

COMMUNITY WORKFORCE PLAN
ANMATJERE -
TI TREE, PMARA JUTUNTA,
WILLOWRA, WILORA AND
LARAMBA



Desert
Knowledge
Australia

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Introduction

Purpose of the Report

The Northern Territory Government (NTG) has engaged Desert Knowledge Australia (DKA) to develop Community Workforce Plans for communities in Central Australia. The initial pilot reports focus on Ntaria (Hermannsburg) and Ti Tree (including Pmara Jutunta). In collaboration with the Department of Trade, Business, and Asian Relations (DTBAR), this initiative aims to identify community priorities to drive economic growth in remote Aboriginal communities in Central Australia, focusing on local leadership, governance, and the delivery of targeted skills, training, employment, and enterprise support services.

Following the completion of the pilot reports and in line with updated requirements, this report provides a comprehensive analysis of the current demographic and economic landscape, establishing a baseline for future Community Workforce Planning. The consolidated data contained in this report will enable both community stakeholders and government bodies to pursue the following objectives:

- Enhance community awareness and understanding of current and future industry, business, and workforce opportunities within both local communities and the broader regional cluster.
- Support the development of key initiatives aimed at creating employment opportunities and pathways through targeted training and industry development.
- Facilitate increased engagement in apprenticeships, traineeships, and school-to-work pathways, particularly focusing on youth;
- Optimise the use of existing training facilities and identifying future training needs;
- Identify foundational skills, literacy and numeracy, and pre-employment training needs through extensive stakeholder engagement.

Report Format

The structure of this report follows the framework developed by Informed Solutions (Informed Solutions (NT) Pty Ltd, 2014), mapping the key steps identified in the planning method flowchart outlined below.

Steps 1 and 2 of the framework focus on providing a comprehensive understanding of the community context and workforce landscape, identifying community demographics, existing infrastructure and services, education and training opportunities and outcomes, key local industries and employers, workforce demand, and economic indicators.

Steps 3 and 4 are informed by community consultation activities conducted throughout the course of the project, or through secondary sources such as past meeting notes where direct consultation has not yet occurred. These steps aim to identify the future needs of community members, undertake an issue analysis, and assess barriers, opportunities, and limitations. Additionally, they focus on determining the leadership and coordination required to implement recommendations arising from community input. In cases where direct consultation has not yet taken place, it is essential that future engagement be undertaken to validate community issues and barriers, and to prioritise aspirations based on the insights gathered from previous consultations

Steps 5 and 6 outline the implementation strategies and recommendations developed by the community to drive this work. These steps will identify actions, responsibilities and accountabilities, ensuring that all stakeholders including VET training organisations, industry employers, local employers, community, the Northern Territory

and Federal Government collaborate effectively to deliver the community workforce plan. This stage will include the establishment of a coordinated governance approach to workforce planning by engaging stakeholders through a Stakeholder Reference Working Group to guide decision-making and implementation of workforce plans.

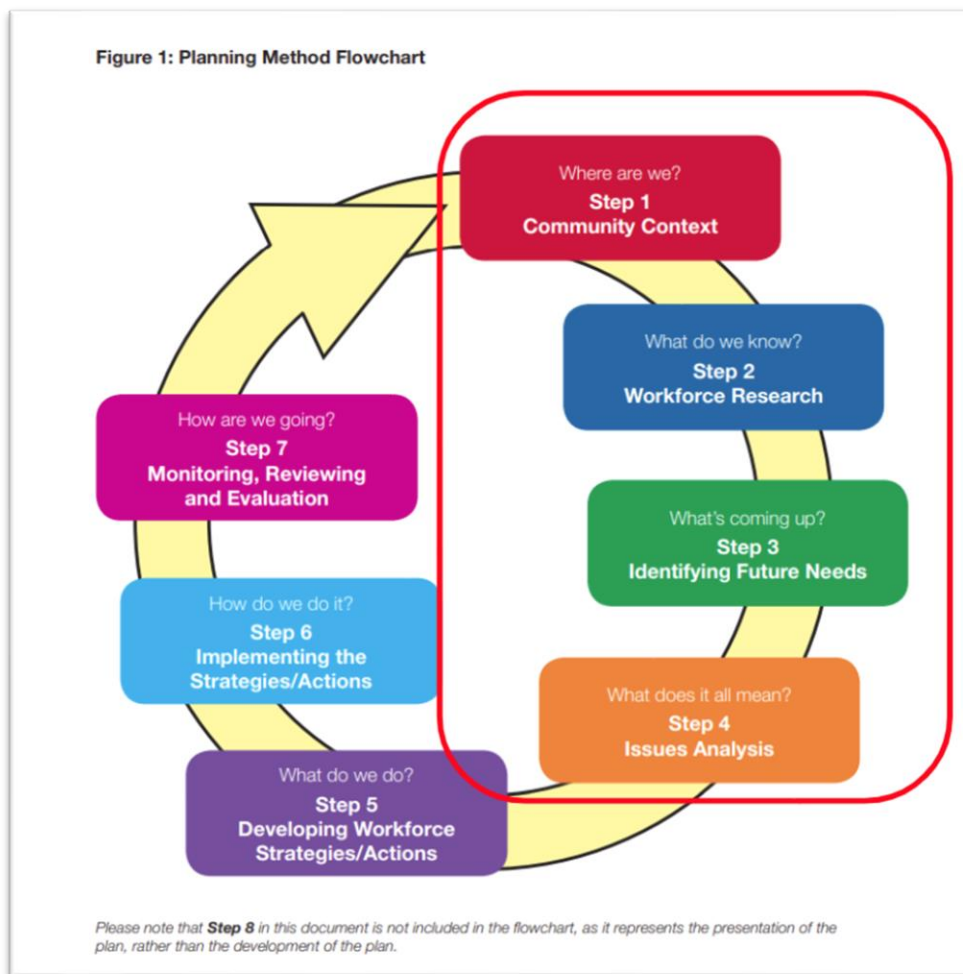


Figure 1: Planning Method Flowchart

Step 7 establishes the mechanism and timeframe to review the data and issues identified in Steps 1 to 4, and to monitor the strategies and actions from Step 5. This process ensures that the Workforce Plan remains responsive to changing conditions, allowing for necessary adaptations. It involves both quantitative and qualitative analysis such as workforce participation data and stakeholder feedback and should be guided by the nature of the strategies developed. Existing targets, including Closing the Gap and NTG employment goals, should be incorporated and reviewed in collaboration with governance groups, Local Decision Makers (LDMs), and other stakeholders. This process should be ongoing, with plans to be reviewed annually or biannually, as scheduled by the relevant governance groups.

Data Collection Framework

Based on feedback received from the development of the Pilot reports, this report utilises the framework as a guide, focussing on collating data for Steps 1 to 4.

The data has been organised into the following categories:

1. **Community Demographics and Skills**
 - a. Population statistics and trends (ABS)
 - b. Workforce participation rates
 - c. Educational attainment levels
 - d. Existing skill sets and qualifications
 - e. Training program completion rates
 - f. Skills gaps analysis
2. **Organisational Mapping**
 - a. Active employers and service providers
 - b. Current business operations
 - c. Employment capacity
 - d. Service delivery frameworks
 - e. Organisational growth potential
3. **Economic Analysis**
 - a. Gross Regional Product data
 - b. Employment statistics
 - c. Major industry presence
 - d. Economic drivers and barriers
 - e. Market opportunities
4. **Infrastructure and Development**
 - a. Planned infrastructure projects
 - b. Funded Project timelines and phases
 - c. Required workforce capabilities
 - d. Employment pathways
 - e. Skills development requirements

Data Collection and Review

The project phases outlined below detail the steps taken to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the collected data:

1. Collection of publicly available data (e.g., ABS demographics, DSS data)
2. Review of internal NTG reports (e.g., Remote Towns Jobs Profiles, Remote School Action Plans and OCARC consultations)
3. Stakeholder consultation (with existing employers and relevant government departments)
4. Community governance and stakeholder validation of data
5. Production of three distinct report formats:
 - a. Comprehensive technical report
 - b. Community-focused version
 - c. Government presentation format

Methodological Limitations

To ensure appropriate interpretation of findings, several methodological and data limitations should be acknowledged:

1. **Data Currency and Geographic Limitations**

This analysis relies primarily on 2021 Census data, which does not accurately reflect demographic and employment conditions in 2025. While comparable Remote Workforce Plans have benefited from the detailed 2023 Remote Towns Jobs Profiles (including specific employment data, Vocational Education and Training statistics, and job vacancy rates), the communities in this report were not included in these profiles. This data gap limits our ability to identify important community-specific variations and current workforce trends.

2. Significant Data Gaps

Several important data points contained in the Remote Town Job Profiles are unavailable for this analysis include:

- Upcoming VET training schedules
- Occupational distribution by Indigenous status
- Limited data on - Current job vacancies

Additional data limitations:

- Data for Pmara Jutunta is limited as it was classified solely as an Indigenous Location in the 2021 Census. Unlike Suburb and Localities census datasets, Indigenous Location datasets lack occupational and industry statistics.
- Comprehensive qualification levels of current job holders
- Industry-specific employment data that aligns with VET training categories

These gaps constrain our ability to match training needs with employment opportunities across all communities.

3. Data Perturbation

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) uses data perturbation to protect individual privacy, especially in small communities. This process involves making small random adjustments to all counts, including totals, which results in small discrepancies between disaggregated data and published totals. These adjustments generally do not affect broader analyses; however, totals in this report may differ slightly from the sum of their components.

4. Desktop Research Constraints

As a desktop research exercise, the report collates third party data to form an overall view, some direct consultation was undertaken specifically for Pmara Jutunta community, highlighted in section 3 of the report. The absence of primary data collection means current skills, training preferences, employment barriers, and community capacity have not been directly assessed from community members' perspectives. This limitation is particularly significant when considering the validity of information that may influence workforce participation and the appropriateness of proposed solutions in the most recent environment. It is assumed that any solutions trialed as a result of the information from this report will be stress tested in communities prior to large-scale implementation.

5. Implementation Planning Limitations

While the report identifies strategic opportunities for workforce planning, it does not include detailed implementation planning elements such as cost estimates, prioritisation frameworks, or assessment of past workforce initiative effectiveness in these specific communities. These limitations highlight the importance of viewing this report as a foundation for further implementation steps to validate findings and collaboratively develop implementation strategies that are responsive to local priorities and capabilities.

Executive Summary

This report examines the workforce planning landscape across Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba in the Northern Territory, providing a foundation for Community Workforce Plans that support improved economic participation.

Key Challenges

Economic and Employment Challenges in Central Australian Communities

The remote Central Australian communities of Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba experience significant socio-economic disadvantage, characterised by limited workforce participation, widespread poverty, and structural barriers that perpetuate cycles of economic hardship. These interconnected challenges create complex obstacles to community development and individual prosperity.

Key Economic and Employment Indicators:

1. **Low Employment Participation:** 12.2% of Aboriginal working-age residents are employed, with 68.5% not participating in the labour force at all^{1 2}
2. **Limited Job Quality:** Available employment is predominantly part-time and concentrated in government-funded roles^{3 4}
3. **Widespread Income Poverty:** 83.3% of Aboriginal residents have a personal income of less than \$500 per week, with almost 20% under \$150 per week⁵
4. **Extreme Socio-economic Disadvantage:** The region is classified among the 10% most socio-economically disadvantaged areas in Australia⁶
5. **High Cost of Living Barriers:** Food costs are 40% higher than in Alice Springs, creating additional financial pressure⁷
6. **Transportation Access Issues:** Prohibitive transportation costs limit access to employment and training opportunities⁸
7. **Skills Gap in Essential Services:** The absence of local trades and construction workers means communities rely on external contractors for essential services, highlighting gaps in local skill development⁹

Additional Community-Specific Challenges:

8. **Competing Social Activities:** Community members often prioritise social activities over work participation, indicating a need for more regionally appropriate engagement strategies
9. **Low Educational Attainment:** Low education levels mean that pathways to training, and employment

¹ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *Census of Population and Housing: Ti Tree, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba. G56 Industry of Employment by Occupation. *Canberra: ABS, 2021.

⁵ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba. I08 Total Personal Income (Weekly) by Sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Persons*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)*. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/socio-economic-indexes-areas-seifa-australia/latest-release>

⁷ NT Health (2023). *Attachment A - 2023 NT Market Basket Survey Summary Report*. Darwin. <https://data.nt.gov.au/dataset/nt-market-basket-survey-2023> [8]

⁸ Centre Bush Bus (n.d.) Bus Timetables. www.centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/

⁹ Centre Bush Bus (n.d.) Bus Timetables. www.centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/

⁹ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021)* Census of Population and Housing for Ti Tree, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba. G60, Occupation by Age by Sex.* Canberra: ABS, 2021

represent long-term journeys requiring sustained ongoing support.

10. **Survival Mode Living:** Given extreme poverty levels, community members are often focused on meeting immediate survival needs such as securing food, making it difficult to prioritise longer-term education and training commitments

Education and Training Landscape

Education and training outcomes across the region highlight significant challenges for workforce planning. School attendance rates range from 34% to 49%,¹⁰ with low regular attendance disrupting learning continuity, reflected in NAPLAN data which shows significant gaps in literacy and numeracy achievement.¹¹ Senior secondary education is unavailable in most communities,¹² and vocational education and training (VET) opportunities are limited, particularly in trades and technical fields.¹³

Twenty-two (22) Aboriginal residents across the five communities hold formal post-school qualifications,¹⁴ however no Aboriginal university graduates were identified.¹⁵ Indigenous languages are the primary language for 92% of Aboriginal residents,¹⁶ necessitating culturally responsive and linguistically relevant training approaches. While VET participation has increased in Ti Tree, other communities face limited access, and the alignment of training programs with local job opportunities is **limited**,¹⁷ restricting pathways from education to employment.

Opportunities for Growth

Despite these challenges, existing community consultations reflect aspirations for:

- Local job creation,
- Infrastructure development,
- Programs tailored to youth and women
- Recruiting and training local staff to enhance attendance and engagement for students.

Central Desert Regional Council Community Plans highlight future infrastructure projects which have the potential to create local jobs and develop skills within the community.

A newly developing organisation – Pmara Jutunta Aboriginal Corporation is in its initial development stages with the Pmara Jutunta (6-Mile) Community placing trust in the organisation to progress local community aspirations.

¹⁰ Data compiled from Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024). *Ti Tree, Willowra, Stirling and Laramba My School Profiles*. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50120>; <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50131>; <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50119>; <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50096>

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

¹³ Northern Territory Government, Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade. *Central Australia VET In-Training*. Darwin: Northern Territory Government, 2024

¹⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing: Ti Tree. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba. I05 Australian Indigenous Languages Used at Home by Proficiency in Spoken English for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Persons*. Canberra: ABS, 2021

¹⁷ Northern Territory Government, Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade. *Central Australia VET In-Training*. Darwin: Northern Territory Government, 2024

The organisation has now developed a strategic plan and have identified several initiatives to they would like to see developed on the community.

Through their strategic planning process, it was identified that a major area of support needed for PJAC:

- To engage in governance training for the board
- To engage administrative support for activities like business administration and grant writing.

The report also notes that in mid-June 2025, PJAC have signed a MOU with Many Rivers to support this initiative over the next 5 years. Continued support of such initiatives across the region would lead to further economic development, community wellbeing and local control of community futures.

Community-driven enterprises including a retail store, cultural centre and farming projects, have the potential to generate local economic benefits while addressing community needs. Existing government funding in education, aged care, childcare and community safety could be more effectively utilised to benefit the local community by linking funding investments to clear local Aboriginal employment targets and community-led service delivery models. Flexible work arrangements and on-country training models are also viewed as important in addressing barriers such as transport, health, and family responsibilities.

Workforce planning Opportunities

To address these challenges, the report considers the following strategies for workforce planning:

1. **Enhance foundational skills:** Focused on literacy, numeracy and financial literacy to support greater workforce readiness.
2. **Align training with employment opportunities:** Ensure that VET and other training programs are directly tied to work force demand and community needs.
3. **Expand on-Country training options:** Develop remote training hubs and flexible delivery models to make skills development more accessible in remote communities.
4. **Support paid traineeships:** Continue providing income-earning opportunities in high-demand sectors while residents work towards formal qualifications.
5. **Develop culturally responsive pathways:** Foster culturally safe employment models which value cultural knowledge and leadership in the workplace.
6. **Leverage existing investments for employment growth:** Collaborate with funding recipients and government agencies to set local Aboriginal employment targets, implement procurement policies prioritising local Aboriginal businesses and develop job-creation strategies aligned with community needs and public projects.
7. **Establish Front Door Office and Information Hub:** Create a single, integrated access point for education, skills, employment, and business services staffed by local Aboriginal personnel to provide culturally safe, personalised support and increase awareness of available programs.
8. **Enhance Governance and Leadership Training for Community Leaders:** Community Leaders reported requiring training and support to effectively manage community-controlled initiatives. Provide tailored training to build these leadership and governance capabilities.

Introduction

Step 1: Community Context

Community Profiles and Demographics

Step 1 provides an overview of Anmatjere region – Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba, including their geographical location, demographic profile, and the services available in each community. This information provides a foundational understanding that is important for informing workforce planning.

Communities	Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba														
Languages	The languages spoken in Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba are primarily Anmatyerr and Warlpiri.														
Traditional owners	The traditional owners of Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba are primarily the Anmatyerr and Warlpiri people.														
Population	The combined population of Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba is 702. ¹⁸														
	<p>Table 1: Total Community Populations</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ti Tree¹⁹</th> <th>Pmara Jutunta²⁰</th> <th>Willowra²¹</th> <th>Wilora²²</th> <th>Laramba²³</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>88</td> <td>144</td> <td>222</td> <td>59</td> <td>189</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census of Population and Housing Community Profiles</i></p>					Ti Tree ¹⁹	Pmara Jutunta ²⁰	Willowra ²¹	Wilora ²²	Laramba ²³	88	144	222	59	189
Ti Tree ¹⁹	Pmara Jutunta ²⁰	Willowra ²¹	Wilora ²²	Laramba ²³											
88	144	222	59	189											
Indigenous status	89.8% of residents (631 out of 702) of Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba														

¹⁸ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba*. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

¹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ti Tree*. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

²⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Pmara Jutunta*. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

²¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Willowra*. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

²² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Wilora*. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

²³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Laramba*. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.²⁴

Table 2: Community Aboriginal Population

Ti Tree ²⁵	Pmara Jutunta ²⁶	Willowra ²⁷	Wilora ²⁸	Laramba ²⁹
49 (55.7%)	144 (100%)	207 (93.2%)	59 (100%)	172 (91%)

Source: Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census of Population and Housing Community Profiles

Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ti Tree: Located 180km north of Alice Springs.³⁰ • Pmara Jutunta: Located north of Alice Springs, south of Ti Tree on the Ahakey Aboriginal Land Trust. Anmatjere (region) is the name given to Ti Tree and its surrounding communities including Pmara Jutunta.³¹ • Willowra: Located north of Alice Springs on the Wirliyajarrayi Aboriginal Land Trust.³² • Wilora: Located north of Alice Springs on a Community Living Area within the Stirling Pastoral Property. Anmatjere (region) is the name given to Ti Tree and its surrounding communities including Wilora.³³ • Laramba: Located northwest of Alice Springs on a Community Living Area within the Napperby pastoral property.³⁴
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ti Tree: Accessible via the Stuart highway. It takes 2 hours to drive there via car.³⁵ • Pmara Jutunta: Accessible via the Stuart highway. It takes 2 hours to drive there via car. Pmara Jutunta is situated approximately 500m off the Stuart Highway.³⁶ • Willowra: Located 340 km north-northwest of Alice Springs, accessible via the Stuart Highway. Travel north from Alice Springs towards Tennant Creek, then turn off 15 km past Ti Tree. From there, continue 130 km northwest to reach Willowra.³⁷ • Wilora: Located 245 km north of Alice Springs, a short distance off the Stuart Highway.³⁸

²⁴ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

²⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ti Tree. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

²⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Pmara Jutunta. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

²⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Willowra. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

²⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Wilora. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

²⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Laramba. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

³⁰ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Ti Tree. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/18964>

³¹ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Pmara Jutunta. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/138>

³² BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Willowra. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186>

³³ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Wilora. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/187>

³⁴ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Laramba. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/86>

³⁵ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Ti Tree. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/18964>

³⁶ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Pmara Jutunta. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/138>

³⁷ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Willowra. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186>

³⁸ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Wilora. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/187>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laramba: Located 205 km by road from Alice Springs via Napperby Station Road, which turns west from the Stuart Highway 122 km north of Alice Springs. The community is located 83 km from the turnoff, with a total drive time of approximately 2.5 hours.³⁹ <p>The Centre Bush Bus provides essential passenger services to several communities in the Anmatjere region, operating on scheduled routes however, service coverage and accessibility vary significantly across communities:</p> <p>Direct Service Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ti Tree: Serviced twice weekly on the Alice Springs to Tennant Creek route⁴⁰ • Willowra and Wilora: Both receive direct service twice weekly⁴¹ <p>Communities Requiring Secondary Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pmara Jutunta: Residents must travel 10km to access the Centre Bush Bus via Ti Tree. • Laramba: Residents must travel 36km to access the Centre Bush Bus via Tilmouth Well.⁴²
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Infrastructure and Services

Internet Access	Table 3: Community Internet Access					
		Ti Tree ⁴³	Pmara Jutunta ⁴⁴	Willowra ⁴⁵	Wilora ⁴⁶	Laramba ⁴⁷
	Mobile Coverage	-	Telstra coverage	Telstra coverage	Telstra coverage	Telstra coverage
	Internet	-	Available	Available	-	Not available
	Wi-Fi Hotspot	Wi-Fi available	-	Wi-Fi hotspot at Willowra Activity Centre, 9am-3pm Mon-Fri. Not available Sat & Sun.	-	Wi-Fi hotspot and computer room by CAYLUS. Separate Wi-Fi serviced by Activ8me.
<small>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</small>						
Freight Services	Freight services are primarily provided by two key operators, Stanes Transport and Centre Bush Bus. ^{48,49}					

³⁹ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Laramba*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/86>

⁴⁰ Centre Bush Bus (n.d.) *Bus Timetables*. <https://centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/>

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Ti Tree*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/18964>

⁴⁴ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Pmara Jutunta*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/138>

⁴⁵ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Willowra*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186>

⁴⁶ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Wilora*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/187>

⁴⁷ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Laramba*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/86>

⁴⁸ Centre Bush Bus (n.d.) *Bus Timetables*. www.centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/

⁴⁹ Stanes Transport (n.d.) *Delivery Areas*. www.stanestransport.com.au/delivery-area

		Table 4: Local Community Businesses				
		Ti Tree ⁵⁰	Pmara Jutunta ⁵¹	Willowra ⁵²	Wilora ⁵³	Laramba ⁵⁴
Local Businesses	Central Desert Regional Council	Pmara Jutunta Health Centre	Central Desert Regional Council	Stirling Station Store	Central Desert Regional Council	
	Central Land Council		Central Land Council	Wilora Health Centre	Laramba Aged Care	
	National Indigenous Australians Agency		Willowra Baptist Church		Laramba Childcare Centre	
	Red Centre Farm		Willowra Health Centre		Laramba Community Store	
	Ti Tree Farm Garden		Willowra Learning Centre		Laramba Health Centre	
	Ti Tree Food Store		Willowra Outback Store		Laramba School	
	Ti Tree Health Centre		Willowra Police Station - Unstaffed			
	Ti Tree Police Station		Willowra School			
	Ti Tree Roadhouse					
	Ti Tree School					
	Wayout Bush Store					
Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile						
Regional Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Desert Regional Council • Central Land Council • Department of Children and Families • Department of Education • Department of Health • Department of Human Services (Centrelink) • Northern Territory Police, Fire Emergency Services 					

⁵⁰ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Ti Tree. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/18964>

⁵¹ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Pmara Jutunta. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/138>

⁵² BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Willowra. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186>

⁵³ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Wilora. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/187>

⁵⁴ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Laramba. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/86>

Children's Services	Table 5: Community Children's Services				
	Ti Tree⁵⁵	Pmara Jutunta⁵⁶	Willowra⁵⁷	Wilora⁵⁸	Laramba⁵⁹
	*Announced – CDRC and SNAICC Partnership 2023, further progress to be clarified with CDRC.	-	Willowra Preschool	-	Laramba Childcare Centre
<i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile, (Council, 2023)</i>					
Community Services	Table 6: Community Children's Services				
	Ti Tree⁶⁰	Pmara Jutunta⁶¹	Willowra⁶²	Wilora⁶³	Laramba⁶⁴
	Central Desert Regional Council	-	Central Desert Regional Council	-	Central Desert Regional Council
	Central Land Council		Central Land Council		Laramba Aged Care
	Ti Tree Police Station				
<i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</i>					
Aboriginal Organisations	Table 7: Aboriginal Organisations Operating in Communities				
	Ti Tree⁶⁵	Pmara Jutunta⁶⁶	Willowra⁶⁷	Wilora⁶⁸	Laramba⁶⁹
	-	Pmara Jutunta Aboriginal Corporation	Willowra Outback Store (Wirliyajarrayi Aboriginal Corporation)	-	-
<i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</i>					
Government Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Desert Regional Council • National Indigenous Australians Agency • Centrelink (Services Australia) • Central Australia Health Service / Department of Health • Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services • NT Department of Education and Training 				

⁵⁵ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Ti Tree*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/18964>

⁵⁶ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Pmara Jutunta*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/138>

⁵⁷ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Willowra*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186>

⁵⁸ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Wilora*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/187>

⁵⁹ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Laramba*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/86>

⁶⁰ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Ti Tree*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/18964>

⁶¹ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Pmara Jutunta*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/138>

⁶² BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Willowra*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186>

⁶³ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Wilora*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/187>

⁶⁴ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Laramba*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/86>

⁶⁵ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Ti Tree*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/18964>

⁶⁶ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Pmara Jutunta*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/138>

⁶⁷ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Willowra*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186>

⁶⁸ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Wilora*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/187>

⁶⁹ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Laramba*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/86>

Regional Council	Central Desert Regional Council is responsible for delivering municipal services, community development, and essential infrastructure. Their services include waste management, road maintenance, youth and community programs, aged care and early childhood services. ⁷⁰													
Visitor Accommodation	Table 8: Visitor Accommodation in Communities													
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="371 383 595 421">Ti Tree⁷¹</th> <th data-bbox="595 383 818 421">Pmara Jutunta⁷²</th> <th data-bbox="818 383 1042 421">Willowra⁷³</th> <th data-bbox="1042 383 1265 421">Wilora⁷⁴</th> <th data-bbox="1265 383 1493 421">Laramba⁷⁵</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="371 421 595 674">- Ti Tree Roadhouse Caravan Park - Ti Tree Farm</td> <td data-bbox="595 421 818 674">Ti Tree Roadhouse Caravan Park 10 km from the community</td> <td data-bbox="818 421 1042 674">Central Desert Regional Council Visitor Accommodation</td> <td data-bbox="1042 421 1265 674">Central Desert Regional Council Visitor Accommodation</td> <td data-bbox="1265 421 1493 674">Tilmouth Roadhouse on the Tanami Highway approximately 40 km south of Laramba</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ti Tree ⁷¹	Pmara Jutunta ⁷²	Willowra ⁷³	Wilora ⁷⁴	Laramba ⁷⁵	- Ti Tree Roadhouse Caravan Park - Ti Tree Farm	Ti Tree Roadhouse Caravan Park 10 km from the community	Central Desert Regional Council Visitor Accommodation	Central Desert Regional Council Visitor Accommodation	Tilmouth Roadhouse on the Tanami Highway approximately 40 km south of Laramba			
Ti Tree ⁷¹	Pmara Jutunta ⁷²	Willowra ⁷³	Wilora ⁷⁴	Laramba ⁷⁵										
- Ti Tree Roadhouse Caravan Park - Ti Tree Farm	Ti Tree Roadhouse Caravan Park 10 km from the community	Central Desert Regional Council Visitor Accommodation	Central Desert Regional Council Visitor Accommodation	Tilmouth Roadhouse on the Tanami Highway approximately 40 km south of Laramba										
<i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</i>														
Power/Water	Electricity in Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba is supplied at the Northern Territory standard tariff with standard connection charges. Pmara Jutunta and Willowra have plentiful groundwater, while Wilora's is limited; all are of marginal quality, disinfected (with sodium hypochlorite or UV) and monitored monthly. Sewerage systems vary, with Pmara Jutunta having a fully reticulated system, Willowra using a septic tank effluent pumping system, and Wilora and Laramba relying on private septic systems. ⁷⁶													
Community Events	Ti Tree and Laramba play in the Central Australian Football League (CAFL) Community Competition, with the 2025 season commencing in April ⁷⁷													

Step 2: Workforce Research

Step 2 presents workforce data for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba including demographic details, labour force participation rates, and employment status. This information is useful for understanding the local workforce contexts.

Target Group

To define the target group for this report, DKA considered several factors, the number of individuals in the labour force, including the workforce participation rate, and those classified as not in the labour force.

⁷⁰ Central Desert Regional Council (n.d.) *Services*. <https://centraldesert.nt.gov.au/our-services>

⁷¹ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Ti Tree*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/18964>

⁷² BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Pmara Jutunta*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/138>

⁷³ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Willowra*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186>

⁷⁴ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Wilora*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/187>

⁷⁵ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profile – Laramba*. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/86>

⁷⁶ Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.), *Community Profile – Pmara Jutunta*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/138>; BushTel (n.d.), *Community Profile – Ti Tree*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/18964>; BushTel (n.d.), *Community Profile – Willowra*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186>; BushTel (n.d.), *Community Profile – Wilora*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/187>; BushTel (n.d.), *Community Profile – Laramba*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/86>.

⁷⁷ Play AFL (n.d.) *TIO CAFL*. <https://play.afl/northern-territory/competitions/tio-cafl>

Target Group Definition

Target group = the total labour force *less (-)* those who are currently employed *plus (+)* Individuals eligible to work but not actively seeking employment

For the purpose of this report, the target group comprises individuals who are either currently registered under the CDP caseload or are unemployed and actively seeking work. This includes individuals who are eligible to work but not actively seeking employment.⁷⁸⁷⁹

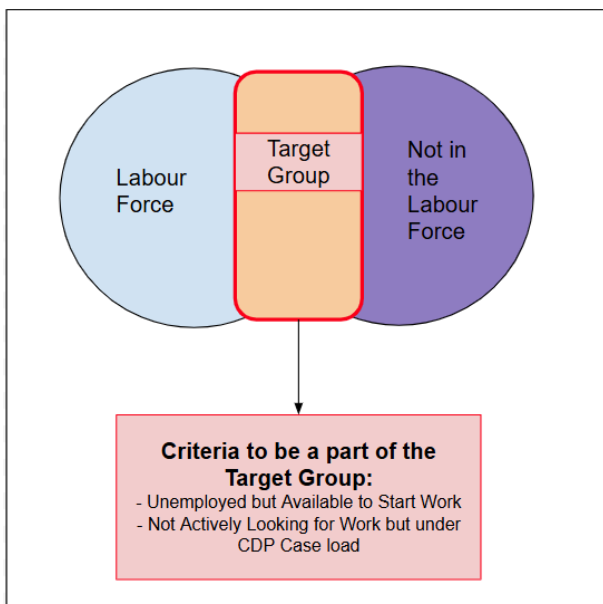


Figure 2: Target Group Definition

Labour force participant

Is someone who is either employed or unemployed but *actively seeking work*, as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Individuals who are not in the labour force include those who are neither working nor actively looking for work due to reasons such as retirement, study, caregiving responsibilities, disability, or voluntary inactivity.

Changes to mutual obligation requirements

The suspension of mutual obligation requirements can have an impact on the data. This is because the ABS considers someone to be unemployed if they are *actively looking for work*. When mutual obligation requirements are suspended, it is possible that some job seekers may not have undertaken the job search that they normally would have, in which case they would be classified as not in the labour force rather than unemployed.

2.1 Workforce Demographics

Working Age Population

Across Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba, the working-age population (15+) consists of 499 people, with 432 individuals (86.6%) identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.⁸⁰ The distribution of working age residents varies by community:

- **Ti Tree:** 34 Aboriginal working-age residents⁸¹

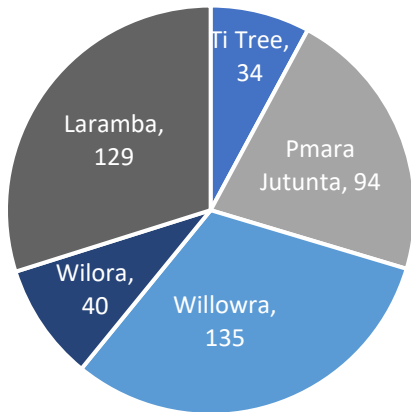
⁷⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023). *Labour Force Explained*. <https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/home/labour+force+explained>

⁷⁹ Jobs and Skills Australia (2024) *Small Area Labour Markets, September Quarter 2024*. https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-12/small_area_labour_markets_-_september_quarter_2024.pdf

⁸⁰ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁸¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ti Tree. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021

- Pmara Jutunta: 94 Aboriginal working-age residents⁸²
- Willowra: 135 Aboriginal working-age residents⁸³
- Wilora: 40 Aboriginal working-age residents⁸⁴
- Laramba: 129 Aboriginal working-age residents⁸⁵



This report aims to identify the barriers, successes and complexities faced by the 432 working aged Aboriginal residents of the Anmatjere region with residential addresses in Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba.

Figure 3: Aboriginal Working Age Population

Source: Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census of Population and Housing Community Profiles

Labour Force Participation

A total of 31% of Aboriginal working-age residents (134 out of 432) responded that they were actively participating in the labour force in the 2021 Census, while 68.5% (296) responded that they were not engaged in the workforce:

- Ti Tree: 15 in labour force; 18 not participating⁸⁶
- Pmara Jutunta: 21 in labour force; 74 not participating⁸⁷
- Willowra: 60 in labour force; 73 not participating⁸⁸
- Wilora: 10 in labour force; 33 not participating⁸⁹

⁸² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Pmara Jutunta. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁸³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Willowra. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁸⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Wilora. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁸⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Laramba. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁸⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ti Tree. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁸⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Pmara Jutunta. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁸⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Willowra. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁸⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Wilora. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

- **Laramba:** 28 in labour force; 98 not participating⁹⁰

The overall non-participation rate across the combined communities is 68.5%, with significant variation between individual communities.

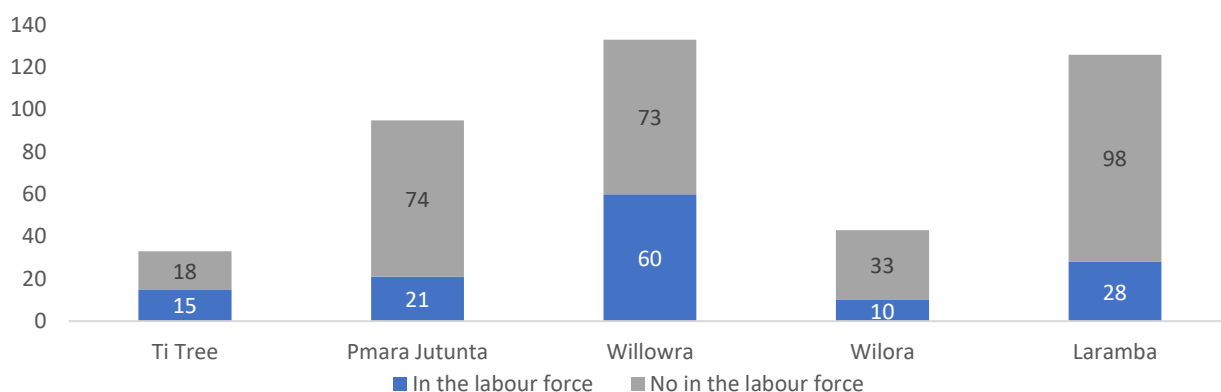


Figure 4: Aboriginal Labour Force Numbers

Source: Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census of Population and Housing Community Profiles

Labour force participation rates have been calculated based on 2021 Census respondents who indicated that they were either 'in the labour force' or 'not in the labour force.' Individuals who did not state their labour force status have been excluded from the analysis.

Employment Status

2021 Census data highlights significant workforce planning needs across the five communities. Of the 432 working-age Aboriginal residents across Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba 64 individuals (14.8%) are employed, 22 full-time and 42 part-time.⁹¹ Employment distribution across all communities is as follows:

- **Ti Tree:** 15 Aboriginal residents are employed⁹²
- **Pmara Jutunta:** 9 Aboriginal residents are employed⁹³
- **Willowra:** 15 Aboriginal residents are employed⁹⁴
- **Wilora:** 4 Aboriginal residents are employed⁹⁵
- **Laramba:** 21 Aboriginal residents are employed⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Laramba. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁹¹ Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census Community Profiles. I21 Labour Force Status by Age by Sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Persons. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁹² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ti Tree. I21 Labour Force Status by Age by Sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Persons. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁹³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Pmara Jutunta. I21 Labour Force Status by Age by Sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Persons. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁹⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Willowra. I21 Labour Force Status by Age by Sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Persons. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁹⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Wilora. I21 Labour Force Status by Age by Sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Persons. Canberra: ABS, 2021

⁹⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Laramba. I21 Labour Force Status by Age by Sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Persons. Canberra: ABS, 2021

Community Development Program (CDP) Participants

The CDP represents an important aspect of workforce engagement in remote Central Desert communities. Community-specific CDP figures have been provided by the National Indigenous Australian Agency (NIAA) for the communities of Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba. The data contains additional information about participants placed in employment as well as participants achieving outcomes.

Table 9: CDP Flow Caseload

Flow Caseload*							
Community Cluster	2023-2024				2024-2025		
	Jul-Sep 2023	Oct-Dec 2023	Jan-Mar 2024	Apr-Jun 2024	Jul-Sep 2024	Oct-Dec 2024	Jan-Mar 2025
Anmatjere	409	404	432	461	461	444	444

*Flow caseload – a unique count of participants during each quarter (i.e. those who entered and/or exited the program were counted once within the quarter).

Table 10: CDP Participants Placed in Employment

Participants Placed in Employment**							
Community Cluster	2023-2024				2024-2025		
	Jul-Sep 2023	Oct-Dec 2023	Jan-Mar 2024	Apr-Jun 2024	Jul-Sep 2024	Oct-Dec 2024	Jan-Mar 2025
Anmatjere	30	<20	<20	<20	24	<20	<20

**This is a distinct count of participants placed into a job based on the community where they were residing at the time.

Table 11: CDP Participants Achieving Outcomes

Participants Achieving Outcomes							
Community Cluster	2023-2024				2024-2025		
	Jul-Sep 2023	Oct-Dec 2023	Jan-Mar 2024	Apr-Jun 2024	Jul-Sep 2024	Oct-Dec 2024	Jan-Mar 2025
Anmatjere	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20

To protect individual privacy, cells with a value between 1 and 19 are suppressed and reported as '<20'. Any other data that may enable derivation of these small counts is withheld and marked as 'n.p.'.

Data Source for Tables 9,10 and 11: National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) Community Development Program (CDP) data request, prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia on behalf of DTBAR, NTG, June 2025

The Anmatjere Community Cluster maintains approximately 400-460 participants per quarter across the reporting period from July 2023 to March 2025. Employment placement data shows 30 placements in 2023-24, declining to suppressed numbers (fewer than 20) in 2024-25.

As a general note, the report acknowledges that factors such as seasonal employment, changes to mutual obligation requirements, referral criteria, and other variables can directly influence these numbers. A representation of this is provided in Figure 5 on page 21.

A note on CDP participation versus persons of employable age, the total number of CDP participants in a region may be higher than the total number of employable residents as the geographic boundaries for CDP regions will include homelands and people who are employed and on CDP.

Jobseeker Recipients

JobSeeker and Youth Allowance recipients in the Central Desert Regional Council Local Government Area (LGA) also increased from 908 (37.7% of population aged 15-64) in March 2020 to 1,188 (49.4%) in December 2024.⁹⁷ This upward trend, alongside increasing CDP participation, also indicates growing employment challenges in the region. The long-term trend on Jobseeker payments in regional communities based on LGA is represented in table 13 below.

Table 12: JobSeeker and Youth Allowance Recipients in the Northern Territory

JobSeeker		export		reset	
Current month	December 2024		March 2020		
Region - LGA/SA2	Job Seeker and youth allowance recipients	% of 15-64 age population	Job Seeker and Youth allowance recipients	% of 15-64 age population	Change
Northern Territory	23,650	14.5	19,925	12.2	+3,725
Belyuen	23	21.7	18	17.0	+5
Wagait	47	18.7	37	14.7	+10
Darwin Waterfront Precinct	15	5.8	14	5.4	+1
Coomalie	147	18.9	113	14.5	+34
Tiwi Islands	815	47.7	599	35.0	+216
Victoria Daly	730	38.4	494	26.0	+236
West Daly	1,102	53.7	735	35.8	+367
Central Desert	1,188	49.4	908	37.7	+280
MacDonnell	1,523	36.8	1,143	27.6	+380

Source Data from the Department of Social Services (DSS) Regional Development Australia (RDA) NT JobSeeker and Youth Allowance Recipients compiled by .id Informed decisions

The long-term trend in JobSeeker payments within regional communities by Local Government Area (LGA) is presented in Figure 5 below. The data reveals a consistent cyclical pattern over the five-year period, illustrating the percentage of the population receiving JobSeeker support payments. It is assumed that Community

⁹⁷ Profile.id. (2024). JobSeeker and Youth Allowance recipients in the RDA Northern Territory. <https://profile.id.com.au/rda-northern-territory/job-seeker?Geocode=70620>

Development Programme (CDP) and JobSeeker recipients represent the same cohort when considering regional councils. Based on this cyclical pattern and CDP programme evaluation reports, the following factors potentially explain these ongoing cycles:

1. 13-week activity cycles: The Community Development Programme operates through structured 13-week blocks of mutual obligation activities followed by brief intermission periods, creating regular fluctuations in participation and payment levels.
2. Scheduled breaks and cultural obligations: Approved leave for cultural events, holidays, health appointments, or personal circumstances temporarily reduces participation, resulting in periodic declines.
3. Voluntary participation policy changes: Recent policy shifts towards voluntary participation have increased variability, with some recipients exercising discretion over activity compliance, causing corresponding payment fluctuations.
4. Seasonal labour market variations: Employment opportunities in remote areas fluctuate seasonally, influencing participants' active engagement or temporary withdrawal from the programme.
5. Programme administration cycles: Compliance enforcement, provider reporting schedules, and payment processing create periodic peaks and troughs aligned with official programme timelines.
6. Community and demographic factors: Local community events, population movement, and individual circumstances contribute to cyclical participant engagement patterns throughout each year.

Collectively, these factors account for the pronounced, repetitive cyclical pattern observed in JobSeeker payment trends and programme participation within remote Australian communities⁹⁸. Further clarification of this information may be needed through direct consultations with CDP providers or community members. This report notes that the CDP program will conclude, and communities will transition to the Remote Australia Employment Services (RAES) on 1 November 2025.

⁹⁸ Office of Indigenous Affairs (2025). Impact Analysis - Replacing the Community Development Program. <https://oia.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/posts/2025/01/Impact%20Analysis%20-%20Replacing%20the%20Community%20Development%20Program.pdf>

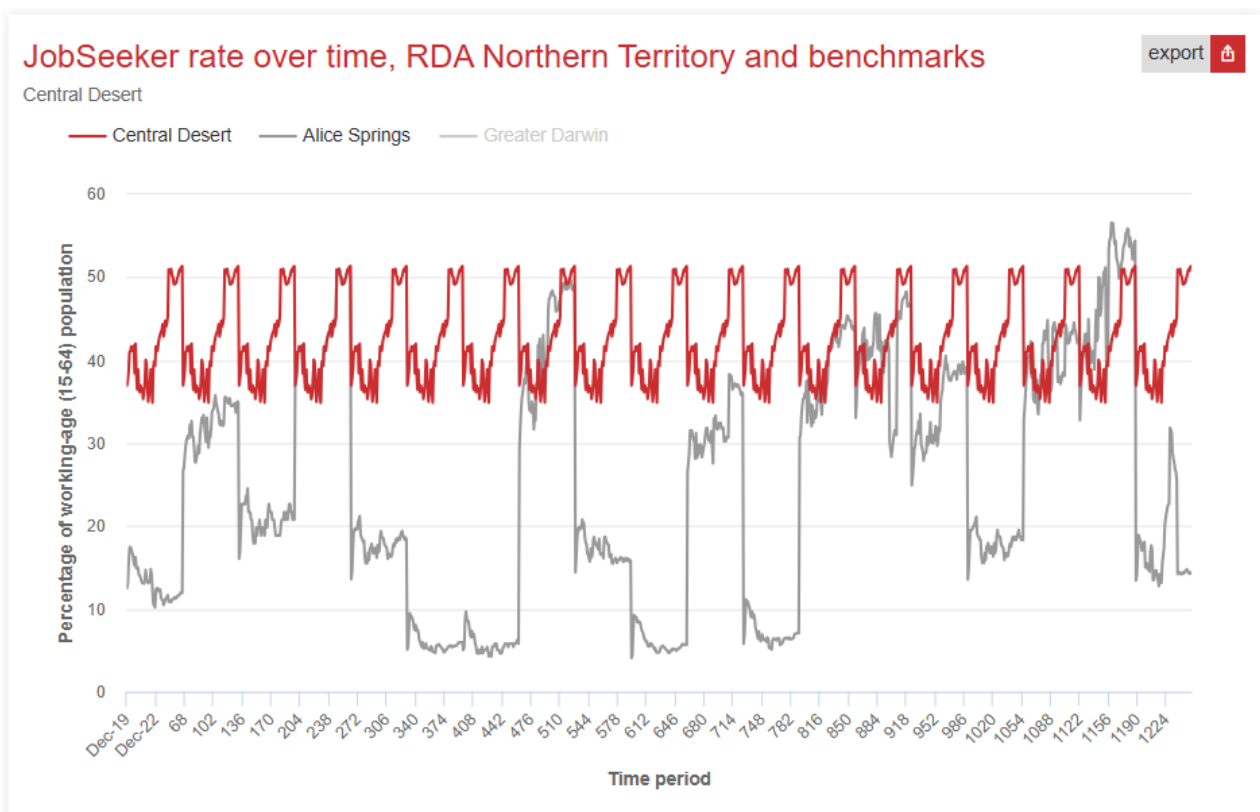


Figure 5: JobSeeker Payment Recipients between December 19 and July 2025 (monthly)

Source: Department of Social Services - JobSeeker and Youth Allowance recipients - monthly profile via data.gov.au. Compiled and presented by .id (informed decisions)

Individual Incomes

2021 Census data on Aboriginal household incomes reveals widespread financial constraints:

- 83.3% of Aboriginal residents (360 individuals) earn less than \$500 per week,⁹⁹ or less than \$26,000 annually
- 42.4% of Aboriginal residents (183 individuals) report earning between \$150-\$299 per week (42.4%, 183 individuals),¹⁰⁰ equivalent to \$7,800 - \$15,548 annually.
- 19.2% of Aboriginal residents (83 individuals) report incomes under \$150 per week,¹⁰¹ or less than \$7,800 annually.
- 3 Aboriginal residents across the five communities report earning over \$1,000 per week,¹⁰² or over \$52,000 annually.

These patterns reflect significant and widespread financial hardship and strong reliance on government support programs, emphasising the need for accessible local employment opportunities with liveable wages. Figure 6. below presents the distribution of individual incomes based on the 2021 Census data.

⁹⁹ Ibid

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba. 108 Total Personal Income (Weekly) by Sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Persons*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹⁰² Ibid

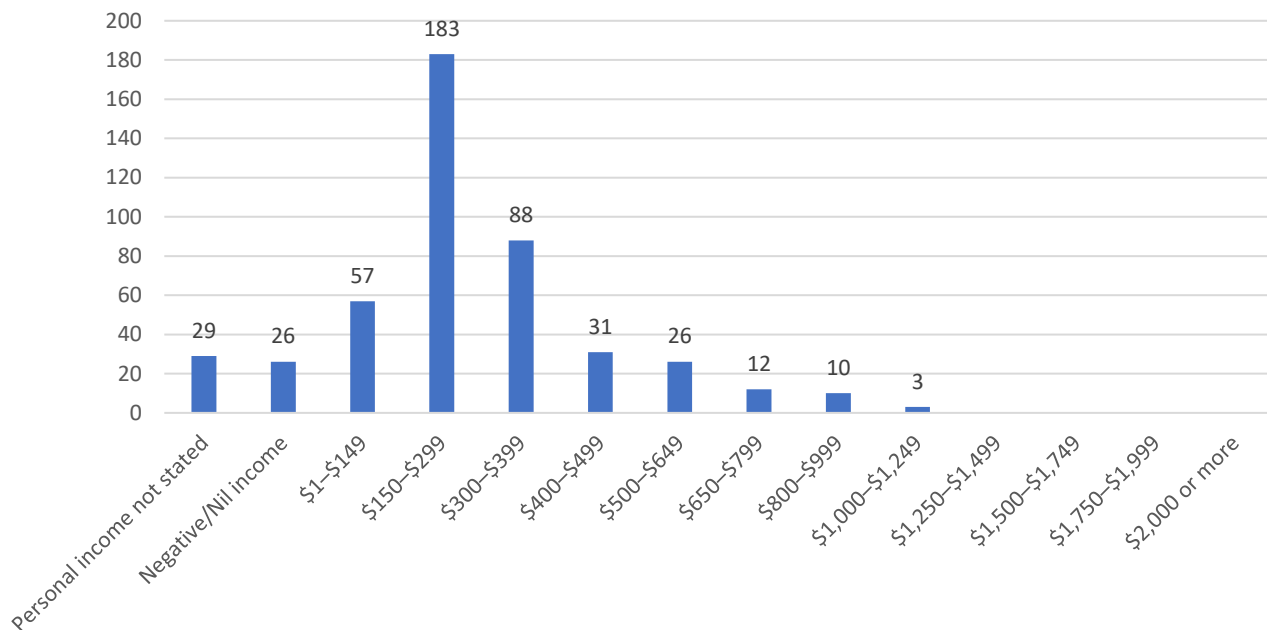


Figure 6: Total Personal Income of Aboriginal Residents

Source: Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile

The demographic and employment data above highlight several critical considerations for workforce planning:

- Many communities represent a significant untapped labour force, with 68.5% of working-age residents currently not participating in the workforce. At the same time, they face serious economic challenges, 83.3% of residents have a personal income of less than \$500 per week, with three individuals across five communities having an income of more than \$1,000 weekly. One in five residents survives on less than \$150 per week, underscoring a broader pattern of underemployment and financial hardship.
- Employment is predominantly part-time and low-paid, with limited pathways for career progression. This economic complexity underscores a need for targeted job creation strategies, ones that offer livable wages and build higher-skilled roles with clear career development opportunities.

Without such interventions, residents seeking stable, long-term careers are likely to relocate to regional centres like Alice Springs or Darwin, leading to a continued loss of valuable skills from local communities.

2.2 Skills in the Community

This section analyses education and training levels across Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba which directly impact workforce capacity and employment opportunities.

Education

The development of a strong future workforce is tied to the educational opportunities and outcomes of young people.¹⁰³ Core competencies in literacy, numeracy, and access to higher levels of schooling and vocational training are essential for equipping students with the skills needed for future employment. The data presented

¹⁰³ Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2021). *Shaping Our Future: Children's Education and Care National Workforce Strategy*. <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-10/ShapingOurFutureChildrensEducationandCareNationalWorkforceStrategy-September2021.pdf>

below from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024) highlights key hurdles in future workforce readiness for students;

1. including low school attendance rates,
2. limited secondary education options, and a
3. lack of vocational training opportunities within the communities.

These challenges contribute to young people leaving school unprepared to enter the workforce and their long-term remote workforce planning.

Table 13: Indigenous Young People Enrolled in an Education Institute

Community	Age groups:	Total Indigenous people in age bracket	Total no. enrolled in an educational institution	% of age group enrolled
Ti Tree ¹⁰⁴	0-4 years	6	0	0%
	5-14 years	7	7	100%
	15-24 years	7	0	0%
Willowra ¹⁰⁵	0-4 years	17	3	18%
	5-14 years	54	54	100%
	15-24 years	35	9	26%
Wilora ¹⁰⁶	0-4 years	8	0	0%
	5-14 years	11	11	100%
	15-24 years	6	0	0%
Laramba ¹⁰⁷	0-4 years	14	3	21%
	5-14 years	26	26	100%
	15-24 years	25	4	16%

Source: Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, I01

Table 14: School Profile Data

Metric	Ti Tree School ¹⁰⁸	Willowra School ¹⁰⁹	Stirling School ¹¹⁰	Laramba School ¹¹¹
Location	Ti Tree	Willowra	Wilora	Laramba
Year Range	T-12	T-11	1-5	T-12
Enrolment Numbers	61	87	10	39
Aboriginal Students	100%	100%	100%	100%
Non-English Language	100%	100%	100%	100%

¹⁰⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ti Tree. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

¹⁰⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Willowra. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

¹⁰⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Wilora. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

¹⁰⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Laramba. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

¹⁰⁸ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024). *Ti Tree School Profile, My School*. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50120>

¹⁰⁹ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024). *Willowra School Profile, My School*. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50131/vetinschools>

¹¹⁰ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024). *Stirling School Profile, My School*. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50119>

¹¹¹ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024). *Laramba School Profile, My School*. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50096>

Background				
Student-to-Teacher Ratio	5.5:1	6.7:1	10:1	6.5:1
Attendance Rate (Semester 1, 2024)	55%	34%	47%	49%
Students Attending 90%+ of the Time	8%	0%	0%	3%
VET in School	Available	-	-	No data available
Senior Secondary Outcomes	No data available	-	-	No data available
School Funding Per Student (2023)	\$70,094	\$40,838	\$76,361	\$36,619
ICSEA Value (National Average)	593 (1000)	607 (1000)	643 (1000)	593 (1000)

Source: © Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) 2009 to present, unless otherwise indicated. This material was downloaded from the ACARA website (www.acara.edu.au) (<https://www.myschool.edu.au/home>) (accessed 15 July 2025) and was not modified. The material is licensed under CC BY 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). ACARA does not endorse any product that uses ACARA material or make any representations as to the quality of such products. Any product that uses material published on this website should not be taken to be affiliated with ACARA or have the sponsorship or approval of ACARA. It is up to each person to make their own assessment of the product

As highlighted in the table above, Sterling School in Wilora provides an education up to the 5th Grade, meaning students must leave the community to continue their education. When students move away for schooling, they face a loss of family support, cultural dislocation, and social isolation, which can further contribute to absenteeism and disengagement and the associated implications for their employability.¹¹²

Literacy, Numeracy and Language Context

The NAPLAN results reveal data gaps and educational challenges across Ti Tree, Willowra, Stirling, and Laramba schools. Data for Ti -Tree and Willowra school are from 2023, and the NAPLAN data for Laramba School is 2024. The data reporting is limited across subjects and year levels, with data not available for Stirling School. National averages are provided for comparison in parentheses.

Table 15: NAPLAN Scores

Subject	Year Level	Ti Tree School ¹¹³	Willowra School ¹¹⁴	Stirling School ¹¹⁵	Laramba School ¹¹⁶
Reading	3	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided
	5	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided	307 (492)
	7	No scores provided	No scores provided	N/A	No scores provided
	9	No scores provided	No scores provided	N/A	No scores provided
Writing	3	296 (416)	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided
	5	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided

¹¹² Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. (2020). *Education in remote and complex environments (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training)*. https://www.aph.gov.au/-/media/02_Parliamentary_Business/24_Committees/243_Reps_Committees/Education_and_Employment/Education_in_remote_and_complex_environments/Remote_education_full_report.pdf

¹¹³ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024). *Ti Tree School Profile, My School*. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50120>

¹¹⁴ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024). *Willowra School Profile, My School*. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50131/vetinschools>

¹¹⁵ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024). *Stirling School Profile, My School*. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50119>

¹¹⁶ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024). *Laramba School Profile, My School*. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50096>

	7	No scores provided	297 (534)	N/A	No scores provided
	9	No scores provided	No scores provided	N/A	No scores provided
Spelling	3	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided
	5	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided	279 (486)
	7	No scores provided	296 (539)	N/A	No scores provided
	9	No scores provided	No scores provided	N/A	No scores provided
Grammar	3	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided
	5	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided
	7	No scores provided	327 (539)	N/A	No scores provided
	9	No scores provided	No scores provided	N/A	No scores provided
Numeracy	3	287 (407)	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided
	5	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided	294 (489)
	7	352 (538)	No scores provided	N/A	No scores provided
	9	No scores provided	No scores provided	N/A	No scores provided
Participation Rate		56% (95%)	50% (95%)	-	88% (95%)

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NAPLAN data may be incomplete due to student absences, exemptions, small cohort sizes, or data suppression for privacy. *No scores provided* indicates unavailable data for that specific subject and year level. *N/A* indicates that the school does not cater to those year levels.

The available scores fall below the national benchmarks, and the attendance rates in Table 14 are below 55%. Creating meaningful employment opportunities for community members within local schools in teaching assistant roles, as school engagement officers and as education support staff could strengthen the connection between the community, students and education, improving student engagement while providing valuable local employment opportunities.

While NAPLAN provides insights into school-based literacy and numeracy development, the assessments are conducted in English and should be considered within the broader linguistic context of the communities. The 2021 Census indicates that Indigenous languages are the primary languages spoken with 92% of Aboriginal residents in these communities responding that they primarily speak an Australian Indigenous language at home.¹¹⁷ 3% of respondents across all 5 communities speak English at home.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba. 105 Australian Indigenous Languages Used at Home by Proficiency in Spoken English for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Persons*. Canberra: ABS, 2021

¹¹⁸ Ibid

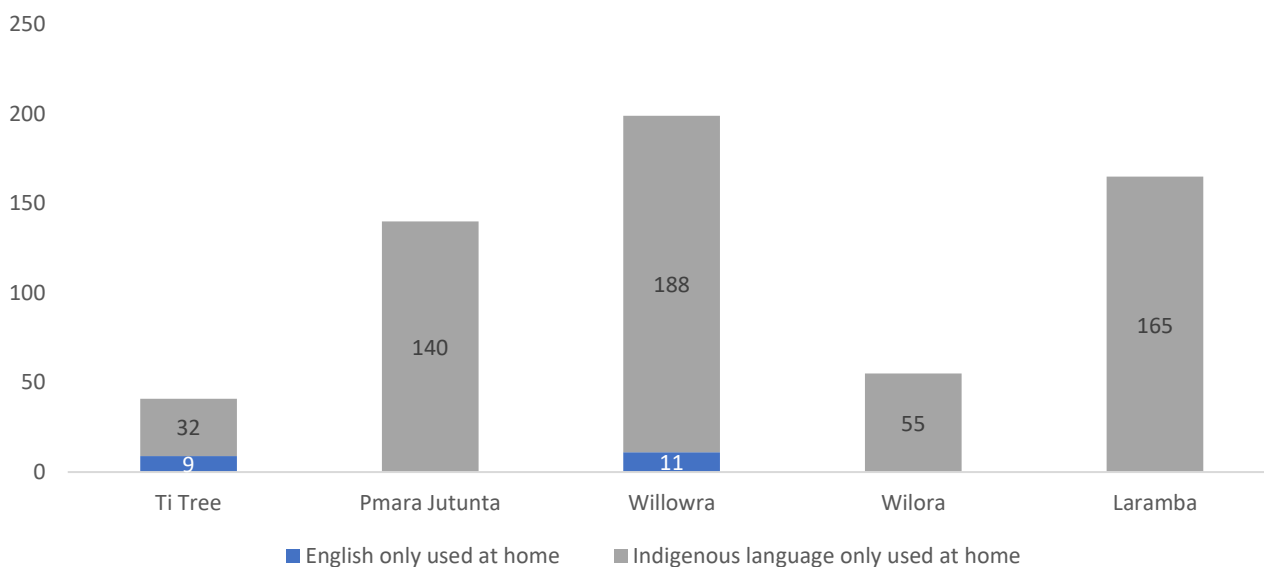


Figure 7: Language Spoken at Home

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile

The language context impacts both learning environments and employment opportunities and helps to inform workforce planning. It highlights the need for employment pathways that acknowledge most community members speak a first language other than English. Education and training programs are likely to be more effective when they incorporate or are delivered in the languages spoken within the community.

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Vocational Education and Training (VET) plays a critical role in building skills and supporting employment pathways across the Anmatjere region, which includes Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba. With comprehensive data available for the communities, we can provide a detailed overview of VET engagement and outcomes, informing workforce planning strategies tailored to local needs.

Participation Highlights:

Total VET enrolments (2022–2024): ≤ 392 students

- 2022: ≤ 116 students
- 2023: ≤ 150 students
- 2024: ≤ 126 students

Key Program Areas:

- High participation in Certificate II programs, especially in Sport and Recreation (up to 51 students across 2023–24) and Visual Arts (up to 14 students in Cert II, and 13 in Cert I across 2023-24).
- Strong engagement in Civil Construction Plant Operations, Retail Services, Project Management, and Local Government.
- Consistent uptake of short courses and licensing (e.g., NT White Card, Heavy Vehicle Driving Skills).

Apprenticeships and Traineeships:

- Up to 35 students enrolled in structured apprenticeship and traineeship pathways between 2022 and 2024, with enrolments in Local Government (Certificate III), Alcohol and Other Drugs, and Retail Management at Certificate IV levels.

Table 16: Student count for DET Funded VET Programs in Anmatjere

Program	2022	2023	2024	Total Students
Certificate II in Sport and Recreation		25	26	51
Certificate III in Sport, Aquatics and Recreation			11	11
Certificate II in Resources and Infrastructure Work Preparation			11	11
Certificate I in Automotive Vocational Preparation	9		9	18
Learner Support			8	8
Certificate II in Visual Arts		8	6	14
Certificate III in Local Government	5	7	5	17
Certificate III in Civil Construction Plant Operations	12		5	17
Certificate I in Visual Arts		8	5	13
Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety		5	5	10
Certificate IV in Retail Management	5		5	10
Certificate IV in Project Management Practice		5	5	10
Certificate II in Retail Services		5	5	10
Certificate II in Local Government		5	5	10
Certificate II in Conservation and Ecosystem Management		5	5	10
NT White Card			5	5
Certificate I in Workplace Skills			5	5
Certificate III in Local Government (Operational Works)	5	5		10
License to Drive a Heavy Combination Vehicle		5		5
Heavy Vehicle Driving Skills		5		5
Certificate IV in Waste Management		5		5
Certificate III in Learning an Australian First Nation's Language		5		5
Certificate III in Business		5		5
Certificate I in Hospitality		5		5
Certificate I in Conservation and Ecosystem Management		5		5

* All figures indicated as "5" in the above data have been modified to protect student privacy. Actual values are ≤ 5 .

Table 17: A&T count for Apprenticeships and Traineeships in Anmatjere

Program:	2022	2023	2024	Total students
Certificate III in Local Government		5	5	10
Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs	5	5		10
Certificate IV in Retail Management	5	5	5	15

* All figures indicated as "5" in the above data have been modified to protect student privacy. Actual values are ≤ 5 .

Source: Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations. (2025). Data provided to Desert Knowledge Australia for report purposes only. [Unpublished raw data].

The above data was provided to Desert Knowledge Australia by the Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations for the purposes of this report only. This information is not intended for wider distribution or public circulation without prior written permission from the Department.

Engagement in Tertiary Education

The 2021 Census data show minimal Indigenous student participation in tertiary education across all five communities, with 10 students engaged in university or vocational education - all from Ti Tree.

Table 18: Tertiary Educational Institute Attended

Educational Institution Type	Ti Tree ¹¹⁹	Pmara Jutunta ¹²⁰	Willowra ¹²¹	Wilora ¹²²	Laramba ¹²³
University or other higher education	6	0	0	0	0
Vocational education (including TAFE and private training providers)	4	0	0	0	0
Other type of educational institution	0	6	0	0	0
Type of educational institution not stated	7	7	3	0	5

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census of Population and Housing Community Profiles

Qualifications

Table 19: Highest Qualification (Non-School)

Non-School Qualification	Ti Tree ¹²⁴	Pmara Jutunta ¹²⁵	Willowra ¹²⁶	Wilora ¹²⁷	Laramba ¹²⁸
Postgraduate Degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate	0	0	0	0	0
Bachelor's degree	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced Diploma or Diploma	0	0	0	0	0
Certificate III & IV	4	0	11	4	0
Certificate I & II	0	3	0	0	0
Total	4	3	11	4	0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census of Population and Housing Community Profiles

The 2021 Census reveals few formal qualifications held by Aboriginal residents across all communities.

- 22 Aboriginal residents across all five communities hold formal post-school qualifications
- Zero Aboriginal residents hold university degrees, advanced diplomas, or diplomas
- 19 Aboriginal residents hold Certificates III & IV

¹¹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing: Ti Tree. I06, Type of Educational Institution Attending (Full-Time/Part-Time Student Status by Age) by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹²⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing: Pmara Jutunta. Type of Educational Institution Attending (Full-Time/Part-Time Student Status by Age) by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹²¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing: Willowra. Type of Educational Institution Attending (Full-Time/Part-Time Student Status by Age) by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹²² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing: Wilora. Type of Educational Institution Attending (Full-Time/Part-Time Student Status by Age) by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹²³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing: Laramba. Type of Educational Institution Attending (Full-Time/Part-Time Student Status by Age) by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹²⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing: Ti Tree. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹²⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing: Pmara Jutunta. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹²⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing: Willowra. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹²⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing: Wilora I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹²⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing: Laramba I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

- 3 Aboriginal residents hold Certificates I & II
- Laramba has zero Aboriginal residents with formal post-school qualifications

When considered alongside current job vacancies, this data highlights the challenges posed by qualification requirements for available roles. Addressing these barriers to workforce participation could involve expanding on-Country educational opportunities, fostering on-the-job training and traineeships, or reassessing qualification requirements for certain positions.

The gap between qualification requirements for available jobs and existing qualifications in the community remains an important consideration for workforce planning, suggesting the need for flexible approaches that recognise existing skills while providing pathways for formal qualifications.

2.3 Employment

Building on the analysis of the education and training landscape, this section of the report examines current employment patterns, key industries, and job vacancies. The employment landscape across Ti Tree, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba reveals both trends and opportunities to inform workforce planning strategies.

Employment data presented in this section is from the 2021 Census General Community Profile data set, which includes both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents. The 2023 Remote Towns Jobs Profiles did not include these communities, so there is limited data available regarding jobs demand and vacancies.

Pmara Jutunta lacks General Community Profile census data entirely due to classification as an Indigenous Location under the 2021 census, restricting this analysis to the remaining four communities. These limitations should be considered when interpreting findings.

Key Employment Industries

2021 Census data show employment across Ti Tree, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba is heavily concentrated in three sectors:

- Public Administration and Safety (26 people) ¹²⁹
- Education and Training (25 people) ¹³⁰ and
- Health Care and Social Assistance (16 people) ¹³¹

¹²⁹ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *Census of Population and Housing: Ti Tree, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba. G56 Industry of Employment by Occupation*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹³⁰ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *Census of Population and Housing: Ti Tree, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba. G56 Industry of Employment by Occupation*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹³¹ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *Census of Population and Housing: Ti Tree, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba. G56 Industry of Employment by Occupation*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

These sectors collectively account for 67 of the communities' total employed residents. Retail Trade provides limited employment in Ti Tree and Willowra (12 people combined)¹³², while Agriculture employs 5 people in Laramba.¹³³

Fourteen major industry sectors show zero employment across all four communities, including Construction, Manufacturing, Mining, Transport and Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services.¹³⁴ This absence limits local business activity and means residents must travel outside their communities for work opportunities in these industries, creating both challenges for local economic development and highlighting the gap between regional VET delivery in these sectors and local employment availability.

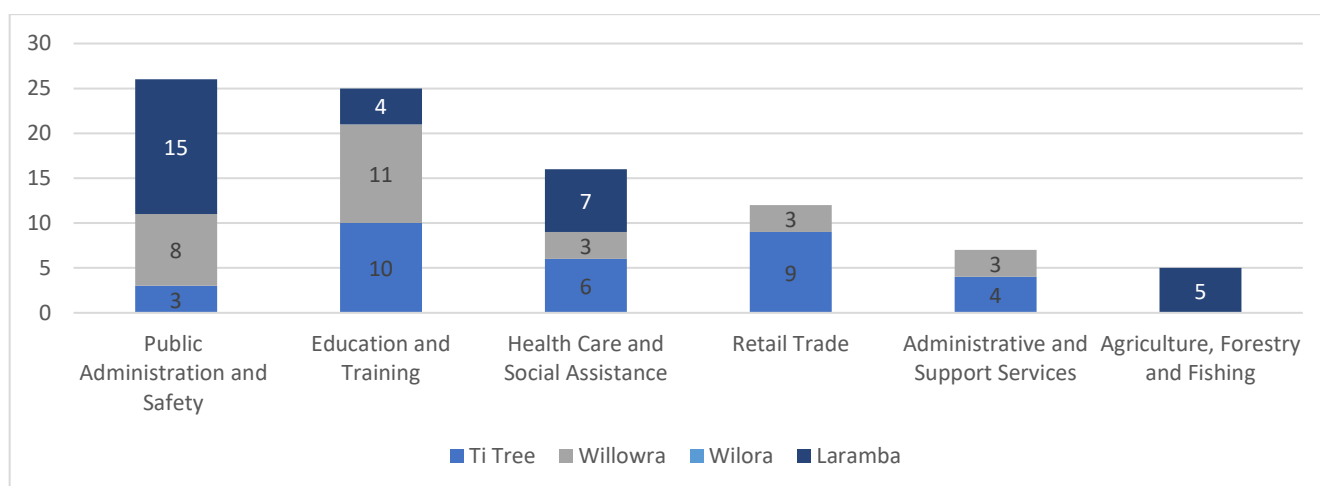


Figure 8: Employment by Industry

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census of Population and Housing Community Profiles

Occupational Distribution

The occupational profile across these communities shows a concentration in service-oriented roles:

- Community and Personal Service Workers being the largest category (35 people across all communities)¹³⁵
- Professionals (22 people)¹³⁶
- Managers (18 people)¹³⁷

2021 Census data indicate an absence of Technicians and Trades Workers across the four communities¹³⁸ - no electricians, plumbers, carpenters, mechanics or other skilled trades. This represents a significant workforce gap, particularly given these roles are essential for community infrastructure and maintenance. This absence, combined with limited local employment in construction and manufacturing industries, suggests these communities are likely heavily reliant on external contractors for essential services. The lack of trades workers

¹³² Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *Census of Population and Housing: Ti Tree, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba. G56 Industry of Employment by Occupation*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹³³ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *Census of Population and Housing: Ti Tree, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba. G56 Industry of Employment by Occupation*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹³⁴ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *Census of Population and Housing: Ti Tree, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba. G56 Industry of Employment by Occupation*. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

¹³⁵ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing for Ti Tree, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba. G60, Occupation by Age by Sex*. Canberra: ABS, 2021

¹³⁶ Ibid

¹³⁷ Ibid

¹³⁸ Ibid

has implications for VET planning, highlighting an opportunity for locally delivered trades training that, when paired with targeted employment pathways, could reduce dependence on outside services, create much-needed local jobs, and positively impact local economies.

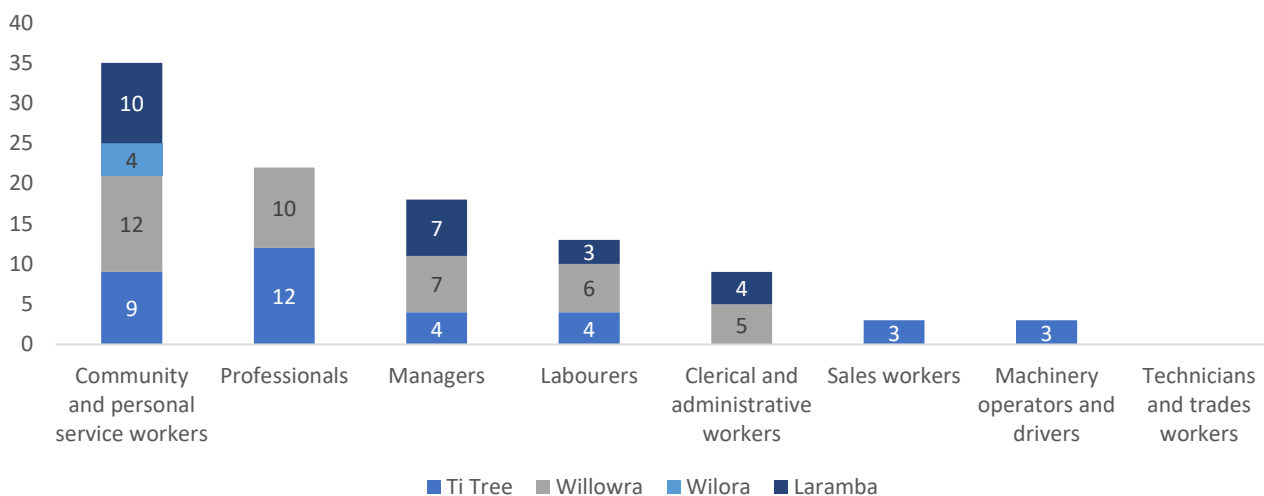




Figure 9: Employment by Occupation






Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census of Population and Housing Community Profiles

Workforce Demand

In May 2025, these communities had eight job vacancies.

Table 20: Qualifications Required and Education Pathways to 2025 Role Vacancies

Occupation	Employer	# of Roles	Qualification	Details	Education/ Training Provider	Cultural Framework
Remote Area Nurse	NT Health	1	Bachelor of Nursing	3 years, (Commonwealth supported places available)	Charles Darwin University (Darwin Campus)	Caring for Family and Community 
Junior Rangers Project Officer (Ti Tree)	Central Desert Regional Council	1	Certificate II in Conservation and Ecosystem Management On the Job Training	6 months, fee free	Charles Darwin University	Working on Country 
Team Leader, Youth and Community Safety (Ti Tree)	Central Desert Regional Council	1	Certificate II in Community Services	6 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and Charles	Caring for Family and Community 

					Darwin University	
Team Leader, Youth and Community Safety (Anmatjere)	Central Desert Regional Council	1	Certificate II in Community Services	6 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and Charles Darwin University	Caring for Family and Community 
Team Leader, Youth and Community Safety (Willowra)	Central Desert Regional Council	1	Certificate II in Community Services	6 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and Charles Darwin University	Caring for Family and Community 
Coordinator CDP Engagement (Willowra)	Central Desert Regional Council	1	Certificate II in Community Services	6 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and Charles Darwin University	Servicing the Community 
Senior Coordinator CDP Engagement (Laramba)	Central Desert Regional Council	1	Certificate II in Community Services	6 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and Charles Darwin University	Servicing the Community 
Team Leader, Youth and Community Safety (Laramba)	Central Desert Regional Council	1	Certificate II in Community Services	6 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and Charles Darwin University	Caring for Family and Community 

Source: Data Compiled from Central Desert Council Vacancies (2025) and Ethical Jobs (2025)

Current vacancies are concentrated in health and community services with 7 positions at the Central Desert Regional Council.

Casual Jobs:

- Both NTG and CDRC have several vacant casual positions which are not publicly advertised online but are advertised through local noticeboards and networks in the community.
- Given the nature of the roles (being casual) and methods of advertising this report is unable to quantify into FTE or total number of roles.
- The report notes that the casual roles may align better with the needs of remote residents given community responsibilities and limited access to essential services.

A request to the Department of Education and Training for school position vacancy data as of May 2025 revealed the following non-teaching vacancies across the four schools:

Table 21: May 2025 Education Vacancies (excluding teaching vacancies)

School	Ti Tree School	Willowra School	Stirling School	Laramba School
Location:	Ti Tree	Willowra	Wilora	Laramba
Total Vacant Positions:	1	3	1	1
Position Title:				
Literacy Officer		1		
Professional Learning Leader		1		
Maintenance Officer	1	1	1	1

Source: Department of Education and Training. (2025). Data provided to Desert Knowledge Australia for report purposes only. [Unpublished raw data].

Implications for Workforce Planning

The employment landscape across these communities presents both significant challenges and strategic opportunities for workforce planning:

- **Limited Employment Opportunities:** With fourteen vacant positions across five communities, there is a critical shortage of job opportunities. Notably, 100% of these roles are government-funded positions, highlighting a heavy reliance on public sector employment.
- **Economic Dependence:** The dominance of public service employment and absence of private sector opportunities reinforces economic dependence on government funding, highlighting the vulnerability of these communities to funding changes and the need for economic diversification.

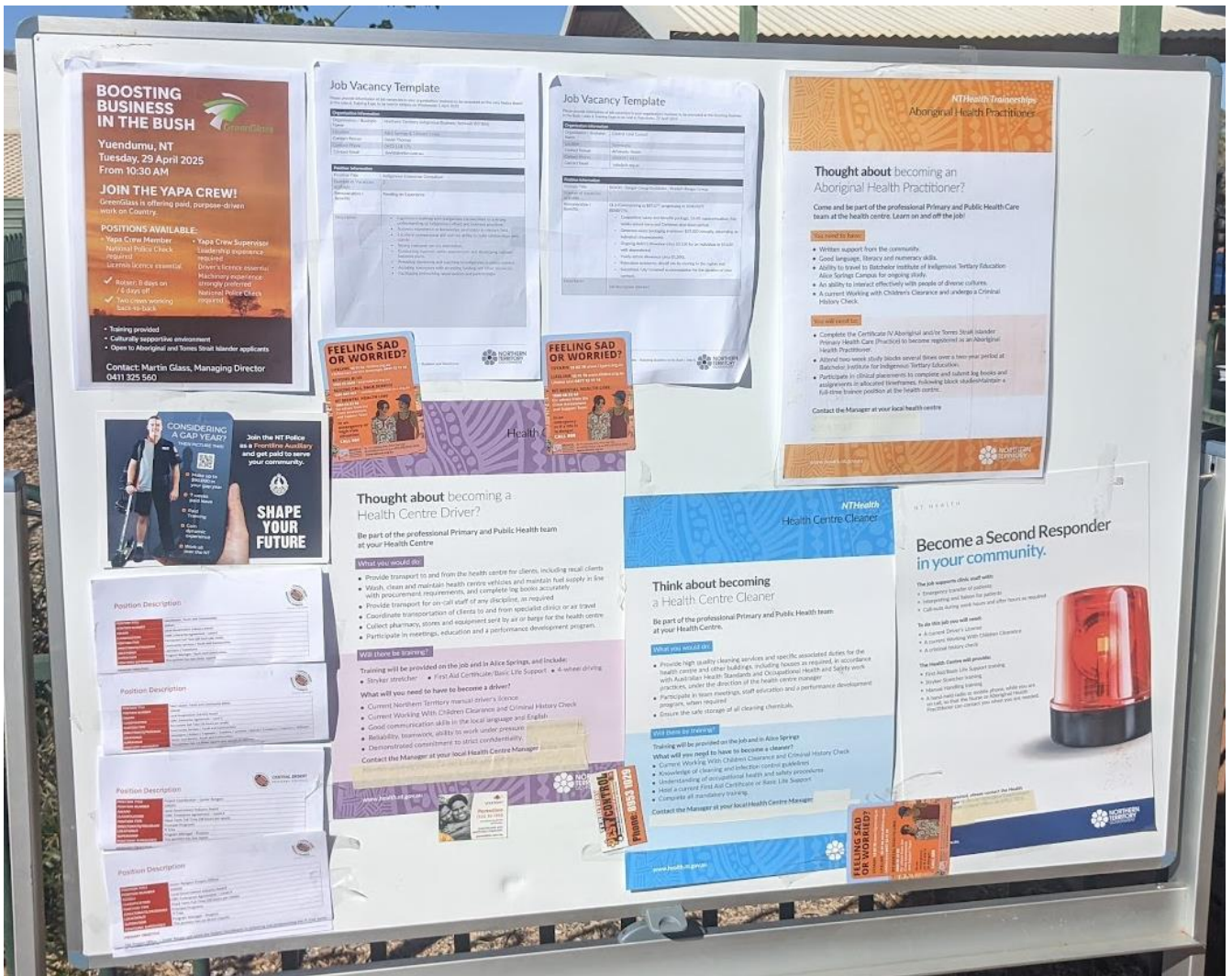


Figure 10: Jobs available during the 2025 DTBAR Local Jobs Expo

Source: Desert Knowledge Australia (2025)

Nolans Bore - Skills and Employment Assumptions

Available Skills in Direct and Related Fields

A significant number of Anmatjere community members have completed VET programs in areas relevant to mining (such as civil construction, resources and infrastructure, and heavy vehicle driving) and support services (including hospitality, business, and sport and recreation). This provides a local pool of candidates with baseline qualifications for both direct mine roles and ancillary positions like kitchen, cleaning, and recreation services.

Arafura's Commitment to the Local Community¹³⁹

Arafura Rare Earths has publicly committed to:

- An Indigenous employment target of up to 20% over the life of the project.
- Implementing a regional workforce and graduate development program, as well as a Vocational

¹³⁹ Source: NAIF – Nolans Bore Rare Earth Project – Indigenous Engagement, <https://www.naif.gov.au/our-projects/arafura-nolans-bore-rare-earths-project/>

Education and Training in Schools initiative to build local skills.

- Requiring all contractors and suppliers to submit Indigenous participation plans and to maximise opportunities for local Indigenous businesses.
- Engaging in ongoing consultation with local communities, education providers, and government to align opportunities with community needs.

Potential Available Employment

- The Nolans Bore Project anticipates a peak construction workforce of 600 and a steady-state operational workforce of about 350, with a mix of direct mining and support service roles. In theory, the number of VET-trained locals could fill a substantial portion of these positions, particularly in support services and entry-level mining roles.

Estimated Employment Outcomes

Estimating employment participation at Nolans Bore involves several key assumptions based on community skills and regional data¹⁴⁰:

1. Workforce participation in Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, and Nturiya is low (30–45%).
2. Social and economic barriers reduce actual employment outcomes.
3. Support services roles are often outsourced, with local hiring typically low unless enforced.

Despite the available skills and Arafura’s commitments, actual local employment is likely to fall short due to several factors:

- Direct mining roles: Few VET-trained locals are likely to transition into ongoing employment, due to workplace readiness challenges and the demanding nature of mining work.
- Support services: Mining companies typically outsource these roles to specialist contractors, who may not prioritise local hiring unless contractually required. As a result, local participation in support services is often a small percentage of the total support workforce, unless strong local employment clauses are enforced.

Issues: Workplace Readiness and Other Barriers

Key barriers to higher participation include:

- Low levels of educational attainment and work-readiness in the region.
- Gaps in literacy, numeracy, and soft skills required for regular, structured employment.
- Social and cultural obligations, health issues, and reliance on welfare payments (such as CDP) can limit workforce participation.
- Contractors’ preference for experienced staff, especially in support services, which can exclude less experienced local applicants.

¹⁴⁰ Data source: Arafura Resources (2016). Social Impact Assessment. Arafura Rare Earths Limited, 2016,
Data source: National Indigenous Australians Agency (2024). Youth Services Action Plan. Report prepared for NIAA, 2024,
Data source: Central Desert Regional Council (2023). Workforce Submission to Australian Parliament. Report, 2023,
Data source: Northern Territory Government (2021). BushTel Community Profile: Pmara Jutunta, 2021,
Data source: University of Queensland (2019). Ti Tree Creek Camp Study. Research report, 2019

While there is a pool of VET-trained locals and clear corporate commitments to Indigenous participation, the realities of education, social complexity, and procurement practices mean that a modest proportion of community members are likely to secure and sustain employment at Nolans Bore—substantially less than the number with formal qualifications. Sustained mentoring along with work placements to gain experience and confidence to apply skills learned in a classroom, targeted training, and strong contractual requirements for local content will be essential to maximise meaningful local employment.

2.4 Economic Context

Economic factors significantly shape workforce participation in Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba. This section examines cost of living pressures, income levels, and investment opportunities that influence employment. Understanding this economic context provides key insights for developing strategies that address barriers while leveraging available resources.

Gross Regional Product

The economic profile of the Anmatjere region which includes Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba, provides important context for understanding regional economic activity and workforce opportunities.

For the purposes of this report, the regions have been identified in line with the map below:

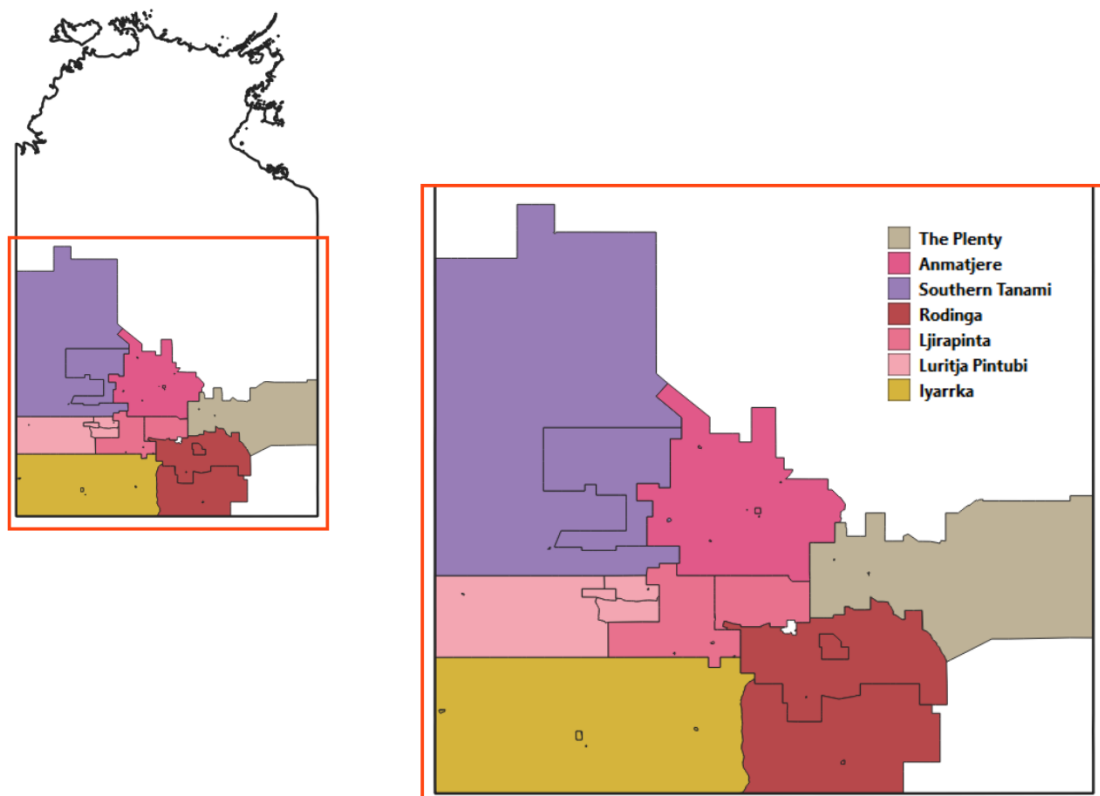


Figure 11: Map of Clusters

Data source: ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). *Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Tanami Region*. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025

Dataset disclaimer - Data Sources

1. Demographic data is sourced from ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021; and ABS Regional Population Growth.
2. Economic data is sourced from NIEIR, 2024; and .id modelling of NIEIR and ABS Census data.
3. N.B. Estimates of employment in small areas is highly challenging due to inabilities to access timely and accurate employment information in Australia. NIEIR make attempts to model annual employment estimates. These will differ from publicly available Census counts due to a number of reasons including:

- the Census is a snapshot at a point in time (August) and does not highlight if someone was employed throughout the year at another time;
- the Census contains an undercount of the population due to people being absent or not filling out the form on Census Day. See more at <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/2021-census-overcount-and-undercount/latest-release>;
- the Census estimate of 'employed' is based on people correctly filling in the form. This is not always the case as people often fill in their employment status, industry of employment, and/or place of work wrong.

These reasons lead to varying employment estimates. For example, the ABS Labour Force original estimate of employment in the Northern Territory in August 2021 is 131,000, however, the 2021 census estimate of employed residents is only 107,000.

Measuring Economic Output – Economic Modelling

The region's economic output can be measured in two complementary ways:

- **Total Place of Work (POW) GRP:** \$31.5 million¹⁴¹ - which represents all economic value produced within the geographic boundaries of the region, regardless of who performs the work.
- **Employed Resident GRP:** \$25.6 million¹⁴² - which measures the economic value generated by residents of the area regardless of where they work.
- **Total Estimated Regional Workforce:** 178 employed residents

The gap between these figures (resident GRP at 81.3% of total GRP) indicates that while the local economy is largely driven by residents rather than external workers or companies, approximately \$5.9 million in economic value is generated by non-resident workers or external operations.

The Indigenous economic pattern shows employed resident GRP exceeds place of work GRP by \$1.1 million. This indicates that Indigenous residents generate economic value that extends beyond the immediate regional boundaries, potentially through work in neighbouring areas or remote service delivery. Indigenous residents represent 43.8% of the regional workforce and generate 14.0% of the total place of work economic activity and 22.2% of the employed resident economic activity.

- **Indigenous Place of Work GRP:** \$4.58 million¹⁴³
- **Indigenous Employed Resident GRP:** \$5.68 million¹⁴⁴
- **Indigenous Resident workforce:** 78 employed residents¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). *Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Anmatjere Region*. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025.

¹⁴² Ibid

¹⁴³ ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). *Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Anmatjere Region*. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid

¹⁴⁵ Ibid

Table 22: Proportion of GRP Per Capita Generated by Indigenous People

Category	Total Workforce	Employed Resident Workforce	GRP by Place of Work (POW) (\$)	GRP by Place of Residence (\$)	GRP per POW Worker (\$)	GRP per Resident Worker (\$)
Total Regional	206	178	31,489,832	25,610,825	152,863	143,881
Indigenous	62	78	4,586,436	5,689,606	73,975	72,944

Data source: ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Tanami Region. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025

- The total regional workforce (206) exceeds the number of employed residents (178), indicating that approximately 28 workers commute into the region. This suggests that the region offers more employment opportunities than its resident population can supply, highlighting a positive employment base. However, it also points to a local labour supply gap, with some jobs being filled by non-residents. This may reflect a mismatch between available roles and the skills or availability of the local population.
- Among Indigenous people, there are more employed residents (78) than there are Indigenous workers employed within the region (62). This indicates that at least 16 Indigenous residents are employed outside their community. This highlights both the mobility of the Indigenous workforce and a reliance on external job markets to secure employment opportunities that may not be readily available locally.
- The Indigenous Place of Work (PoW) GRP per capita is \$73,975, less than half the regional average of \$152,863. This suggests that Indigenous-held jobs within the region are concentrated in lower-output sectors, such as community services, local government, and health support. These sectors, while essential, tend to generate less economic value per job compared to industries like mining, infrastructure, or private sector enterprise. The data points to a lack of access to high-value local employment opportunities for Indigenous workers
- Indigenous employed residents have a GRP per capita of \$72,944, compared to \$143,881 for the total regional employed population. Even when accounting for work undertaken outside the region, the economic output per Indigenous worker is still significantly lower than the regional average. This may reflect broader systemic barriers such as limited access to higher-skilled or better-paying roles, and a higher prevalence of part-time or casual work among Indigenous employees.
- Indigenous Employed Resident GRP (\$5.69 million) is higher than Indigenous Place of Work GRP (\$4.59 million), indicating that Indigenous residents are generating more economic value through employment outside their home communities. This highlights a reliance on external job markets to access higher-value employment. While it underscores the adaptability and potential of the Indigenous workforce, it also reflects the limited availability of high-value jobs within the region itself. Addressing this imbalance will require targeted investment in local industries, job creation, and training pathways that align with community needs and aspirations.

Workforce Distribution

Table 23: GRP Value added -Employed Regional Residents

Sector	Total Employed Residents Value Added (\$)	Indigenous Employed Residents Value Added (\$)	Indigenous Employed Residents % of Total Value Added	Total Employed Residents	Indigenous Employed Residents	Indigenous % of Total Employed Residents (in industry)
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	16559913	1057016	6%	45	3	7%
Education and Training	2271272	1177697	52%	31	16	52%
Health Care and Social Assistance	2190891	1551881	71%	36	25	69%
Public Administration and Safety	2078605	1306551	63%	43	27	63%
Retail Trade	850239	425120	50%	14	7	50%
Administrative and Support Services	746467	0	0%	7	0	0%
Accommodation and Food Services	142172	0	0%	2	0	0%

Data source: ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). *Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Tanami Region*. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025

The regional economy is primarily driven by agriculture and public service sectors:

- **Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing:** \$16.6 million (64.7% of resident GRP), 45 employees¹⁴⁶
- **Education and Training:** \$2.3 million (8.9%), 31 employees¹⁴⁷
- **Health Care and Social Assistance:** \$2.2 million (8.6%), 36 employees¹⁴⁸
- **Public Administration and Safety:** \$2.1 million (8.2%), 43 employees¹⁴⁹
- **Retail Trade:** \$0.85 million (3.3%), 14 employees¹⁵⁰

Agriculture generates nearly two-thirds of the region's economic value and employs an estimated 45 residents (25.3% of the workforce). While several industries show no regional employment, including Mining, Manufacturing, Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services, Construction, and Transport, Postal and Warehousing, this is likely to change given pipeline projects like Nolans Bore.¹⁵¹

In contrast, the Indigenous population's economic activity is primarily driven by public service sectors, with a much smaller agricultural component:

- **Health Care and Social Assistance:** \$1.55 million (27.3% of Indigenous resident GRP), 25 employees¹⁵²
- **Public Administration and Safety:** \$1.31 million (23.0%), 27 employees¹⁵³
- **Education and Training:** \$1.18 million (20.7%), 16 employees¹⁵⁴
- **Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing:** \$1.06 million (18.6%), 3 employees¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁶ Ibid

¹⁴⁷ Ibid

¹⁴⁸ Ibid

¹⁴⁹ Ibid

¹⁵⁰ Ibid

¹⁵¹ Ibid

¹⁵² Ibid

¹⁵³ Ibid

¹⁵⁴ ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). *Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Anmatjere Region*. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid

- **Retail Trade:** \$0.43 million (7.5%), 7 employees¹⁵⁶

68 of the 78 employed Indigenous residents (87.2%) are employed in education, health care, and public administration roles. Agriculture, despite generating substantial per-employee value, employs 3 Indigenous residents (3.8% of the Indigenous workforce).

Economic Outcomes

Despite the region's economic activity, this economic value does not translate to individual prosperity.

- 90% of Aboriginal residents receive government support payments as their primary income source, while 10% derive their main income from employment¹⁵⁷.
- The median individual income for Indigenous residents is \$12,807 annually - substantially below the poverty line.
- Youth disengagement is high, with 69% of young Indigenous people not participating in the workforce.

These figures highlight a disconnect between regional economic output and individual economic outcomes, particularly for Indigenous communities.

Skills Gaps and Infrastructure Challenges

Private sector development remains minimal across the region, with 9 GST-registered businesses as of June 2024,¹⁵⁸ the absence of small business activity reinforces reliance on the government as a key regional employer and driver of the regional economy. Without registered and work ready technicians, trades workers, or construction employees across all communities' contract winning organisations rely entirely on external contractors. This represents both a service delivery challenge and a missed opportunity for local skill development and employment creation that could serve the regional economy while providing career pathways for residents.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid

¹⁵⁷ ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). *Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Anmatjere Region*. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid

Cost of Living in Remote Communities

Remote communities in the Northern Territory face substantial cost of living pressures that directly impact workforce participation and economic wellbeing.

Food Security and Affordability

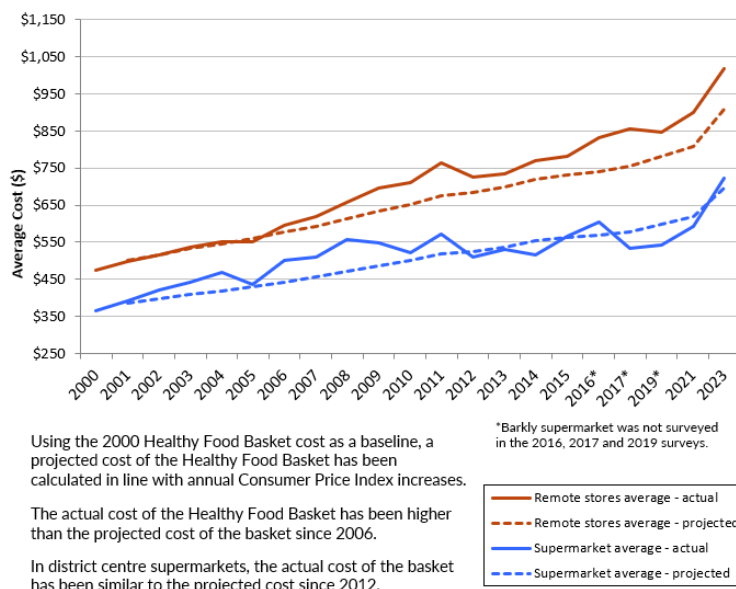


Figure 12: Market Basket Survey - Cost of a Food Basket from 2000-2023

Source: Northern Territory Government, NT Market Basket Survey 2023

The 2023 Market Basket Survey highlights the financial burden of basic nutrition in remote communities:

- The "Healthy Food Basket" (designed to feed a family of six for two weeks) costs an average of \$978 in Central Australian remote stores, 40% more expensive than the \$698 cost in Alice Springs supermarkets.¹⁵⁹
- The "Current Diet Basket" costs \$1,072 in remote stores compared to \$890 in Alice Springs.¹⁶⁰
- From 2021 to 2023, the cost of the Healthy Food Basket rose by 13% in remote stores,¹⁶¹ highlighting increasing cost pressures.

These costs create immediate financial challenges for job seekers. A single parent with dependent children receiving the maximum JobSeeker Payment of \$836.50 per fortnight¹⁶² falls \$141.50 short of affording the "Healthy Food Basket" and \$235.50 short of the "Current Diet Basket," before accounting for other essential living expenses. This financial gap illustrates how income support payments alone cannot meet basic needs and emphasises the importance of creating accessible local employment opportunities.

¹⁵⁹ NT Health (2023). *Attachment A - 2023 NT Market Basket Survey Summary Report*. Darwin. <https://data.nt.gov.au/dataset/nt-market-basket-survey-2023>

¹⁶⁰ Ibid

¹⁶¹ Ibid

¹⁶² Services Australia (2025) *Jobseeker Payment*. <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/how-much-jobseeker-payment-you-can-get?context=51411>

Transportation Costs

Transportation costs represent a significant challenge for residents of Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba, who are geographically isolated with limited access to affordable and reliable transport. The 2024 NTCOSS Transport Factsheet highlights unleaded petrol prices reaching 268.7 cents per litre, a 16.7-cent increase over the past year,¹⁶³ far exceeding the national average and placing additional financial pressure on already constrained household budgets.

The Centre Bush Bus provides important connections between remote communities and Alice Springs, however with a return trip costing up to \$310,¹⁶⁴ more than half the weekly income of 83.3% of Aboriginal residents,¹⁶⁵ this essential service remains financially inaccessible for most. For residents of Pmara Jutunta, who must travel an additional 10 km to Ti Tree to access the Centre Bush Bus, or Laramba requiring a 36 km journey to Tilmouth Well, the costs and logistical difficulties of accessing transport are even higher.

High transportation costs create barriers to accessing training, employment, and services outside the immediate community. This geographic isolation has direct implications for workforce planning, limiting mobility and access to opportunities in larger centres further emphasising the importance of developing in-Community employment and training options that minimise the need for costly travel.

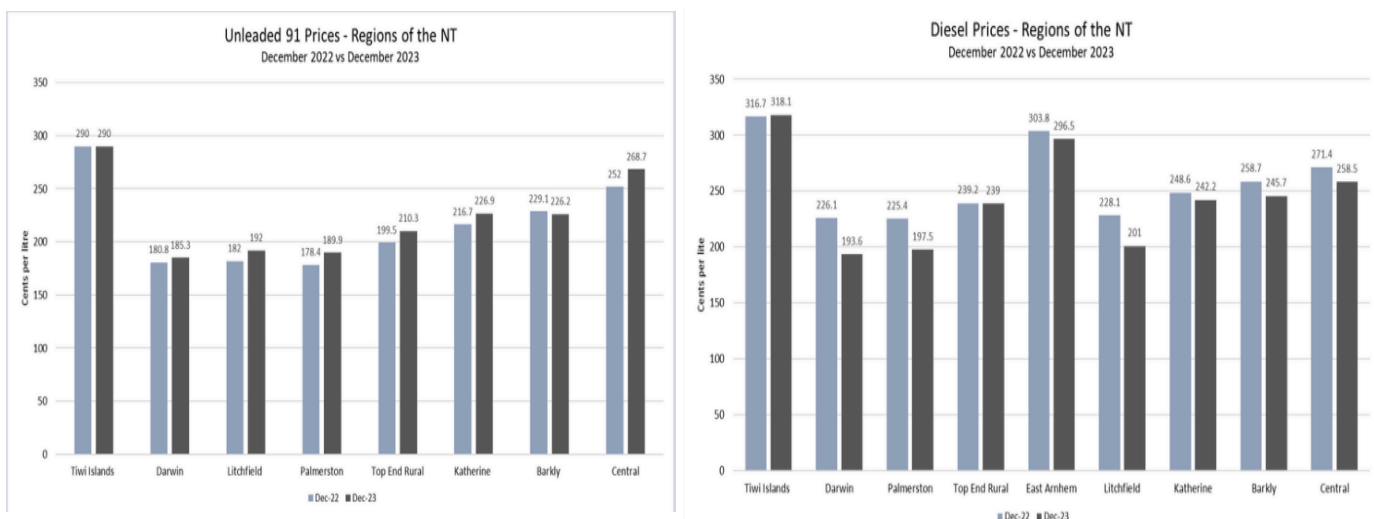


Figure 13: Unleaded 91 and Diesel Prices 2022-23 - Regions of the NT

Source: Harding, M. and Pilbrow, J (2024). Cost of Transport in the Northern Territory Fact Sheet. Darwin: NTCOSS and Just Change.

¹⁶³ Harding, M. and Pilbrow, J (2024). Cost of Transport in the Northern Territory Fact Sheet. Darwin: NTCOSS and Just Change. <https://ntccoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/2024-CoL-Transport-FINAL-030524.pdf>

¹⁶⁴ Centre Bush Bus (n.d.) Bus Timetables. www.centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/

¹⁶⁵ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba. 108 Total Personal Income (Weekly) by Sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Persons. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

Regional Household Expenditure

Expenditure patterns for the broader Central Desert Regional Council area provide important insights into financial pressures:

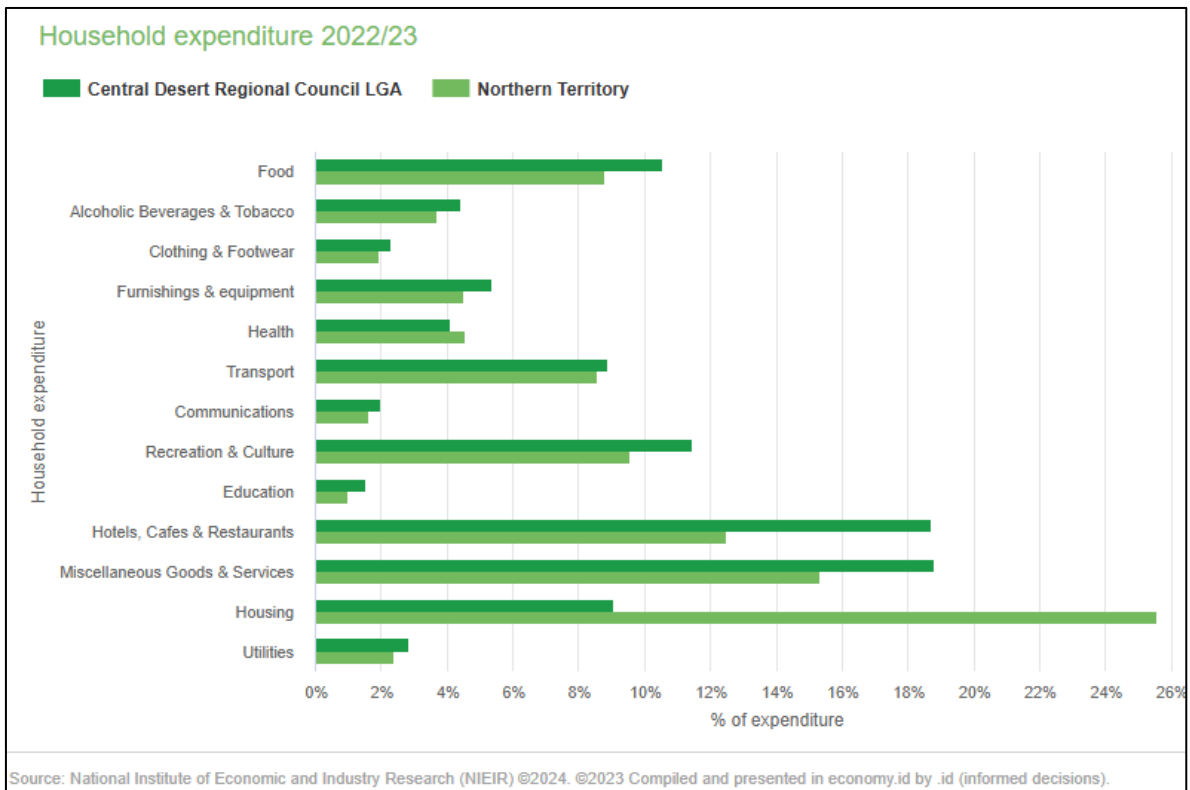


Figure 14: Household Expenditure 2022-23 Central Desert Regional Council LGA and Northern Territory

Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) 2024. Compiled and presented in economy.id by .id (informed decisions)

- Households spend a higher proportion of total expenditure across most categories compared to NT averages.¹⁶⁶
- The most notable differences in expenditure allocation are toward food, recreation and culture, hotels, cafes and restaurants, and miscellaneous goods and services.¹⁶⁷

Household Income

The 2021 Census data for 116 Indigenous households across the five communities highlights financial challenges:

- 25% (30 households) earn less than \$800 per week¹⁶⁸
- 26% (31 households) earn between \$800 and \$1,499 per week¹⁶⁹
- 6% (7 households) earn \$1,500 or more per week¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ .id (Informed Decisions) (2024). RDA Northern Territory, Household Expenditure. <https://economy.id.com.au/rda-northern-territory/household-expenditure?IndkeyNieir=23402&WebID=130>.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid

¹⁶⁸ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba*. 117 total household income (weekly) by Indigenous status of household. Canberra: ABS, 2021

¹⁶⁹ Ibid

¹⁷⁰ Ibid

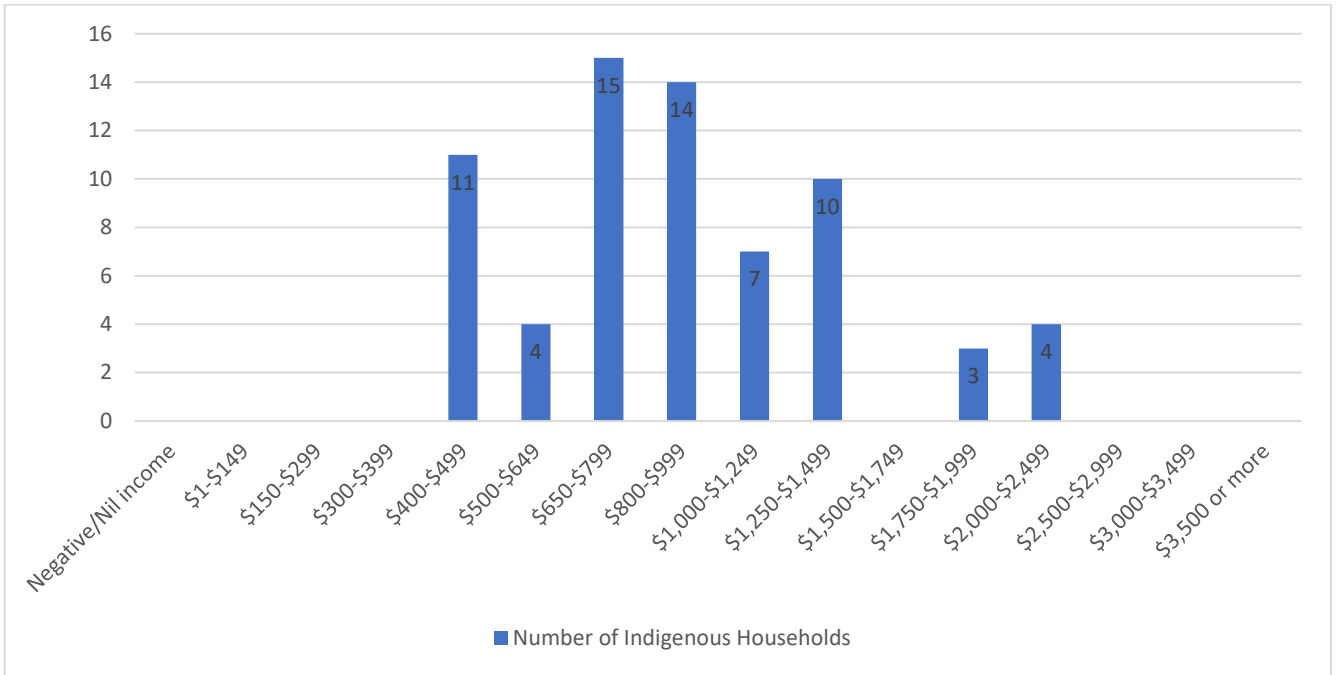


Figure 15: Weekly Reported Aboriginal Household Income

Source: data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile

In contrast, the 25 non-Indigenous households show different income patterns:

- No households earned below \$800 per week¹⁷¹
- 64% (16 households) earn \$1,500 or more per week¹⁷²

This disparity highlights an economic divide between Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents.

Household income data should be considered alongside remote living costs to understand household financial capacity. With food prices 40% higher than in Alice Springs and the fortnightly cost of a Healthy Food Basket approaching \$978, households earning below \$800 weekly face significant budgetary constraints. These financial pressures create barriers to workforce participation, as families will struggle to afford the upfront expenses often required for training programs or job-seeking activities.

The concentration of Indigenous households in lower income brackets, combined with elevated living costs and limited local employment, creates a cycle where income support provides subsistence but prevents financial stability or economic advancement. Developing local employment opportunities that offer wages above support payment levels would better enable households to meet basic needs while accessing broader economic opportunities.

¹⁷¹ Ibid

¹⁷² Ibid

Socio-Economic Disadvantage

The Yuendumu-Anmatjere SA2 region, encompassing Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba, experiences profound socio-economic disadvantage:

Table 24: SEIFA Indexes for the Yuendumu-Anmatjere SA2 region

Index	Score	Decile	Percentile
Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage	482	1	1
Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage	677	1	1
Index of Economic Resources	572	1	1
Index of Education and Occupation	865	1	1

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)*. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/socio-economic-indexes-areas-seifa-australia/latest-release>

These scores place the region in the lowest decile both nationally and within the Northern Territory, ranking it among the 10% most disadvantaged areas in Australia.¹⁷³ The entire population of 1,851 residents is affected by limited income, employment opportunities, education, and access to economic resources—factors that impact health, wellbeing, and long-term community development.

Note: The SEIFA 2021 data presented here is aggregated for the Yuendumu - Anmatjere SA2. This means that the scores reflect the combined socio-economic conditions across the region, including the communities of Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora and Laramba. While this data provides valuable insights into the overall socio-economic landscape, it should be interpreted with the understanding that variations may exist between these individual communities within the Yuendumu - Anmatjere SA2.

Investment and Opportunity: Current Funding Allocations

The funding landscape in Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba is characterised by broad regional investment with limited transparency or targeting at the individual community level. Most government funding is delivered through regional programs, making it difficult to determine the direct impact on specific communities. Seven grants with clear community-specific allocations were identified in available data.

The following sectors received the largest regional funding allocations:

- **Indigenous Employment and Business (\$101M):** Supporting initiatives such as the Central Land Council’s Ranger Program, the CDP (Region 25), and Cultural Mentorship projects.¹⁷⁴
- **Aged Care (\$17.8M):** Funding the Commonwealth Home Support Program and First Nations Aged Care Infrastructure Support.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). *Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)*. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/socio-economic-indexes-areas-seifa-australia/latest-release>

¹⁷⁴ Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.), *Projects and Grants – Pmara Jutunta*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/138?tab=projects>; BushTel (n.d.), *Projects and Grants – Ti Tree*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/18964?tab=projects>; BushTel (n.d.), *Projects and Grants - Willowra*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186?tab=projects>; BushTel (n.d.), *Projects and Grants – Wilora*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/187?tab=projects>; BushTel (n.d.), *Projects and Grants – Laramba*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/86?tab=projects>.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid

- **Child Care (\$14.1M):** Supporting the Central Desert Regional Council’s childcare services.¹⁷⁶
- **Community Safety (\$10M):** Funding the Community Safety Patrol.¹⁷⁷

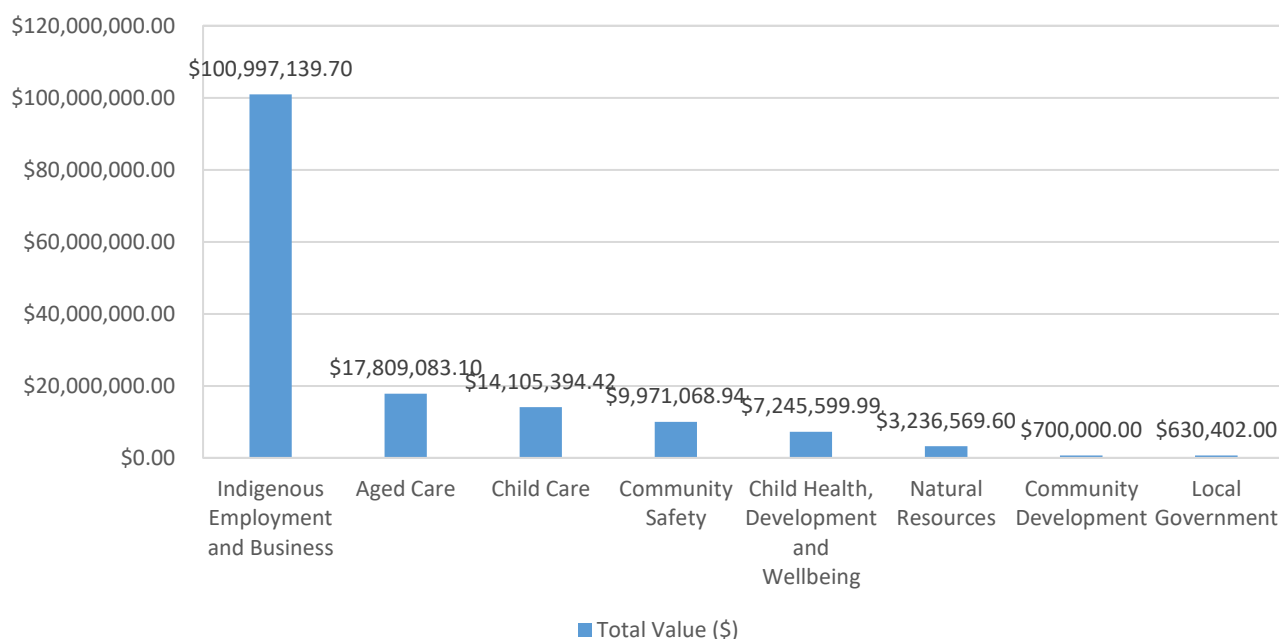


Figure 16: Regional Sector Investments (\$)

Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile

Cluster-Specific Grants

- **Education (\$7.3M):** State and federal funding along with private funding for Ti Tree School, Willowra School, Laramba School, and Stirling School.¹⁷⁸
- **The Wirliyajarrayi Store Solar Project (\$364,764.79):** This project in Willowra aims to foster Indigenous employment, support Indigenous business, and promote sustainable land use.¹⁷⁹
- **Children and Schooling (\$312,365.45):** NIAA funding for Ti Tree to improve school attendance, educational outcomes, and family support.¹⁸⁰
- **Willowra Aerodrome Upgrades (\$200,000):** Improvements to the Willowra Aerodrome for safety, allowing for medical evacuations and improving access in remote areas.¹⁸¹

While most funding is regionally pooled, there are opportunities to leverage these investments for stronger local workforce and economic outcomes:

1. Leverage existing funding for local job creation:

- Education, aged care, and childcare funding could be utilised to create community-

¹⁷⁶ Ibid

¹⁷⁷ Ibid

¹⁷⁸ Ibid

¹⁷⁹ BushTel (n.d.), *Projects and Grants - Willowra*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186?tab=projects>

¹⁸⁰ BushTel (n.d.), *Projects and Grants - Ti Tree*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/18964?tab=projects>

¹⁸¹ BushTel (n.d.), *Projects and Grants - Willowra*, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/186?tab=projects>

based support and service delivery roles, addressing both employment and service gaps.

- Setting clear local Aboriginal employment targets, such as minimum hiring requirements, trainee/apprenticeship quotas, and mandatory reporting on local employment outcomes, will better ensure that regional investments benefit local Aboriginal residents.

2. Prioritise Community-Based Service Delivery:

- By focusing on local recruitment and capacity building, funded programs could address immediate economic needs and lay the groundwork for sustainable employment growth.
- This is particularly important in a regional context where up to 90% of Aboriginal residents rely on government support as their main source of income.

To maximize the impact of government and external investment, funding strategies should move beyond broad regional allocations and prioritise community-specific initiatives that directly create local jobs and build workforce capacity. Transparent reporting, local employment targets, and a focus on community-based service delivery will better ensure that investment translates into tangible economic opportunities for Aboriginal residents of Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba.

Confirmed Projects That Have Started or Are Underway

Ti Tree:

Oval lights (\$1,090,000): Confirmed as one of the nine new community projects announced in March 2024. The project has commenced as part of the first tranche of the Community Infrastructure Package.

Nturiya:

New play system (playground): Confirmed as a new playground project in Nturiya, included in the same package.

Pmara Jutunta:

Change rooms (\$327,000): Confirmed as one of the projects underway, specifically for Pmara Jutunta. Lease for a new community store and a 'front door' office space was signed in June 2025.

Wilora:

Half basketball court (\$100,000): Confirmed as one of the projects that has started as part of the same government package.

Other Future Projects

This report also notes that several projects have been announced; however, it remains unclear whether investment has been confirmed or if any of these projects have commenced.

- Ti Tree Cultural Centre (\$1,900,000)
- Nturiya Rec Hall (\$799,000)
- Pmara Jutunta Community Store (\$1,250,000)
- Wilora Digital Connectivity (\$728,000)
- Wilora Oval and Grandstands (\$817,000)
- Wilora Farm and Processing Shed (\$2M)

- Junior Rangers (\$1.1M)
- Community WiFi Hubs (\$1.3M)

These projects may still be in the planning stage, awaiting funding, or intended for inclusion in future rounds, specifically the second and third tranches of the Community Infrastructure Package, scheduled for announcement in May 2026.

Step 3: Identifying Future Needs – Community Aspirations and Workforce Planning Opportunities

The workforce planning landscape is significantly enhanced when aligned with community aspirations and priorities. Throughout the five communities, numerous community-driven initiatives have been identified that offer dual benefits: meeting essential community needs while creating meaningful employment pathways for local residents.

Penangke Cultural Consulting - Community Consultations

Desert Knowledge Australia commissioned Penangke Cultural Consulting to engage with Ti Tree and Pmara Jutunta communities in 2024. The process included stakeholder interviews and discussions on existing work, potential employment, training needs, and barriers to participation. Key aspirations identified include:

Table 25: Key Aspirations Identified from Consultations with Ti Tree and Pmara Jutunta

Item	Training Required	Investment Required	Impact
New community store	Retail operations, Business administration & management	Investment received from the 2nd Tranche of the Central Australia Plan \$50 Million in community Infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve food accessibility and security • Reduce cost of living • Jobs and skills for locals • Attract tourism traffic from Stuart Highway • Potential for attached art gallery
CDP contracts	Housing and yard maintenance, Fencing, Outstation servicing, Night patrol		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase local employment • Improve community infrastructure • Enhance community safety
Dedicated office space	Business administration & management	Relocation and renovation of abandoned government building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide workspace for Pmara Jutunta Aboriginal Corporation and CDP
New ceremonial spaces	Cultural knowledge		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and promote cultural practices • Enhance community well-being

Item	Training Required	Investment Required	Impact
Oval facilities improvement	Not specified		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide better recreational facilities • Encourage sports and physical activities
Cemetery/sorry program	Not specified		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support cultural practices and community needs
Community farm	Agricultural skills, Equipment operation	Significant resources, equipment & infrastructure needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to supply mines • Increase food security • Create local employment opportunities
Public swimming pool	Lifeguard Training, Aquatic Technical Operations Training, Swimming Pool Maintenance, Front of House, Business administration & management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will provide a safe recreational space for youth and community members. • Keep young people engaged, potentially reducing instances of anti-social behaviour. • Jobs and skills for locals.
Purchase of the mango farm and nursery	Horticulture, Business administration & management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to affordable fresh produce will reduce cost of living and increase health outcomes for community. • Jobs and skills for locals. • Could supply neighbouring communities and businesses (e.g. mines). • Profit goes back to community.
Bush mechanics workshop	Automotive mechanics, Business administration & management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable car repairs on-Country, reducing the cost of vehicle maintenance. • Jobs and skills for locals.
Stock/station work	Agriculture, Leadership & management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to affordable fresh meat will reduce cost of living and increase health outcomes for community.

Item	Training Required	Investment Required	Impact
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs and skills for locals. • Could supply neighbouring communities and businesses (e.g. mines). • Profit goes back to community.
Cultural Competency Training Provider	Public speaking, Business administration & management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve cultural safety of community members. • Increase cultural competency of service providers operating in community. • Jobs and skills for locals.

Source: Data compiled from Penangke Cultural Consulting (2024)

Office of the Central Australian Regional Controller (OCARC) Community Meetings

In 2023, Ti Tree’s community aspirations were raised during OCARC meetings, identifying initiatives that present significant opportunities for workforce planning. These community-identified priorities span multiple sectors. The OCARC community engagement work has informed the development of six measures included within the Central Australia Plan Investment (CAPI) and the projects that have secured investment.

Ti Tree community members prioritised¹⁸²:

- Establishing a one-stop shop for licensing, Centrelink, White Cards and Ochre card services.
- Ti Tree to become a service hub (childcare, water park, essential services)
- Developing a transport network within Ti Tree
- Establishing a Ti Tree community corporation with its own CDP
- Creating pathways to employment
- Developing a community plan
- Investigating an alternative governance model
- The community store is no longer in 6 Mile, people want to spend money in their own community
- Youth programs with pathways to training and employment
- Junior Ranger Programs
- Recruiting a School Engagement Officer to pick up students who have missed the bus
- Community-run school nutrition program from school kitchen (kitchen requires upgrades)
- Employment opportunities to have sufficient leave entitlements including cultural leave

¹⁸² Data source: NIAA (2025). OCARC Actions. Unpublished data for Desert Knowledge Australia. Not for wider circulation.

- Establishing a garage/workshop to create local training and employment pathways
- Improving CDP for women and young people
- Establishing a Social Club and Resource Centre
- Dialysis treatment in Ti Tree
- Addressing overcrowding
- Lighting, water and shelter at Men’s camp
- A morgue in the community
- Football oval upgrades

School Action Plans: Education-Based Employment Opportunities

The On Country Learning Measure, a \$40 million initiative supported by both Northern Territory and Australian Governments, offers significant workforce planning potential across these communities. School action plans, developed in 2024 collaboratively with community members, cultural authorities, school staff, and students, outline several employment pathways.¹⁸³

Ti Tree School community members prioritised:¹⁸⁴

- Recruitment of local staff within the school into positions within the Dept of Education.
- Provide in-school support to engage students who feel vulnerable.
- Provide meaningful pathways and skill development towards employment.

Willowra School community members prioritised:¹⁸⁵

- Our people work in schools.
- People can get full-time Government jobs.
- Our teachers have good training, and they stay in community for longer.
- Home liaison officers to help get kids to school and support them at school.
- Assistant teachers in each classroom and preschool.
- All families are represented at the school

Laramba School community members prioritised:¹⁸⁶

- Working with strong partners to give students more skills and training opportunities in the community.

The Stirling School Action Plan was not published online.

Supported by over \$7 million in combined funding across the schools in 2023, these education-focused initiatives have the potential to both improve learning outcomes and create sustainable employment for local community members. By implementing the school priorities identified above, schools can leverage their existing funding to benefit the entire community.

¹⁸³ Northern Territory Government, Department of Education. (2024). On-Country Learning Measure: Central Australian Schools Action Plans. <https://education.nt.gov.au/statistics-research-and-strategies/on-country-learning-measure-central-australian-schools-action-plans>

¹⁸⁴ Education NT (2024) Ti Tree School Action Plan. https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1369505/Ti-Tree-school-action-plan.PDF

¹⁸⁵ Education NT (2024) Willowra School Action Plan. https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1369510/willowra-school-action-plan.PDF

¹⁸⁶ Education NT (2024) Laramba School Action Plan. https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1369495/laramba-school-action-plan.PDF

CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS
Culturally Responsive Learning

What will it look like?

School attendance

- Home liaison officers to help get kids to school and support them at school.

Meaningful learning

- Assistant teachers in each classroom and preschool
- Literacy and numeracy training for all staff

The right people

- All families represented
- Government jobs
- Training for all staff

Figure 17: Ti Tree School Action Plan

Source: Northern Territory Government. Department of Education and Training. On country Learning Measure: Central Australian Schools Action Plans

2024 TI TREE SCHOOL ACTION PLAN

How are we going to get there?

School attendance
Create a welcoming environment to engage learners. Work with other agencies to support families and students.

Wellbeing and inclusion
Focus on Whole School Wellbeing program. Support to engage students who feel vulnerable.

Meaningful learning
Implement a local curriculum map, strengthen Learning on Country and ILC programs. Use hands on and tactile approaches to support intensive literacy and numeracy programs. Provide meaningful pathways and skill development towards employment.

The right people
Continue the recruitment of local staff within the school into positions within the Dept of Education.

Education is partnership
Work with families, Central Desert Council, Meriden College, Royal Flying Doctor, BeYou, St Philips, Music Outback Foundation, AFL and Football NT to provide the best opportunities for our students.

[Signature]
Principal

[Signature]
School Body/Lead Committee

[Signature]
Cultural Authority

LARAMBA SCHOOL 2024
WORKING TOGETHER TO BE STRONG

Laramba has asked for:

- Home learning support.
- Cultural projects and local country learning.
- Community partnerships to support getting more kids to school and job training.

STRONG LEARNING

- We will make 'talking books' in English and Anmatyerr to help learning to read in 2 languages.
- We will make local stories and use local voices to keep culture strong.
- We will have iPads for home learning opportunities.

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

-We will work with strong partners to give Laramba students more skills and training opportunities in community.

STRONG COMMUNITY

- We all need to work together to help every student come to school every day.
- We will work closely with families and services to keep our community strong.

[Signature]
Principal

Tasha Stafford
School Council Chairperson

PETER STAFFORD
Cultural Authority

Figure 18: Laramba School Action Plan

Source: Northern Territory Government. Department of Education and Training. On country Learning Measure: Central Australian Schools Action Plans

How are we going to get there?

PRIORITY 1 School attendance

ACTIVITIES

- The school helps my kids get ready for learning
- The school has people to help our kids in the classroom
- The school knows what our kids need to help them to learn

PRIORITY 2 Meaningful learning

ACTIVITIES

- There are extra people in the classroom to help our kids with reading, writing and maths
- Teachers are trained to provide intensive literacy and numeracy
- There is more learning on and about our country

PRIORITY 3 The right people

ACTIVITIES

- Our people work in schools
- People can get full time Government jobs
- Our teachers have good training and they stay in community for longer

PRIORITY 4 Education is partnership

ACTIVITIES

- Community works with the school to get our kids a good education
- Everyone in community is helping our kids succeed at school

PRIORITY 5 Wellbeing and inclusion

ACTIVITIES

- School staff help us with making sure our kids are happy, healthy and ready for learning
- Teachers and school staff know about how to understand our kids and help them to learn

[Signature]
Principal

Maisie Kitson
School Body/Lead Committee

Maisie Kitson
Cultural Authority

Central Desert Regional Council Community Plans

The Central Desert Regional Council community plans for 2024/25 also identify local priorities that connect directly to workforce planning.

Anmatjere's plan highlights workforce planning opportunities for Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta and Wilora through¹⁸⁷:

Potential quick wins:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bus for young people at CDP• Power and water connection for Men's Shed• Develop an inter-community football club• Mobile Laundry
Potential long-term projects:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possible construction of a water park/pool• Explore opportunities for a cultural centre• More jobs• Employment for women in CDP• CDP to develop programs that give employment to women• Construction of a multipurpose facility, men's sheds at Wilora and Pmara Jutunta, a ½ basketball court at Wilora, oval upgrades at Pmara Jutunta, solar lighting at sorry camps, shade structures, speed humps and footpaths, power and water for Men's Shed's

Willowra's priorities include¹⁸⁸:

Potential quick wins:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fencing at cemetery• Determine location for gym• Install shade structure near Learning Centre• Increase waste services
Potential long-term projects:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop farming projects• Road improvements• Playground/sports and rec facilities to meet minimum standards• Increase public toilets• Water tank installation• Workshop for cars• Plant trees, fruit trees and flowers (market gardening)• Possible construction of a water park• Public laundry

¹⁸⁷ Central Desert Regional Council (2024) Ti Tree 24/25 Community Plan.

https://centraldesert.nt.gov.au/index.php?option=com_edocman&view=document&layout=viewpdf&nohtml=1&id=418&documenturl=2024-25_Anmatjere_Community_Plan_v2.pdf&Itemid=255

¹⁸⁸ Central Desert Regional Council (2024) Willowra 24/25 Community Plan.

https://centraldesert.nt.gov.au/index.php?option=com_edocman&view=document&layout=viewpdf&nohtml=1&id=424&documenturl=2024-25_Willowra_Community_Plan_v2.pdf&Itemid=255

Laramba's priorities include¹⁸⁹:

Potential quick wins:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase bin and skip bin services• Upgrade playgrounds and fencing• Repair solar lights in women's area• Install fences, speakers and grandstands at oval• Repair and replace street signs• Church to repair air conditioner, paint interior, construct a stage• Repair and install more solar lighting, replace globes in pole lighting• Fence behind houses on Alheramp Rd• Fence around oval park, more resources for centre park
Potential long-term projects:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase public toilets• Mechanical workshop• Market gardening and hobby farm• Possible construction of a water park• Nighttime landing upgrades to airstrip

¹⁸⁹ Central Desert Regional Council (2024) Laramba 24/25 Community Plan.
https://centraldesert.nt.gov.au/index.php?option=com_edocman&view=document&layout=viewpdf&nohtml=1&id=422&documenturl=2024-25_Laramba_Community_Plan_v2.pdf&Itemid=255

Additional Insights from Penangke Cultural Consultants:

1. Foundational Life Skills as a Foundation for Engagement

Community consultations revealed a significant opportunity to enhance foundational life skills such as literacy, numeracy, financial literacy, and health and hygiene education. Strengthening these skills would support community members to better participate in discussions about aspirations, business opportunities, and long-term planning. Supporting foundational life skills creates a strong base for more meaningful engagement, enabling individuals to shift focus from immediate survival needs to future aspirations.

2. Community Development Program (CDP) as a Pathway

The CDP program was viewed positively by community members from Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta and Ti Tree Station (Nturiya) who participated in consultations with Penangke Consultants, particularly for its positive impact for young people and its role in building foundational workplace habits, such as routine development and time management. However, there is some uncertainty about how proposed changes to CDP will impact participants and outcomes. Strengthening business development initiatives alongside CDP or RJED (Remote Jobs and Economic Development) could foster a pathway from foundational engagement to long-term job creation and economic independence.

3. Flexible Work Models Aligned with Community Needs

In consultations community members emphasised the value of flexible work arrangements that accommodate family, cultural, and community commitments. Part-time and casual roles were identified as being better suited to the local context, creating opportunities for employment while respecting the diverse responsibilities of community life. Workforce planning models could expand on this strength by prioritising roles that offer flexibility and align with community priorities.

4. Health as an Enabler for Workforce Participation

CDP providers identified poor health as a significant barrier to training and employment. Addressing health challenges could significantly enhance workforce participation. Initiatives focused on holistic well-being, including nutrition, preventative health, and community wellness programs, represent an opportunity to build the capacity of individuals to engage in meaningful employment and training opportunities.

5. Pathways from Centrelink to Employment

Community members expressed concerns about the risks of transitioning to paid employment due to fears of losing the security of Centrelink support. Educational initiatives that highlight the advantages of paid employment, such as increased financial independence and career progression, could help address these concerns. The upcoming transition from CDP to RJED provides an opportunity to engage with organisations to ensure smooth implementation and build confidence in employment pathways.

6. On-Country Learning and Training Accessibility

Training accessibility remains a challenge for communities like Pmara Jutunta, Ti Tree Station (Nturiya) and Wilora (Stirling) due to geographical isolation and limited transport options. Delivering training directly in these communities represents an opportunity to increase participation and create pathways to employment without requiring community members find ways to travel to Ti Tree. On-country learning models could be adapted to suit the unique needs of each community, fostering skills development while reducing barriers to access.

Community consultations across Ti Tree, Pmara Jutunta, Willowra, Wilora, and Laramba consistently demonstrate that aligning workforce planning with local aspirations and priorities is key to sustainable economic growth. Initiatives that combine job creation with essential service delivery, infrastructure development, and cultural leadership offer the strongest pathways to long-term community wellbeing and employment.

Summary Table of Community Aspirations

Table 26: Summary Aspirations Identified from Consultations

Domain / Initiative	Training / Skills Needed	Investment / Resources Needed	Expected Impact	Source
Community Store (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Retail ops, business admin & management	\$50M CAPI investment (2nd Tranche)	Food security, reduced cost of living, jobs, tourism, possible art gallery	Penangke Consulting
CDP contracts (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Housing/yard maintenance, fencing, outstation servicing, night patrol	Ongoing CDP program	Jobs, safer communities, improved infra	Penangke Consulting
Dedicated Office Space (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Business admin, management	Relocate/renovate gov building	Supports Aboriginal Corporation & CDP delivery	Penangke Consulting
Ceremonial & Cultural Spaces (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Cultural knowledge	Land/space planning, Maintenance & infra	Preserve cultural practices, wellbeing	Penangke Consulting + CDRC Plans
Oval & Sports Facilities (Ti Tree, Laramba, Wilora)	Not specified	Facility upgrades	Youth engagement, healthier community	Penangke Consulting + CDRC Plans
Community Farm Projects (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta, Willowra)	Agriculture, equipment ops	Infra, resources & equipment	Jobs, food production, mine supply potential	Penangke Consulting + Willowra CDRC Plan
Swimming Pool / Water Park (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta, Willowra)	Lifeguard, aquatic ops, facilities management	Construction, staffing, training	Youth engagement, anti-social behaviour prevention, jobs	Penangke Consulting + CDRC Plans (Ti Tree, Willowra, Laramba)
Mango Farm / Nursery Purchase (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Horticulture, business admin	Acquisition, setup	Fresh food, lower costs, jobs, sales to mines/others	Penangke Consulting

Bush Mechanics / Auto Workshop (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Mechanics, admin	Workshop facility	Affordable car repair, training & jobs	Penangke Consulting + CDRC Willowra + Laramba Plans
Stock / Station Work (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Agriculture, leadership & management	Land, stock	Fresh meat supply, local jobs, reinvestment	Penangke Consulting
Cultural Competency Training Provider (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Public speaking, business admin, course design	Small program investment	More culturally safe services, jobs for locals	Penangke Consulting
Service Hub / Licensing & Centrelink One-stop shop (Ti Tree)	Administration & customer service	Facility & agency partnerships	Easier access to ID/support services, local jobs	OCARC Meetings 'Ti Tree'
Transport Network (Ti Tree region)	Vehicle ops & logistics	Fleet funding	Better access to work, health, school	OCARC Meetings 'Ti Tree'
Youth / School Pathways (Ranger programs, School Engagement Officer, School Kitchen upgrade) (Ti Tree)	Ranger skills, nutrition, student support	Kitchen upgrades, ranger resources	Attendance boost, youth into training/jobs	OCARC + School Action Plans (Ti Tree)
Dialysis Facility (Ti Tree)	Health support training	Specialist equipment & infrastructure	Reduce travel burden, stronger health outcomes	OCARC Meetings 'Ti Tree'
Men's Camp / Morgue / Social Club / Resource Centre (Ti Tree)	Not specified	Shelter, lighting, facilities	Stronger cultural & social fabric for community	OCARC Meetings 'Ti Tree'
School-Based Employment (Ti Tree, Willowra, Laramba)	Assistant teaching, home liaisons, education support	\$40M On-Country Learning Initiative (\$7M schools in 2023)	Local gov jobs, skill development, retention of teachers in community	NT Dept of Education School Action Plans
Willowra Community Priorities (Willowra)	Horticulture, auto mechanics, rec leadership	Roads, workshops, gardens, water tanks, public toilets	Farming projects, car workshop training, health improvements	CDRC Willowra Plan
Laramba Community Priorities (Laramba)	Mechanics, gardening, construction	Oval upgrades, drainage, sanitation, lighting, market garden	Jobs, safe facilities, food production, cultural infrastructure	CDRC Laramba Plan

Foundational Life Skills (literacy, numeracy, health, finance) (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Life skills training	Program delivery, trainers on-country	Participation readiness, confidence, future planning	Penangke Consulting
Flexible Work Models (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Community-based workforce adaptation	Policy flexibility	Greater employment uptake, esp. women/young carers	Penangke Consulting
Health as Workforce Enabler (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Nutrition, preventive health	Health programs, wellness initiatives	Improved participation in training & jobs	Penangke Consulting
Centrelink Employment Transition (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	Job-readiness skills, financial literacy	Engagement strategies	More confidence to shift into jobs vs. welfare	Penangke Consulting
On-Country Training Delivery (Ti Tree/Pmara Jutunta)	All workforce skills listed above	Mobile or in-community training	Removes transport barriers, increases uptake	Penangke Consulting

Workforce Planning Opportunities

The analysis of community demographics, education and training, the local employment landscape, economic context and community aspirations in the region reveals several strategic opportunities for workforce planning:

1. Invest in foundational skills

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Community consultations revealed a significant opportunity to enhance foundational life skills such as literacy, numeracy, financial literacy, and health and hygiene education. Strengthening these skills would support community members to better participate in discussions about aspirations, business opportunities, and long-term planning. Supporting foundational life skills creates a strong base for more meaningful engagement, enabling individuals to shift focus from immediate survival needs to future aspirations.	1.1 Deliver targeted programs to strengthen literacy, numeracy and financial literacy as a foundation for workforce participation.

2. Align training with existing employment opportunities

Challenge	Suggested Actions
This region has very limited job opportunities. There are currently eight positions being advertised across these communities: Remote Area Nurse, Junior Rangers Officer (Ti Tree), Senior CDP Engagement Coordinator (Laramba), and CDP Engagement Coordinator (Willowra) and Team Leader, Youth and Community Safety (Anmatjere, Ti Tree and Willowra). This presents a challenge for ensuring that VET Training offerings are aligned with key employment sectors.	2.1 Establish a Community Workforce Training Priority Framework which focusses on aligning training offering with current and potential future employment opportunities. The framework should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current and emerging workforce demand.
	2.2 Expand Sector-Specific Training Pathways in alignment with current vacancies and emerging needs. For example, consultations conducted by Penangke Cultural Consultants in Ti Tree and Pmara Jutunta highlight the need for training in Business Management and Administration, Bookkeeping and Construction for the planned Community Store.

3. Implement on-Country training solutions

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Geographic isolation creates significant barriers to accessing training, prohibitive for many community	3.1 Establish a Training Hub in each community, equipped with digital learning technology,

members.	dedicated training spaces, and accommodation for visiting trainers.
	3.2 Develop a Remote Delivery Model in partnership with registered training organisations (RTOs) such as Batchelor Institute and Charles Darwin University, combining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block training periods with trainers visiting communities • Online/virtual learning with local support • Workplace-based training and assessment • Flexible delivery to accommodate cultural, family, and community commitments
	3.3 Train and employ local training support officers to provide ongoing assistance between trainer visits, addressing literacy, numeracy, and digital skill barriers.
	3.4 Create a Regional Training Calendar coordinating all planned training delivery across the three communities to maximise resources and participation.

4. Develop a paid traineeship program

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Low household incomes and high costs of living make unpaid training inaccessible for many. The absence of Aboriginal employment in trades, technicians, construction, and manufacturing industries, leaves communities dependent on external contractors for essential services.	4.1 Implement a Paid Traineeship Program in high-demand regional sectors, providing income while working toward qualifications. These may target Education Assistant Traineeships, Aboriginal Health Worker Traineeships, Aged Care Traineeships, Child Care Traineeships, Ranger Traineeships and Trades Apprenticeships (including electricians, plumbers, carpenters, and mechanics).
	4.2 Develop a "Step-Up" Certification Model that breaks qualification requirements into smaller, achievable units with associated pay increases as units are completed.
	4.3 Create Position Funding Pools for trainee roles, drawing on allocations for Indigenous Employment and Business across the

	communities.
	4.4 Establish a Training Wage Subsidy for local employers who provide paid release time for employees to attend training.

5. Create culturally responsive employment pathways

Challenge	Suggested Actions
These communities experience low Aboriginal employment rates and high CDP participation.	5.1 Develop a Cultural Workforce Framework to create culturally safe workplaces that recognise the value of cultural knowledge and leadership.
	5.2 Implement a Community Leadership Pathway specifically designed to build upon Aboriginal representation in management roles through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate IV in Leadership and Management • Cultural leadership mentoring program • Job shadowing opportunities with current managers
	5.3 Facilitate cultural competency training for all staff and service providers operating in each community.

6. Leverage existing investments for employment growth

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Funding allocations across the communities are not yet fully translated into local employment opportunities.	6.1 Collaborate with funding recipients to create local Aboriginal employment targets and pathways across key sectors, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trades, technicians, and construction • Indigenous health initiatives • Aged care programs • Education and training • Early childhood education initiatives
	6.2 Implement local employment requirements for all government-funded initiatives, with appropriate targets for local Aboriginal employment.
	6.3 Establish procurement policy requirements for all government-funded initiatives that prioritise

	employing residents from the region.
	<p>6.4 Develop a Job-Creation Strategy to diversify employment opportunities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating with local businesses, councils, and government agencies to create roles in health, education, age care, and conservation. • Exploring public works or infrastructure projects that require labour and can stimulate short- and long-term employment. • Leverage local procurement policies to ensure that upcoming projects in the communities include local employment targets.

7. Establish Front Door Office and Information Hub

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Community members face barriers accessing education, skills development, employment and business assistance services due to fragmented service delivery, language and cultural differences, technological challenges, and lack of awareness of available programs.	7.1 Establish a front-door office for education, skills development, employment, and business assistance that provides a single access point for multiple services, ensuring an integrated and efficient approach to addressing community needs.
	7.2 Develop the office as an information hub that increases awareness of available programs and enhances the reach and impact of support services.
	7.3 Prioritise local Aboriginal recruitment when staffing the office to ensure personnel can better understand individual community needs, offer more personalised and culturally appropriate support while overcoming barriers such as language, cultural differences, and technological challenges
	7.4 Create meaningful job opportunities within the community through the establishment and operation of the front-door office, with employment opportunities specifically targeted toward local Aboriginal community members.

8. Enhance governance and leadership training for community leaders

Challenge	Suggested Actions
In consultations with Pmara Jutunta Community Leaders reported wanting to develop skills to manage community-controlled initiatives effectively.	8.1 Provide Governance Training tailored to community boards, with a focus on financial management, business planning and operational leadership.
	8.2 Offer Funding Opportunities Training to enhance grant application skills, including identifying funding sources, budget preparation, and project proposal development.
	8.3 Support community projects that could benefit from additional funding, including renovation of the abandoned government building for office space, improvement of oval facilities, development of new ceremonial spaces, and establishment of a community farm.

9. Improve Information and Communication Systems

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Community members report being unaware of available services to support them in developing business ideas and applying for funding, leading to underutilisation of existing support services.	9.1 Ensure ongoing and regular presence of community services to ensure community members can access services available to them, including examples such as Births, Deaths and Marriages.
	9.2 Develop culturally appropriate communication materials and utilise social media and digital platforms to improve awareness.
	9.3 Partner with local media (Paw Media, CAAMA Radio and NITV) to enhance communication reach.
	9.4 Organise Road Shows, information sessions and workshops to provide direct access to information and support.
	9.5 Collate a list of people who are trained in various skills for upcoming contract work and create a community directory for procurements, enabling the Department of Infrastructure & Logistics and/or local contractors/employers to contact local skilled trade persons when projects arise.

These opportunities can be implemented through a phased approach with community leadership and governance. By activating these strategies with community leadership and cross-sector collaboration, the workforce planning challenges identified in the region could be addressed, creating meaningful employment pathways that contribute to community well-being and economic development.

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