

COMMUNITY WORKFORCE PLAN  
LIRAPINTA -  
NTARIA, UTJU AND WALLACE  
ROCKHOLE



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## 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 and Ti Tree (including Pmara Jutunta). In collaboration with the Department of Trade, Business, and Asian Relations (DTBAR), this initiative seeks to identify community priorities to unlock economic growth in remote Aboriginal communities in Central Australia, embracing local leadership and governance and delivery of targeted skills, training, employment and enterprise services and support.

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

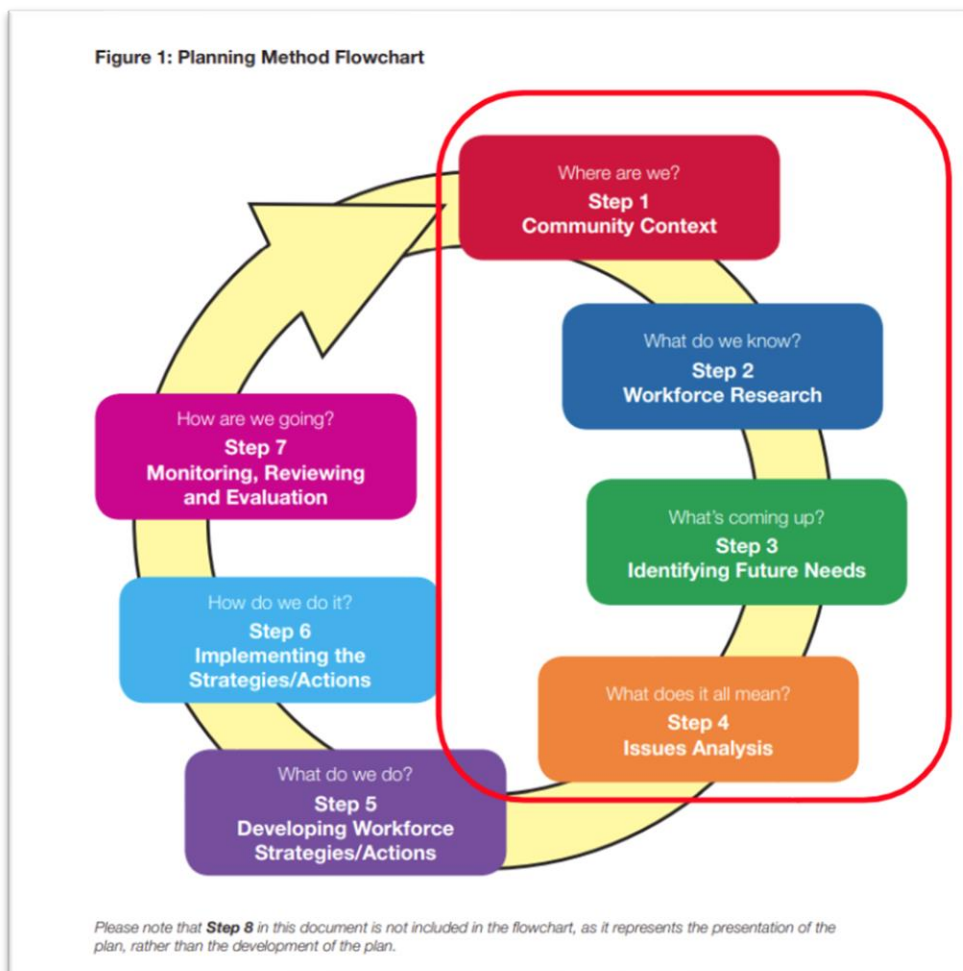
The structure of this report follows the framework developed by Informed Solutions (Informed Solutions (NT) Pty Ltd, 2014), mapping the key steps identified in the planning method flowchart outlined below.

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 organized into the following categories:

## 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

## Organisational Mapping

- a. Active employers and service providers
- b. Current business operations
- c. Employment capacity
- d. Service delivery frameworks.
- e. Organisational growth potential

## Economic Analysis

- a. Gross Regional Product data
- b. Employment statistics
- c. Major industry presence
- d. Economic drivers and barriers
- e. Market opportunities

## 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., Jobs Audit, Nous Consultation reports, OCARC, and other consultations)
3. Stakeholder consultation (with existing employers and relevant government departments)
4. Community governance and stakeholder validation of data

6

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 and 2023 Remote Towns Jobs Profile information, which may not fully reflect current demographic and employment conditions in 2025. Detailed employment data, including the vacancy rate and sector-specific vacancies, is primarily available for Ntaria, with more limited data for Utju and Wallace Rockhole, potentially obscuring important community-specific variations.

### 2. Desktop Research Constraints

While Desert Knowledge Australia commissioned Penangke Cultural Consulting to conduct community engagement in Ntaria during 2024, equivalent primary consultation was not undertaken in Utju or Wallace Rockhole. As a result, this report has not incorporated direct community consultations to validate findings for these two communities. The absence of which means current skills, training preferences, employment barriers and community capacity have not been directly assessed from community members' perspectives for these two communities. This limitation is particularly significant when considering cultural factors that may influence workforce participation and the appropriateness of proposed solutions.

### 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. Data Gaps

Several important data points are unavailable, including:

- Upcoming VET training schedules
- Comprehensive qualification levels of current job holders
- Titles / roles of job holders in industries
- Industry-specific employment data that aligns with VET training categories

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

### 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 underscore the need to view

the report as a foundation for next steps, including validating the findings and co-developing implementation strategies that are aligned with local priorities, capacities, and community input.

## Executive Summary

This report examines the workforce planning landscape across Ntaria, Utju, and Wallace Rockhole in the Northern Territory, providing a foundation for Community Workforce Plans aimed at improving economic participation for Aboriginal residents. For consistency in this report, we refer to the communities as Ntaria, Utju, and Wallace Rockhole, acknowledging that Ntaria is also known as Hermannsburg and Utju as Utju.

### Workforce Demand Key Insights

- **Low Workforce Engagement:**  
69% of Aboriginal working-age residents across the three communities are not engaged in the labour force (2021 Census data).
- **High CDP Participation:**  
In Ntaria 232 people are enrolled in the Community Development Program (CDP), indicating heavy reliance on employment support services.
- **Severe Income Disparities:**  
87% of Aboriginal residents across the communities' report earning less than \$500 per week, significantly below national Indigenous income averages.
- **Cost of Living Challenges:**  
Food prices are approximately 40% higher than in Alice Springs. High transport costs further limit access to jobs and training outside the communities.

### Education and Training Landscape

- **Low School Attendance:**  
School attendance across the three communities ranges from 44% to 62%.  
0% to 8% of students attend school 90% or more of the time across the communities.
- **Poor Educational Outcomes:**  
NAPLAN results are consistently below national averages, highlighting significant gaps in English literacy and numeracy.
- **Limited Formal Qualifications:**  
No Aboriginal residents hold a diploma or higher qualification.  
Only 40 individuals across the communities have post-school certifications, mainly Certificate I–IV levels concentrated in Ntaria.
- **Barrier to Workforce Readiness:**  
Educational challenges significantly limit pathways to employment and long-term workforce participation.

### Opportunities for Growth

- **Aspirations for Local Employment:**  
Community consultations (Part 3) reflect a desire for local job creation and sustainable employment pathways.

- School Action Plans emphasise goals of recruiting and training local Aboriginal staff to improve student outcomes and provide employment.
- Seven government grants totalling near \$10 million have been allocated for projects in Ntaria, focused on:
  - Indigenous employment and business development
  - Education and early childhood development
  - Arts and visual culture
  - Regional development and infrastructure
- Notable Initiatives include:
  - Tjuwanpa Women’s Rangers: Jobs in conservation and land management for Aboriginal women
  - Wanta Aboriginal Corporation: Early childhood development employment
  - Visual Arts Funding: Supports the Indigenous arts industry
  - Tour Guide Training & Employment: Builds capacity in cultural tourism
- Infrastructure investment in sporting precinct upgrades and capital works offer opportunities for job creation.

#### Key challenges and Opportunities

- Low Labour Force Participation and Job Opportunities
  - Align vocational training with local employer needs, especially in education, health, and community services.
  - Link major projects and funding to local job targets, prioritising Aboriginal hires and businesses.
  - Support Aboriginal-owned businesses in food services, tourism, land management, and arts.
- Barriers to Training and Education Access
  - Deliver training locally “on Country” to increase participation
  - Provide targeted support for literacy, numeracy, and digital skills.
  - Simplify enrolment and application processes for training linked to jobs or local enterprise.
- Limited Youth and School Leaver Pathways
  - Create paid traineeships combining work and skill development.
  - Develop clear school-to-work pathways including apprenticeships.
  - Invest in youth engagement programs to keep students connected to education and training.
- Cultural and Systemic Employment Barriers
  - Develop culturally safe career pathways respecting local values.
  - Increase Aboriginal staffing in schools, health, and community services.
  - Ensure training and employment providers are culturally responsive.
- Income Disparity and High Living Costs
  - Prioritise local employment in funded projects to boost incomes.

- Support local businesses addressing essential needs to reduce costs.
- Transport and Infrastructure Challenges
  - Improve local transport access to jobs, training, and services.
  - Invest in infrastructure supporting workforce participation (training centres, digital access).
  - Use planned infrastructure projects for local job creation.
- Underutilisation of Community Skills and Assets
  - Create a community skills directory linking talent to jobs.
  - Map and promote local skills and qualifications.
  - Encourage local leadership in workforce and economic development.
- Governance and Leadership Capacity Building
  - Provide tailored governance training for community boards (financial, business, leadership).
  - Offer training in funding applications and project development.
  - Support community projects like office renovations, facilities upgrades, ceremonial spaces, and community farms.
- Improved Information and Communication Systems
  - Ensure regular community service presence and access to key services (e.g., Births, Deaths, Marriages).
  - Continue data collection on workforce participation and needs.
  - Maintain ongoing community consultation to keep plans relevant.
  - Organise roadshows, workshops, and info sessions.
  - Partner with local organisations for data collection and validation.

# Introduction

## Step 1: Community Context

### Community Profiles and Demographics

Step 1 provides an overview of Ntaria (Hermannsburg), Utju (Utju) and Wallace Rockhole 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	Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole													
Languages	The languages spoken in Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole are primarily Western Arranta and Pitjantjatjara, however other language groups include Warlpiri and Arrente.													
Traditional owners	The traditional owners of Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole are primarily the Western Arranta and Pitjantjatjara peoples.													
Population	<p><b>Table 1: Total Community Populations</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Ntaria</th> <th>Utju</th> <th>Wallace Rockhole</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Population</td> <td>551<sup>2</sup></td> <td>236<sup>2</sup></td> <td>87<sup>3</sup></td> <td>874</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole.</i></p>					Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole	Total	Population	551 <sup>2</sup>	236 <sup>2</sup>	87 <sup>3</sup>	874
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Indigenous status	<p><b>Table 2: Community Aboriginal Population</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Ntaria</th> <th>Utju</th> <th>Wallace Rockhole</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Aboriginal Population</td> <td>491<sup>4</sup></td> <td>211<sup>5</sup></td> <td>82<sup>6</sup></td> <td>784</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole.</i></p>					Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole	Total	Aboriginal Population	491 <sup>4</sup>	211 <sup>5</sup>	82 <sup>6</sup>	784
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Location	<p>Ntaria</p> <p>Ntaria is in Central Australia, 125 kilometers West of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) in the traditional lands of the Western Arrernte people.<sup>7</sup></p>													

<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing, Hermannsburg I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021. Utju. Wallace Rockhole

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing, Utju. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing, Wallace Rockhole. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

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<sup>5</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing, Utju. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing, Wallace Rockhole. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

<sup>7</sup> BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Hermannsburg. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/43>

	<p><b>Utju</b></p> <p>Utju is nestled in a spectacular valley in the Western end of the MacDonnell Ranges, about 100km from Ntaria and 240 west of Alice Springs.<sup>8</sup></p> <p><b>Wallace Rockhole:</b></p> <p>Is located west of Alice Springs on the Uruna Aboriginal Land Trust and is near Henbury and Owen Springs Pastoral Properties.<sup>9</sup></p>																												
<p><b>Access</b></p>	<p>Larapinta Drive is a designated state route in the Northern Territory. It runs in a Westerly direction from Alice Springs to Ntaria and then continues onto Utju with Wallace Rockhole on the way.</p> <p><b>Table 3: Community Distance from Alice Springs</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="344 667 1437 837"> <thead> <tr> <th>Location</th> <th>Destinations</th> <th>KM</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Alice Springs</td> <td>Ntaria</td> <td>126km</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alice Springs</td> <td>Wallace Rockhole</td> <td>93km</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alice Springs</td> <td>Utju</td> <td>213km</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole.</i></p> <p>The Centre Bush Bus provides a regular transport service between Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole and Alice Springs. The service operates on Mondays and Thursdays. Residents of these communities use this service to access essential services in Alice Springs.</p> <p><b>Table 4: Bus Timetable and Costs<sup>10</sup></b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="344 1117 1437 1350"> <thead> <tr> <th>Destination</th> <th>Frequency</th> <th>One-way Fare (Adult)</th> <th>One-way Fare (Child)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ntaria</td> <td>Twice weekly (Mon &amp; Thurs)</td> <td>\$95</td> <td>\$75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Utju</td> <td>Twice weekly (Mon &amp; Thurs)</td> <td>\$115</td> <td>\$190</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wallace Rockhole</td> <td>On-demand only (Mon &amp; Thurs)</td> <td>\$95</td> <td>\$75</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Centre Bush Bus (n.g.) Bus Timetables. <a href="https://centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/">https://centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/</a></i></p>	Location	Destinations	KM	Alice Springs	Ntaria	126km	Alice Springs	Wallace Rockhole	93km	Alice Springs	Utju	213km	Destination	Frequency	One-way Fare (Adult)	One-way Fare (Child)	Ntaria	Twice weekly (Mon & Thurs)	\$95	\$75	Utju	Twice weekly (Mon & Thurs)	\$115	\$190	Wallace Rockhole	On-demand only (Mon & Thurs)	\$95	\$75
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## Infrastructure and Services

<p><b>Internet Access</b></p>	<p><b>Table 5: Community Internet Access</b></p>			
	<p>Community</p>	<p>Telstra Mobile Coverage</p>	<p>Broadband Access</p>	<p>Wi-Fi Hotspot availability</p>
	<p>Ntaria</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Wi-Fi – in the vicinity of the Rec Hall. Available at 10am</p>
	<p>Utju</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Wi-Fi – in the vicinity of the Rec Hall. Available at 10am</p>
	<p>Wallace Rockhole</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Wi-Fi is available in the vicinity of the council office</p>
	<p><i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. <a href="http://www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile">www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</a></i></p>			

<sup>8</sup> BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Utju. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/20>

<sup>9</sup> BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Wallace Rockhole. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/174>

<sup>10</sup> Centre Bush Bus (n.d.) Bus Timetables. <https://centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/>

Freight Services	Freight services to the communities of Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole are primarily provided by three key operators, Stanes Transport, Central Desert Transport and Centre Bush Bus. <sup>111213</sup>																																																																										
Local Businesses	<p><b>Table 6: Local Community Businesses</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="379 436 443 477">No</th> <th data-bbox="443 436 790 477">Ntaria</th> <th data-bbox="790 436 1106 477">Utju</th> <th data-bbox="1106 436 1428 477">Wallace Rockhole</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Central Land Council</td> <td>Utju Community Store</td> <td>MacDonnell Regional Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Finke River Mission Supermarket and Take-Away</td> <td>Utju Health Centre</td> <td>Wallace Rockhole Health Centre</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Hermannsburg Health Centre</td> <td>Areyonga School</td> <td>Wallace Rockhole School</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Hermannsburg Historical Precinct</td> <td>Finke River Mission</td> <td>Next Generation Workforce Pty Ltd</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>Hermannsburg Police Station</td> <td>MacDonnell Regional Council</td> <td>Porter, Kenneth Raymond</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>Hermannsburg Potters</td> <td>Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre Aboriginal Corporation</td> <td>Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>Hermannsburg School</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>Kata Anga Tea Rooms</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td>MacDonnell Regional Council</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>National Indigenous Australians Agency</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>Ntaria Supermarket</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td> <td>Ntaria Women's Safe House</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td> <td>Purple House Dialysis Unit</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>14</td> <td>Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre Aboriginal Corporation</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>100% Finke Cultural Tours</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>16</td> <td>Ntaria Supermarket &amp; Fuel</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td> <td>Ntaria Campground</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. <a href="http://www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile">www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</a></i></p>			No	Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole	1	Central Land Council	Utju Community Store	MacDonnell Regional Council	2	Finke River Mission Supermarket and Take-Away	Utju Health Centre	Wallace Rockhole Health Centre	3	Hermannsburg Health Centre	Areyonga School	Wallace Rockhole School	4	Hermannsburg Historical Precinct	Finke River Mission	Next Generation Workforce Pty Ltd	5	Hermannsburg Police Station	MacDonnell Regional Council	Porter, Kenneth Raymond	6	Hermannsburg Potters	Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre Aboriginal Corporation	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation	7	Hermannsburg School			8	Kata Anga Tea Rooms			9	MacDonnell Regional Council			10	National Indigenous Australians Agency			11	Ntaria Supermarket			12	Ntaria Women's Safe House			13	Purple House Dialysis Unit			14	Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre Aboriginal Corporation			15	100% Finke Cultural Tours			16	Ntaria Supermarket & Fuel			17	Ntaria Campground		
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12	Ntaria Women's Safe House																																																																										
13	Purple House Dialysis Unit																																																																										
14	Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre Aboriginal Corporation																																																																										
15	100% Finke Cultural Tours																																																																										
16	Ntaria Supermarket & Fuel																																																																										
17	Ntaria Campground																																																																										

<sup>11</sup> Centre Bush Bus (n.d.) Bus Timetables. [www.centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/](http://www.centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/)

<sup>12</sup> Stanes Transport (n.d.) Delivery Areas. [www.stanestransport.com.au/delivery-area](http://www.stanestransport.com.au/delivery-area)

<sup>13</sup> Central Desert Transport (n.d.) Transport and Freight Services in Alice Springs. <https://www.cdtnt.com.au/>

Regional Businesses/ Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education</li> <li>• Central Desert Regional Council</li> <li>• Central Land Council</li> <li>• Central Petroleum</li> <li>• Department of Children and Families</li> <li>• Department of Education and Training</li> <li>• Department of Health (Central Australia Health Service)</li> <li>• MacDonnell Regional Council</li> <li>• National Indigenous Australians Agency</li> <li>• Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services</li> <li>• Services Australia</li> </ul>												
Health Services	<p>Central Australian Aboriginal Congress works in partnership with Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole community to deliver primary health care to residents.</p> <p><b>Table 7: Community Health Services</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>No</th> <th>Ntaria</th> <th>Utju</th> <th>Wallace Rockhole</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Purple House Dialysis Unit</td> <td>Utju Health Centre</td> <td>Wallace Rockhole Health Centre</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Hermannsburg Health Centre</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. <a href="http://www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile">www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</a></i></p>	No	Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole	1	Purple House Dialysis Unit	Utju Health Centre	Wallace Rockhole Health Centre	2	Hermannsburg Health Centre		
No	Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole										
1	Purple House Dialysis Unit	Utju Health Centre	Wallace Rockhole Health Centre										
2	Hermannsburg Health Centre												
Education and Training	<p><b>Table 8: Community Education and Training Facilities</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>No</th> <th>Ntaria</th> <th>Utju</th> <th>Wallace Rockhole</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Hermannsburg School</td> <td>Areyonga School</td> <td>Wallace Rockhole School</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. <a href="http://www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile">www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</a></i></p>	No	Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole	1	Hermannsburg School	Areyonga School	Wallace Rockhole School				
No	Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole										
1	Hermannsburg School	Areyonga School	Wallace Rockhole School										
Children's Services	<p><b>Table 9: Community Children's Services</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>No</th> <th>Ntaria</th> <th>Utju</th> <th>Wallace Rockhole</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Ntaria Preschool<sup>14</sup></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. <a href="http://www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile">www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</a></i></p>	No	Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole	1	Ntaria Preschool <sup>14</sup>						
No	Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole										
1	Ntaria Preschool <sup>14</sup>												

<sup>14</sup> The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (n.d.) Ntaria Preschool. <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/national-registers/services/ntaria-preschool>

Community Services	<b>Table 10: Community Services</b>			
	No	Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole
	1	Central Land Council	MacDonnell Regional Council	MacDonnell Regional Council
	2	MacDonnell Regional Council	Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre Aboriginal Corporation	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation
	3	Ntaria Women's Safe House		
4	Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre Aboriginal Corporation			
Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. <a href="http://www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile">www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</a>				
Aboriginal Organisations	<b>Table 11: Aboriginal Organisations' Operating in Communities</b>			
	No	Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole
	1	Hermannsburg Health Centre, Western Aranda Health Aboriginal Corporation	Utju Community Store Aboriginal Corporation	MacDonnell Regional Council
	2	Hermannsburg Potters Aboriginal Corporation	Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre Aboriginal Corporation	Wallace Rockhole Health Centre
	3	Purple House Dialysis Unit, Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation		Wallace Rockhole School
	4	Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre Aboriginal Corporation		Next Generation Workforce Pty Ltd
	5			Porter, Kenneth Raymond
6			Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation	
Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. <a href="http://www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile">www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</a>				
Government Agencies	<b>Local Government</b> MacDonnell Regional Council  <b>NT Government</b> Department of Health (Central Australia Health Service)			

	<p>Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services Department of Education and Training</p> <p><a href="#">Australian Government</a> National Indigenous Australians Agency Services Australia</p>
<b>Regional Council</b>	<p>MacDonnell Regional Council delivers essential services, including roads, parks, rubbish collection, and airstrip maintenance. It provides Commonwealth-funded programs like childcare, youth development, home care, and night patrol, alongside managing utilities for Power Water Corporation, postal delivery for Australia Post, and Centrelink agency services. In Ntaria, Utju, and Wallace Rockhole, the Council maintains public spaces, sports facilities, and critical infrastructure. Utju also offers a swimming pool and animal control services.</p>
<b>Visitor Accommodation</b>	<p>Ntaria Store offers limited commercial accommodation, while Wallace Rockhole has no commercial accommodation available. MacDonnell Regional Council provides visitor accommodation in Utju.<sup>15</sup></p>
<b>Power/Water</b>	<p>Electricity in Ntaria and Wallace Rockhole is supplied at the Northern Territory standard tariff, with standard connection charges. Ntaria and Wallace Rockhole are connected to the Alice Springs electricity grid, while electricity in Utju is also supplied at the standard tariff. Ntaria and Utju rely on limited groundwater sources of adequate quality, disinfected with sodium hypochlorite and monitored monthly for microbes, while Wallace Rockhole has a plentiful groundwater supply treated similarly. Ntaria and Utju have fully reticulated sewerage systems, whereas Wallace Rockhole uses private septic systems for houses and buildings.<sup>16</sup></p>
<b>Community Events</b>	<p>Ntaria plays in the Central Australian Football League (CAFL), with the 2025 season commencing in April<sup>17</sup></p>

<sup>15</sup> Data Compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Ntaria, Wallace Rockhole and Utju. [www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/](http://www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/)

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

<sup>17</sup> Play AFL (n.d.) TIO CAFL. <https://play.afl/northern-territory/competitions/tio-cafl>

## Step 2: Workforce Research

Step 2 presents workforce data for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole 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, including the number of individuals in the labour force including the workforce participation rate and those classified as not in the labour force.

### 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.<sup>18,19</sup>

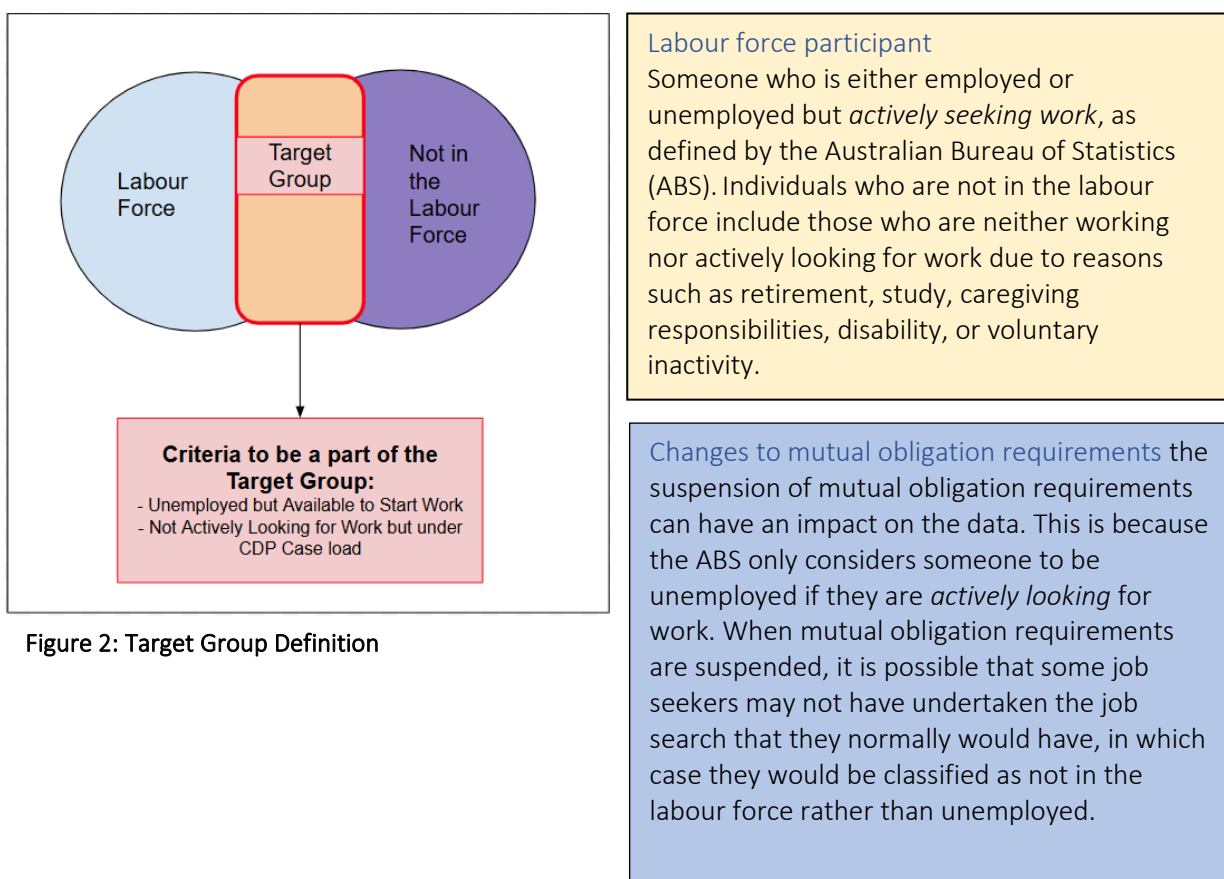


Figure 2: Target Group Definition

<sup>18</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Explained (2023). <https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/home/labour+force+explained>

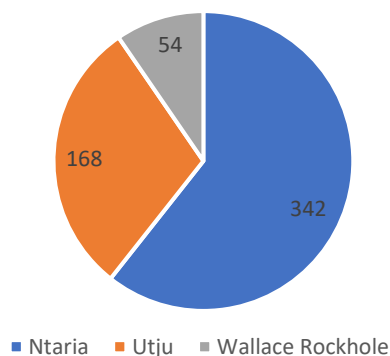
<sup>19</sup> Jobs and Skills Australia (2024). Small Area Labour Markets September Quarter 2024. [https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-12/small\\_area\\_labour\\_markets\\_-\\_september\\_quarter\\_2024.pdf](https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-12/small_area_labour_markets_-_september_quarter_2024.pdf)

## 2.1 Workforce Demographics

### Working Age Population

Across Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole the working age population (15+) consists of 644 people, with 564 individuals (87.5%) identifying Aboriginal. The distribution varies by community:

- **Ntaria:** 342 Aboriginal working-age residents<sup>20</sup>
- **Utju:** 168 Aboriginal working-age residents<sup>21</sup>
- **Wallace Rockhole:** 54 Aboriginal working-age residents<sup>22</sup>



---

*This report aims to address the barriers, successes and complexities faced by the 564 working aged Aboriginal residents of the Ljirapinta region with residential addresses in Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole.*

---

**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

28.5% of Aboriginal working-age residents responded that they were participating in the labour force in the 2021 census, while 69.1% responded that they were not engaged in the labour force. The community labour force breakdown is as follows:

- **Ntaria:** 88 in labour force; 248 not participating<sup>23</sup>
- **Utju:** 51 in labour force; 109 not participating<sup>24</sup>
- **Wallace Rockhole:** 22 in labour force; 33 not participating<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), Census of Population and Housing, Hermannsburg. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

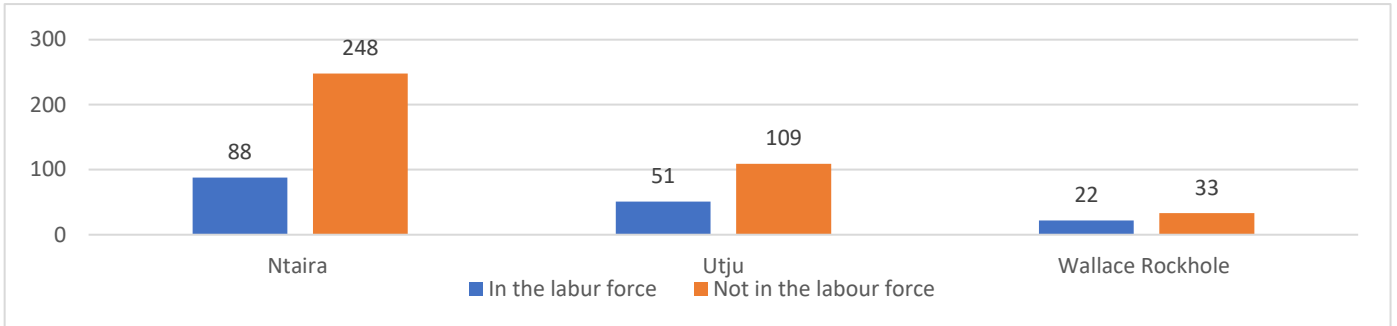
<sup>21</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), Census of Population and Housing, Utju. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

<sup>22</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), Census of Population and Housing, Wallace Rockhole. I19 Selected Labour Force, Education and Migration Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

<sup>23</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), Census of Population and Housing, Hermannsburg. I21 Labour force status by sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

<sup>24</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), Census of Population and Housing, Utju. I21 Labour force status by sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), Census of Population and Housing, Wallace Rockhole. I21 Labour force status by sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

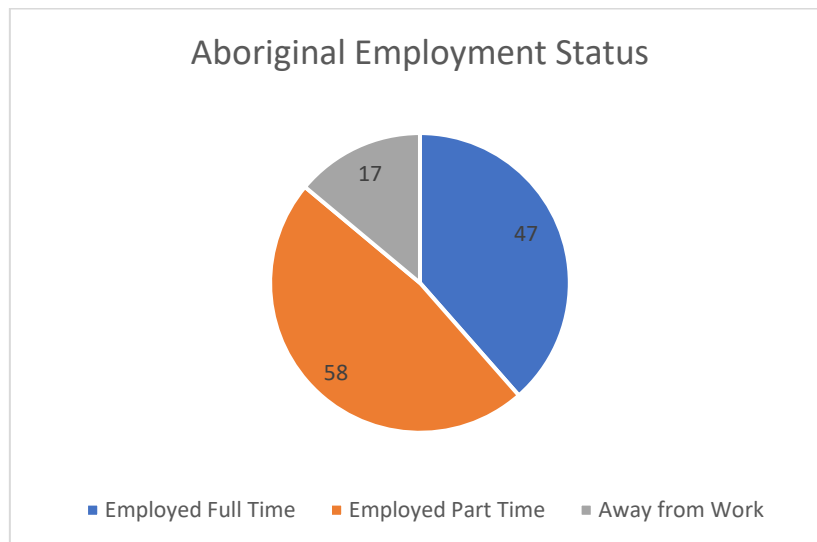


**Figure 4: Aboriginal Labour Force Numbers**

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

## Employment Status

According to the 2021 Census, 105 Aboriginal residents were employed across the three communities.<sup>26</sup> Of these 47 individuals were employed full-time, 58 part-time, and 17 reported being away from work at the time of the census.



**Figure 5: Aboriginal Employment Status**

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

## Community Development Program (CDP) Participants

The CDP represents a significant aspect of workforce engagement in these communities; detailed CDP data is available for Ntaria through the 2023 Remote Towns Jobs Profile.

- There were 232 CDP participants in Ntaria in 2023<sup>27</sup>
- 45% of CDP participants were aged 25 – 44 years old.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), Census of Population and Housing, for Hermannsburg, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. I21 Labour force status by sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

<sup>27</sup> Department of Trade, Business and Innovation, Northern Territory Government (2025). 2023 Remote Towns Jobs Profiles, Ntaria. Northern Territory Government, Darwin. Page 57.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

- CDP Employment outcomes show 26 participants secured work for at least 13 weeks, but less than 20 participants secured work for at least 26 weeks.<sup>29</sup>

The broader regional context reveals a decrease in CDP participants in the West Alice Springs Region, dropping from 492 in July 2023 to 460 by June 2024.<sup>30</sup>

**Table 12: CDP Regional Date Report 2003-2024**

CDP Region number and name	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	May 2024	Jun 2024
14-Derby/Gibb River Region WA	1,037	1,028	995	978	972	962	947	942	965	969	933	954
15-East Kimberley Region WA	1,102	1,095	1,094	1,090	1,104	1,106	1,141	1,154	1,150	1,158	1,156	1,216
16-Eyre Region SA	463	465	450	446	454	454	447	455	462	462	467	474
17-Far West Region SA	603	597	596	602	611	616	618	644	640	633	650	666
18-Flinders and Far North Region SA	797	788	767	758	755	757	752	769	776	786	785	796
19-Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands SA	906	913	912	882	872	875	857	855	838	842	839	873
20-South East Alice Region NT	469	473	471	466	458	446	444	447	457	457	428	431
21-South West Alice Region NT	280	279	284	278	281	295	286	269	257	272	285	267
22-West Alice Region NT	492	484	477	466	462	456	462	465	449	455	455	460
23-Alice Springs District NT	849	849	814	829	858	873	855	900	937	965	991	996
24-North East Alice Region NT	530	551	570	594	599	590	589	607	611	594	580	586
25-North West Alice Region NT	703	708	713	723	739	727	737	761	772	781	810	826

Source Data Compiled from the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) CDP Regional Data 2023-24

More recent 2025 community-specific CDP figures have been provided by the National Indigenous Australian Agency (NIAA) for the communities of Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. The data contains additional information about participants placed in employment as well as participants achieving outcomes and provides the following insights:

**Table 13: 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
Ljirapinta	449	412	418	422	425	418	396

\*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).

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

<sup>29</sup> Department of Trade, Business and Innovation, Northern Territory Government (2025). 2023 Remote Towns Jobs Profiles, Ntaria (Ntaria). Northern Territory Government, Darwin.

<sup>30</sup> NIAA (2024). Community Development Program Regional Data Report 2023-2024. [www.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2024-12/Community-Development-Program-Regional-Data-Report-2023-2024.pdf](http://www.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2024-12/Community-Development-Program-Regional-Data-Report-2023-2024.pdf)

Table 14: 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
Ljirapinta	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<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 15: 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
Ljirapinta	<20	22	0	<20	<20	<20	<20

Data Source for Tables 14 and 15: National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) Community Development Program (CDP) data request, prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia on behalf of DTBAR, NTG, June 2025

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.'.

The Ljirapinta Community Cluster maintains approximately 390-450 participants per quarter across the reporting period from July 2023 to March 2025. Employment placement data shows <20 placements across the period. Data suppression occurs frequently across quarters, indicating placement numbers below 20 in most reporting periods.

A note on CDP participation vs. persons of employable age, the total number of CDP participants in a region maybe 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 MacDonnell Regional Council LGA increased from 1,143 (27.6% of population aged 15-64) in March 2020 to 1,523 (36.8%) in December 2024.<sup>31</sup> These trends should be

<sup>31</sup> 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>

interpreted with caution, as the data are drawn from different programs and regional boundaries, which complicates direct comparison.

Table 16: JobSeeker and Youth Allowance Recipients in the Northern Territory

**JobSeeker** export  reset 

Current month	April 2025		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
<b>Northern Territory</b>	23,955	14.7	19,925	12.2	+4,030
Alice Springs	2,115	11.7	2,378	13.2	-263
Barkly	1,452	33.7	1,162	27.0	+290
Belyuen	23	21.7	18	17.0	+5
<b>Central Desert</b>	1,227	51.0	908	37.7	+319
Coomalie	145	18.6	113	14.5	+32
Darwin	3,387	6.0	3,159	5.6	+228
Darwin Waterfront Precinct	15	5.8	14	5.4	+1
East Arnhem	3,101	48.5	2,040	31.9	+1,061
Katherine	1,065	16.1	1,082	16.3	-17
Litchfield	850	5.7	674	4.5	+176
<b>MacDonnell</b>	1,502	36.3	1,143	27.6	+359
Palmerston	1,795	7.1	1,719	6.8	+76
Roper Gulf	2,010	43.8	1,420	30.9	+590
Tiwi Islands	800	46.8	599	35.0	+201
Unincorporated NT	690	14.3	678	14.1	+12
Victoria Daly	731	38.4	494	26.0	+237
Wagait	47	18.7	37	14.7	+10
West Arnhem	1,933	42.7	1,553	34.3	+380
West Daly	1,070	52.2	735	35.8	+335
Greater Darwin	6,095	3.7	5,622	3.5	+473

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

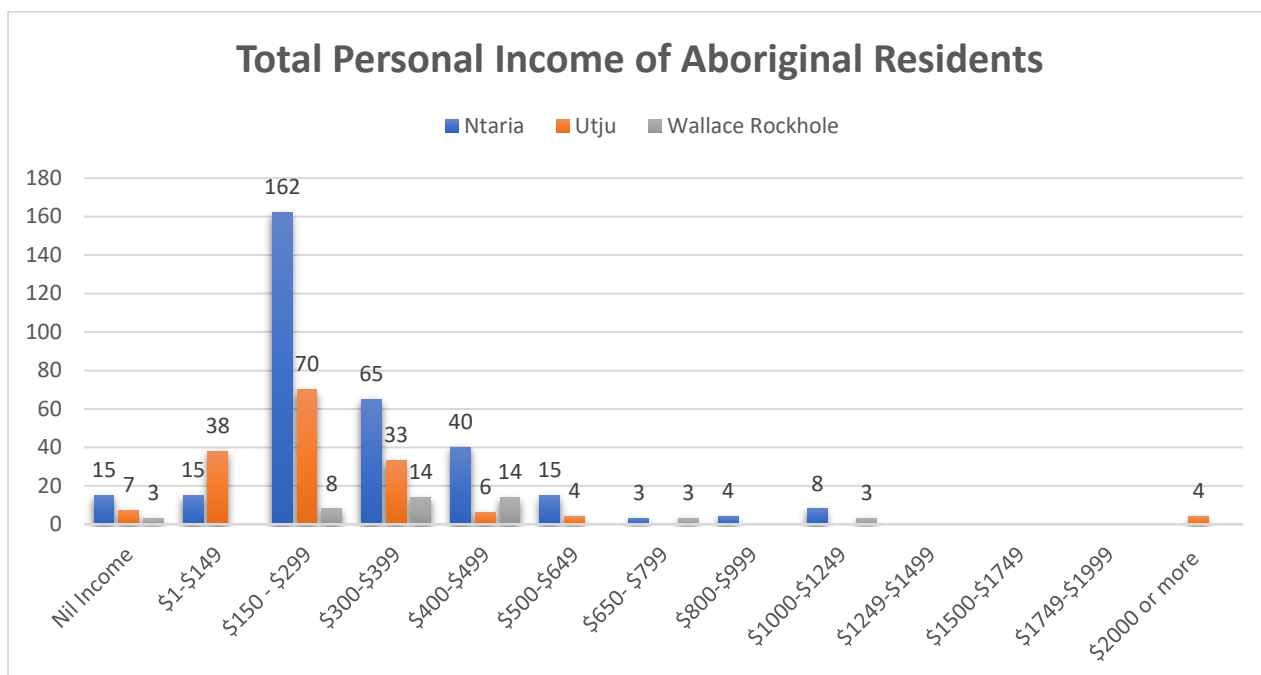
Source Data from the Department of Social Services (DSS) Regional Development Australia (RDA) NT JobSeeker and Youth Allowance Recipients compiled by .id Informed decisions

## Individual Incomes

2021 Census data on individual incomes for Aboriginal residents of Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole reveals:

- 87% of Aboriginal residents (490 people) report earning less than \$500 per week<sup>32</sup>
- The most common income range is \$150 - \$299 per week, reported by 42.6% of Aboriginal residents (240).<sup>33</sup>
- 13.8% of Aboriginal residents (78 individuals) report earning less than \$150 per week.<sup>34</sup>
- 4.4% of Aboriginal residents (25 people) report negative or no income.<sup>35</sup>

Figure 6 below presents the distribution of individual incomes across the three communities based on the 2021 Census data. These figures highlight the economic disadvantage experienced across these communities, where the individual incomes are below the 2021 Indigenous national averages.<sup>36</sup> The concentration of residents in the lower income bands indicate the need for targeted workforce planning initiatives to create local employment opportunities that support sustainable economic participation for residents.



**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

<sup>32</sup> Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), Census of Population and Housing, for Hermannsburg, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. I08 Total Personal Income (Weekly) By Sex for Aboriginal by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid

<sup>34</sup> Ibid

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2023) 2.08 Income, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework. <https://www.indigenoushpf.gov.au/measures/2-08-income>

## 2.2 Skills in the Community

This section analyses education and training levels across Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole 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.<sup>37</sup> Core competencies in language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills 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 below from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024) highlights key hurdles in future workforce readiness for students, including low school attendance rates and limited secondary education options. These challenges contribute to young people leaving school unprepared to enter the workforce. Strategies to boost attendance, strengthen local access to education and training, and creating pathways for employment within the community are essential in driving long-term remote workforce planning.

**Table 17: 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
Ntaria <sup>38</sup>	0-4 years	59	16	27%
	5-14 years	93	87	94%
	15-24 years	97	14	14%
Utju <sup>39</sup>	0-4 years	10	0	0%
	5-14 years	33	33	100%
	15-24 years	36	7	19%
Wallace Rockhole <sup>40</sup>	0-4 years	6	0	0%
	5-14 years	22	17	77%
	15-24 years	11	3	27%

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

<sup>37</sup> 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>

<sup>38</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ntaria. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

<sup>39</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Utju. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

<sup>40</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Wallace Rockhole. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

**Table 18: School Profile Data**

Metric	Ntaria School <sup>41</sup>	Areyonga School <sup>42</sup>	Wallace Rockhole School <sup>43</sup>
Location	Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole
Year Range	T-12	T-6	T-6
Enrolment Numbers	120	27	12
Aboriginal Students	100%	100%	100%
Non-English Language Background	99%	100%	100%
Student-to-Teacher Ratio	6:1	4:1	6:1
Attendance Rate (Semester 1, 2024)	44%	62%	52%
Students Attending 90%+ of the Time	4%	8%	0%
VET in School	Available – 4 students obtained Certificate I in Food and Hospitality	-	-
Senior Secondary Outcomes	4 completions, no NTCEC's awarded (2022)	-	-
2023 School Funding (Per Student)	\$3,886,538 (\$27,582)	\$1,493,563 (\$62,232)	\$720,973 (\$55,459)
ICSEA Value (National Average)	624 (1000)	608 (1000)	No data available.

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](http://www.acara.edu.au)) (<https://www.myschool.edu.au/home>) (accessed 10 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

All three schools share several educational characteristics that shape their workforce planning potential:

- **Cultural Context:** All three schools serve Aboriginal students with non-English language backgrounds, Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses and further education options should incorporate culturally responsive teaching practices, including facilitating classes in Indigenous languages, to improve engagement and learning outcomes.

<sup>41</sup> Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024), Ntaria School Profile, My School 2024. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50111>

<sup>42</sup> Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024), Areyonga School Profile, My School 2024. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50078>

<sup>43</sup> Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024), Areyonga School Profile, My School 2024. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50127>

- **Attendance Challenges:** Attendance rates range from 44% to 62%, with a very small percentage of students attending 90% or more of the time. These figures indicate significant barriers to consistent school participation.
- **Access to Secondary Schooling and VET in Schools:** Ntaria School is the only school offering senior secondary education (Years 10-12). VET opportunities are available at Ntaria School, with four students obtaining a Certificate I in Food and Hospitality in 2023. Expanding VET programs could provide more pathways for skill development and employment readiness for school leavers.
- **Low Socio-Educational Advantage:** The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) scores for Ntaria and Utju are well below the national average of 1000, indicating substantial socio-educational disadvantage.

## Literacy and Numeracy

The 2024 NAPLAN performance data highlights significant challenges faced by schools in Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole, with scores consistently falling below national averages. National benchmarks are included in parentheses next to each school's 2024 scores in the table below. The below outcomes align with the broader trend of educational disparities for Indigenous and remote students highlighted in 2024's National NAPLAN results.<sup>44</sup>

This literacy and numeracy context plays an important role in shaping workforce planning strategies. It highlights the need for employment pathways tailored to the unique needs of school leavers from remote communities with non-English-speaking backgrounds. These pathways should respect and integrate varied learning styles and cultural knowledge systems while also providing opportunities for continuous skill development.

**Table 19: NAPLAN Scores**

Subject	Year Level	Ntaria School <sup>45</sup>	Areyonga School <sup>46</sup>	Wallace Rockhole <sup>47</sup>
Reading	3	273 (404)	No scores provided	393 (418)
	5	286 (492)	267 (506)	No scores provided
	7	No scores provided	Not applicable	Not applicable
	9	No scores provided	Not applicable	Not applicable
Writing	3	174 (416)	No scores provided	366 (402)
	5	275 (485)	295 (474)	No scores provided
	7	No scores provided	Not applicable	Not applicable
	9	No scores provided	Not applicable	Not applicable

<sup>44</sup> SNAICC (2024). 2024 NAPLAN results reveal need for early years and transition to school support – SNAICC in the News. <https://www.snaicc.org.au/2024-naplan-results-reveal-need-for-early-years-and-transition-to-school-support-snaicc-in-the-news/>

<sup>45</sup> Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024), Ntaria School Profile, My School 2024. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50111>

<sup>46</sup> Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024), Areyonga School Profile, My School 2024. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50078>

<sup>47</sup> Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024), Areyonga School Profile, My School 2024. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50127>

Spelling	3	No scores provided	No scores provided	495 (412)
	5	289 (486)	No scores provided	No scores provided
	7	No scores provided	Not applicable	Not applicable
	9	No scores provided	Not applicable	Not applicable
Grammar	3	No scores provided	No scores provided	460 (426)
	5	276 (498)	No scores provided	No scores provided
	7	No scores provided	Not applicable	Not applicable
	9	No scores provided	Not applicable	Not applicable
Numeracy	3	235 (404)	No scores provided	394 (402)
	5	304 (489)	354 (496)	No scores provided
	7	No scores provided	Not applicable	Not applicable
	9	No scores provided	Not applicable	Not applicable
Participation Rate		57% (95%)	67% (95%)	100% (95%)

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](http://www.acara.edu.au)) (<https://www.myschool.edu.au/home>) (accessed 10 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

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.

## Vocational Education and Training (VET)

This summary provides an overview of Vocational Education and Training (VET) activity in the Ljirapinta region, including Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. It details both general VET program participation and specific apprenticeship and traineeship pathways that support local workforce planning. This analysis is based on data that 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.

In 2024, Ljirapinta delivered 21 VET qualifications, spanning entry-level programs to Diploma-level qualifications. The table below captures all VET Courses offered in this region between 2022 - 2024, and the number of students enrolled in each. Please note enrolment numbers below 5 have been rounded to 5 to protect student privacy, actual values are  $\leq 5$ .<sup>48</sup>

**Table 20: Student count for DET Funded VET Programs in Ljirapinta**

DET Funded VET Programs - Ljirapinta	2022	2023	2024
Basic cooking skills for tour guides		5*	
Certificate I in Automotive Vocational Preparation			18
Certificate I in Conservation and Ecosystem Management			10

<sup>48</sup> Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations. (2025). Data provided to Desert Knowledge Australia for report purposes only. [Unpublished raw data].

Certificate I in Hospitality		6	
Certificate I in Retail Services			5
Certificate I in Tourism (Australian Indigenous Culture)	17	25	18
Certificate II in Community Services			5
Certificate II in Conservation and Ecosystem Management	5	9	5
Certificate II in Horse Care	17		
Certificate II in Local Government		8	8
Certificate II in Retail Services	5	8	5
Certificate II in Visual Arts	7	14	16
Certificate II in Workplace Skills		5	
Certificate III in Business		10	8
Certificate III in Civil Construction Plant Operations		5	
Certificate III in Conservation and Ecosystem Management		5	6
Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care	5	5	5
Certificate III in Individual Support		7	5
Certificate III in Local Government			5
Certificate III in Retail		5	5
Certificate III in School Based Education Support			5
Certificate IV in Disability		5	5
Certificate IV in Retail Management			5
Certificate IV in School Based Education Support		5	5
Certificate IV in Visual Arts		5	5
Diploma of Local Government		5	5
Learner Support	5	5	

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

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

In 2025, up to 15 residents of Ljirapinta were engaged in apprenticeships and traineeships, with up to 5 students enrolled in each of the certificates listed in Table 21 supporting hands-on learning and direct employment opportunities:

**Table 21: A&T count for Apprenticeships and Traineeships in Ljirapinta**

Apprenticeships & Traineeships - Ljirapinta	2022	2023	2024	2025
Certificate II in Retail Services	5*	5	5	5
Certificate III in Local Government				5
Certificate IV in Retail Management				5
Diploma of Local Government (Health and Environment)	5	5		

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

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

This data reveals moderate alignment with key employment sectors across the communities. The 2021 Census identifies Public Administration and Safety, Education and Training, Health Care and Social Assistance and Retail

as the four largest local employment sectors.<sup>49</sup> Public Administration and Safety shows moderate alignment with VET, supported by multiple enrolments in local government certificates. Education and Training sees limited VET enrolments in early childhood and school-based education support certificates, highlighting a potential future workforce gap in this important public service sector. Health Care and Social Assistance also has modest student participation in community services, disability, and individual support qualifications, which may present a challenge to future workforce sustainability. VET student engagement across multiple retail certificates and traineeships is aligned with the sector as 4<sup>th</sup> largest employer.

Interestingly, the three most popular courses by enrolment are not directly aligned with the top three employment sectors:

- Certificate I in Tourism (Australian Indigenous Culture) – 18 students
- Certificate I in Automotive Vocational Preparation – 18 students
- Certificate II in Visual Arts – 16 students

While these areas currently fall outside the major employment sectors identified in the 2021 Census, Tourism and Visual Arts qualifications are aligned with recent local funding allocations, including:

- \$1.1 million was allocated to Finke River Culture and Adventures Pty Ltd to support local tour guide training, employment and mentoring.<sup>50</sup>
- Approximately \$1.9 million went to the Iltja Ntjarra Aboriginal Corporation and Hermannsburg Potters Aboriginal Corporation, to support local Indigenous arts industries.<sup>51</sup>
- A further \$3.9 million was granted to the Tjuwanpa Women's Rangers program, providing local employment in land and conservation work.<sup>52</sup>

The popularity of these programs suggests that students and training providers are responding to emerging opportunities supported by targeted local funding and program delivery in Ntaria.

Recruitment platforms, including NT Government portals and regional council job boards, show that most advertised roles are based in Alice Springs or designed for broader regional coverage. This indicates a structural challenge where skills training is occurring, but immediate local employment pathways remain limited, potentially affecting the impact of VET on economic participation within these communities.

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<sup>49</sup> Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing: Hermannsburg. Industry of Employment by Age by Sex. (Canberra: ABS, 2021); Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing: Utju. Table G54, Industry of Employment by Age by Sex. (Canberra: ABS, 2021); Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing: Wallace Rockhole. Table G54, Industry of Employment by Age by Sex. (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

<sup>50</sup> BushTel (n.d.). Hermannsburg - Projects and Grants. Northern Territory Government. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/43?tab=projects>

<sup>51</sup> Ibid

<sup>52</sup> Ibid

## University Qualifications

The 2021 Census indicates that no Aboriginal residents hold university level qualifications across the three communities;<sup>53</sup> 37 people hold Certificate Levels I-IV in Ntaria, and 3 hold a Certificate I & II in Utju.

**Table 22: Highest Qualification (Non-School)**

Non-School Qualification	Ntaria <sup>54</sup>	Utju <sup>55</sup>	Wallace Rockhole <sup>56</sup>
Postgraduate Degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate	0	0	0
Bachelor's degree	0	0	0
Advanced Diploma	0	0	0
Certificate III & IV	14	0	0
Certificate I & II	23	3	0
Certificate Level (nfd)	0	5	0

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

## 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 across Ntaria, Utju, and Wallace Rockhole. Understanding where jobs currently exist and where demand is growing provides important context for aligning training opportunities with employment pathways.

### Key Employment Industries

The 2021 Census provides data on employment across Ntaria, Utju, and Wallace Rockhole. However, it does not distinguish between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents in employment by sector. Therefore, this analysis reflects overall community employment patterns.

According to the 2021 Census general community profile, employment across the three communities is dominated by the public sector<sup>57</sup> which highlights the important role that public sector employment plays in the local economy, particularly in government administration, education, and health services:

**Table 23. Employment by Industry**

<sup>53</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing: Hermannsburg. Table I20c, Highest Non-School Qualification: Level of Education (A) By Indigenous Status by Age by Sex

<sup>54</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing: Yuendumu. I20c Highest Non School Qualifications: Level of Education by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

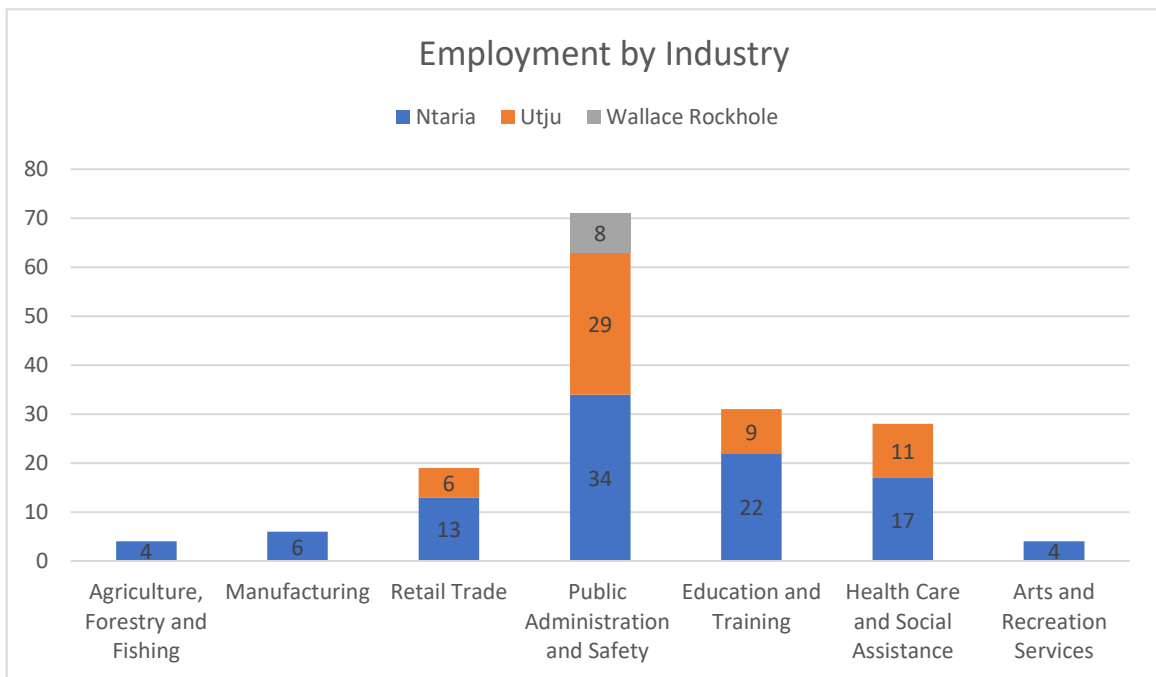
<sup>55</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing: Yuelamu. I20c Highest Non School Qualifications: Level of Education by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

<sup>56</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing: Nyirripi. I20c Highest Non School Qualifications: Level of Education by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021.

<sup>57</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing for Hermannsburg, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. G54 Industry of Employment by Age by Sex. (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

Sector	Total Jobs	Notes
Public Administration and Safety	71	Largest employer across communities
Education and Training	31	Second-largest sector
Health Care and Social Assistance	28	Third-largest employment sector
Retail Trade	19	Primary private-sector employer
Manufacturing	6	Limited presence
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	4	Limited presence
Arts and Recreation Services	4	Limited presence

Source: Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing for Hermannsburg, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. G54 Industry of Employment by Age by Sex. (Canberra: ABS, 2021)



**Figure 7: 2021 Employment by Industry**

Source: Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing for Hermannsburg, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. G54 Industry of Employment by Age by Sex. (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

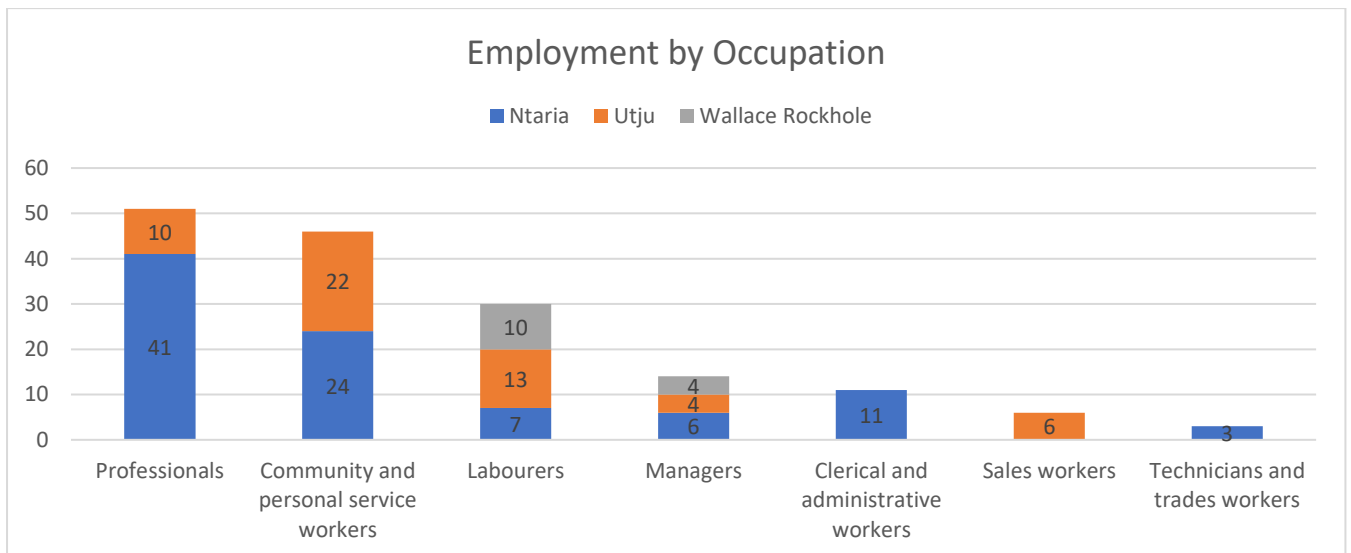
## Occupational Distribution

The 2021 Census data provide a snapshot of employment by occupation and industry across Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. However, it does not distinguish between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents and represents a combined total for all employed persons aged 15 years and over.

- **Professionals:** Form the largest occupational group with 51 positions. This category includes teachers, health professionals and other specialised roles requiring formal qualifications. This category is notably underrepresented in Wallace Rockhole, where no professionals were recorded in the 2021 Census.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup>Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing: Hermannsburg. G60 Occupation by Age by Sex. (Canberra: ABS, 2021); Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing: Utju. G60 Occupation by Age by Sex. (Canberra: ABS,

- **Community and Personal Service Workers:** Is the second most common occupation across the communities with 46 positions. These roles often require cultural knowledge and are focused on direct service delivery to residents. Notably, there were no Community and Personal Service Workers recorded in Wallace Rockhole.<sup>59</sup>
- **Labourers:** Constitute the third largest occupation type with 30 positions recorded across all three communities. Wallace Rockhole reports the highest concentration of labourers relative to its small total workforce.<sup>60</sup>



**Figure 8: 2021 Employment by Occupation**

Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing for Hermannsburg, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. G60 Occupation by Age by Sex. (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

## Workforce Demand

The workforce landscape in Ntaria, Utju, and Wallace Rockhole remains challenging for job seekers, with registered job seekers under the Community Development Program (CDP) outnumbering available roles. Public sector jobs particularly in education, health and public administration, dominate the employment landscape. However, these are primarily skilled positions requiring formal qualifications, with few entry-level opportunities available. This presents a barrier for job seekers with limited experience or qualifications.

Community feedback highlights the frustration felt by residents at the scarcity of local jobs:

*No jobs. No work. Always telling us there are jobs - only half the community are working. Tjuwanpa do not come here. We need local people working in the store.*<sup>61</sup>

– Utju OCARC Community Meeting Notes, 27/4/2023

2021); Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of Population and Housing: Wallace Rockhole. G60 Occupation by Age by Sex. (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

<sup>59</sup> Ibid

<sup>60</sup> Ibid

<sup>61</sup> OCARC Community Meeting Notes (2023). Unpublished, not for wider circulation.

At the time of publication of the 2023 Remote Town Job Profile for Ntaria, there were 39 vacant positions in the community.<sup>62</sup> This data provides a valuable benchmark for workforce planning. Key insights from the 2023 vacancies include:

- Over 40% of all vacancies were for Indigenous-Specific positions (16 positions)<sup>63</sup>
- 30% of vacancies were for Community and Personal Service Workers, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers and Health Workers (12 positions).<sup>64</sup>
- 18% of vacancies (7 roles) required no formal qualifications, providing accessible entry points into the local workforce.<sup>65</sup>

Despite these opportunities, the employment gap in Ntaria remained substantial. With 396 Aboriginal individuals participating in the Community Development Program (CDP),<sup>66</sup> job seekers outnumbered available roles by more than eight to one, highlighting the need for strategies to address both immediate and long-term workforce challenges.

Among the roles providing on the job training and requiring no formal qualifications in 2023, were the following available positions:

- 1 Construction and Mining labourer
- 3 Handy Person roles
- 1 Hospitality Worker
- 1 Kitchen Hand
- 1 Sales Assistant

In addition to these entry level opportunities, several positions also offered structured training pathways, supporting skill development through culturally safe programs at institutions like Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. Examples include:

- [Aboriginal Education Workers \(7 positions\)](#): Certificate III in School Based Education Support (Batchelor Institute, Charles Darwin University)
- [Aboriginal Health Workers \(4 positions\)](#): Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice (Batchelor Institute)
- [Aboriginal Land and Sea Rangers \(5 positions\)](#): Certificate II in Conservation and Ecosystem Management (Batchelor Institute, Charles Darwin University)

**Table 24: Qualifications Required and Education Pathways to 2023 Role Vacancies**

Occupation	Employer	# of Roles	Qualification	Details	Education/ Training Provider	Cultural Framework
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<sup>62</sup>Department of Trade, Business and Innovation, Northern Territory Government (2025). 2023 Remote Towns Jobs Profiles, Ntaria. Northern Territory Government, Darwin. Pg 22.





<sup>63</sup> Ibid






<sup>64</sup> Ibid


<sup>65</sup> Ibid

<sup>66</sup>Department of Trade, Business and Innovation, Northern Territory Government (2025). 2023 Remote Towns Jobs Profiles, Ntaria. Northern Territory Government, Darwin. Pg 57.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Worker	Department of Education and Training	7	<a href="#">Certificate III in School Based Education Support</a>	18 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Batchelor Institute, Charles Darwin University	Caring for Family and Community 
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker	NT Health	4	<a href="#">Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice</a>	2 years, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Batchelor Institute	Caring for Family and Community 
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land and Sea Ranger	Central Land Council	5	<a href="#">Certificate II in Conservation and Ecosystem Management</a>  On the Job Training	6 months, fee free	Batchelor Institute, Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs Campus)	Working on Country 
Assistant Manager	-	1	<a href="#">Certificate III/IV in Business</a> / On the job training	6 months – 1 year, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Batchelor Institute	Servicing the Community 
Baker	-	1	<a href="#">Certificate III in Commercial Cookery</a>	1 Years, fee free	Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs Campus)	Servicing the Community 
Café or Restaurant Manager	-	1	<a href="#">Certificate III in Hospitality</a> + Relevant Experience	6 months, fee free	Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs Campus)	Servicing the Community 

Classroom Teacher	Dept Education and Training	2	<a href="#">Bachelor of Education</a> (Primary or Secondary)	4 years, Commonwealth Supported places available	Charles Darwin University (Darwin Campus)	<b>Caring for Family and Community</b> 
Construction and Mining Labourer	-	1	<a href="#">White Card</a>	-	-	<b>Building the Community</b> 
Construction Trade Worker	-	2	Relevant Trade Qualification e.g. <a href="#">Certificate III or IV in the specific trade (carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, etc.)</a> .	1-3 years, fees vary depending on trade and level of certification	Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs Campus)	<b>Building the Community</b> 
General Clerk	-	4	<a href="#">Certificate III/IV in Business</a> / On the job training	6 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students / 1 year fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Batchelor Institute	
Handyperson	-	3	On the job training	-	-	<b>Building the Community</b> 

Hospitality Worker	-	1	On the job training	-	-	<p>Servicing the Community</p> 
Kitchen Hand	-	1	On the job training	-	-	<p>Servicing the Community</p> 
Primary Health Organisation Manager	NT Health	1	<p><a href="#">Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice</a> +</p> <p><a href="#">Diploma of Leadership &amp; Management</a></p> <p>+ Relevant Experience</p>	<p>18 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</p> <p>1 year, \$2701 (Government Supported Place)</p>	<p>Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education</p> <p>Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs)</p>	<p>Servicing the Community</p> 
Program or Project Administrator	-	2	<p><a href="#">Certificate IV in Business</a> /</p> <p><a href="#">Certificate II in Community Services</a></p>	<p>18 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</p>	<p>Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education</p>	<p>Servicing the Community</p> 
Registered Nurse	NT Health	2	<p><a href="#">Bachelor of Nursing</a></p>	<p>3 years, (Commonwealth supported places available)</p>	<p>Charles Darwin University (Darwin Campus)</p>	<p>Caring for Family and Community</p> 

Sales Assistant	-	1	On the job training	-	-	
Other (inadequately described)	-	1	-	-	-	-

Source: Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations (2023) Remote Towns Jobs Profiles Ntaria, Northern Territory Government, January 2025, Darwin

A request to the Department of Education and Training for school jobs vacancy data as of May 2025 identified the following 12 non-teaching vacancies across the three schools:

**Table 25: May 2025 Education Vacancies (excluding teaching vacancies)**

School	Ntaria School	Areyonga School	Wallace Rockhole School
<b>Location:</b>	Ntaria	Utju	Wallace Rockhole
<b>Total Vacant Positions:</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Position Title:</b>			
Literacy Worker Two Way Learning (PSSO) Wallace Rockhole School		1	1
Office Based Admin Assistant	1		
Administrative Officer			1
FAFT Family Liaison Officer	1		
Aboriginal Education Officer	1		
Maintenance Officer	1	1	
Family Liaison Officer	3		
Cleaner		1	

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

An updated review of publicly advertised positions conducted in early 2025 identified around 27 positions at the regional council, in addition to:

- 2 x Remote Area Nurses (Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole)
- 1 x Electrical Superintendent, Underground (Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole)
- 1 x Cook (Ntaria, Wallace Rockhole)
- 1 x Warehouse Assistant (Ntaria, Wallace Rockhole)

Regional Councils advertise their vacancies in their council papers, while others like the local Congress office will advertise more locally on notice boards and word of mouth. The Northern Territory government also has ongoing vacancies placed on their portals, while some 'tier 1 or Level 1' roles would only be advertised at a local level.



## Position Vacancies Hermannsburg

Position #	Service	Description	Type	Weekly Hours
400704	MacKids	Educator - Early Learning	Full-Time	38
400705	MacKids	Educator - Early Learning	Part-Time	30.4
400707	MacKids	Educator - Early Learning	Part-Time	27.4
400711	MacKids	Educator - Early Learning	Part-Time	27.4
400712	MacKids	Educator - Early Learning	Casual	As Rostered
401343	MacSafe	Senior Community Safety Officer	Part-Time	25
401344	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Part-Time	20
401357	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Casual	As Rostered
402394	MacCare	Home Care Assistant (Male)	Casual	As Rostered
403046	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Casual	As Rostered
501303	Council Serv	Customer Service Officer	Part-Time	19
501304	Council Serv	Customer Service Officer	Casual	As Rostered
501329	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
501332	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19

Table data derived from XLOne Position Vacancy Report of Active Open Positions in the MRC Org Structure and approved by Managers: 8/01/2025

**Figure 9: MacDonnell Regional Council Position Vacancies in Hermannsburg (Ntaria)**

*Source: Agenda Hermannsburg Local Authority Meeting 30 January 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report<sup>67</sup>*

**AREYONGA LOCAL AUTHORITY MEETING**

**6 FEBRUARY 2025**



## Position Vacancies Areyonga

Position #	Service	Description	Type	Weekly Hours
401325	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Part-time	20
401326	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Casual	As Rostered
401328	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Casual	As Rostered
401336	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Casual	As Rostered
401337	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Casual	As Rostered
402240	MacCare	Home Care Assistant	Casual	As Rostered
403004	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Part-Time	9.5
403005	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Casual	As Rostered
403006	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Casual	As Rostered
403009	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Part-Time	9.5
501124	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
501125	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19

Table data derived from XLOne Position Vacancy Report of Active Open Positions in the MRC Org Structure and approved by Managers: 30/01/2025

**Figure 10: MacDonnell Regional Council Position Vacancies in Utju**

*Source: Agenda Utju Local Authority Meeting 6 February 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report<sup>68</sup>*

<sup>67</sup> MRC Agenda Hermannsburg Local Authority Meeting 30 January 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report: <https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/council-meetings/local-authority-meetings/hermannsburg-local-authority-meetings/466/documents/hla-agenda-3012025.pdf>

<sup>68</sup> MRC Agenda Utju Local Authority Meeting 6 February 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report: [https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/council-meetings/local-authority-meetings/Utju-local-authority-meetings/467/documents/arla\\_06022025\\_agm\\_at.pdf](https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/council-meetings/local-authority-meetings/Utju-local-authority-meetings/467/documents/arla_06022025_agm_at.pdf)



## Position Vacancies Wallace Rockhole

Position #	Service	Description	Type	Weekly Hours
501523	SDC	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19

Table data derived from XLOne Position Vacancy Report of Active Open Positions in the MRC Org Structure as at: 5/03/2025

**Figure 11: MacDonnell Regional Council Position Vacancies in Wallace Rockhole**

*Source: Agenda Wallace Rockhole Local Authority Meeting 20 March 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report<sup>69</sup>*

Without strategic job creation initiatives, it is unlikely that the number of participants in the CDP will decrease meaningfully. Additionally, through the consultation process it was apparent that a better working relationship between the Regional Council and Tjuwanpa could enable a more integrated approach towards workforce planning. The Regional Council is one of the largest employers in the region and therefore working closely with a regional employer would result in increased collaboration and employee participation rates.

<sup>69</sup> MRC Agenda Wallace Rockhole Local Authority Meeting 20 March 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report: [https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/council-meetings/local-authority-meetings/wallace-rockhole-local-authority-meeting/405/documents/wla\\_20032025\\_agn\\_at.pdf](https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/council-meetings/local-authority-meetings/wallace-rockhole-local-authority-meeting/405/documents/wla_20032025_agn_at.pdf)

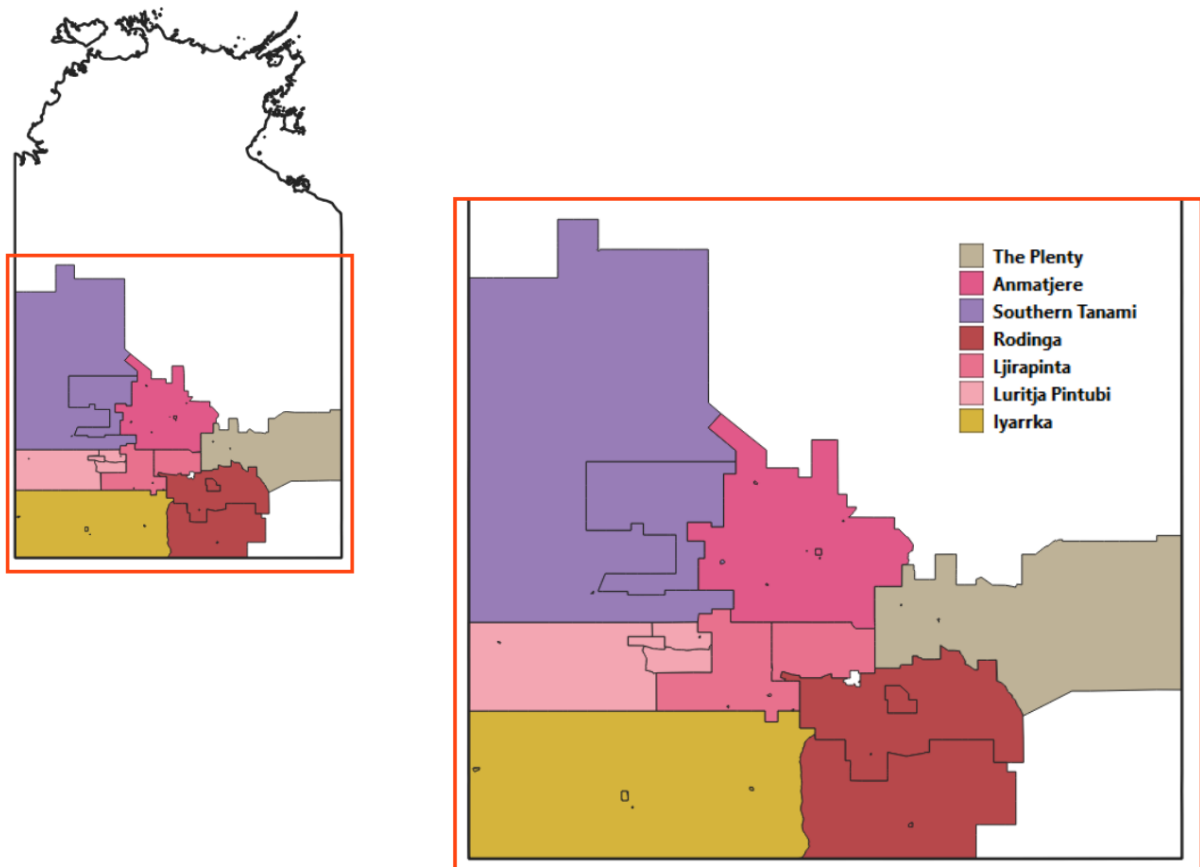
## 2.4 Economic Context

Economic factors play a central role in shaping workforce participation and opportunity in the Ljirapinta region, which includes Ntaria, Utju, and Wallace Rockhole. This section examines regional economic output, workforce structure, and the specific context for Indigenous workforce planning. Understanding these dynamics provides key insights for addressing barriers and leveraging opportunities for local employment and economic inclusion.

### Gross Regional Product (GRP)

The economic profile of the Ljirapinta region provides essential context for understanding regional economic activity and workforce opportunities. While the region generates substantial economic value, much of this activity is due to mining operations that provide limited direct employment benefits to Aboriginal residents as per Table 26 below a total of 6 indigenous people are hired through mining with 5 identifying as residents. The analysis below incorporates GRP data for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations while highlighting Indigenous-specific economic patterns.

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



**Figure 12: 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.

The Ljirapinta region's total workforce includes 303 employed residents,<sup>70</sup> and its economic output can be measured in two complementary ways:

- **Total Place of Work (POW) GRP:** \$109.77 million<sup>71</sup>  
This is the total value of all goods and services produced by businesses and organisations physically located in the region, regardless of where their workers live. It reflects the size of the regional economy and the scale of economic activity happening within the region's boundaries.
- **Employed Resident GRP:** \$42.65 million<sup>72</sup>  
This figure captures the total economic value generated by people who live in the region, no matter where they work. It measures the combined economic contribution of all residents, whether they are employed locally or commute elsewhere.
- **Total Estimated Regional Workforce:** 303 employed residents

Resident GRP, accounts for only 38.9% of total GRP, indicating that \$67.1 million in economic value is generated by non-resident workers and external operations.

### **Indigenous Economic Participation**

The regional Indigenous workforce includes 193 employed residents,<sup>73</sup> representing 63.7% of the total employed resident workforce.

- **Total Place of Work (POW) GRP:** \$33.25 million<sup>74</sup>

<sup>70</sup> ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Ljirapinta Region. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid

<sup>72</sup> Ibid

<sup>73</sup> Ibid

<sup>74</sup> Ibid

- Employed Resident GRP: \$30.8 million<sup>75</sup>

**Table 26: Total Regional versus Indigenous GRP Data**

Category	Total Workforce	Employed Resident Workforce	POW GRP (\$)	Employed Resident GRP (\$)	POW GRP Per Capita (\$)	Employed Resident GRP Per Capita (\$)
Total Regional	568	303	107,313,746	40,196,496	188,933	132,662
Indigenous	273	193	33,253,394	30,796,492	121,807	159,567

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 workforce (568) is greater than the employed resident workforce (303), which suggests that approximately 265 people commute into the region for work. This indicates that the region attracts workers from outside, due to the availability of jobs in certain industries.
- \$67M (62% of GRP) is generated by FIFO/ commuting workers.
- The Indigenous Place of Work (PoW) GRP per capita is \$121,807, compared to the total regional PoW GRP per capita of \$188,933. This suggests that Indigenous-held jobs are more likely to be in lower-output sectors such as government services, community support, and education.

### Workforce Distribution and Industry Sectors

The regional economy is centred on public service delivery and mining, with the following key industry contributions among all residents:

**Table 27: GRP Value added - Employed Regional Residents**

Industry Sector	Total Value Added (\$M)	Indigenous Value Added (\$M)	Total Employees	Indigenous Employees	Indigenous Employment Rate (%)
Public Administration & Safety	\$11.6 M	\$9.0M	97	76	78%
Mining	\$9.8 M	\$7.3M	6	5	83%
Education & Training	\$3.9 M	\$2.4M	41	26	63%
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$3.0 M	\$2.2M	48	36	74%
Retail Trade	\$3.0 M	\$1.6M	57	31	53%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	\$2.6 M	\$0.8M	10	3	33%
Construction	\$1.3 M	\$1.3M	4	4	100%
Administrative and Support Services	\$1.0 M	0	10	-	0%
Arts and Recreation Services	\$0.9 M	\$0.4M	16	8	50%

<sup>75</sup> Ibid

Accommodation and Food Services	\$0.8 M	0	8	-	0%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	\$0.7 M	0	3	-	0%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	\$0.5 M	\$0.5M	4	4	100%

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

- Public Administration and Safety: Indigenous residents account for 76 out of 97 employees, contributing \$9.1 million of the sector's \$11.6 million economic output.<sup>76</sup>
- Education and Training: Indigenous employees represent 26 of 41 employees, contributing \$2.4 million of the sector's \$3.9 million total economic output.<sup>77</sup>
- Health Care and Social Assistance: Indigenous employees contribute \$2.2 million of the sector's \$3.0 million total output, representing 36 of 48 employees.<sup>78</sup>
- Retail Trade: Indigenous employees represent 31 of 57 employed workers, contributing \$1.6 million of the sector's \$3.0 million total economic output.<sup>79</sup>

Additional industry representation includes workforce contributions in Agriculture (3 out of 10 employees, \$0.8 million value added), Construction (4 out of 4 employees, \$1.3 million), Professional Services (4 out of 4 employees, \$0.5 million), and Arts and Recreation (8 of 16 employees, \$0.4 million).<sup>80</sup>

Aboriginal workers demonstrate strong representation in public service sectors, with 138 of 193 employed Indigenous residents working in public administration, education, and health care.<sup>81</sup> These employment patterns highlight these industries as key regional employers.

### Challenges and Opportunities

Indigenous residents comprise 90% of the region's population but experience significant barriers to workforce participation, with a regional labour force participation rate of 29% and a youth disengagement rate of 79%.<sup>82</sup> Government benefits are the primary income source for 87% of Indigenous residents regionally, with only 13% deriving their income from employment.<sup>83</sup>

Indigenous workforce participation varies significantly across industry sectors. All residents employed in the in Mining, Construction and Professional Services sectors are Aboriginal, however these sectors only provide a total of 14 jobs local jobs, highlighting limited overall employment opportunities. Aboriginal residents fill most positions in Public Administration (78%) and Health Care (75%), and hold 63% of Education positions, 54% of Retail positions and 50% of Arts and Recreation positions. Agriculture shows lower Indigenous employment at

<sup>76</sup> ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Ljirapinta Region. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025.

<sup>77</sup> ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Ljirapinta Region. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid

<sup>79</sup> Ibid

<sup>80</sup> ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Ljirapinta Region. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid

<sup>82</sup> Ibid

<sup>83</sup> Ibid

30%, and there are no Aboriginal residents employed in Administrative Support, Utilities or Accommodation and Food Services.

### 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

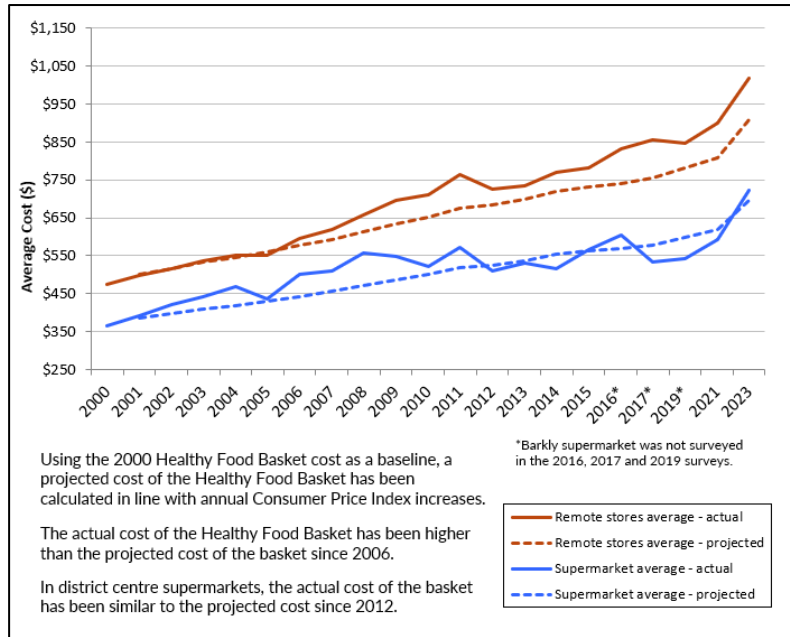


Figure 13: Market Basket Survey - Cost of a Food Basket from 2000-2023

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.<sup>84</sup>
- The "Current Diet Basket" costs \$1,072 in remote stores compared to \$890 in Alice Springs.<sup>85</sup>
- From 2021 to 2023, the cost of the Healthy Food Basket rose by 13% in remote stores,<sup>86</sup> 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 fortnight<sup>87</sup> 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.

<sup>84</sup> NT Health (2023). Attachment A - 2023 NT Market Basket Survey Summary Report. Darwin.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid

<sup>86</sup> NT Health (2023). Attachment A - 2023 NT Market Basket Survey Summary Report. Darwin.

<sup>87</sup> Services Australia (2025) Jobseeker Payment. <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/how-much-jobseeker-payment-you-can-get?context=51411>

## Transportation Costs

The cost of transportation is significant for households living in Ntaria, Utju, and Wallace Rockhole as their geographical isolation require residents to travel considerable distances to access essential services in Alice Springs - 126km from Ntaria, 213km from Utju and 93km from Wallace Rockhole. The high cost of travel exacerbates this challenge. According to the 2024 NTCOSS Transport Factsheet, unleaded petrol prices in the region reached 268.7 cents per litre in 2024, a 16.7cent increase over the previous year and significantly higher than the national average.<sup>88</sup>

Public transportation, like the Centre Bush Bus, provides important connections between these communities and Alice Springs. However, a return journey costs between \$190 and \$230 for a single adult,<sup>89</sup> creating financial barriers to accessing training, employment and essential services outside of the community. The limited schedule and high fares often leave residents stranded in town without an affordable means of returning home, exacerbating financial and logistical challenges.

Community feedback reflects these challenges:

*"[We] Need another bus for community programs transport – getting back and forth from town. Bush bus only goes one way. People get stuck in town. Takes all our money. Bush bus refuse people to get back on the bus (if people owe too much money)."*<sup>90</sup>

- Utju and Utju OCARC Community Meeting, 27/4/2023

Centre Bush Bus service schedule and fares further illustrate these challenges for residents of Ntaria, Utju and Utju:<sup>91</sup>

**Table 28: Bus Schedule and Cost**

Destination	Service Days	Adult Fare	Child Fare
Ntaria	Twice a week (Mon & Thurs)	\$95	\$75
Utju	Twice a week (Mon & Thurs)	\$115	\$90
Wallace Rockhole	On demand (Mon & Thurs)	\$95	\$75

Source: Centre Bush Bus (n.g.) Bus Timetables. <https://centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/>

The combination of long distances, high fuel costs and expensive, infrequent public transport creates significant barriers for individuals seeking access to training, employment and essential services outside their communities. These challenges make regular travel unaffordable for many, further isolating residents and limiting their ability to join the broader workforce or pursue opportunities in Alice Springs or other larger towns. Localised employment and training opportunities that reduce the need for travel may promote local job growth, enhance skill development and support residents in pursuing meaningful careers within their own communities.

<sup>88</sup> Harding, M. and Pilbrow, J (2024). Cost of Transport in the Northern Territory Fact Sheet. Darwin: NTCOSS and Just Change. <https://ntcoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/2024-CoL-Transport-FINAL-030524.pdf>

<sup>89</sup> Centre Bush Bus (n.d.) Bus Timetables. [www.centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/](http://www.centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/)

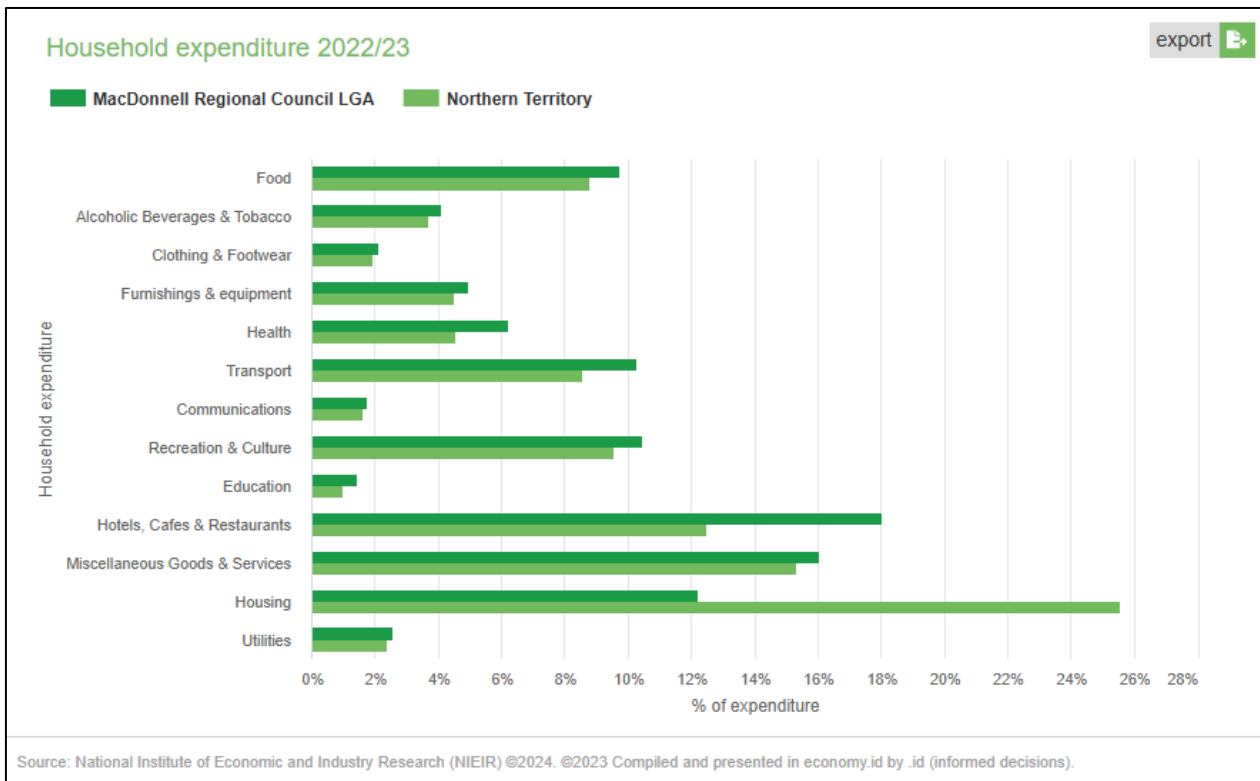
<sup>90</sup> OCARC Community Meeting Notes (2023). Unpublished, not for wider circulation.

<sup>91</sup> Centre Bush Bus (n.d.) Bus Timetables. [www.centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/](http://www.centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/)

## Regional Household Expenditure

While community-specific data is not available, expenditure patterns for the broader MacDonnell Regional Council area provide important insights:

- Households in this region allocate significantly more of their budget to hotels, cafes and restaurants (18.02%) compared to the Northern Territory average (12.51%),<sup>92</sup> likely reflecting travel costs required for accessing essential services outside their communities.
- Health expenditure is higher at 6.21% versus the Territory average of 4.56%,<sup>93</sup> suggesting increased healthcare costs or increased healthcare needs in these remote areas.
- Transportation costs consume 10.29% of household budgets compared to 8.55% for the Territory average, highlighting the financial impact of geographic isolation.<sup>94</sup>



**Figure 14: Household Expenditure 2022-23 MacDonnell 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)

These expenditure patterns indicate that residents in these remote communities face additional financial pressures related to their location, which directly impacts household economic stability and capacity for workforce participation.

<sup>92</sup> .id (Informed Decisions) (2024). Household Expenditure. <https://economy.id.com.au/rda-northern-territory/household-expenditure?IndkeyNieir=23402&WebID=130>.

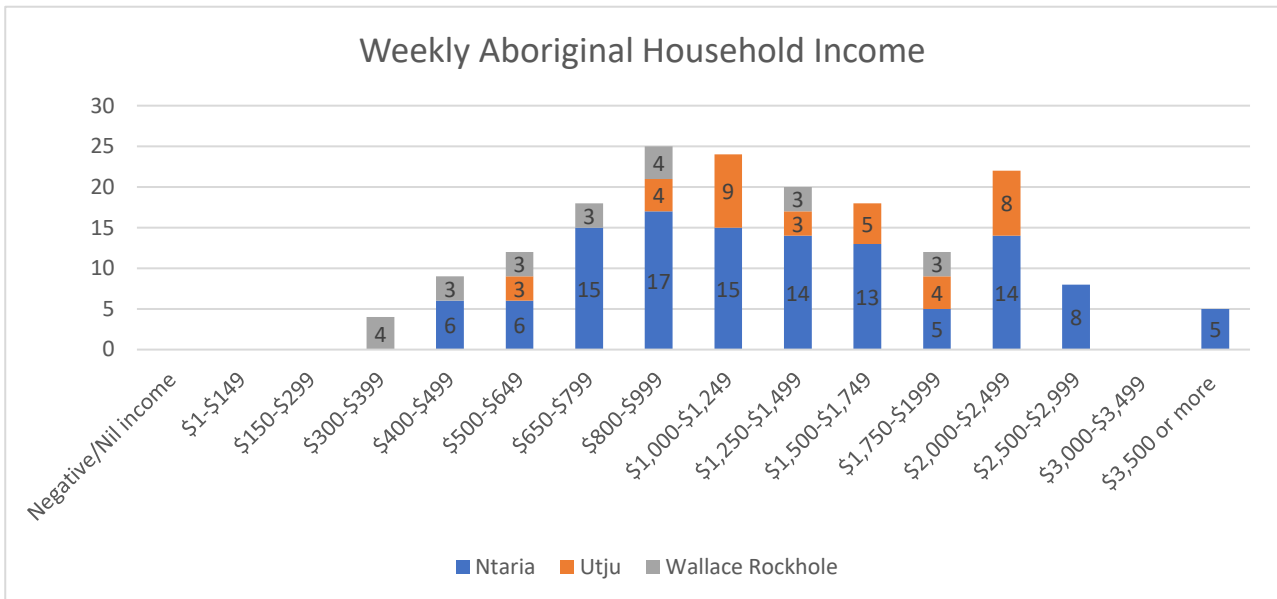
<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

## Household Income

187 Aboriginal households of Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole responded to household income questions in the 2021 Census.<sup>95</sup> 2021 census data shows:

- No households reported negative, nil, or very low incomes under \$300 per week suggesting basic income support systems are reaching residents.<sup>96</sup>
- The majority of households, (approximately 50% of households, or 94 out of 187) earn between \$500 - \$1,499 per week.<sup>97</sup>
- 3%% (or 5 households) earn \$3,500 or more per week.<sup>98</sup>



**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

## Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage

The 2021 SEIFA results show that the MacDonnell LGA is one of the most socio-economically disadvantaged areas in Australia. Across all four SEIFA indexes, which measure relative levels of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage, including factors such as income, employment, education, and access to resources - the MacDonnell LGA ranks in the bottom decile (Decile 1).<sup>99</sup> These scores place the LGA among the most disadvantaged regions nationally. Within the Northern Territory, the MacDonnell LGA consistently ranks among the five most disadvantaged areas, reflecting significant socio-economic challenges.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile for Hermannsburg, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. 117 total household income (weekly) by Indigenous status of household. Canberra: ABS, 2021

<sup>96</sup> Ibid

<sup>97</sup> Ibid

<sup>98</sup> Ibid

<sup>99</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). SEIFA 2021 by Local Government Area (LGA) Local Government Areas - 2021: MacDonnell.

[https://dataexplorer.abs.gov.au/vis?tm=seifa%20lga&pg=0&df\[ds\]=SNAPSHOTS\\_TOPICS&df\[id\]=ABS\\_SEIFA2021\\_LGA&df\[ag\]=ABS&df\[vs\]=1.0.0&pd=2021%2C&dq=72330.&ly\[cl\]=SEIFA\\_MEASURE&ly\[rw\]=SEIFAINDEXTYPE&to\[TIME\\_PERIOD\]=false](https://dataexplorer.abs.gov.au/vis?tm=seifa%20lga&pg=0&df[ds]=SNAPSHOTS_TOPICS&df[id]=ABS_SEIFA2021_LGA&df[ag]=ABS&df[vs]=1.0.0&pd=2021%2C&dq=72330.&ly[cl]=SEIFA_MEASURE&ly[rw]=SEIFAINDEXTYPE&to[TIME_PERIOD]=false)

<sup>100</sup> Ibid

**Table 29: SEIFA Indexes for the MacDonnell LGA**

Index	Score <sup>101</sup>	Decile <sup>102</sup>	Percentile <sup>103</sup>
Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage	727	1	4
Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage	566	1	4
Index of Economic Resources	590	1	5
Index of Education and Occupation	861	1	6

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>

The Ljirapinta region faces significant economic challenges that directly impact workforce participation and opportunity, particularly for its predominantly Aboriginal population. While the region generates substantial economic output through industries like mining and public services, local employment opportunities remain limited, with Aboriginal residents experiencing low labour force participation and high youth disengagement. High cost of living, transportation expenses and socio-economic disadvantage, exacerbate these challenges and impact access to education, training and employment.

## Investment and Opportunity: Current Funding Allocations

The funding landscape in Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole is characterised by broad regional investment. Most government funding is delivered through regional programs, making it difficult to determine how much each community receives from each grant and subsequently the direct impact on specific communities. 7 grants with clear community-specific allocations were identified through the available data, totalling \$9.9M for Ntaria (no specific investment allocations were identified for Utju or Wallace Rockhole).

### Regional Funding Allocations

The following sectors received the largest regional and interstate funding allocations:

- **Indigenous Health (\$115.0M):** Supporting comprehensive regional primary health care programs, youth health initiatives, smoking reduction programs, child and maternal health priorities, early childhood development initiatives and community safety programs.<sup>104</sup>
- **Indigenous Employment and Business (\$57.0M):** Predominantly supporting the Central Land Council’s Ranger’s regional program, with a smaller allocation of \$0.55M going towards the Ngurratjuta Retail Jobs Trial.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Ibid

<sup>102</sup> Ibid

<sup>103</sup> Ibid

<sup>104</sup> Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.). Projects and Grants. Northern Territory Government. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/43?tab=projects;>  
<https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/20?tab=projects;>[https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/174?tab=projects.](https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/174?tab=projects;)

<sup>105</sup> Ibid

- **Medical Research (\$10.7M):** Supporting Aboriginal-led culturally responsive research to improve health and social outcomes for Aboriginal people in Central Australia and Barkly regions.<sup>106</sup>
- **Indigenous Communities (\$10.4M):** Primarily supporting regional family violence prevention legal services with a smaller allocation of \$0.53M supporting the interstate program *Shields for Living, Tools for Life Healing Camps*.<sup>107</sup>
- **Child Health, Development and Wellbeing (\$7.2M):** Supporting Early intervention, intensive home and community-based family support service for vulnerable families in selected communities in NT and the APY Lands, SA.<sup>108</sup>
- **Aged Care (\$3.0M):** Supporting a regional Indigenous employment initiative program focussed on creating Indigenous employment initiatives within the Aged Care sector.<sup>109</sup>
- **Regional Development (\$1.8M):** Sporting oval upgrades, shade structures and community infrastructure across selected MacDonnell Regional Council communities.<sup>110</sup>
- **Indigenous Education (\$1.6M):** Supporting regional school nutrition programs.<sup>111</sup>
- **Child Care (\$0.75M):** Supporting Congress' *Community Child Care Fund* to increase participation in early childhood education and care for First Nations children in remote locations.<sup>112</sup>
- **Local Government (\$0.72M):** Supporting MacDonnell Regional Council's LRCI Phase 4 Road Infrastructure project aimed at creating local short-term employment opportunities through construction projects.<sup>113</sup>
- **Community Development (\$0.7M):** Towards MacDonnell Regional Council's *Strengthening Families and Communities Brokerage Fund* to on-fund brokerage entities and service providers across communities in Central Australia to support family and community safety and strengthening.<sup>114</sup>
- **Infrastructure (\$0.5M):** To provide gravel re-sheeting, pavement reshaping and reconstructing runway strips for two aerodromes servicing Ntaria and Mount Liebig.<sup>115</sup>

Each sector investments consist of multiple grants awarded to several organisation that runs across a variation of timeframes. Each grant awarded to an organisation may then be utilised in as many as up to 25 communities.

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid

<sup>107</sup> Ibid

<sup>108</sup> Ibid

<sup>109</sup> Ibid

<sup>110</sup> Ibid

<sup>111</sup> Ibid

<sup>112</sup> Ibid

<sup>113</sup> Ibid

<sup>114</sup> Ibid

<sup>115</sup> Ibid

### Regional Funding Allocations (\$M)

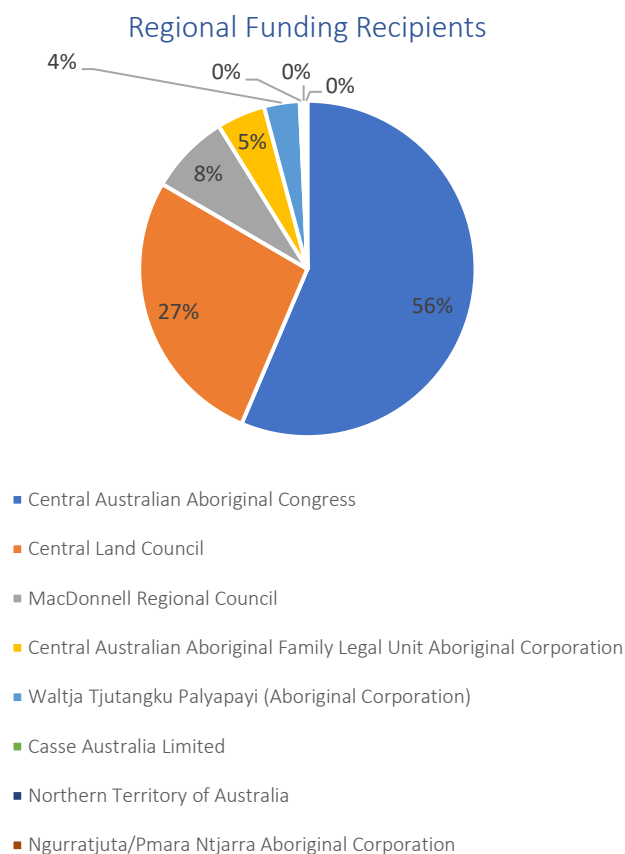


**Figure 16: Regional Investments (\$M) in Ljirapinta**

Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole.. [www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile](http://www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile)

Approximately \$210 million in regional funding allocations benefitting Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole were awarded to:

1. Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (\$119.1M)
2. Central Land Council (\$57.1M)
3. MacDonnell Regional Council (\$15.3M)
4. Central Australian Aboriginal Family Legal Unit Aboriginal Corporation (\$9.9M)
5. Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation (\$7.2M)
6. Casse Australia Limited (\$0.53M)
7. Northern Territory of Australia (\$0.5M)
8. Ngurratjuta/Pmara Ntjarra Aboriginal Corporation (\$0.49M)



**Figure 17: Regional Funding Recipients (\$M) in Ljirapinta**

Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profiles for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole*. [www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile](http://www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile)

5 of the 8 regional funding recipients (63%) listed above are Aboriginal Corporations or Indigenous-controlled organisations, receiving approximately 92% of total regional funding (\$193.7M out of \$210M). This includes four Aboriginal Corporations and the Central Land Council, an Indigenous-Controlled Statutory Authority.

### Community-Specific Grants

Seven grants were allocated specifically for Ntaria, with a cumulative funding amount of approximately \$9.89 million. These grants are distributed across Indigenous employment and business, education, humanities, regional development, and community infrastructure:

- **Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre Aboriginal Corporation, *Tjuwanpa Women's Rangers* (\$3.9M):** Based in Ntaria, this program provide employment opportunities for Aboriginal women in conservation and land management.<sup>116</sup>
- **Wanta Aboriginal Corporation, *Ntaria Stronger Communities for Children* (\$1.6M):** This program is focussed on early childhood development, school readiness and supporting local families.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>116</sup> BushTel (n.d.). Hermannsburg - Projects and Grants. Northern Territory Government. <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/43?tab=projects>

<sup>117</sup> Ibid

- [Iltja Ntjarra Aboriginal Corporation, \*Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support\* \(\\$1.16M total\)](#): Supporting Iltja Ntjarra Aboriginal Corporation to provide services to Ntaria watercolourists and engage Indigenous arts workers.<sup>118</sup>
- [100% Finke River Culture and Adventures Pty Ltd, \*Tour Guiding Employment, Training and Mentor Strategy\* \(\\$1.1M\)](#): Providing tour guide employment, training and mentoring opportunities for the Larapinta Trail and Hermannsburg Precinct.<sup>119</sup>
- [MacDonnell Regional Council, \*Ntaria Sporting Oval Upgrades\* \(\\$1.0M\)](#): Community infrastructure funding for upgrades to the sports precinct, including changerooms, toilet facilities and shaded areas.<sup>120</sup>
- [Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support, \*Hermannsburg Potters Aboriginal Corporation\* \(\\$0.78M\)](#): To support the Hermannsburg Potters to provide services to artists based in the community and engage Indigenous arts workers.<sup>121</sup>
- [Wanta Aboriginal Corporation, \*Capital Works\* \(\\$0.4M\)](#): For Capital Works including construction of accommodation and office space in Ntaria. This grant is aimed at activities that focus on getting Indigenous Australians into work, fostering Indigenous business and assisting Indigenous people to generate economic and social benefits from effective use of their land, particularly in remote areas.<sup>122</sup>

### Local Job Creation Opportunities

The following funded projects<sup>123</sup> explicitly create local employment pathways under their funding criteria, however most initiatives are regionally funded:

- [Central Land Council Ranger Program](#) (\$57.1M, 2021–2028): Provides local employment in land management and cultural preservation through Indigenous ranger roles across 15 regions, employing 90 Aboriginal rangers.
- [Tjuwanpa Women’s Rangers](#) (\$3.9M, 2021–2028): Offers sustained employment opportunities targeting Indigenous women in ranger positions.
- [Tour Guide Employment, Training and Mentoring Strategy](#) (\$1.1M): Creates Indigenous employment opportunities in Ntaria within the tourism industry.
- [Indigenous Employment Initiative Program](#) (\$3.0M): Creates Indigenous jobs within MacDonnell Regional Council’s aged care services operating across eight remote communities, including Ntaria and Utju.
- [The LRCI Phase 4 Road Infrastructure program](#) (\$0.7M): Provides temporary employment in regions with limited job opportunities, however the short-term nature of these roles limits their long-term impact.
- [The Ngurratjuta Retail Jobs Trial](#) (\$498,085.50): Operates within the Community Development Program framework where participation is often mandatory for JobSeeker recipients and may not represent new or formal employment opportunities.

While the above funded initiatives *explicitly* create local employment pathways, many more have the potential to create local jobs if local recruitment and Indigenous participation are prioritised:

- [Shields for Living Tools for Life Healing Camps](#) (\$0.54M): Creates opportunities for local facilitators and

<sup>118</sup> Ibid

<sup>119</sup> Ibid

<sup>120</sup> Ibid

<sup>121</sup> Ibid

<sup>122</sup> Ibid

<sup>123</sup> Data Compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Projects and Grants – Ntaria, <https://bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/43?tab=projects>

cultural mentors to be employed in healing camp programs facilitated in in the community.

- [Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support - Hermannsburg Potters \(\\$0.78M\)](#): Generates employment opportunities for local artists in Ntaria.
- [Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support - Iltja Ntjarra \(\\$1.12M\)](#): Provides funding that could be utilised to employ Aboriginal artists.
- [Capital Works - Accommodation and Office Space in Ntaria \(\\$0.38M\)](#): Could provide local jobs on the construction of accommodation and office facilities in Ntaria for Wanta Aboriginal Corporation.
- [Ntaria Stronger Communities for Children \(\\$1.61M\)](#): Could create positions for Indigenous education support officers and family engagement workers focused on improving school attendance and education outcomes.
- [Ntaria Sporting Oval Upgrades \(\\$1.00M\)](#): Could create local construction jobs in the planned upgrades to the Hermannsburg Sport Precinct including the construction of new changerooms, toilet facilities and shaded areas.
- [Community Child Care Fund \(\\$0.75M\)](#): This project supports the operations of Early Childhood Education and Care programs in remote communities and could create early childhood education and care employment opportunities for residents.
- [Children and Family Intensive Support \(\\$7.25M\)](#): Could create local employment opportunities for community support workers to deliver early intervention services within their or neighboring communities.
- [Family Violence Prevention Legal Service \(\\$9.86M\)](#): Could create local jobs including community liaison positions to ensure the culturally safe delivery of legal services and support in the community.
- [School Nutrition Program \(\\$1.68M\)](#): This program could create local jobs with the MacDonnell Regional Council in the delivery of a school nutrition program aimed at improving school attendance and education outcomes for children in the community.
- [Connected Beginnings Program \(\\$0.55M\)](#): Supports early childhood development for Indigenous children and could create early childhood education positions within the community.
- [Indigenous Smoking Reduction Program \(\\$4.2M\)](#): This is a combined funding allocation for two smoking reduction grants awarded to Central Australian Aboriginal Congress and could create roles for Indigenous workers to deliver smoking cessation programs and healthy lifestyle initiatives.
- [Emerging Child and Maternal Priorities \(\\$10.76M\)](#): This is a combined funding allocation for two Emerging Child and Maternal Priorities grants awarded to Central Australian Aboriginal Congress and could create roles for local Aboriginal health workers in targeted child and maternal health interventions.
- [MacSafe Community Safety Program \(\\$7.36M\)](#): Could create local jobs in the delivery of the MacDonnell regional Council's MacSafe Community Safety Program, previously Night Patrol.
- [Indigenous Youth Health Program \(\\$20.27M\)](#): Over \$20million in funding was awarded to Central Australian Aboriginal Congress to deliver programs that improve health outcomes for Indigenous Youth through targeted and community-driven activities, and could create employment opportunities in the local delivery of these activities.
- [Indigenous Comprehensive Primary Health Care \(\\$71.83M\)](#): Generates the largest employment potential in the operation and delivery of primary health care services within the community.
- [Recreational Precinct Shade Structure \(\\$0.80M\)](#): Could create more temporary employment opportunities with MacDonnell Regional Council in the installation of shade canopies to enable sports

carnivals, meetings, concerts and community events.

- [Steel Shade Shelters Supply and Install \(\\$1.04M\)](#): Could create further opportunities for temporary local employment in the supply and installation of a 7x8m steel shade shelter.
- [Territory Wide Aerodrome Resheet Program \(\\$0.50M\)](#): Has the potential to create local employment in delivering gravel re-sheeting, pavement reshaping and reconstructing the runway strip for the Ntaria airstrip.

By focusing on local recruitment and capacity building, funded programs could address immediate both immediate employment needs while laying the groundwork for sustainable local employment growth. This is particularly important in a regional context where up to 87% of regional Aboriginal residents rely on government support as their main source of income. The concentration of health funding (\$115.0M) presents significant opportunities for local employment in health service delivery.

To maximise the impact of government and external investments, funding strategies should prioritise community-specific initiatives that directly create local jobs. Ambitious employment target, and a focus on community-based service delivery for government funded local projects may better ensure that existing investments translates into tangible economic opportunities for Aboriginal residents of Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole.

## 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 three communities, numerous community-driven initiatives have been identified that offer dual benefits: meeting essential community needs while creating meaningful employment pathways for residents.

### Penangke Cultural Consulting - Community Consultations

Desert Knowledge Australia commissioned Penangke Cultural Consulting to engage Ntaria community in 2024. The process included stakeholder interviews and discussions on existing work, potential employment, training needs, and barriers to participation. The following ideas were expressed at the community consultation forum held on 14 February 2024. The meeting was attended by several employer representatives, some of whom identified needs to develop their organisation, after which the community's needs were discussed. Attendees included representatives from The Hermannsburg Potters, Congress, Ntaria School, MacDonnell Regional Council, as well as individual community members.

During this consultation it was emphasised that ideas that come from within the community and can be led by the community will garner the required support and momentum to progress. Key community aspirations identified included:<sup>124</sup>

**Table 30: Penangke Consultation Notes from Ntaria Community Consultation**

Priority	Alignment to Cultural Framework	Item	Training Required	Potential Partners	Investment Required	Potential Impact
1.	Servicing the Community	Developing a Community Skills Directory	Information Privacy and record Keeping	Tjuwanpa Outstation Resources and Macdonell Shire Regional council	Labour and record-keeping Materials	Locals are engaged in jobs currently being carried out by community members from outside Ntaria.
2.	Building the Community	Commercial kitchen to provide healthy food, food education & employment	Food Safety Certificate Food Handlers Certificate Business Administration Training		Infrastructure, access to existing? Business model? or community support initiative?	Provide healthy food options to community  Improve health outcomes  Supply the school and aged care  Offer catering services for functions & events

<sup>124</sup> Penangke Consulting (2024). Community Consultations for Ntaria (Hermannsburg). Unpublished.

Priority	Alignment to Cultural Framework	Item	Training Required	Potential Partners	Investment Required	Potential Impact
						Provide facility to offer food education for healthy families
3.	Servicing the Community	Towing business	Heavy Rigid Vehicle License Business Administration Training			More affordable & accessible towing service for locals  Sub-contract remote services to larger businesses
	Servicing the Community	Laundromat	Machine Technician Business Administration Training			
	Caring for Family and Community	Hairdresser/barber shop	Hairdresser Barber Business Administration Training			
	Caring for Family and Community	Disability support work	NDIS Worker Screening Business Administration Training	Aged care Congress		Enable people with disabilities to stay on-Country and receive support.  Skills development & employment for local support providers.
	Servicing the Community	Wheelchair bus	Driver's License	Aged care Congress		
	Building the Community	Public swimming pool	Lifeguard Training Aquatic Technical Operations Training Swimming Pool Maintenance Front of House Business Administration Training			
	Caring for Family	Nursery for fresh vegetables	Gardeners, Business Administration Training			
	Caring for Family and Community/	Multipurpose sporting complex	Sports administration Training,			

Priority	Alignment to Cultural Framework	Item	Training Required	Potential Partners	Investment Required	Potential Impact
	Building the Community		Umpire training, Business Administration Training			
	Strong in Culture	Art gallery	Retail administration, Visual Art, Art Administration, Business Administration Training			Increase tourism. Build on the community's reputation for quality art. Increase exposure & opportunity for local artists.
	Strong in Culture	Taking young people on cultural excursions, teaching art, and teaching out bush	Teacher Training Vehicle Training			
	Building the Community	Men's Shed				
	Building the Community	Op Shop	Business Administration Training			
	Building the Community	Construction	Builder's License Course OHS/WHS Course Business Administration Training			
	Caring for Community	7-day Grocery Shop	Supply Chain Management Business Administration Training			

Source: Penangke Consulting (2024). Community Consultations for Ntaria (Hermannsburg). Unpublished.

## Additional Insights from Penangke Consultations:

Community identified training needs:<sup>125</sup>

- English literacy
- Computer skills
- Business administration and plan development
- Administration skills to apply for funding and jobs
- Resume writing & job application support
- Hairdressing/barber training
- Food safety
- Mining sector qualifications
- Water education (understanding sources, levels, purification)
- Management training (e.g. to become an Art Centre Manager)
- Training should be linked to jobs (employer-led)

Community identified barriers to Vocational Training and School-to-Work pathways:<sup>126</sup>

- Accessibility to CDU: enrolment is not easy to access, the enrolment process is not culturally sensitive.
- Courses are cancelled if enrolments don't meet minimum requirements.
- CDU training opportunities are not widely circulated.
- Enquiries to training institutions are not responded to in a timely manner - reports of up to 6 months for a response.
- Community has IT limitations (lack of computer equipment and computer skills) to register online and/or complete online training.
- There is a long wait for White Card training. By the time it comes around, people who registered are no longer interested.
- Once young people reach Centrelink eligibility age, it is very difficult to get them to think about paid employment or vocational training.

Other community identified barriers to local workforce planning included:<sup>127</sup>

- **Missed local employment opportunities:** Not enough local training and employment opportunities offered for the recent Territory Housing construction projects. Construction work is sporadic and when local staff do get work, it is usually on a short-term contract basis. Central Petroleum runs the nearby Palm Valley gas fields but does not engage with the community early enough regarding available employment opportunities. Work is sporadic and opportunities are also generally on a short-term, contract basis.

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<sup>125</sup> Penangke Consulting. (2024). Community Consultations for Ntaria (Hermannsburg) Unpublished.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid

<sup>127</sup> Ibid

- **Red Tape:** Frustrating extent of red tape in delivering training to community members
- **Culturally Aware Training Providers:** Lack of culturally sensitive training providers.
- **Lack of continuity:** The continuous rotating door of new trainers and education providers negatively impact on the effectiveness of education provision for community members.
- **Limited awareness of available support:** While there are support services available for remote residents there is limited community awareness of these services. Examples include limited awareness of community first development, Northern Territory Aboriginal Investment Corporation, Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network, or DITT's business support programs.
- **Concerns regarding changes to CDP:** Ongoing consistent approach needed while changes to the Community Development Program are being reviewed
- **Support Community Members into Management Positions:** Those community members in employment should be better supported to take on additional training and mentorship to move into more senior roles and management positions.
- **Complicated application processes for local jobs:** Job application processes and requirements are a barrier to employment.

Community identified opportunities for workforce planning:<sup>128</sup>

- **The Hermansburg Potters:** Five female artists from The Hermansburg Potters attended the community consultation meeting. They expressed a keen interest in expanding the capacity of the potter's studio which is currently occupying a small building on Kaltjarrinja Street. The Potters would like to offer art classes and produce more products for sale, however they are very limited in space. If they had more space to operate, including a separate men's and women's studio as well as a space for Elders to rest during the workday that would allow them to facilitate paid Art Classes for students and tourists on Country. It was suggested that there may be an opportunity to extend the current workshop building into the adjoining car park.
- **Tjuwanpa Outstation Nursery:** The Tjuwanpa Resource Centre has existing infrastructure for a nursery. If effectively managed and resourced, it was identified as having the potential to supply fresh produce and provide employment opportunities in Ntaria. Current activities at the nursery include harvesting local seeds and restoring the facilities which are in disrepair.
- **Central Australian Aboriginal Congress:** Noted that they are always in need of more male Aboriginal staff. It was also noted Congress would like to employed qualified local residents to do maintenance and repair jobs at the clinic, a community directory would be helpful so that local employment could be prioritised.
- **Central Petroleum:** Central Petroleum presents significant opportunity for local employment. By initiating earlier communication about upcoming employment opportunities, the company could provide community members with ample time to prepare job applications. Transitioning from sporadic, short-term contracts to more stable, permanent roles and investing in upskilling local workers would better enhance the local

<sup>128</sup> Ibid

workforce.

## OCARC Community Meetings

In 2023, community aspirations were highlighted during an OCARC meeting in Utju and Wallace Rockhole. Participants identified numerous initiatives offering opportunities for local workforce planning, including:<sup>129</sup>

- Purchase of assets for community management (e.g. grader/digger)
- Repair and maintenance of street lighting infrastructure
- Flood mitigation work in recreational areas
- Road maintenance
- Installation of telecommunications infrastructure to improve connectivity
- Additional transport services to improve existing bus service accessibility
- Installation of toilets, shower block and solar lighting facilities for sorry camp
- Establish youth programs and activities within the community to keep young people engaged
- Creation of local employment opportunities
- Establishment of local Centrelink services
- Repair and maintenance of houses including repair of water damage, leaks, pest control and installation of air-conditioning
- Repair and renovation of vacant houses for community use
- Repair water pump at Kulpajini outstation to ensure adequate water supply

With over 200 individuals registered as jobseekers, these projects could provide meaningful employment pathways while simultaneously delivering needed infrastructure upgrades, improved services and community development. By creating opportunities for local training and employment, such initiatives have the potential to foster economic participation, strengthen community capacity and ensure the benefits of government investment are maximised and retained locally.

## 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 all three communities. School action plans, developed collaboratively with community members, cultural authorities, school staff, and students, outline several local employment pathways.<sup>130</sup>

### Ntaria School community members prioritised:<sup>131</sup>

- Employing trained staff assist students with reading, writing and maths
- More Western Arranta people employed
- More school staff employed with government jobs

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<sup>129</sup> OCARC Community Meeting Notes (2023). Unpublished, not for wider circulation.

<sup>130</sup> Northern Territory Government, Department of Education. (n.d.). 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>

<sup>131</sup> Education NT (2024) Ntaria School Action Plan. [https://education.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/1369500/ntaria-school-action-plan.PDF](https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1369500/ntaria-school-action-plan.PDF)

- Increase training and development activities for school staff

Areyonga School community members prioritised:<sup>132</sup>

- Extra classroom staff to help students with a bilingual education, learning on and about our country, and intensive English literacy and numeracy support
- Full-time government jobs for community members at the school

Wallace Rockhole School community members prioritised:<sup>133</sup>

- Indigenous staff in the classroom to help with learning

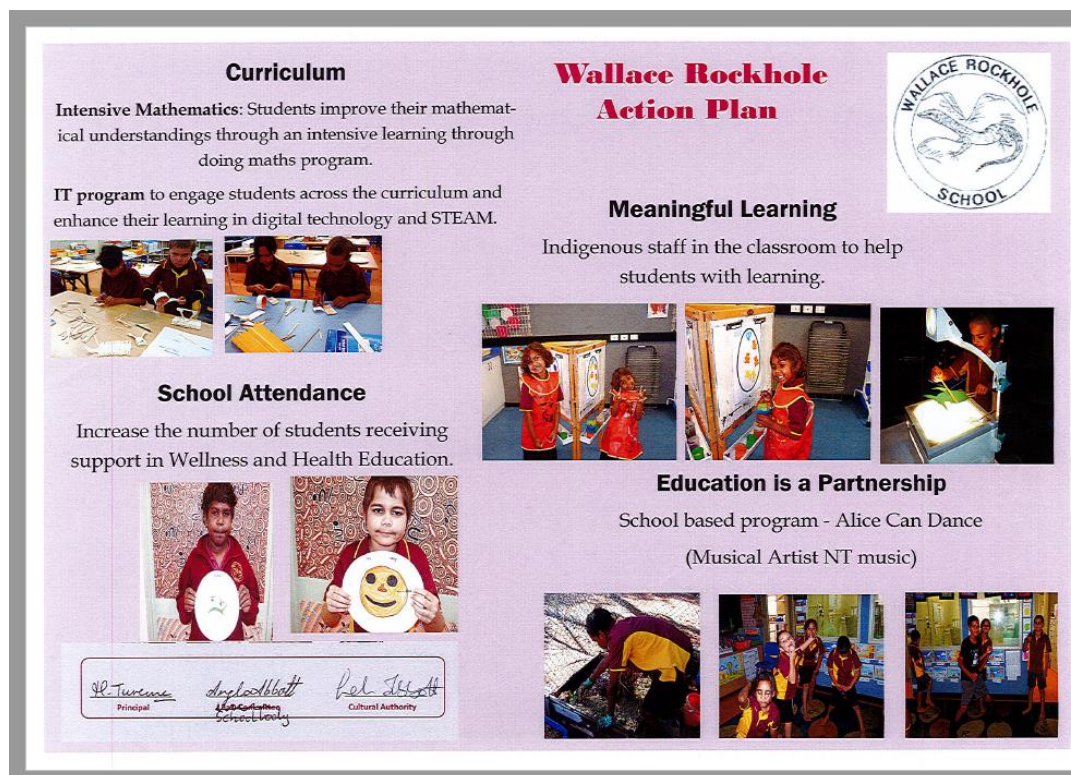


Figure 18: Wallace Rockhole School Action Plan

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

<sup>132</sup> Education NT (2024) Areyonga School Action Plan [https://education.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1369486/Utju-school-school-action-plan.PDF](https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1369486/Utju-school-school-action-plan.PDF)

<sup>133</sup> Education NT (2024) Wallace Rockhole Action Plan. [https://education.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/1369507/wallace-rockhole-school-action-plan.PDF](https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1369507/wallace-rockhole-school-action-plan.PDF)

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT EDUCATION ENGAGE GROW ACHIEVE CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS Culturally Responsive Learning

## NTARIA SCHOOL 2024 ACTION PLAN

**Aspirations**  
 Strong in Western Arranta identity and understanding.  
 Confidence and ability to participate and work in and beyond community.  
 Knowledge and skills to support self-determination and community development.

**Ntaria School**  
 Ntaria kultjirvama  
 "We are learning"

**PRIORITY 1 Individual child plans and pathways**

**PRIORITY 2 Intensive learning support**

**PRIORITY 3 Increased employment of local people**

**PRIORITY 4 Western Arranta Language & Culture approach to education**

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT EDUCATION ENGAGE GROW ACHIEVE CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS Culturally Responsive Learning

## How are we going to get there?

**PRIORITY 1** Individual child plans and pathways  
**ACTIVITIES**  
 • Students, families and school staff plan for each student's learning.  
 • School staff work with families to make sure students are ready for learning.  
 • Clear pathways plans for older students to grow confidence and know what choices they can make about their future at and beyond school.

**PRIORITY 2** Intensive learning support  
**ACTIVITIES**  
 • There are extra people in the classroom to help all students with reading, writing and maths.  
 • The school has trained people to help students with all types of learning.  
 • School staff are able to give more support for children who need extra help.

**PRIORITY 3** Increased employment of local people  
**ACTIVITIES**  
 • More Western Arranta people are employed at our school.  
 • More school staff are employed with government jobs.  
 • Our school staff have more training and development activities.

**PRIORITY 4** Western Arranta Language & Culture approach to education  
**ACTIVITIES**  
 • There is more learning on and about our country and culture at school.  
 • The community works with the school to decide on education decisions.  
 • Local voice and local knowledge in how language and culture is taught at Ntaria School.  
 • Everyone in community is helping our children to succeed at school.

Principal School Body/Lead Committee Cultural Authority

Figure 19: Ntaria School Action Plan

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

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT EDUCATION ENGAGE GROW ACHIEVE CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS Culturally Responsive Learning

**Areyonga School**  
 Urala Kutja Nintirnganyi  
 Learning Together

## Areyonga School Action Plan

**School Values:**  
 Nganana Pukulpa (I'm proud)  
 Nganana Pukultju (I'm kind)  
 Nganana Ngaltunyju (I'm caring)

**Aspirations**  
 • Students are strong in their own culture and identity and confident bilingual learners  
 • Every child, every day  
 • Forster healthy partnerships between the school and community

**PRIORITY 1 School attendance**

**PRIORITY 2 Meaningful learning**

**PRIORITY 3 The right people**

**PRIORITY 4 Education is a partnership**

**PRIORITY 5 Wellbeing and inclusion**

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT EDUCATION ENGAGE GROW ACHIEVE CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS Culturally Responsive Learning

## 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 a bilingual education  
 • There is more learning on and about our country  
 • Intensive literacy and numeracy support

**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

Figure 20: Areyonga School Action Plan

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

## MacDonnell Regional Council - Regional Plan

The MacDonnell Regional Council (MRC) 2024-25 Regional Plan outlines significant opportunities for remote workforce planning across its communities, including Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole. The plan emphasises employment and support for local enterprises, with key objectives under Goal 1: Developing Communities highlighted below.

Achieving the MRC’s Aboriginal employment targets for commercial and tendered contracts, alongside prioritising local employment in the implementation of its Community Infrastructure, Roads, and Drainage Maintenance Plans, has the potential to significantly advance workforce planning in the region. These measures would facilitate increased economic participation among Aboriginal residents, fostering skill acquisition and enhancing socio-economic outcomes. Prioritising local employment ensures that investments in infrastructure directly benefit the community, strengthening local economies and addressing systemic barriers to workforce inclusion.

These initiatives contribute to capacity-building by equipping individuals with transferable skills, enhancing long-term employability and economic resilience. Integrating workforce planning objectives into council infrastructure projects aligns with broader strategies for sustainable and inclusive regional development, positioning MRC as a pivotal agent in driving positive socio-economic outcomes for its communities.

**Table 31: MacDonnell Regional Council (MRC) 2025-26 Regional Plan**

Initiative	Description <sup>134</sup>	Target Completion Date
Develop Community Infrastructure Plans	Complete 10-year MRC Community Infrastructure Plans for all communities.	June 2027
Establish a Road and Drainage Maintenance Plan	Develop a long-term maintenance plan for council-controlled roads and stormwater drainage.	June 2025
Create Employment Opportunities	Collaborate with CDEP providers and funding partners to build a job-ready workforce.	June 2028
Promote Aboriginal Leadership	Ensure 90% of MRC’s community-based core service Team Leader roles and above are held by Aboriginal staff.	June 2028
Increase Aboriginal Employment in Contracts	Achieve 50% Aboriginal employment in commercial contracts undertaken by MRC. Achieve 10% Aboriginal labour participation in tendered contracts.	June 2026/June 2028
Support Local Aboriginal Enterprise	Host one business enterprise workshop per ward annually to connect community members with business knowledge experts. Support one business enterprise project in each community each year.	June 2028

Source: MacDonnell Regional Council. (2024). MacDonnell Regional Council 2024-25 Regional Plan. MacDonnell Regional Council. <https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/uploads/misc/2024-25-MRC-REGIONAL-PLAN-FINAL-DIGITAL-SPREADS.pdf>

<sup>134</sup> MacDonnell Regional Council. (2024). MacDonnell Regional Council 2024-25 Regional Plan. MacDonnell Regional Council. <https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/uploads/misc/2024-25-MRC-REGIONAL-PLAN-FINAL-DIGITAL-SPREADS.pdf>

These aspirations present valuable opportunities that require targeted recruitment and procurement policies to ensure benefits reach Aboriginal community members. By establishing Aboriginal employment targets, creating pathways for local business participation, and providing appropriate training, these initiatives can address community needs while creating sustainable employment that strengthens local economies.

The substantial investments flowing into these communities combined with the clearly articulated community aspirations create a foundation for sustainable workforce planning. Realising this potential requires deliberate approaches that prioritise Aboriginal employment throughout implementation, aligning workforce strategies with community-identified priorities.

## Workforce Planning Opportunities

The analysis of community demographics, education and training, the local employment landscape, economic context and community aspirations for Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole reveals numerous strategic opportunities for workforce planning. The following opportunities are proposed to address key workforce planning challenges while building on community strengths and existing investments. These workforce planning opportunities would benefit from implementation through a phased approach with community leadership and governance to better ensure sustainable outcomes.

The top three opportunities for job creation, as identified in the report and community consultations, are:

1. **Creating a community skills directory** to connect local people with available jobs and employers.
2. **Supporting local enterprise development** (such as food services, tourism, and arts businesses).
3. **Establishing paid traineeships and hands-on job training** to build skills and create direct employment pathways, especially for young people.

These initiatives have the greatest potential for immediate and sustained job creation, while also supporting broader community aspirations for economic participation and self-determination. Further:

### 1. Low labour force participation and limited job opportunities

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Low labour force participation and limited job opportunities. The existing – one point of contact via the CDP provider has systemic complexities.	1.1 Match training to local jobs: Ensure vocational training is aligned with the needs of local employers, especially in education, health, and community services.
	1.2 Use current investments to create jobs: Link major funding and projects to local job targets by hiring local Aboriginal people and using locally owned businesses wherever possible.
	1.3 Support local enterprise: Encourage and support local Aboriginal-owned business development in areas such as food services, tourism, land management, and the arts.

### 2. Barriers to accessing training and education

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Barriers to accessing training and education	2.1 Bring training into communities: Offer training on Country to make it easier for people to take part, especially for entry-level and culturally specific roles.
	2.2 Provide targeted support for foundational skills: Address gaps in literacy, numeracy, and digital skills through tailored programs.

	2.2 Simplify and reduce lead times for enrolment and application processes for training and education provision that leads directly into jobs or the development of local enterprise.

### 3. Limited pathways for youth and school leavers

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Limited pathways for youth and school leavers	3.1 Learn while you earn: Create paid traineeships and hands-on job training so people can build skills and get work experience at the same time.
	3.2 Facilitate school-to-work transitions: Develop and simplify clear pathways from school to employment, including apprenticeships and paid traineeships.
	3.3 Support youth engagement: Invest in programs that keep young people engaged in education and training.

### 4. Cultural and systemic barriers to employment

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Cultural and systemic barriers to employment	4.1 Support culturally safe career pathways: Develop job pathways that respect local culture and values, helping more people feel comfortable and supported at work.
	4.2 Increase the number of Aboriginal staff in schools, health, and community services to foster culturally safe environments.
	4.3 Ensure training and employment providers are culturally responsive to the region they are working in.

### 5. Income disparity and high cost of living

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Income disparity and high cost of living	5.1 Prioritise local employment in funded projects to increase household incomes.

	5.2 Support the development of local businesses that address essential needs (e.g., food services, transport, retail) to reduce living costs.
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#### 6. Transport and infrastructure barriers

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Transport and infrastructure barriers	6.1 Improve local transport options to support access to jobs, training, and essential services.
	6.2 Invest in community infrastructure that supports workforce participation (e.g., training centres, digital access points).
	6.3 Leverage planned infrastructure projects for local job creation.

#### 7. Underutilisation of existing skills and community assets

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Underutilisation of existing skills and community assets	7.1 Create a community skills directory to connect local talent with job opportunities.
	7.2 Map and promote existing skills and qualifications within the community.
	7.3 Encourage local leadership in workforce and economic development initiatives.

#### 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.
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### 9. Improve Information and Communication Systems

Challenge	Suggested Actions
Data gaps and limited evidence base for planning	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 Continue to collect and review local data on workforce participation, skills, and training needs.
	9.3 Engage in ongoing community consultation to ensure workforce plans remain relevant and responsive.
	9.4 Organise Road Shows, information sessions and workshops to provide direct access to information and support.
	9.5 Partner with local organisations for data collection and validation.

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 Ntaria, Utju and Wallace Rockhole could be addressed, creating meaningful employment pathways that contribute to community well-being and economic development.

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