



**2007-2008 Women's Leadership and Development Program  
Grants**

**FINAL REPORT**

**10 August 2009**

**Minmaku Palyantja Palya: Value Women's Good Work**

**A Collaborative Project between**

**WOMEN IN ADULT AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION  
(WAVE)**

**and**

**WALTJA TJUTANGKU PALYA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION  
(Waltja)**

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<b>Attachment N:</b>	Lynch A & Taylor J, 2009, <i>Minmaku Palyanta Palya: Waltja Women Leaders' Project. Independent Project Evaluation.</i>

## **1. OUTLINE OF PROJECT**

The main focus of this project has been the recognition, acknowledgement and promotion of senior Aboriginal women who have been instrumental in the development of children's services and youth programs on their remote communities in Central Australia. These women have, in addition to their leadership work on their own communities, contributed to the development of Waltja Tjutanku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation (Waltja), an Aboriginal women's organisation which provides services and support across the Central Australia region. The project also sought to build relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous women, along with continued good working relationships, from the two organisations involved- WAVE and Waltja.

The project has included:

- establishment of regular communication between Waltja Committee and WAVE Executive;
- shared project governance and reporting responsibilities;
- collaboration between WAVE and Waltja to review the value/success/challenges of the Waltja model of community engagement and service provision, further informed by an embedded independent evaluation process;
- promotion of the project and the Minmaku workshop to community councils, Central Australian organisations and networks, and to national women's networks;
- preliminary community research/consultation by workshop nominees;
- Minmaku workshop planning, logistics and delivery for two workshops;
- documentation of evidence and accreditation of nominees against relevant units from community services qualifications (CHC20201);
- documentation of workshop outcomes;
- development of personal profiles for each workshop participant and promotion through Waltja and WAVE websites and other media;
- development of multimedia resources and guidelines for organisations working with Aboriginal clients and communities in Central Australia and nationally;
- public launch of draft project materials.

### **1.1 Methodological approach and processes**

This project rests on a framework of collaboration and shared values and interests, between a national women's NGO (WAVE) (also the enabling body for funding), and Waltja, an Aboriginal women's non government organisation located in central Australia (Alice Springs), and serving the communities that surround it. Both organisations have a passion for supporting women in their learning journeys, and to enhance their individual and collective potential for economic, social and cultural well being, through access to relevant and affordable education & training.

Given the diversity of women involved in this project, as well as the disparate locations of all involved, considered, open and regular communication is central, along with the shared desire to centre the women participants in this project. These demands have been addressed through developing and utilising an reflexive approach, built on community development framework, and informed by feminist sensibilities of mutual respect, honesty and shared regular communications, designed to foster relationships. The involvement of independent evaluators, also using an action research approach, from the beginning and throughout the project, has enhanced the 'model' employed and developed.

In these ways, the approach and processes involved throughout the project become worthy of further attention themselves, as do the many and continuing outcomes – expected and unexpected.

This Final Report builds on and extends the Mid Term Report (November 2008), along with materials that accompanied it, and the attachments to this document.

Minmaku Workshop Seven Mile Alice Springs July 2009



## **2. PROJECT PARTNERS**

The project is a collaborative venture between Women in Adult and Vocational Education (WAVE) and Waltja Tjutanku Palyapayi (Waltja).

**2.1** WAVE was formed in 1987 and is the first and only National and autonomous organisation for Australian women in the Adult, Community, Vocational Education and Training and work-related learning sector/s. Managed through a national executive with state/territory representation, WAVE acts as a National Network for women who work and study in Adult and Vocational Education and work-related education and training. Members include teachers, trainers, coordinators, administrators & managers, policy workers, academics, HR personnel, students, public servants, and politicians with an interest in ACE VET and work-related education and training. Key purposes of WAVE include: the provision of advice and advocacy on behalf of members to decision makers in relation to the adult and vocational education sectors; the promotion of social justice and equity in and through adult and vocational education institutions, policies and practices; to strengthen links and build areas of mutual co-operation with other organisations, local, national and international, including but not limited to, women's and adult and vocational organisations and to undertake research which will advance the interests of women in adult, vocational and work-related education and training. WAVE (<http://www.wave.org.au/>) is a member of the national alliance: Security4Women (<http://www.security4women.com/>)

**2.2** Waltja is a Central Australian women's non-government organisation governed by senior Aboriginal women. Waltja's constitutional objectives encompass advocacy for self-determination of communities and individuals, a whole-of-family approach, and support and training for community employment and community-managed services.

WAVE has undertaken past investigations into access and equity for Aboriginal women in vocational education and training (VET), and has collaborated with Waltja in a compilation of past and current research into training and education issues for Aboriginal women in Central Australia (Lawrence, K 2005: attached).

Waltja website [www.waltja.org](http://www.waltja.org) provides details on Waltja's governance, mission, organisational methodology, programs and publications. Waltja works in the Central Australian region, an area that encompasses three states and many language groups. Waltja's organisational goals and operational strategies focus upon the centrality of women to community capacity, the need for training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people to enable them to work in and manage local services, and the value of partnership and communication between families, local services, and funding and regulatory bodies, within and between communities and across the region.

### 3. PROJECT ACTIVITIES MAPPED TO AGREED MILESTONES

The Minmaku project has progressed towards and or completed the activities outlined in the Activity Milestones Plan in accordance with the Project Budget.

Details are as mapped hereunder:

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Project Objective Achieved</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Establish Project Governance</b>		
	Project Management Committee established. Communication strategies and meeting protocol established Timetable for project activities established. Evaluation and reporting processes established Auditor and financial reporting schedule established Minmaku participants nominated and approved.	See Nov 08 Progress Report	B2.1 B2.3
<b>2</b>	<b>Allocate Staffing And Resources</b>		
	Minmaku project officer position staffed with workstation and administrative support in Waltja office Trainers allocated to the project Interpreters/community liaison workers nominated	See Nov 08 Progress Report	
<b>3</b>	<b>Promote Project To Participants, Their Communities and Other Stakeholders</b>		
	Nominees and their communities advised in writing, leadership promoted Participation confirmed. WAVE members advised through website, email communications and Executive meeting AVETRA national conference project promotion. Promotion of project through Security4Women national alliance. Report on project on AVETRA website, WAVE website, Waltja website. Story in Waltja publication 'Family News' Project- related community visits: nominee consultations, project promotion. Profiles developed with Minmaku	See Nov 08 progress report; April 09 Progress Report	B2.1 B2.3

	nominees by project worker. Promotion of draft project resources to Central Australian key organisations and stakeholders.		
<b>4. Training And Accreditation Methodology</b>			
	Workshop plan approved by MC. Aboriginal training facilitators, MC and project worker agree on the preliminary community research questions and the workshop agenda. Arrange assessment moderation Arrange for sector recognition.	See Progress Report April 09. Training outcomes: See <b>Attachment A:</b> Minmaku and Strategic Plan Training Summary. See <b>Attachment B:</b> Letter to Shire Services Managers	
<b>5 Progress Report To Office For Women</b>			
	Stage 1 Report November 08 Stage 2 Report May 09 Final Report July 09		B2.1 B2.2 B2.3 B2.4
<b>6 (a) Workshop March 2009</b>			
	Conducted at Ross River, 16 <sup>th</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2009	See Progress Report November 08; Progress Report April 09	B2.1 B2.2 B2.3
<b>6 (b) Workshop July 2009</b>			
	Planning with Waltja Exec. Planning with WAVE Exec PMC Planning  Invitations and negotiations with Minmaku nominees and their Shire Services Managers  Workshop venue, travel, accommodation, catering, resources.  Workshop with WAVE and Waltja members  Promotion of draft resources at National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame in Alice Springs Promotion of resources through Waltja and WAVE websites and other media;  Advice on draft resources: Waltja and WAVE participants, launch participants	See Progress Report April 2009. See <b>Attachment B:</b> Letter to Shire Services Managers See <b>Attachment C:</b> Participant lists. <b>Attachment D:</b> Workshop action plan <b>Attachment E:</b> WAVE Executive meeting agenda <b>Attachment F:</b> Launch agenda 9 <sup>th</sup> July <b>Attachment G:</b> Invitees list and Participants list	B2.1 B2.2 B2.3 B2.4
<b>7 Production Of Records/Resources</b>			

	<p>The items marked with an asterisk * are accessible on the Waltja website <a href="http://www.waltja.org.au/default/Minmaku.html">http://www.waltja.org.au/default/Minmaku.html</a> and the WAVE website <a href="http://www.wave.org.au">http://www.wave.org.au</a></p> <p>Minmaku profiles *</p> <p>Leadership Certificates</p> <p>Workshop 1 products: Irene Nangala Waltja Chairperson speech on leadership* Text about 'Good Leaders' and 'Support for Women Leaders' Paintings and explanatory text on leadership Evaluation records PowerPoint: for AVETRA conference April 2009 *</p> <p>Minmaku PowerPoint November 2008 for Desert Knowledge Symposium *</p> <p>Draft posters based on text and paintings</p> <p>Mapping of Minmaku nominees' competencies against 2 units in Certificate II Community Services Work CHC20202 (Attachment A)</p> <p>Minmaku Palyantja Palya DVD</p> <p>Stage 1 Report November 08 Stage 2 Report May 09 Final Report July 09 Independent Evaluators' Report</p>	<p>See <b>Attachment H:</b> Draft WAVE Waltja Minmaku DVD</p> <p>See <b>Attachment I:</b> Draft Poster: Good Leaders Work Hard</p> <p>See <b>Attachment J</b> Draft Poster: Support for Women Leaders</p> <p>See <b>Attachment K:</b> Draft Poster: Being a leader makes you proud and strong</p> <p>See <b>Attachment L:</b> Draft Poster: All the different ways I am a leader.</p> <p>See <b>Attachment M:</b> CDRom: contents include leadership certificates, profiles, paintings and explanatory text, evaluation records, PowerPoints, photographs from events</p>	<p>B2.1 B2.2 B2.3</p>
<b>8</b>	<b>Evaluation And Reporting</b>		
	<p>Final independent evaluator report to project partners and OfW Project report and financial acquittals to MC and OfW</p>	<p>By 30 July (requested amendment to 30/8/09) Financial Acquittal: 30/9/09</p>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Acquittal</b>		
	<p>Financial acquittal including audited report to OfW</p>	<p>By 30/9/09</p>	

## **4. HIGHLIGHTS, BREAKTHROUGHS AND DIFFICULTIES**

Given that this project has spanned a year, the spread of the project endeavours, and the collaboration between two organisations, the 'Minmaku Project' (as it has become known) has been both continually challenged and enriched throughout the Project's lifespan. The comments below illustrate but a few of the many highlights, breakthroughs and also difficulties. More can be gleaned from feedback later in the report (see Section 5.2 General Evaluation)

We are sure that conversations about the project will carry on into the future, as we continue to reflect and to build the relationships between the two organisations, and the friendships that have begun to develop through the project.

### **4.1 Highlights**

One highlight has been the developing of relationships between the two organisations Waltja and WAVE, including individual members of both organisations, and the public demonstration of that relationship at the Minmaku launch in Alice Springs on July 9<sup>th</sup> 2009. The promotion of the launch to a wide spread of organisations and individuals further served to publicise this developing relationship.

The relationship is between two very different organisations: WAVE is a national body, Waltja a regional organisation; WAVE members are predominantly urban women while Waltja members are entirely remote community residents, and Waltja staff are based in the regional centre of Alice Springs; WAVE members are predominantly non-Aboriginal while Waltja members are entirely Aboriginal. WAVE works at the level of national policy, research and advocacy while fostering state/territory-based networking activities through its state convenors and members. Waltja is concerned with the particular issues and contexts for Aboriginal women in remote central Australia.

However, it has become clear throughout the project and particularly during the combined Waltja and WAVE workshop in July, that the organisations have a great deal in common, and particularly in their support for and recognition of women's leadership.

In addition, both are NGOs with limited resources and a large and ambitious footprint, trying to achieve much with little and within a precarious policy, funding and global financial context.

Waltja women appreciated the participation of Elaine Butler from WAVE at the March 2009 workshop, and appreciated the collaboration between the two women's organisations. Several expressed delight at the WAVE banner that suggests three women dancing together. In the July workshop they were keen to encourage the

WAVE women to create a painting on canvas including the WAVE logo and details of the Minmaku project – there was insufficient time for this and the WAVE participants were somewhat challenged to consider themselves as artists. We are postponing this for the next joint project!

Waltja participants have given very positive feedback about meeting WAVE women and exchanging personal stories as well as stories of work and leadership.

The feedback has been noted in the independent evaluators' report, and in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Project Progress Report (April 2009). Waltja Chairperson Irene Nangala provided this feedback after the July 2009 workshop:

- It was good to get other people like the WAVE ladies involved in our workshops. We want to see those WAVE ladies profiles and stories.
- It was a good thing that happened, us all getting together, and what ... [WAVE participant] was telling me about her stories.
- It was good telling stories ngapartji ngapartji [reciprocity] - I tell my story, you tell your story”.

It is clear from the Evaluators' Report that the whole project affirmed for Waltja participants that they are valued as leaders. Participants clearly valued highly the evidence provided through the Profiles and Leadership Awards of their learning and leadership. The paintings and text on leadership from first workshop became central project materials. The Waltja participants were able to see in the second workshop how their paintings and text on leadership had become posters, and how their leadership stories, paintings and workshop participation had become the Minmaku DVD. Their Minmaku profiles were also on display. The Waltja participants, most of whom are culturally constrained from 'bragging', were able to show and take pride in these resources.

## **4.2 Breakthroughs**

In considering this section, it has been difficult to isolate 'breakthroughs' from the many events, learnings and outcomes embedded in this project.

Given this, and after considerable thought and discussion, we have decided to highlight one main 'breakthrough', that in turn led to so many activities and results – that is, the stories. The power of stories and storytelling is of course well documented. This project adds testimony to stories and story telling as a process through which to reflect on and document aspects of one's life (in this case connected to women's leadership); to begin conversations, develop relationships, and to 'bear witness' without needing to 'brag'. Most importantly, the profiles of the Minmaku participants, once printed and laminated, now stand as documentation and so recognition of the leadership work over time of the women concerned. They are situated at the very centre of this project.

We have also noted that the WAVE women found it difficult to write their stories- this was a surprise for us (all)! And again, these stories, now 'captured', will contribute to important work to be done.

The following excerpt cited from the Independent Evaluators Report (Attachment N) acts as evidence:

#### 4.2.1 Stories:

All participants interviewed said their profiles and certificates should be made public, *'They are for putting up, so our leadership is recognised'*. Several women had ideas about ways their profiles could be utilised. One suggested profiles could be sent ahead of executive members when they were going to meetings with funding bodies or government ministers, so that those they were meeting with had a understanding of the women's backgrounds, knowledge and experiences before they met them, with the implication that this may inspire greater respect. Another participant felt that non-Aboriginal workers in her community would benefit from finding out more about her from her profile. *"I'm going to show my story (profile) to the Shire council, maybe the CEO, because new people are coming to the community and they don't understand what we do."* Sadly, she added that *"But we have to talk to them too, not just give them the paper (profile) because they might just throw it away."* Another thought it might help participants get jobs, as a way of recording their previous work and training, especially if they moved away from their community to another place. One participant said profiles might improve communication with non-Aboriginal people. *"We listen to whitefellas – they need to listen to us and understand what we do."*

The WAVE women commented about the depth and diversity of experience and skills of the Minmaku women. Most expressed admiration for the Minmaku women's achievements, commitment and determination to create a better future for their communities, and their ability to do this whilst juggling family responsibilities and overcoming an array of personal challenges.

*"The profiles were simple, direct and personal."* *"(Most) had demonstrated their adaptability to take on new tasks ... had buckets of initiative, obviously good problem solvers at both family and community level."* *"I think they kept coming back to the needs of the community and kept their focus strong."* *"Most were experienced systemic advocates."*

In preparing their own profiles for the 2nd workshop, the WAVE women commented how challenged they were to write their own profile in a similar open, personal and direct way – very different from the usual biography. *"Reading their profiles made my profile cover all facets of my life - family, work, education, community etc. whereas if writing for a different audience I would have confined myself to just the work facet of my 'leadership'."* Another commented *"the stories are very real and strong. I think the WAVE profiles could be presented in a similar way to the Waltja profiles."*

At the 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop participants commented they would have liked more of a balance in the sharing of stories – for the Waltja women to have had time to read or hear the WAVE women's stories before the workshop as they had done, and for them to be able to look at copies together when they met – to use as a reference and so they could focus more on sharing than hearing or reading information for the first time.

Since the Second workshop, requests for access to the stories continue to come from both the Minmaku/Waltja participants, and from WAVE participants. We are sure these stories will live on.

## 4.3 Difficulties

**4.3.1 Incorporating additional workshop into project plan.** As noted in the independent Evaluators' Report (Attachment N), the challenge of having to split into two workshops (initially because of the desire of Waltja Committee members to meet at a remote community) became an *advantage*, allowing the project team time to:

- process the outcomes of first Minmaku workshop and develop draft resources
- time for Waltja women to reflect on their own leadership and learning, gain confidence in speaking of themselves as leaders.
- Time for the WAVE participants to read the Waltja Minmaku participant profiles and write their own profiles.

**4.3.2 Differences and similarities between Waltja and WAVE** as organisations – one is national/urban; the other regional/remote, raised challenges to be considered and accommodated: viz, how to bring the two organisations 'together', throughout the project, and especially at critical times; planning and implementing a joint workshop. This 'bringing together' involved coordinating participants from urban settings scattered around Australia, as well as the remote communities of central Australia. The intended remote location of 1<sup>st</sup> workshop made it impossible to bring members of both organisations together as initially planned, due to timing, time requirements for remote travel, member availability and cost.

**4.3.3 Logistical difficulties.** These required continuing thought and planning, negotiation with community employers, vehicles, drivers, and coordination along with hard physical work. This work fell predominately on Kate Lawrence, given her position with Waltja and within this Project, her 'local' knowledge and her location in Alice Springs. WAVE both recognises and honours Kate Lawrence, her attention to process, detail, and caring, the stress and sheer hard work involved, and the finesses, grace and good humour that contributed so much to the project.

**4.3.4 Coordination of interstate travellers** was predominantly the work of WAVE. While time consuming, voluntary and requiring commitment and follow through, this work did not require the intensity associated with the 'on the ground' coordination required for workshop activities, as detailed partially above.

**4.3.5 Cost contribution** – the workshop split increased travel and administration costs for Waltja & WAVE, so extra project partner contributions were required. As the funding base for WAVE is always a challenge (as is the case for many women's NGOs) this required very careful management, and communications with/in WAVE executive.

**4.3.6 Timing of project activities** The face to face meeting and so 'real' development of understanding between women leaders from WAVE & Waltja came together at end of the project rather than while the project was in

progress. However, we are sure that the impetus from the meeting in July 2009 will continue in many ways, both planned and unexpected. (See also 4.3.1 above)

**4.3.7 Story writing** It was, surprisingly, a challenge for the WAVE participants to think and write about themselves as leaders, and a challenge to write about themselves personally. These stories are an important outcome of the project, and set the potential for further activities.

**4.3.8 Enrolment & accreditation** Challenges of the accreditation and enrolment processes include:

- a disjuncture between communication/engagement processes and VET speak ‘paperwork-based’ process, especially for/with people with low English literacy;
- the difficulty of fit between obvious competencies that the Aboriginal women leaders have and the units in Community Services TP.

**4.3.9 Ambitious agendas** The July 2009 workshop had an ambitious agenda, given the short time available for Waltja/Minmaku and WAVE participants to meet each other and interact, and what we hoped to achieve in this window of opportunity. While it was deemed important to ‘go with the flow’ on the actual workshop day, some opportunities to follow though on more structured activities that had been planned were missed.

## 5. EVALUATION

The following details Evaluation of the Project by the two organisations (WAVE & Waltja), including feedback from participants in the Project.

It is also informed by the Final Report received from the independent evaluation process (Lynch A & Taylor J, 2009, *Minmaku Palyanta Palya: Waltja Women Leaders' Project. Independent Project Evaluation.*) (Attachment N)

We accept that report; thank the evaluators for the diligent and careful work and expertise they have invested, and endorse the recommendations contained therein.

Please refer to that Report (Attachment N) for further detail in relation to Project Evaluation.

### 5.1 Project Objectives

All objectives stated in the funding agreement have been met.

Please refer to Section 3 for mapping of Objectives met, and evidence in Attachment M: CDRom.

#### **Objective B2.1**

*Increased acknowledgment and participation of Indigenous women in planning and administering early childhood and youth services in their locations.*

Please Note: The wording for this objective was amended to:

*increased acknowledgement of Indigenous women*

Participation is a long-term goal to which this project contributes positively through the documentation & promotion of Indigenous women's leadership in relation to early childhood and youth services in remote communities.

Acknowledgement has been achieved through the documentation of participants' leadership stories; paintings and texts, and the public display of these materials, including in communities and at the launch.

#### **Objective B2.2**

*Increased capacity of Indigenous women to access further training and employment opportunities.*

Accreditation evidence was compiled on the basis of data and records from the first Minmaku workshop for these 2 units from Certificate II Community Services Work:

- CHCCOM1B Communicate with people accessing the services of the organisation
- CHCORG2B Work with others.

Advice was provided to Shire Services Managers about the participation of Minmaku leaders, and copies of their Minmaku profiles, in the expectation that Shire Services Managers will acknowledge and further support the leadership of these women in their communities, and their capacity to both undertake paid employment and to mentor other Aboriginal women in employment.

### **Objective B2.3**

*Increased awareness of leadership abilities of Indigenous women.*

Awareness of the leadership abilities of Indigenous women participants has been increased in and through a number of ways, for the women themselves, for the WAVE participants, and for those who attended the launch. Awareness has also been raised through the documentation of participants' leadership stories; paintings and texts, and the public display of these materials, including in communities and at the launch. Further more, this was extended through the successful running of a workshop about the project at a national conference, and resulting materials.

### **Objective B2.4**

*Increased involvement of Indigenous women in the establishment and provision of community-based services.*

This is a long-term goal to which this project contributes positively through the documentation & promotion of Indigenous women's leadership in relation to early childhood and youth services in remote communities.

## **5.2 General evaluation**

The following section details specific responses sought, under the category of general evaluation.

Evaluation of this project is overwhelmingly positive, with high indication of ongoing outcomes, including unexpected/unplanned outcomes.

Report by independent evaluators provides summative evaluation of and for the project, from an action research approach, and including further evaluative commentary from Waltja Minmaku participants and WAVE attendees.

### **5.2.1: How the outcomes of the activity are being promoted and disseminated**

Outcomes of this project have been and will continue to be promoted and disseminated widely. Some examples include: WAVE website; Waltja website; Waltja magazine *Family News*; advice and communications with CAETN; the paintings and profiles of Minmaku participants; AVETRA national conference workshop and documentation on the AVETRA website; invitations to launch of project outcomes; and ongoing WAVE policy advocacy. Word of mouth is also a great vehicle for promotion for this project.

Further feedback contributed by WAVE participants at the second workshop & launch includes the following comments:

- Through WAVE website with 2000 hits per month will report upon the outcomes; - WAVE quarterly newsletter to subscribers will include outcomes of the project: - Word of mouth in Northern Sydney Institute.
- There has been informal discussion amongst Executive members about their Alice Spring meeting and experiences.  
The WAVE Web site can be a way of keeping the project alive – updates etc.  
Contacts made at the launch can be followed up for future engagement.  
The WALTJA participants have been offered WAVE membership, which promotes an on-going engagement opportunity between both communities.
- I will be reporting on the event through the AEU National TAFE Council Executive (and more than likely also at the AGM) and more generally in my reports to the other AEU Women's Officers at our national meeting in October.
- Personal contacts – interest generated in the WAVE/WALTJA project and my being fortunate enough to have meeting with a group of women from communities is great  
through disability sector - the inclusion of the Auslan section of the Waltja Women's Leaders DVD is of interest to Deaf Australia, Interpreters, telecommunications advisory board members, etc. etc. all those interested in dissemination of inclusive information to aboriginal communities. Colleagues from this sector I have met with since are very interested and impressed with the Auslan component.
- Through TAFE (Canberra Institute of Technology) – maybe will talk with Yurauna Centre about Waltja/Minmaku as to whether/how they want to use resources.  
But I won't do this without WAVE/WALTJA thinking it is a good idea.  
Report to WWDA for bulletin/news?
- At this time, my main outcome has simply been to share with staff at the Inverell campus what a great project it was and is, and how useful the resources are not only for Indigenous people but anyone who hasn't a solid educational background. I was particularly impressed with the resources about ethical issues in doing research and working with children. I've not been able to discuss this with faculty staff as yet, but have copies and hope to promote them in New England institute.

### **5.2.2: How our organisations will ensure the outcomes are sustained beyond the Funding Agreement period**

Comments above add further testimony to meeting this requirement.

Waltja & WAVE websites comprise continuing resources on leadership; the paintings and participant profiles will be displayed in participants

communities; awareness and understanding of leadership is continually promoted by Waltja management committee; increased growth of relationships- organisational & personal; advocacy for women's access to relevant and accessible accredited training, including training linked to employment will continue through WAVE.

Further evaluative feedback from WAVE participants includes the following comments:

- WAVE will continue to support the Waltja women's leadership program with follow up meetings and contacts
- Waltja works with these women on an on-going way and is committed to sustaining project outcomes, and WAVE has a long term relationship with Waltja  
The women gaining accreditation gives them a lasting attainment, and one that can be built upon
- However the evaluation process comes up with ongoing contact (whether email, online, or voice) it appears that there is an interest in keeping in contact with the Waltja women, perhaps even an invitation to some of them to the next WAVE conference if and when that may happen.
- talk further with WWDA Management Committee about commitment to outcomes,
- making a Reconciliation Action Plan,
- promote project and materials on WWDA-discuss, and in Quarterly magazine.
- Given the current situation re TAFE, I'm not sure that there is a great deal the organisation can do. On a personal level, I feel strongly that I'd like to have a more active role in the project, though commitments here mean I'll not be available until winter 2010. However I have discussed my involvement in terms of a return to industry, a requirement of all TAFE staff, as it would add to my currency in understanding cultural issues, communication with people of CALD backgrounds, community development, maybe counselling and social planning (I've a diploma in this). I also have accumulated long service leave that I can utilise so that I can have a reasonable amount of time there.

### **5.2.3: What the key learnings are for our organisations**

Evaluative feedback from Waltja has highlighted the following issues:

- o Celebrating success is a good strategy: Respect and acknowledgement of Aboriginal women's leadership activities is effective way of working, contradicts the negative media and social stereotypes, encourages women and enables them to support each other better. People need to be supported to understand and appreciate their own leadership and the leadership of very different others. Waltja women have really appreciated the acknowledgement by non-Indigenous WAVE women and the opportunity to share stories.
- o Logistical issues: the 'event management' of this project has required enormous effort and considerable investment of resources over and above what was funded. Costs and labour and materials requirements are always high for events that bring together participants from across the Central Australian region. Projects such as this need to be adequately funded and supported.
- o Staffing and support. Waltja appreciated the investment of time on a voluntary basis provided by Elaine Butler the WAVE project management team member, particularly in relation to planning and reporting. Throughout the project the Waltja dedicated staff member Kate Lawrence was required to

maintain ongoing project activities, travel to and consult with Minmaku nominees, plan and coordinate project activities, keep extensive records, maintain regular communication with other project team members and with Waltja management, and contribute to reports. Future projects need to fund adequate project worker hours and/or reduce expectations of project outcomes.

- Partnership approach requires a lot of coordinated and collaborative investment. Both a learning and a challenge- to appreciate and coordinate the labour and coordination that are required in community development projects which bring people together across landscape, culture and language differences, literacy and educational experiences, etc. A challenge also to align 'big picture (VET policy, RTO systems and advocacy to Government, with the personal development aspects of this project: learning, recognition and relationship building. Extensive reporting requirements and documentation have also been a challenge! All of this has been very worthwhile doing, and has made project outcomes very interesting, but problematic in terms of organisational capacities and requirements of individual team members.

WAVE Acknowledges and supports the comments made by Waltja (above).

Evaluative feedback from WAVE also includes the following comments from individual participants at the July 2009 workshop: -

- My key learnings are mostly in the form of questions raised:
  - How can non-Indigenous women learn to reach across significant cultural and language gaps to forge genuine relationships and networks with Indigenous women?
  - What could we contribute to give more support to Waltja and through them, to Indigenous women leaders in remote communities?
  - What skills and resources do we have that we can share and that could make a difference to Indigenous women in the NT?
- Leadership issues are similar for Aboriginal women and non - Aboriginal women and the structures and support networks are also similar.
- It is very important for the Aboriginal women, as it is for non-Aboriginal women to have recognition of practical based skills to enable them to further contribute to their communities and obtain employment and further education opportunities. This may increase their financial status in the future and allow them to be employed in their own communities rather than non-aboriginals coming in.
- Women must learn to not only participate in leadership positions more but also support those who are in those positions already.
- The vocational and employment challenges that face regional/remote Indigenous women is enormous and requires strategic management to ensure suitable outcomes and to build their leadership capacities.
- The social issues these women need to manage in their communities is demanding [daunting] and is highly relevant to their learning environment, and future employment possibilities, and their leadership roles
- That WAVE has been proactive in its community relationships with this project
- I think WAVE has learned that for the right project money within Government (at all levels) is available and worth pursuing and that by supporting grassroots

organisations, women can have lasting and life changing experiences in terms of leadership, community engagement and learning.

- a. personally – that there is much for me to learn
- b. personally - continually looks for points of contact, ways of support
- c. personally – keep WWDA informed
- d. personally – be WWDA contact person and advocate for engagement with ATSI issues.
- Key learnings - the first is not so much new as reminder, and that is, that no matter what our culture, family and friends are really important. The next, that unless you go into Central Australia, you can really have no idea of that vast, beautiful, largely empty landscape. Then that the relationship between Indigenous people and the land is a tangible bond, several women spoke about this in quite emotional ways. Lastly, that sharing stories and learning from each other really does increase understanding and thus, the efficacy of work that we might want to do together.

I'm sure that I could go on and on, but time prevails, it was a wonderful experience and a great project. It is a pity that our time was so short, because I would like to have heard more about the process of developing the resources, advocacy etc.

So thanks to all of the women who have worked and are working so hard on this project, and please pass the word on that if there is anything at all that I can do from Inverell, I'd love to help

### **5.3 The number of participants involved in the activity**

While the numbers below give some indication of participants involved in this activity, the 'footprint' of the Minmaku project has been much broader.

- WAVE: - 12 Participants directly involved, but all members and website subscribers through regular emails, newsletters and the website.
- Independent evaluators: - 2
- Waltja participants: - 15 Minmaku nominees. 5 Waltja Executive members. March 2009 workshop - 25 participants. July 2009 workshop - 15 participants
- Waltja workers: - 1 project worker throughout the project (full-time at Waltja, part-time on this project). 6 casual Waltja staff assisted during the workshops. Workshop caterer. Film training and DVD production – 2 consultants.
- Launch attendees: - 50+

### **5.4 Percentage of stakeholders satisfied that the project was appropriate to the needs of the target group.**

The key stakeholders for this project include WAVE and Waltja, along with Office for Women. However, we consider the most important of the stakeholders are the Minmaku participants themselves - the magnificent women nominated by their communities as leaders & the young women they mentored. Hence they are both stakeholders and the 'target group'.

**5.4.1 WAVE**- as an organisation, and also the members involved, is satisfied that this Minmaku project was appropriate to the needs of the target group/s. The project was an opportunity to continue working with Waltja, for mutual advantage, but especially for Waltja members and their communities. That we will continue this working relationship through another Project is testament to the

high level of satisfaction, of the appropriateness, as well as the undisputed need, for such work.

**5.4.2** Waltja Committee and Management have also expressed a desire to continue the collaboration with WAVE and to continue the momentum developed to encourage and support women's leadership. Waltja and WAVE have successfully submitted a proposal for another collaborative Women's Leadership and Development (2008-2009) project for completion in 2010.

**5.4.3** The Office for Women (OfW) as the funding source for this project, is also a stakeholder, so by extension, are the Department and Government in which OfW is located. We would be delighted to receive feedback from OfW, on the project, materials forwarded throughout the Project, including insights, suggestions, and of course, constructive criticism.

**5.4.4** Another category of 'Stakeholders' includes the invitees to and attendees at the launch. The latter gave very positive verbal feedback (Govt; NGOs; NT/CW Govt representatives) (See Attachment G: Invitees list)

Minmaku Workshop Seven Mile Alice Springs July 2009



## **6 KEY LEARNINGS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS**

We wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge and express appreciation for the funding that made this project possible. It has further established working relationships between two women's organisations- differently located, but with mutual goals and values.

Further more, the focus on women's leadership, especially in remote Indigenous communities has been and will continue to be extremely positive. This is reinforced by the documentation and so recording of each woman's knowledge, experience and capacity as a leader in and for her community.

The high significance and valuing of education and training, including the importance of documentation for competence, is a continuing theme.

Embedding the processes of community development and action research into the foundations of this project has been shown to be an integral 'enabling factor' in the achievement of both expected and unexpected project outcomes, as well as providing opportunity for reflexive learning throughout the project. This collaborative model is worthy of further consideration, as is the approach to highlighting and building on women's leadership and learning.

The learnings from this project are many for both organisations and also for their individual members - as documented in previous sections of this report. We look forward to extending the key learnings through our next collaborative project, including further consideration and action in relation to the independent evaluators report.

### **Recommendations for follow up**

The Project Management team concur with the findings of the independent evaluators (ref Att. N) and acknowledge their valuable contribution. We intend to follow up the recommendations of Evaluators in the following ways:

#### **Use of Profiles**

- WAVE member profiles will be published through WAVE and Waltja websites to further promote women's leadership and to increase understanding and friendships between the two organisations.
- Waltja will make the Minmaku profiles, and profiles of other Waltja leaders available to all new Executive members, staff, contractors and project collaborators to enable them to quickly learn about these Waltja leaders and their community contexts, and to assist in building relationships. Profile

development will

- Waltja and WAVE will encourage new members, staff, contractors and collaborators to prepare their own profiles in a similar style to use as the basis for conversations and development of good working relationships within and between organisations.
- WAVE will consider encouraging an annual update of WAVE member profiles, linking in with membership renewal
- Waltja will attempt to source funding to assist with profile development for Executive and Management Committee members, the cost of producing laminated copies for them, and the publication of profiles on Waltja website and in ring-bound folders.
- WAVE and Waltja may seek technical support and funding to create video or audio and online versions with photos of the profiles – for people who cannot read English.
- Waltja will use the profiles to promote the leadership of Minmaku participants and Committee members to key stakeholders and decision-makers such as the Shire Councils and service managers in the remote communities where Waltja women live..

#### **Acknowledgement of women leaders within Waltja and WAVE**

- Waltja and WAVE may consider a women's leadership celebration as part of their annual program of activities, either jointly or separately.

#### **Ongoing monitoring of project impact**

- Waltja may continue to evaluate the impact of recognising women's leadership on the functioning of the Waltja Executive and the organisations the women work in. For example, Waltja Executive or staff could ask women in six months time to note any impacts, such as success in applying for paid positions.
- WAVE may consider providing practical support to the small Waltja training team in creating tools for participant monitoring, and possibly assist in this process at a future joint meeting (see also below: building on the WAVE and Waltja partnership).

#### **Extension of the Minmaku model**

- Waltja has already incorporated the use of profiles/stories of life and learning into strategies for accreditation towards training qualifications as well as promotion of project participants (eg Nintiringtjaku facilitation role). This may become more explicit in Waltja's organisational strategies.
- If interest is expressed from relevant agencies and organisations and if funding or commercial opportunities become available, Waltja may develop a train the trainer package to accompany the Minmaku model and offer to other

Aboriginal organisations to acknowledge, celebrate and accredit their women leaders. Waltja could seek assistance from WAVE members in any additional writing up / packaging up of the model and resources.

- Waltja Committee may consider strategies for the leadership workshop to be replicated on a smaller scale in communities, to make it easier for young women to attend and learn.

### **Applying the learnings to future Waltja projects**

- In future project collaborations between Waltja and another organisation, the dual workshop approach in which Waltja women first explore and discuss the topic and develop their resources, and then in a second workshop join together with another organisation to share and discuss their resources and incorporate the other organisation's contributions.
- Waltja Committee has indicated support for the regular invitation and inclusion of young women in one Waltja Committee meeting each year. to enable them to learn from senior women about leadership, and to learn and use specific skills (eg gathering profiles and uploading on the website, videoing the meeting etc).
- Waltja will respond to the strong enthusiasm of many of the WAVE members to build a practical connection with Waltja, by inviting WAVE members to participate in the 2009-10 collaborative project Ulkumantjua Ukarratjuta, and to invite WAVE assistance with accreditation and training activities and with Waltja RTO operations.

### **Building on the WAVE and Waltja partnership**

- That Waltja and WAVE seek funding to undertake further projects to build on the foundations established in this project. Waltja will continue to support women to attend and contribute to relevant conferences and this may be an area where WAVE network members could be very helpful. WAVE members have clearly identified this as a key role they could play – inviting and supporting Waltja women to attend the WAVE conference, other conferences in their states, and acting as guides and hosts to Waltja women away from their country
- WAVE women suggested Waltja women might be interested in the idea of study tours or programs in other states in conjunction with WAVE. This idea could be explored further.
- Waltja and WAVE may further explore the idea of a program of industry placements / volunteer placements for WAVE members with Waltja, where WAVE members would use their education and training expertise to enhance the range of Waltja programs and support the small training team at Waltja, for example embedding the Minmaku model in other programs, developing processes for updating profiles and accreditation of women leaders on an

annual basis, post Minmaku Program monitoring of outcomes etc. Potentially this could be a Waltja/WAVE exchange program where Waltja women leaders visit WAVE members to learn more of their work, participate in WAVE programs and events, study programs etc, strongly supported by the Minmaku participants and other Waltja leaders.

Irene Nangala (Chairperson-Waltja) Welcoming Speech at Minmaku Launch Alice Springs July 2009



## ATTACHMENTS

### LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A:** Minmaku and Strategic Plan Training Summary\*\*
- Attachment B:** Letter to Shire Services Managers
- Attachment C:** Participant lists\*\*
- Attachment D:** Workshop action plan\*\*
- Attachment E:** WAVE Executive meeting agenda\*\*
- Attachment F:** Launch Invitation 9th July\*\*
- Attachment G:** Invitees list and participants list\*\*
- Attachment H:** Draft WAVE Waltja Minmaku DVD
- Attachment I:** Draft Poster: Good Leaders Work Hard
- Attachment J:** Draft Poster: Support for Women Leaders
- Attachment K:** Draft Poster: Being a leader makes you proud and strong
- Attachment L:** Draft Poster: All the different ways I am a leader.
- Attachment M:** CD Rom: contents include items listed above marked with \*\* plus leadership certificates, paintings and explanatory text, evaluation records, PowerPoints, WAVE Stories, Photos of workshops.
- Attachment N:** Lynch A & Taylor J, 2009, *Minmaku Palyanta Palya: Waltja Women Leaders' Project. Independent Project Evaluation.*