or spectacle (like a BBQ or sports day), rather than as an opportunity to have a voice to government.
- Voters feel they don't always have access to the full story ('underneath story') behind the policies and position of each candidate, or the electoral process in general.
- There can be blockages at the Shire Office, where stories about how to vote and who is running not reaching others in the community.
- Targeting young people in schools (potentially through using census records to see who has turned 16 and 18) could be a good way to systemically support higher levels of enrolment.
- After viewing the NTEC video providing guidance in Yolngu Matha around how to vote in Territory elections, the Yalu' researchers agreed that it was a good video and very helpful for Yolngu – the length was right (1 min), and the language and images were clear.

Electoral Engagement and Coordination Priorities:

In and around the Katherine Workshop, there were several key elements that emerged as priorities for the Galiwin'ku research team as they began work on this project.

- In alignment with engagement priorities identified in REC-IER Phase 1, it was recognised that the purpose of good engagement practices was to benefit young people, and that in this instance focussing on young people was going to give the best chance for systemic change around voting practices, and Yolngu participation in the electoral system. Particularly, focusing on young people in the school as they reached enrolment age, or earlier.
- There was clear recognition that challenges faced by Yolngu in Galiwin'ku around voting were not only to do with technical issues around roll registration, ballot papers and identification. They were also to do with feeling unable to access meaningful stories about candidates and the political system in general.
- When considering processes and pathways for electoral engagement and education in Galiwin'ku, it was recognised that any such work should not begin with any generalised focus on 'the community', but aim to proceed through engaging with existing governance (both Yolngu and Balanda) structures and arrangements. This is so as to affirm and reinforce those arrangements in the practice of doing electoral engagement as well as to improve the effectiveness of the Electoral Commission.
- There was a strong interest in being able to continue working collaboratively with CDU (as a Yalu' – CDU partnership) in continuing to develop and extend previous work around evaluation carried out in REC-IER Phase 1 (for further details see Appendix 2 page 16)

Community Research Plan:

The research team in Galiwin'ku has developed a research plan which involves taking advantage of the opportunity and immediacy of the May federal Election to speak to people in the community about their experiences of voting.

As an adjunct to this research proposal, they have also developed a diagram and proposal outlining appropriate means by which evaluation of government engagement practices may be carried out. This involves processes generating feedback, and systems of message exchange that will support the circulation of this feedback.

These processes for generating feedback remain consistent with those developed in REC-IER Phase 1, and involve the creation of short reports (including video or photos) of engagement practices as they occur, and providing brief commentaries to interpret these activities, and allow others to learn from them.

Full Galiwin'ku Engagement Plan is provided in Appendix 2.

Resourcing:

Operating out of the Yalu' Marngithinyaraw office, these researchers are well resourced in terms of what they need to carry out this work, and potentially provide ongoing evaluating feedback to government on their engagement practices. As part of the last project, they were provided with an iPad for taking photos and video footage. Yalu' is also in the process of updating its computers, and these are available to research staff to use when needed. The GroundUP research group at CDU is investigating ways of supporting Yalu in this emerging research facilitation role”?

Evaluation processes/Evidencing good electoral engagement:

As detailed in the Galiwin'ku Engagement Plan (Appendix 2) the focus of the Galiwin'ku research team continues to be on maintaining pathways through which feedback can circulate between people in the community and relevant government staff, and maintaining connections between the research team and community elders.

The research to be conducted in Stage 2 of this project will provide information and insights about people's experiences of voting, and how they are engaging with the electoral system. However, in terms of evaluating current and continuing government engagement, the emphasis within this research team is on providing feedback from specific local situations that can serve as 'learning instances' for government staff who read these stories or reports.

The production of evidence in this mode does not relate to a fixed or time limited assessment, but rather produces insights/stories which can travel, and through their circulation can improve the relations between community life and government plans and practices.

Next Steps:

- Yalu' and CDU researchers will carry out research outside of the polling booth on the federal election days in Galiwin'ku (14-15th May) – pending approval from the AEC, permission from NTG and NTEC has already been granted.
- The team is aware that Tamara Whyte (NTG Community Development Officer) has also been involved in other electoral and roll review work in Galiwin'ku, and would appreciate being able to connect in with her, and potentially tell the story of some of her work as examples of government engagement in the community.
- Liaison with NTEC and East Arnhem regional staff around appropriate delivery of research information and materials
- Development of evaluative stories for inclusion in final project report

Emerging Research Insights:

- Longer lead up times around enrolments, electoral engagement and communication will benefit voter understanding and participation on election days.
- Focussing on supporting young people to understand electoral processes now, will produce communities and populations confident to vote later on.
- Letters asking for payment of fines for failing to vote often generate stress amongst people, and some avoidance of the process in general
- Experiences around seeking to vote, but being turned away for being unenrolled, has the potential to turn people away not just for that election, but for life.
- In Ngukurr, producing the possibility of voters to make free, informed and individual choices at the polling booth is not something that will not necessarily happen by default, but needs to be carefully and actively attended to.
- Understanding processes of voting is not just a matter of clear communication. It also involves careful translation around the purpose, implications and mechanisms by which voting may be of benefit for people in community who are often accustomed to other social and governance structures.

Electoral Engagement and Coordination Priorities:

In Ngukurr, it has been identified that the priority for the community-based research team is to operate autonomously on the ground, trialling a form of engagement and coordination where they are the main interface between NTG-NTEC electoral processes and the community.

- They would appreciate the support of the DLGHCD and NTEC in spreading the word about the project (esp. in relation to discussions these groups may have with Yugul Mangi and Stronger Communities for Children).
- They have asked CDU to offer practical and coordination support around on ground research to be carried out in Ngukurr in May
- The team looks forward to developing this partnership supporting electoral engagement, and to also documenting this as a model of engagement that could be useful more broadly.

The Ngukurr research team has appreciated the opportunity to articulate these priorities in the context of this research – in particular the joint workshop in Katherine. They also suggest that it may be useful for NTEC and NTG to consider other such partnership arrangements that divide work on the ground from work in the office (NTEC/NTG) when seeking to deal with engagement challenges of remote service delivery in the future.

Community Research Plan:

The Ngukurr research team has outlined an approach to carrying out this research and evaluation work that prioritises developing right forms of partnership arrangements between:

- Government staff looking to achieve certain outcomes

- On-ground researchers and consultants who may work with them (and community elders) to achieve desired outcomes while also producing best possible engagement practices on the ground

Initial collaborative discussions between CDU, NTG regional staff and Gumbula Consultancies centred around the delivery of roll reviews as part of the Electoral Engagement and Education Working Group. These discussions revealed that there were likely to be sensitive aspects of discussions around roll reviews (especially when removing people from the roll who have passed away). Also, that it would be productive for these discussions to be carried out as part-research and part-education, with local consultants taking the opportunity to educate people around voting and electoral processes at the same time as learning about their past experiences, and their status on the roll.

As part of these discussions the CDU and Gumbula Consultancies research teams have developed an engagement plan which includes the development of a locally relevant flier explaining the research (completed and reviewed by NTG), informing relevant community groups (incl. L.A., Yugul Mangi and Stronger Communities for Children) and a process for conducting on-ground research by Gumbula Consultancies with support from CDU.

Full Ngukurr engagement plan is provided in Appendix 3.

Resourcing:

Gumbula Consultancies is a business that has only been operating in Ngukurr for a few years, and does not have access to an office (as Yalu' does). For this reason, there were some resourcing requirements that needed to be met to establish this team as able to operate within the community, while maintaining connection with CDU, and at a later stage with government.

As approved in early discussions between CDU and DLGHCD, the project was able to provide Gumbula Consultancies with a laptop computer and a printer. This is to support their ability to run as a research office, and to maintain contact with CDU (and potentially NTG) staff over the course of this project, and in relation to any subsequent evaluation work.

Emerging evaluation processes and means for evidencing good electoral engagement:

It has emerged strongly in the Ngukurr research, that good electoral engagement is constituted in good working partnerships. This meant that for the Ngukurr research team, the development of an engagement plan was also the development of a working partnership arrangement.

In then evaluating good engagement and coordination practices, it is the documentation and making visible of this working arrangement this provides evidence of good working practice.

This working arrangement will be evident on the ground for people (in particular young people) in Ngukurr as the work proceeds. This in itself is an important outcome that echoes one of the research findings of REC-IER Phase 1:

Good engagement and agreement making practices provide valuable models for our young people to follow. Good engagement undertaken with our young people in mind

(<http://recier.cdu.edu.au/projects/ngukurr/>)

However, these practices will be less visible for government staff. For this reason, it is the job of Gumbula Consultancies and CDU to work together to tell the story of the partnership – as an evaluation of its effectiveness – for the final project report. This may involve seeking comments or testimonials from involved government staff so as to evidence the value (or not) of the partnership on their side.

Next Steps:

- The CDU researcher will travel to Ngukurr 21 May – 1 June (incl. travel). During this time the research aspect of the project will be undertaken (taking advantage of the recent election and people's experiences)
- This will include updating of research profiles for members of the Gumbula Consultancies research team
- Liaison with NTEC and Big Rivers regional staff around appropriate delivery of research information and materials
- Development of evaluative stories for inclusion in final project report

Appendix 1:

Katherine Meeting Report

Remote Engagement and Coordination – Indigenous Evaluation Research (REC-IER) - Phase 2 Electoral Education and Engagement Project Meeting

MEETING REPORT - KATHERINE

11am – 2pm, Wednesday 27th February 2019
Katherine Government Centre, Ground Floor Meeting Room

ATTENDEES

- **Community researchers:** Ian Gumbula (Ngukurr), Mercy Gumbula (Ngukurr), Rosemary Gundjarranbuy (Galiwin'ku), Stephen Dhamarrandji (Galiwin'ku)
- **NTG:** Rodney Hoffman (Big Rivers), Keegan Williams (Big Rivers), Tamara Whyte (East Arnhem), Brendon Sherratt (Darwin)
- **NTEC:** Wayne Harlock and Greg Hibble
- **CDU:** Michaela Spencer

SUMMARY:

This meeting initiated connections between the different parties involved in the 'Electoral Education and Engagement - RECIER Phase 2 project'.

This project connects with the Electoral Education and Engagement Working Group and continues the NTG-CDU work on remote engagement and coordination generated through the REC-IER project. This meeting recognises and responds to several key insights from this previous work:

- Good local engagement and coordination practices based on shared learning and experience make the work of government workers and community representatives easier and more productive.
- The work of '*engagement*', from the community point of view, is most often characterised as sitting down, face to face, talking and listening openly.
- Government work is most successful when government workers build good *coordination* systems *within government* (with colleagues, across levels of government and different agencies), as well as *within communities* (by tracing broad engagement networks, getting to know individuals and groups, dedicating time to visiting with them in community and reporting to them about the progress of government business).

The meeting focus was on presentations by the NTEC and local community research teams, including: sharing past and current issues, identifying current available resources, discussing opportunities for partnership through this project, and identifying means for CDU, NTEC, DLGHCD to

be supporting the local community researchers as they start on-ground work engaging with their communities.

NT ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Key Points:

- Historically, and under different funding schemes, the NTEC has run a remote education and awareness program. This has not been operational since 2016.
- The NTG maintains the electoral roll and has various processes in place to keep it up to date (e.g. flagging changes of address through Centrelink, PO, MVR etc, and sending letters to electors requesting confirmation of an accompanying roll update)
- The Electoral Engagement and Education Working group has been initiated in response to this situation
- Currently, there are partnerships between NTEC, Centrelink and Department of Community Services supporting remote electoral engagement, roll review and polling.
- There is a 10 day window between the announcement of an election and polling, which is available to visit communities with polling information
- At Local Council elections, current standard practice is for nominations close 12 noon, and voting to start Monday morning
- Currently no appetite for internet voting
- After each election the NTEC tables an election report. This can be forwarded to DCM with suggestions for legislative amendments, some of which may be taken to a committee forum.
- To qualify for enrolment you need: to be listing a liveable address, to have been living there for more than 30 days
- Election help desk in communities
- Questions in communities
 - Where is the best place to have the voting
 - Hire people from communities
 - Hire as many as needed
- Send schedules out to each community – can't visit individually
- Social Media, Facebook, NI TV, mainstream media
- When people register a mobile number they send SMS messages
- **Next election: 22 Aug 2020**

Questions:

- How to better communicate messages about polling
- How to best navigate a short (10 day) window between governments writ and polling

1. Key Ideas

Past experiences of elections:

- Community events
- Competition between many parties
- Voting for who looks good on the poster, who has a soft heart
- Not a clear purpose for Yolŋu

Information comes through the Shire:

- Information on people who are running in the election often stops here
- Messages about when to enrol to vote don't always get through
- Messages don't come to the field, to the community
- Information should be sent to the whole community, but often partial messages given to particular people

Election Day:

- Is a need for interpreting, but also a problem with interpreting
- Everyone knows that any local people will be chosen to work
- Very little information before the day

2. Local Context

Are often difficulties, and lack of clarity around voting:

- People look for help from the interpreters, but they don't know where the interpreters stand
- People cluster in how they vote e.g. young voting for young, old voting for old

Preparation well in advance is important:

- For a September election
 - Finish all enrolling to vote in August
 - May is the time to start all local training of community people and roll review

Right people:

- Local research team
- They are stable in the community
- They have time and their own data

3. Community Researchers/Educators

- Elections in the past have had lots of obstacles
- We are focused on the community and all families and clans
- Making a clear pathway so that the election story can travel through; and people can go with a clear conscience to voting
- We would like to support a balance in the community that allows people to make their own free choices when it comes to voting. This includes finding ways for people to see clearly how to navigate and make choices in relation to:
 - The electoral processes and the community
 - The community and different political parties
- So they can meet together and people will have a choice

4. Preliminary Priorities

- Support for young people
 - Education in schools
 - Focus on 16, 17, 18 year olds
 - A continual process

- Avoiding people coming to vote, being told to enrol and then to wait another 4 years – because they won't come back
- Penalties for failure to vote
 - Create fearfulness
- Connect with census?
 - Identify names of young people turning 18
- Keeping every party equal so that community can choose
- Lead-up sessions with community about elections
 - Giving purpose and reasoning to young people
 - Around enrolment and the right to vote

All we need from the electoral commission are relevant documents, visual and audio to show community. And what they want from the communities, we as researchers will collect and store to pass into them.

For DLGHCD, their role would be to assist the local researchers in the Local Authority meeting as well as Yugul Mangi meeting. Leaving everything if communication and engagement and collection of information to the local researchers.

Appendix 2:

Galiwin'ku Engagement Plan

Initial discussions between the CDU researcher and Galiwin'ku project team occurred around the Katherine workshop and involved an introduction to the work, as well as early scoping around community experiences of elections and ways that the NTEC and Yalu' researchers might work together.

An engagement plan was developed over the course of discussions carried out in Galiwin'ku sometime later. These were focussed around developing good relationships and practices of engagement in relation to this project, and the potential for ongoing evaluation of electoral engagement and coordination in Galiwin'ku.

The plan was developed as three interrelated parts, or steps. The first involved mapping out relevant groups involved in the work and how they were related. The second outlined a discrete piece of research and research questions. The third detailed an arrangement for processes of ongoing evaluation.

Part 1: How are we relating to each other?

Over the course of discussions regarding the parties involved in the project work, Rosemary Gundjarranbuy, Stephen Dhamarrandji and Anita Golon drew this diagram outlining how these parties relate to each other (in the context of this piece of work).

1. The NTEC and the NTG

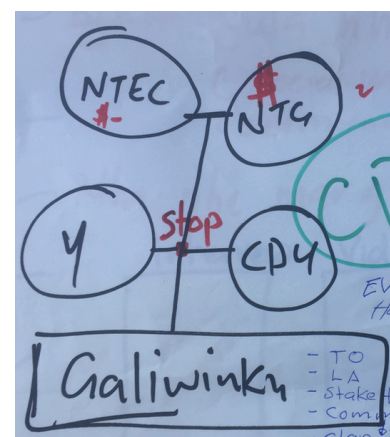
- These groups work together in partnership, supporting each other.
- The research team learnt about how NTEC and NTG relate to each other at the Katherine workshop (but would like to keep learning more about this link)

2. Yalu' and CDU

- These groups work together in partnership, supporting each other.
- When stories or requests come from NTEC and NTG they should stop at this point and are fielded by Yalu'/CDU before proceeding on to Galiwin'ku.

3. Galiwin'ku

- Underpinning and effected by these other two partnerships is *Galiwin'ku*.
- Important groups involved in maintaining the community (including its various traditional and other governance practices) are TO's, L.A., stakeholders, community members and clan leaders.



Part 2: Election Research

Recognising that the Federal election would be taking place during the course of this project, the Galiwin'ku research team proposed to carry out a discrete piece of research on Election Day. This would allow Yolŋu in Galiwin'ku to reflect on voting and elections while the experience was fresh, rather than in the abstract.

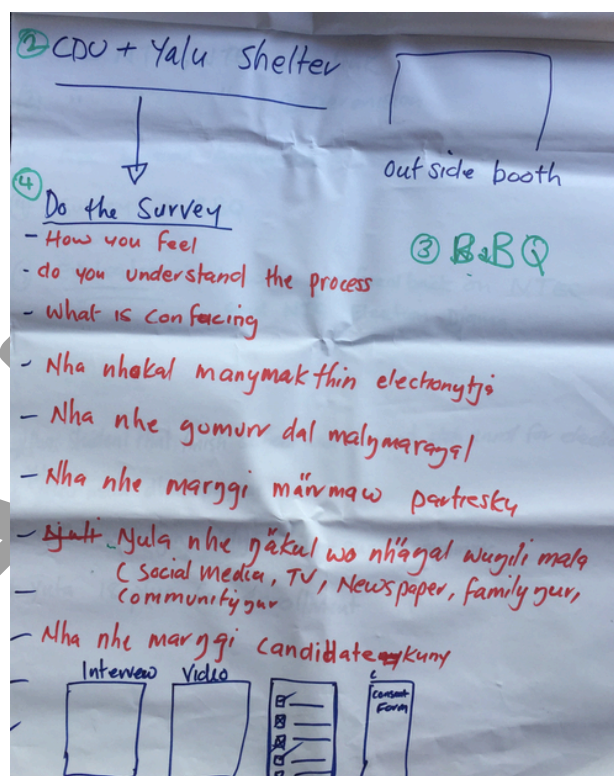
1. Set-up

- Research to be carried out on 14-15th May when the polling booth will be open in Galiwin'ku
- Researchers would set up a shelter outside of the 6m exclusion zone
- They will speak to people after they have voted, and ask no questions about who they voted for
- If possible, they will also hold a BBQ so people can be offered a sausage while they also respond to survey questions

2. Research questions

A set of questions have been developed.

- How do you feel (after voting)?
- (Why did you come to vote?)
- Did you understand the process?
- What is confusing?
- Nha nhokal manymakthin electionytja (What was good for you about the election?)
- Nha dhe gumurr dal malyamarajal (What did you find hard?)
- Nha dhe marngi mairmaw partiesku (What do you know about the two parties?)
- Nula dhe njakul wo nhajal wujili mala (social media, TV, newspaper, family gur, communitygur)
(How did you learn [about the parties?] – on social media tv, your family or community?)
- Nha dhe marngi candidatekuny (What do you know about the candidates?)



3. Research outputs

Responses will be recorded in a variety of ways:

- Completed survey forms
- Notes of interview responses
- iPad video recordings of participants who are willing to speak to camera
- Consent forms will also be completed by all participants

Note: Permission for this research has been sought and granted from the NTG and NTEC. Permission has been sought and is still pending from the AEC.

Part 3: Processes of Evaluation

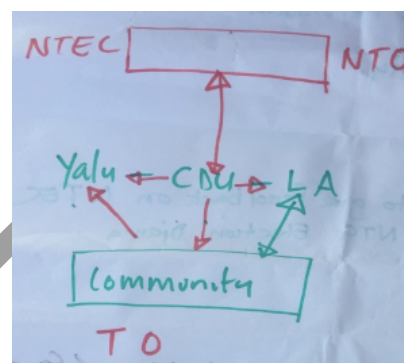
Beyond the election research, the Galiwin'ku research team also recognised that the NTG were interested in ongoing processes for evaluation and message exchange regarding government engagement and coordination activities.

They developed diagrams showing pathways of research and message exchange, and specified the format that these messages could take. Both diagrams below show these pathways, but from slightly different directions.

1. Pathways for message exchange

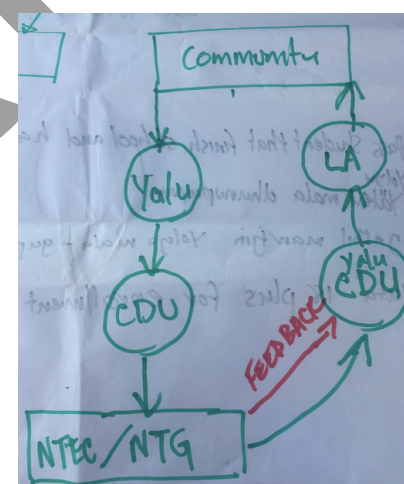
From the NTEC/NTG side:

- NTEC/NTG approach CDU
- CDU speaks with Yalu' and the Local Authority, and through working with these groups can generate a sense of a Galiwin'ku response (to which the authority of TO's/the land is fundamental)
- Yalu' and the L.A. work with CDU to constitute feedback and pass messages back to government



From the community side:

- It is important that feedback loops are closed and feedback can keep circulating
- The arrow in red shows that an important part of the cycle is for there to be feedback provided from government on the feedback which is generated by Yalu' working with CDU and engaging a community response.
- It is through this extra level of feedback on feedback that the loops can iteratively improve, rather than just repeat.



2. Format of messages

The Galiwin'ku researchers were happy with the style of feedback production that was generated in Phase 1 of the REC-IER project research, and were interested in continuing in this mode (see for example http://recier.cdu.edu.au/short_reflections/vignette-stephen-dhamarrandji-galiwinku/)

The short reports have 3 parts:

- Video footage or photos of engagement activities – Yalu' researcher
- Summary of what was happening – Yalu' researcher
- Interpretation for government – CDU researcher

In this format, feedback is connected to particular (i.e. live) instances of engagement in Galiwin'ku, and can travel as stories and learning opportunities for government.

Appendix 3:

Ngukurr Engagement Plan

(As previously circulated amongst NTG staff in the Steering Committee and Big Rivers regional office)

This project is a partnership between NT Government, Gumbula Consultancies and CDU. The purpose is to support better understandings around voting and registering to vote, and to develop and action more locally appropriate voting and electoral processes. This collaborative work is an opportunity for further Ground-Up research and evaluation around government engagement and coordination in remote communities.

The project work draws from previous engagement research (see www.recier.cdu.edu.au) which recognises that good local engagement and coordination practices based on shared learning and experience make the work of government workers and community representatives easier and more productive.

Also that, successful government and community engagement work involves building good coordination systems within government (with colleagues, across levels of government and different agencies), as well as within communities (by tracing broad engagement networks, getting to know individuals and groups, dedicating time to visiting with them in community and reporting to them about the progress of government business).

Gumbula Consultancies will work with people in Ngukurr to learn from them about their experiences of voting, what they don't understand and what works well or can be done differently.

NT Government will work with Gumbula Consultancies and CDU to offer clear story of official voting and roll registration processes, including legal requirements which are fixed and, and areas of flexibility. They will also receive and offer feedback on insights generated within the on-ground research. They will work with NTEC to improve voting and registration practices on the basis of these insights where possible

CDU will work between Gumbula Consultancies and NT Government, helping information to travel from community to government in a useful format, and to record and evaluate outcomes emerging from the project.

ENGAGEMENT PLAN:

- Develop visual resources to be drafted by GC and CDU and reviewed and endorsed by Govt, that clearly describe the purpose of the work and show who is involved – including photos of staff and logos of organisations
 - Notices on Facebook, Ngukurr News, Yugul Voice
 - Introduce project at L.A., Yugul Mangi, Stronger Communities meetings
- **Purpose:** To let relevant authority groups know about the project, and seek their input. To show that a 3-way partnership is central to the project.
- A short workshop in Katherine with NTG/NTEC, Gumbula Consultancies and CDU

- Presentation on electoral registration, voting and roll updates, including legal requirements of voting, tiers of government and other contextual information around the electoral process.
 - CDU-GC presentation on Ngukurr community history and demography, and issues to do with voting and electoral registrations
 - Initial discussion about core elements of voting process and community organisation
- **Purpose:** To open a pathway between these stakeholders, supporting further communication and changed practices arising out of the research.
- A workshop in Ngukurr (or Darwin) with Gumbula Consultancies and CDU finalising the implementation process
 - How to ask people about their experiences of enrolling to vote and voting, and what they understand about the process, what is unclear, how can the process work better for them?
 - How to collect this information (video/notes)?
 - How to interpret and send back to NTG/NT Electoral Commission?
- **Purpose:** Support the research process, and negotiate means for developing feedback which can circulate in government
- Gumbula Consultancies will sit with families or clan groups and talk with them in a way they will understand
 - Ask people about their experiences of enrolling to vote and voting, and what they understand about the process, what is unclear, how can the process work better for them?
 - Where possible take video/audio recordings and/or work with CDU to record stories people tell
- **Purpose:** Have local researchers, where appropriate working in Kriol or other languages, as the point of contact when talking to people in Ngukurr, and eliciting stories.
- Gumbula Consultancies works with CDU to formulate a reports of the process, reflections on success and challenges of this process to NTG, and recommendations for further action.
- **Purpose:** To develop vignettes and short reports which communicate insights arising from community stories.
- The NTG liaise with NTEC to consider if there are changes that need to be made to electoral registration, public communication and education, and voting processes
- **Purpose:** To coordinate and action insights and recommendations arising from evaluation research in relation to relevant agencies
- NTG provides feedback to GC to take back to families and present at meetings (L.A., Yugul Mangi, Stronger Communities)
- **Purpose:** Ensure feedback can flow in both directions, i.e. reports to government and reports back.
- CDU completes report detailing the partnership, outcomes and markers of success that emerged in the project. This report will include recommendations for both the electoral processes, and government engagement processes.
- **Purpose:** Report on the engagement and coordination process of the evaluation research, capture insights arising, provide analysis and recommendations of what worked and did not.