

COMMUNITY WORKFORCE PLAN
RODINGA -
LTYENTYE APURTE (SANTA
TERESA), APUTULA (FINKE),
TITJIKALA AND AMOONGUNA



Desert
Knowledge
Australia

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Introduction

Purpose of the Report

The Northern Territory Government (NTG) has engaged Desert Knowledge Australia (DKA) to develop Community Workforce Plans for communities in Central Australia. The initial pilot reports focus on Ntaria 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.

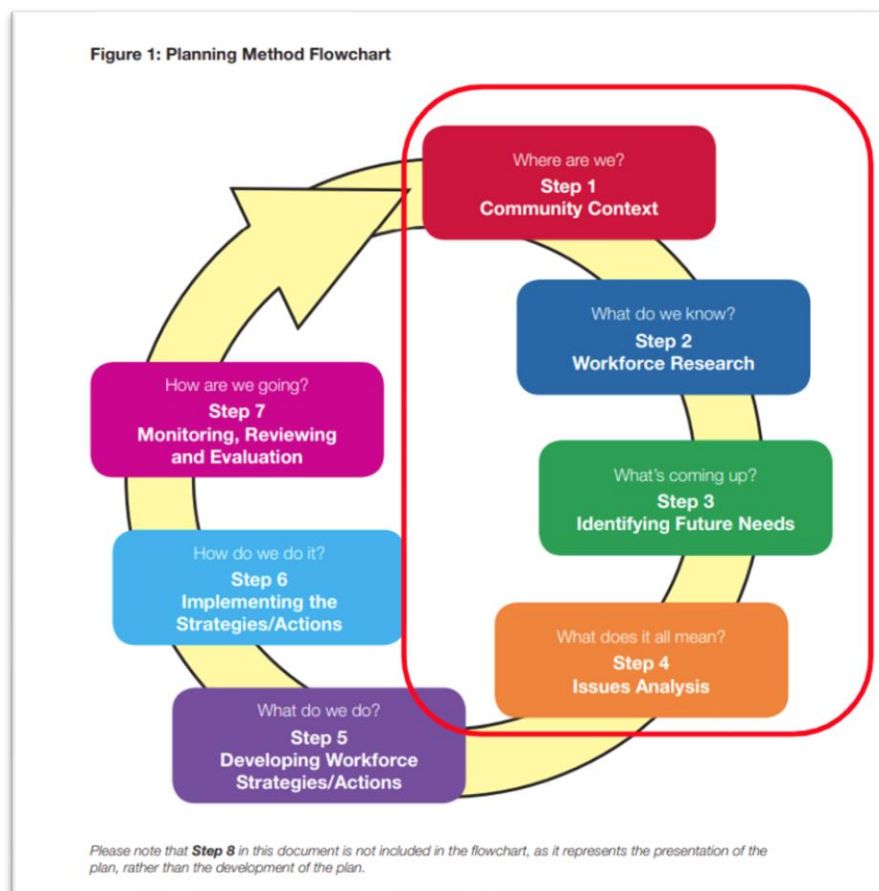


Figure 1: Planning Method Flowchart

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:

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

Data Collection and Review

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

1. Collection of publicly available data (e.g., ABS demographics, Department of Social Services (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
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 information, which may not fully reflect current demographic and employment conditions in 2025.

2. Desktop Research Constraints

As a desktop research exercise, this report has not incorporated direct community consultation to validate findings. The absence of primary data collection means current skills, training preferences, employment barriers, and community capacity have not been directly assessed from community members' perspectives. This limitation is particularly significant when considering cultural factors that may influence workforce participation and the appropriateness of proposed solutions.

3. Data Gaps

Several important data points are unavailable, including:

- Comprehensive qualification levels of current job holders
- VET completion rates
- 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.

4. Data Perturbation

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) applies data perturbation to census data to protect individual privacy, particularly in small communities. This involves small random adjustments, which can cause totals from disaggregated data to differ slightly from published totals. While these adjustments do not significantly impact broader analyses, minor inconsistencies may arise in smaller datasets. These discrepancies are a deliberate feature of the data and have been considered in this report.

5. Implementation Planning Limitations

While the report identifies strategic opportunities for workforce planning, it does not include detailed implementation planning elements such as cost estimates, prioritisation frameworks, or assessment of past workforce initiative effectiveness in these specific communities. These

limitations highlight the importance of viewing this report as a foundation for further community-led consultation to validate findings and collaboratively develop implementation strategies that are responsive to local priorities and capabilities.

Executive Summary

This report examines the workforce planning landscape across Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa), Aputula (Finke), Titjikala and Amoonguna communities in the Northern Territory, providing a foundation for workforce plans that support improved economic participation.

Workforce Research

- Across the four communities there are 792 Aboriginal residents of working age (15+).
- 28.3% (224 people) are active in the labour force, with participation rates ranging from 13% (Amoonguna) to 45% (Titjikala).
- A total of 194 Aboriginal residents are employed across the region, mostly in part-time roles.
- The Community Development Program (CDP) supports 567 participants (as of March 2025), contributing to workforce engagement efforts.
- Over 80% of Aboriginal residents earn less than \$500 per week, with nearly half earning between \$150 and \$299.

Education and Training Landscape

- School attendance is low (50%–59%) across the four communities, with limited regular attendance and poor NAPLAN results.
- Three of the four schools offer no secondary education beyond Year 7.
- Pathways to VET are limited, with inconsistent uptake in key areas like early childhood and education support.
- Between 2022–2024, moderate VET engagement was recorded in sectors such as community services and local government.
- 2021 Census data show seven Aboriginal residents across the four communities reported VET course attendance; none reported attending university.
- Formal qualification levels are low, particularly in Aputula, Titjikala, and Amoonguna.

Employment Landscape

- Employment across the four communities is heavily reliant on the public sector, with over 84% of the workforce in public administration, health care, and education.
- 46 job vacancies were identified in early 2025, many of which were entry-level roles or roles accessible through short-term, fee-free training courses offered by Registered Training Organisations. These include roles in youth services, community safety, aged care, and administration.
- Despite available roles and training opportunities, workforce participation remains low relative to the 567 CDP participants, indicating barriers to employment.

Economic Context

- The Rodinga region generates \$102.4M in Gross Regional Product (GRP), with 37% produced by non-resident workers.
- Indigenous employed residents contribute high per capita value (\$94,370), but overall labour force participation is low (19%).
- Median household incomes are between \$814 and \$1,178 per week; 60% of households have an income under \$1,000.
- MacDonnell Shire ranks in the bottom 1% nationally on the SEIFA index, reflecting entrenched disadvantage.

Investment and Funding

- Approximately \$254M in government investment supports the region through regional and community-specific grants.
- Major funding areas include health (\$108.7M), Indigenous employment and economic development (\$59.1M), and education (\$30.1M).
- Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (43%), Central Land Council (22%), and NPY Women's Council (15%) manage most of this funding.
- Community-specific funding totals \$10.75M, with Ltyentye Apute receiving the largest share (\$7.62M) targeting education, aged care, and arts and employment.
- Greater emphasis on linking investments to measurable training and workforce planning outcomes is important to ensuring long-term economic benefit for residents.

Identifying Future Needs

- Office of the Central Australian Regional Controller (OCARC) community consultations identified priorities such as housing repairs, infrastructure, improved Centrelink services, and better access to health and education services.
- Residents expressed interest in training for local jobs in housing maintenance, fencing, welding, education support, and liaison roles.
- School Action Plans emphasised the need for more Aboriginal educator roles, cultural education, and permanent local roles as opposed to casual ones.
- The MacDonnell Regional Council's 2025–26 Plan aims to increase Aboriginal employment, support enterprises, and link training with job creation through infrastructure and community development projects.

Workforce Planning Opportunities

Opportunities exist to create pathways to employment and strengthen the economic and social resilience of Rodinga communities:

1. Expand On-Country Learning Models:
 - Partner with CDU and RTOs to deliver VET and accredited training in community.
 - Establish mobile or digital learning hubs in Aputula, Titjikala, and Ltyentye Apute.
 - Introduce bilingual curriculums to support literacy and numeracy development.
 - Invest in training locals as classroom aides, cultural educators, and education leaders.
2. Community-Led Employment Pathways:

- Link training outcomes to guaranteed employment in funded local projects.
 - Embed “Training and Employment” clauses in housing, roads, and maintenance contracts.
 - Establish a local employment brokerage service to match trained residents to job vacancies.
3. Invest in More Permanent, Full-Time Community Roles:
 - Convert casual support roles in schools and services into full-time positions.
 - Create structured career pathways (e.g. from Classroom Support Officers to qualified teacher).
 - Prioritise Aboriginal recruitment and professional development in community roles.
 4. Link Infrastructure Grants to Local Jobs:
 - Mandate local hiring and training requirements in infrastructure contracts.
 - Develop ‘learn while you build’ models through apprenticeships and traineeships.
 - Set up skilled local housing and maintenance teams.
 5. Create Local Workforce Hubs:
 - Establish a “community front door” model to coordinate training, services, and job matching.
 - Fund a Community Connector role to guide residents through pathways.
 - Leverage CDP infrastructure and LDM governance for integrated workforce planning.
 6. Create School-to-Work Training and Employment Pathways:
 - Fund transition programs for school leavers (mentoring, work readiness, VET).
 - Employ youth support officers to guide career and study pathways.
 - Embed two-way learning and VET credit into on-Country education.
 7. Strengthen Service Access Roles:
 - Develop community-based roles in NDIS, Centrelink, health, and disability support.
 - Train local bilingual workers as interpreters and service navigators.
 - Offer micro-credentials for service delivery and communication.
 8. Support Local Enterprise and Tourism:
 - Fund enterprise incubators for tourism, arts, and culture-based small businesses.
 - Provide business training in marketing, finance, and event management.
 - Encourage pop-up businesses tied to local events (e.g. Aputula Desert Race).
 9. Coordinate Investment and Monitor Impact
 - Establish a regional workforce taskforce to align training and job creation.
 - Track Aboriginal employment and training to job conversion rates.
 - Require accountability reporting in all funded projects and run annual review forums.

Introduction

Step 1: Community Context

Community Profiles and Demographics

Step 1 provides an overview of Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa), Aputula (Finke), Titjikala and Amoonguna 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	Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna																
Languages	The primary languages spoken in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ltyentye Apurte is Eastern and Central Arrernte. • Aputula is Pitjantjatjara, Yangkuyntjatjara, and Southern Luritja. • Titjikala is Southern Luritja and Pitjantjatjara • Amoonguna is Eastern Arrernte. 																
Traditional Owners	The traditional owners of Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna is the Arrernte people. The traditional owners of Ltyentye Apurte are the Eastern Arrernte people.																
Population	Table 1: Total Community Populations <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Ltyentye Apurte</th> <th>Aputula</th> <th>Titjikala</th> <th>Amoonguna</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Population</td> <td>609¹</td> <td>260²</td> <td>196³</td> <td>229⁴</td> <td>1294</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Profiles ABS: I01 for Ltyentye Apurte (Ltyentye Apurte), Aputula (Aputula), Titjikala and Amoonguna</i></p>						Ltyentye Apurte	Aputula	Titjikala	Amoonguna	Total	Population	609 ¹	260 ²	196 ³	229 ⁴	1294
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Indigenous status	Table 2: Community Aboriginal Population <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Ltyentye Apurte</th> <th>Aputula</th> <th>Titjikala</th> <th>Amoonguna</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Aboriginal Population</td> <td>561⁵</td> <td>179⁶</td> <td>186⁷</td> <td>222⁸</td> <td>1148</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Profiles ABS: I01 for Ltyentye Apurte (Ltyentye Apurte), Aputula (Aputula), Titjikala and Amoonguna</i></p>						Ltyentye Apurte	Aputula	Titjikala	Amoonguna	Total	Aboriginal Population	561 ⁵	179 ⁶	186 ⁷	222 ⁸	1148
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¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ltyentye Apurte (Ltyentye Apurte), I01 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Aputula (Aputula), I01 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Titjikala, I01 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Amoonguna, I01 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

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⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Amoonguna, I01 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

<p>Location</p>	<p>Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna are situated in the Central Desert region of the Northern Territory, with Alice Springs serving as the main regional centre.</p> <p>Ltyentye Apurte Ltyentye Apurte is located southeast of Alice Springs on the Ltyentye Apurte Aboriginal Land Trust. The community borders the pastoral properties of Allambi, Deepwell, Todd River and Undoolya.</p> <p>Aputula Aputula is located near the South Australian border on and surrounded by the pastoral properties of Lilla Creek, Umbeara and New Crown with the Simpson Desert just west of the community.</p> <p>Titjikala Titjikala is located south of Alice Springs on a Community Living Area within the Maryvale pastoral property. Just southwest of Titjikala is Chambers Pillar and the Old Ghan train line</p> <p>Amoonguna Amoonguna is located on the Amoonguna Aboriginal Land Trust just to the southeast of Alice Springs.</p>
<p>Access</p>	<p>Ltyentye Apurte The Community is located 85km from Alice Springs by road and it takes approx.1 hour to drive there. The access road to the community consists of sealed roads and 50% unsealed road. A few creek crossings make the road impassable in extreme wet conditions.</p> <p>Aputula Aputula is located 417 km from Alice Springs. The first 270 km, via the Stuart Highway to Kulgera Roadhouse, is sealed road, while the remaining 147 km from Kulgera to Aputula is dirt road.</p> <p>Titjikala: The community is located 130 km southeast of Alice Springs via the Old South Road and takes approximately 1.5 hours to drive there. The road is mostly unsealed and becomes impassable after heavy rains.</p> <p>Amoonguna: It is 20km from Alice Springs off the Ross Highway via a sealed access road.</p> <p>The Centre Bush Bus provides weekly transport service between Ltyentye Apurte,</p>

	<p>Aputula, Titjikala and Alice Springs. The service to Ltyentye Apurte operates on Tuesdays, and to Titjikala and Aputula on Fridays. Residents of these communities use this service to access essential services in Alice Springs.</p> <p>There are no bus services that travel to Amoonguna, instead people either use private transport or Alice Springs Taxi on demand services.</p>																		
	<p>Table 3: Bus Timetable and Costs⁹</p>																		
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Infrastructure and Services

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Freight Services	<p>Freight services to the communities of Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula and Titjikala are primarily provided by three key operators, Stanes Transport, Central Desert Transport and Centre Bush Bus.¹⁰</p>																						
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Table 6: Local Community Businesses				
No	Ltyentye Apurte	Aputula	Titjikala	Amoonguna
1	Ltyentye Apurte Community Store (Atyenhenge-Atherre Aboriginal Corporation)	Aputula Community Store (Aputula Aboriginal Corporation)	Maryvale Station Store (G&C Pastoral Co. Pty Ltd)	Amoonguna Health Centre (Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation)
2	AAAC (Atyenhenge-Atherre Aboriginal Corporation)	National Indigenous Australians Agency	CatholicCare NT - Community Development Programme	Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation
3	CatholicCare NT	CatholicCare NT	CatholicCare NT - Men's Centre	Tangentyere Artists (Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation)
4	Keringke Arts Aboriginal Corporation	Aputula Health Centre (Central Australia Health Service)	Aputula River Mission of Lutheran Church of Australia	MacDonnell Regional Council
5	Ltyentye Apurte Community Care – Women's Centre and Aged Care (Ltyentye Apurte Arelhe-Ingkerrenyemekemhe Apmere Aboriginal Corporation)	Aputula River Mission of Lutheran Church of Australia	MacDonnell Regional Council	Amoonguna School
6	Men's Shed (Atyenhenge-Atherre Aboriginal Corporation)	MacDonnell Regional Council	National Indigenous Australians Agency	

Local Businesses

	7	Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School	Finke School	Tapatjatjaka Art and Craft Centre (Tapatjatjaka Aboriginal Corporation)	
	8	Purple House Dialysis Unit (Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation)	NPY Women's Council	Titjikala Health Centre (Central Australia Health Service)	
	9.	Saint Theresa's Catholic Church (Catholic Church of the Diocese of Darwin)	Aputula Aboriginal Corporation	Titjikala School	
	10.	Ltyentye Apurte Health Centre (Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation)	Aputula Housing Association Inc.	Titjikala Store (Titjikala Community Store Aboriginal Corporation)	
	11.		Aputula Art Centre		
	12.				
	13.				
<p>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte (Ltyentye Apurte), Aputula (Aputula), Titjikala. And Amoonguna www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</p>					
Regional Business/ Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education • Central Land Council • Department of Children and Families • Department of Education • Department of Health • Department of Human Services (Centrelink) • MacDonnell Regional Council 				

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newmont Tanami Gold Mine Northern Territory Police, Fire Emergency Services 												
Health Services	<p>Table 7: Community Health Services</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ltyentye Apurte</th> <th>Aputula</th> <th>Titjikala</th> <th>Amoonguna</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ltyentye Apurte Health Centre (Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation)</td> <td>Aputula Health Centre (Central Australia Health Service)</td> <td>Titjikala Health Centre (Central Australia Health Service)</td> <td>Amoonguna Health Centre (Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Purple House Dialysis Unit (Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte (Ltyentye Apurte), Aputula (Aputula), Titjikala and Amoonguna. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</i></p>	Ltyentye Apurte	Aputula	Titjikala	Amoonguna	Ltyentye Apurte Health Centre (Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation)	Aputula Health Centre (Central Australia Health Service)	Titjikala Health Centre (Central Australia Health Service)	Amoonguna Health Centre (Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation)	Purple House Dialysis Unit (Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation)			
	Ltyentye Apurte	Aputula	Titjikala	Amoonguna									
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Purple House Dialysis Unit (Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation)													
<p>Education in Ltyentye Apurte is provided through the Catholic Educations Office, while education in Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna is provided through the NT Department of Education.</p> <p>Table 8: Community Education and Training Facilities</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ltyentye Apurte</th> <th>Aputula</th> <th>Titjikala</th> <th>Amoonguna</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School</td> <td>Finke School</td> <td>Titjikala School</td> <td>Amoonguna School</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte (Ltyentye Apurte), Aputula (Aputula), Titjikala and Amoonguna www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</i></p>	Ltyentye Apurte	Aputula	Titjikala	Amoonguna	Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School	Finke School	Titjikala School	Amoonguna School					
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Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School	Finke School	Titjikala School	Amoonguna School										
Children's Services	<p>Table 9: Community Children's Services¹¹¹²</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ltyentye Apurte</th> <th>Aputula</th> <th>Titjikala</th> <th>Amoonguna</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ltyentye Apurte Early Childhood Centre aka Catholic Preschool (CatholicCare)</td> <td>Early Childhood Centre aka MacKids Children's Services (MacDonnell Regional Council)</td> <td>Early Childhood Centre aka MacKids Children's Services (MacDonnell Regional Council)</td> <td>Not available</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ltyentye Apurte	Aputula	Titjikala	Amoonguna	Ltyentye Apurte Early Childhood Centre aka Catholic Preschool (CatholicCare)	Early Childhood Centre aka MacKids Children's Services (MacDonnell Regional Council)	Early Childhood Centre aka MacKids Children's Services (MacDonnell Regional Council)	Not available				
	Ltyentye Apurte	Aputula	Titjikala	Amoonguna									
Ltyentye Apurte Early Childhood Centre aka Catholic Preschool (CatholicCare)	Early Childhood Centre aka MacKids Children's Services (MacDonnell Regional Council)	Early Childhood Centre aka MacKids Children's Services (MacDonnell Regional Council)	Not available										

¹¹ KindiCare (n.d) Ltyentye Apurte Catholic Preschool. <https://kindicare.com/childcare/centres/Australia/NT/0872/santa-teresa/ltyentye-apurte-catholic-preschool>.

¹² NTcommunity (n.d). MacKids Children's Services <https://www.ntcommunity.org.au/service/childrens-services/#/location>

NT)

Source: KindiCare (n.d) Ltyentye Apurte Catholic Preschool. NTcommunity (n.d). MacKids Children's Services

Community Services

Table 10: Community Services

Ltyentye Apurte	Aputula	Titjikala	Amoonguna
MacDonnell Regional Council	MacDonnell Regional Council	MacDonnell Regional Council	MacDonnell Regional Council
Keringke Arts Aboriginal Corporation	Aputula Housing Association Inc.	CatholicCare NT	Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation
Ltyentye Apurte Community Care - Women's Centre and Aged Care (Ltyentye Apurte Arelhe-Ingkerrenyekekemhe Apmere Aboriginal Corporation)	Aputula Art Centre (Aputula Aboriginal Corporation)	Tapatjatjaka Aboriginal Corporation	
Men's Shed (Atyenhenge-Atherre Aboriginal Corporation)	NPY Women's Council	Titjikala Health Centre (Central Australia Health Service)	
CatholicCare NT	Aputula Health Centre (Central Australia Health Service)		
Ltyentye Apurte Health Centre (Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation)	CatholicCare NT		

Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte (Ltyentye Apurte), Aputula (Aputula), Titjikala and Amoonguna. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile

Table 11: Aboriginal Organisations Operating in Communities				
Aboriginal Organisations	Ltyentye Apurte	Aputula	Titjikala	Amoonguna
	Atyenhenge-Atherre Aboriginal Corporation	NPY Women's Council	Tapatjatjaka Aboriginal Corporation	Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation
	Keringke Arts Aboriginal Corporation	Aputula Aboriginal Corporation	Titjikala Community Store Aboriginal Corporation	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation
	Ltyentye Apurte Arelhe-Ingkerrenyekekemhe Apmere Aboriginal Corporation			
	Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation			
	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation			
<p><i>Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte (Ltyentye Apurte), Aputula (Aputula), Titjikala and Amoonguna. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile</i></p>				
Government Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centrelink (Services Australia) • Department of Children and Families • MacDonnell Regional Council • National Indigenous Australians Agency • Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services • NT Department of Education • NT Department of Health 			
Regional Council	MacDonnell Regional Council is responsible for delivering municipal services, providing local government services, and infrastructure management in Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, and Amoonguna.			
Visitor Accommodation	<p>In Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, and Titjikala, MacDonnell Regional Council has Visitor Accommodation available.</p> <p>In Aputula, alternative accommodation can be found at the Kulgera Roadhouse, which is 147 kms via an unsealed road.</p>			

	In Amoonguna, Commercial Accommodation can be accessed from Alice Springs, which is less than 20 km from the community ¹³
Power/Water	<p>Electricity at Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, and Amoonguna is supplied to all customers at the Northern Territory standard tariff and standard connection charges apply.</p> <p>Ltyentye Apurte and Amoonguna are connected to the Alice Springs electricity grid.</p> <p>Aputula and Amoonguna both have a plentiful groundwater source with good quality water. In Aputula the water is disinfected with sodium hypochlorite, in Amoonguna with chlorine, and both monitored monthly for microbes.</p> <p>Ltyentye Apurte and Titjikala has a plentiful groundwater source with adequate quality water, which is disinfected with sodium hypochlorite and monitored monthly for microbes.</p> <p>Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, and Titjikala have a fully reticulated sewerage system. Amoonguna has a septic tank effluent pumping system for the transfer of effluent to sewer ponds from septic tanks on houses and building.¹⁴</p>
Community Events	All four communities participate in the Central Australian Football League (CAFL). The 2025 season commenced in April. ¹⁵

Step 2: Workforce Research

This section presents workforce data for Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna including demographic details, labour force participation rates, and employment status. This information is useful for understanding the local workforce contexts.

Target Group

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

¹³ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profile – Ltyentye Apurte (Ltyentye Apurte), Aputula (Aputula), Titjikala, and Amoonguna www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile/

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Play AFL (n.d.) TIO CAFL. <https://play.afl/northern-territory/competitions/tio-cafl>

Target Group Definition

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

For the purposes of this report, the target group includes individuals who are currently registered under the CDP caseload and are either unemployed and actively seeking work, or eligible to work but not actively seeking employment.¹⁶¹⁷

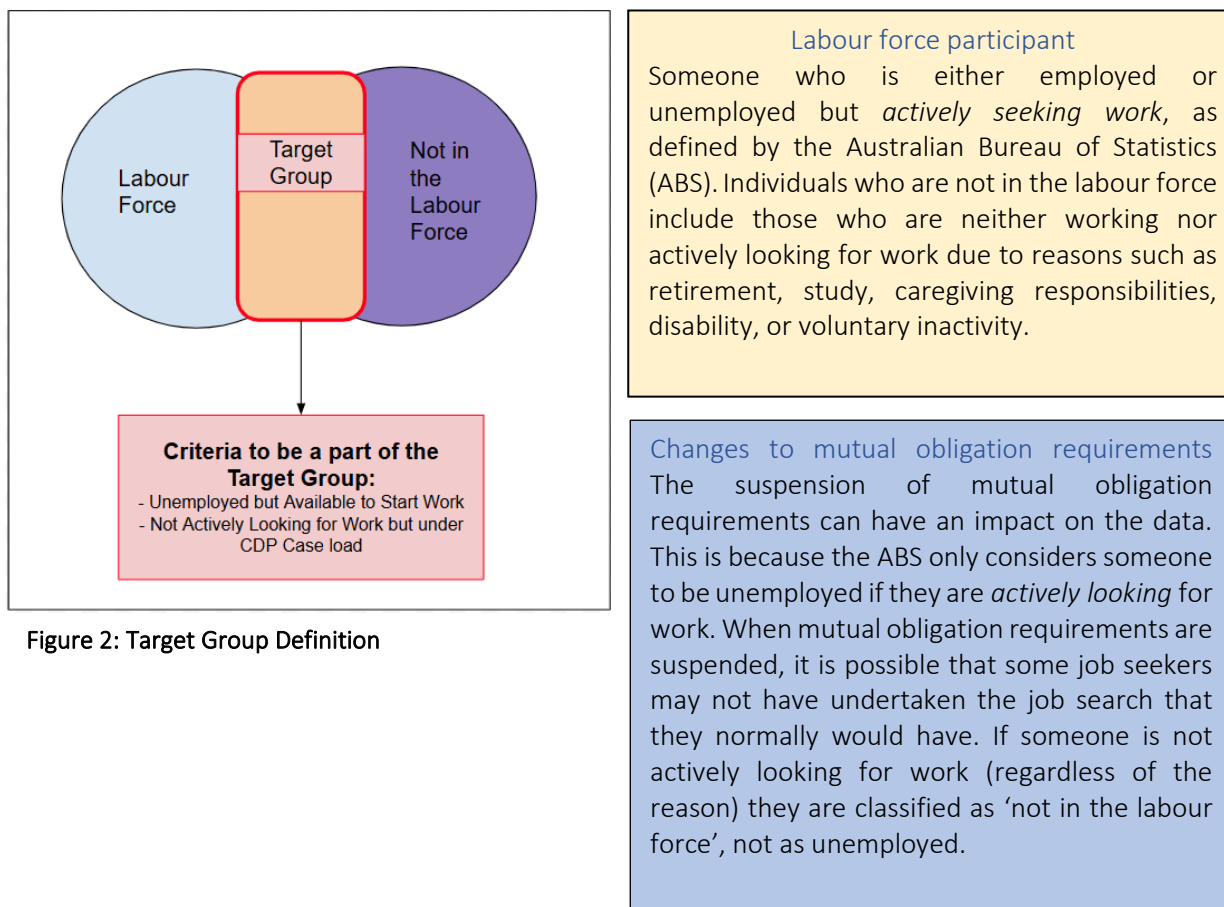


Figure 2: Target Group Definition

¹⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour Force Explained*. <https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/home/labour+force+explained>

¹⁷ Jobs and Skills Australia. *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

2.1 Workforce Demographics

Working Age Population

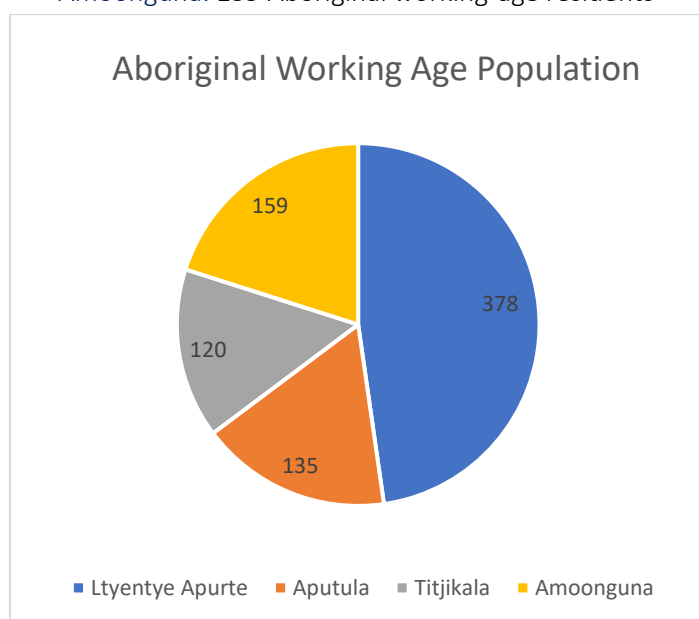
Across Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna, the working age population (15+) consists of 925 people, with 792 individuals (85.6%) identifying as Aboriginal. The distribution varies by community:

Ltyentye Apurte: 378 Aboriginal working-age residents¹⁸

Aputula: 135 Aboriginal working-age residents¹⁹

Titjikala: 120 Aboriginal working-age residents²⁰

Amoonguna: 159 Aboriginal working-age residents²¹



This report aims to address the barriers, successes and complexities faced by the 792 working aged Aboriginal residents of the Rodinga region with residential addresses in Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna.

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

28.3% (224 of 792) Aboriginal working-age residents are actively participating in the labour force, while 69.7% (552) are not engaged in the workforce. (2% (16) labour force status is not stated):

- Ltyentye Apurte: 132 in labour force, 237 not participating²²

¹⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ltyentye Apurte, I19 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

¹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Aputula, I19 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

²⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Titjikala, I19 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

²¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Amoonguna, I19 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

²² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ltyentye Apurte, I19 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

- **Aputula:** 29 in labour force, 100 not participating²³
- **Titjikala:** 52 in labour force, 66 not participating²⁴
- **Amoonguna:** 11 in labour force, 138 not participating²⁵

The non-participation rates are 63% in Ltyentye Apurte, 74% in Aputula, 55% in Titjikala, and 87% in Amoonguna.

Labour force participation numbers have been drawn from the 2021 Census data of respondents who indicated that they were either 'in the labour force' or 'not in the labour force.' The non-participation rates were calculated as a percentage of the total number of persons aged 15 years and above. This includes individuals whose labour force status was not stated.

Figure 4. compares labour force participation and non-participation figures across the communities.

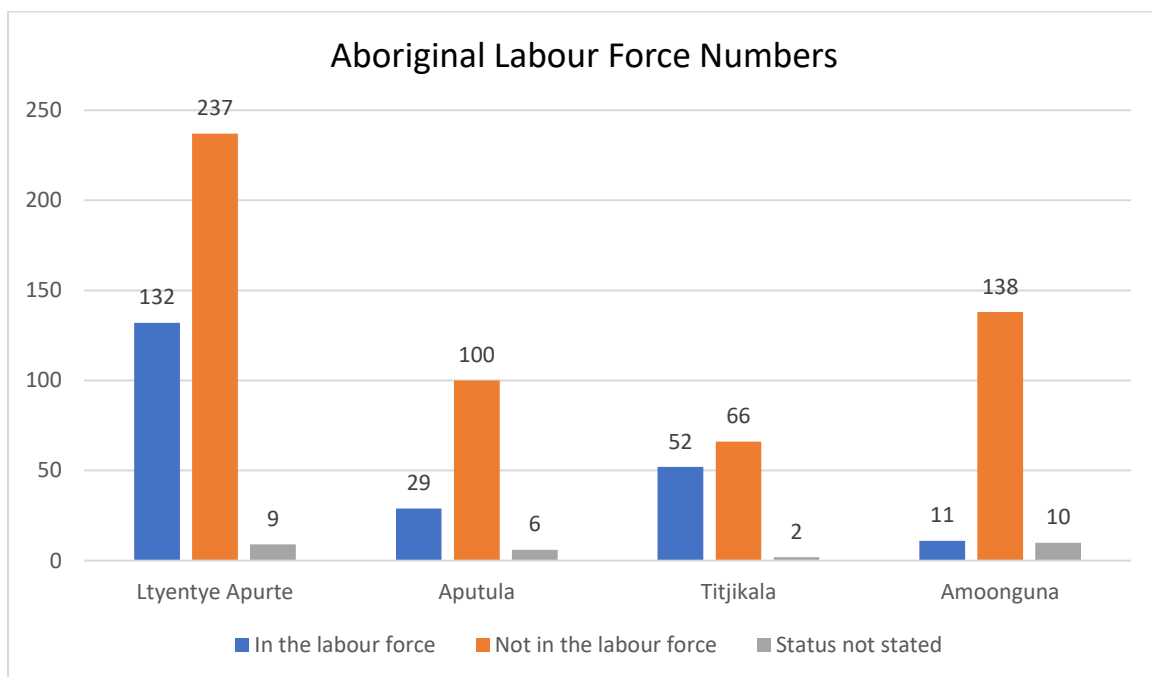


Figure 4: Aboriginal Labour Force Numbers

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

Employment Status

2021 census data show 194 Aboriginal residents employed across the four communities: 75 full-time, 116 part-time, and 3 responded as being away from work²⁶.

²³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Aputula, I19 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

²⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Titjikala, I19 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

²⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Amoonguna, I19 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

²⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna profiles, I21 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

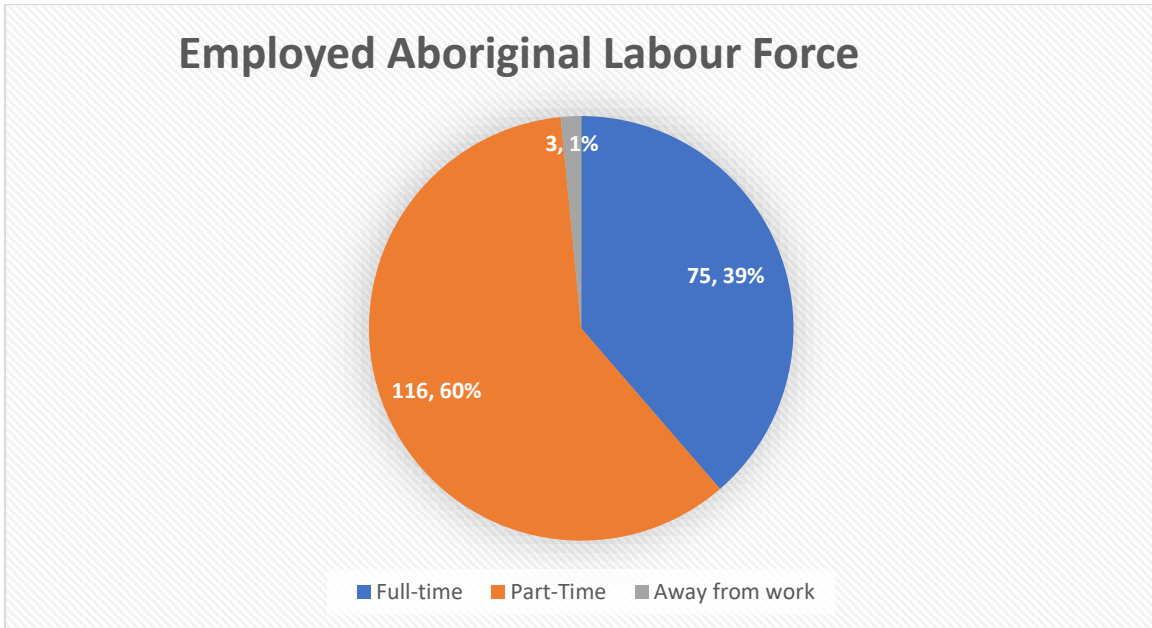


Figure 5: Employed Aboriginal Labour Force

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

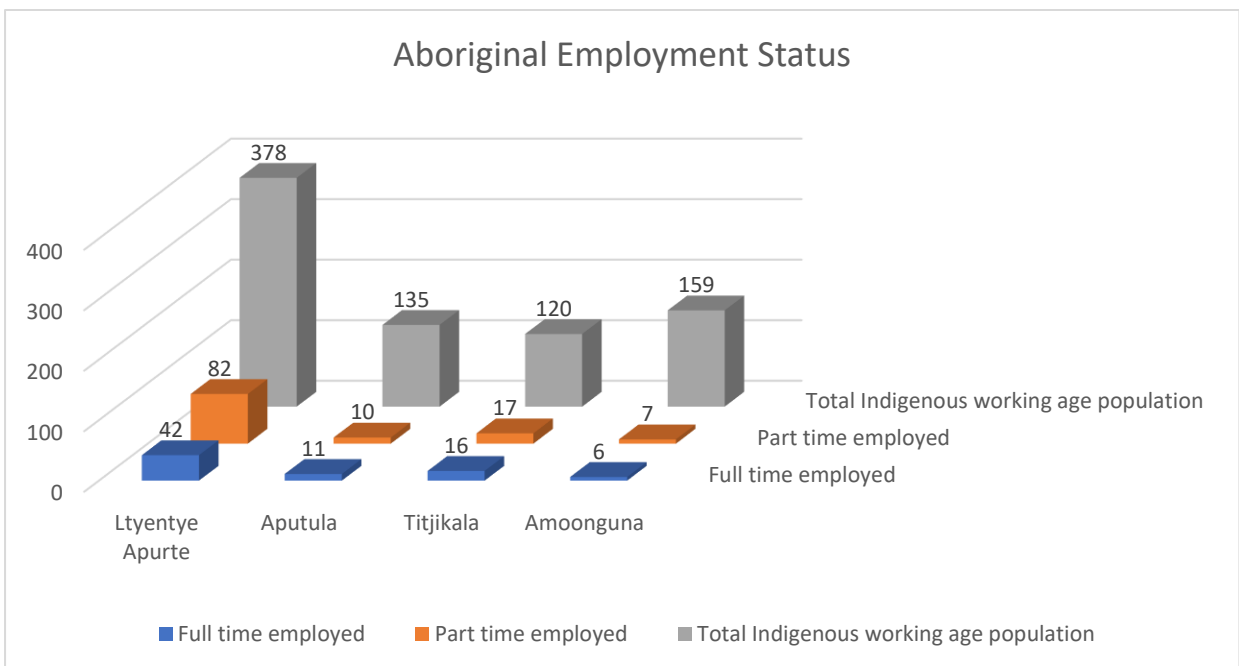


Figure 6: Aboriginal Employment Status

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

Community Development Program (CDP) Participants

The Community Development Program (CDP) is a key initiative supporting workforce engagement and skill development in remote Central Australian communities. CatholicCare NT is the primary provider of the service in Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, and Titjikala, while Tangentyere Council delivers the service in Amooinguna. These services prepare job seekers for work readiness and employment opportunities, focusing on supporting participants to gain skills, contribute to local projects and prepare for future employment opportunities.

CDP data for the Rodinga region was obtained through a formal request to the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). As at March 2025, there were 567 participants enrolled in the program across the area, providing the following insights into local CDP activity:

Table 12: Rodinga CDP Data

Rodinga 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
Flow Caseload ^{*27}	621	601	602	629	590	565	567
Participants Placed in Employment ^{**28}	<20	31	21	31	<20	36	33
Participants Achieving Outcomes ^{***29}	<20	28	<20	<20	<20	33	<20

Source: National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) Community Development Program (CDP) data request, prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia on behalf of Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations, Northern Territory Government, June 2025.

- The CDP flow caseload reduced from 602 in March 2024 to 567 in March 2025, a 5.8% reduction.
- CDP Employment outcomes varied by quarter, with the highest number of 36 participants placed in Oct-Dec 2024. Most other quarters saw between 21 and 33 placements, though some data is suppressed when fewer than 20 individuals were placed (reported as '<20'). This occurred (<20) in the July–September quarter in both 2023 and 2024. The most recent data was 33 placements in March 2025.
- Participants maintaining work over a period were consistently low, with values often reported as <20. Two quarters, Oct–Dec 2023 and Oct–Dec 2024, recorded outcomes of 28 and 33 respectively.

Employment placement data demonstrates the strongest performance among all clusters analysed, with confirmed placements of 21-36 per quarter in most periods and two quarters showing suppressed numbers. Broader programme outcomes show similar strength with 28 and 33 participants achieving outcomes in October-December 2023 and October-December 2024 respectively.

The broader regional context shows that CDP participants in the South-East Alice Region NT decreased from 469 in July 2023 to 431 as of June 2024³⁰.

²⁷ *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).

²⁸ **Participants Placed in Employment - This is a distinct count of participants placed into a job based on the community where they were residing at the time.

²⁹ *** 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.'.

³⁰ 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

Table 13: 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
26-South East Barkly Region NT	416	390	404	392	396	402	392	396	406	402	404	411
27-Far West Alice Region NT	616	614	598	576	576	563	570	576	571	565	578	556
28-North Barkly Region NT	760	760	756	728	749	732	721	733	739	760	746	757
29-Gulf Region NT	470	477	476	475	474	475	474	480	484	487	470	480

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

Jobseeker Recipients

Jobseeker and Youth Allowance recipients in the MacDonnell Regional Council Local Government Area (LGA) increased from 1,143 (27.6% of population aged 15-64) in March 2020 to 1,523 (36.8%) in December 2024.³¹

Table 14: JobSeeker and Youth Allowance Recipients in the Northern Territory

JobSeeker					
Current month	December 2024		March 2020		
Region - LGA/SA2	Job Seeker and youth allowance recipients	% of 15-64 age population	Job Seeker and Youth allowance recipients	% of 15-64 age population	Change
Northern Territory	23,650	14.5	19,925	12.2	+3,725
Belyuen	23	21.7	18	17.0	+5
Wagait	47	18.7	37	14.7	+10
Darwin Waterfront Precinct	15	5.8	14	5.4	+1
Coomalie	147	18.9	113	14.5	+34
Twi Islands	815	47.7	599	35.0	+216
Victoria Daly	730	38.4	494	26.0	+236
West Daly	1,102	53.7	735	35.8	+367
Central Desert	1,188	40.4	908	37.7	+280
MacDonnell	1,523	36.8	1,143	27.6	+380

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

³¹Profile.id. (2024). JobSeeker and Youth Allowance recipients in the RDA Northern Territory. <https://profile.id.com.au/rda-northern-territory/job-seeker?Geocode=70620>

Individual Incomes

Figure 7 below presents the distribution of personal incomes across the four communities based on the 2021 Census data.³²

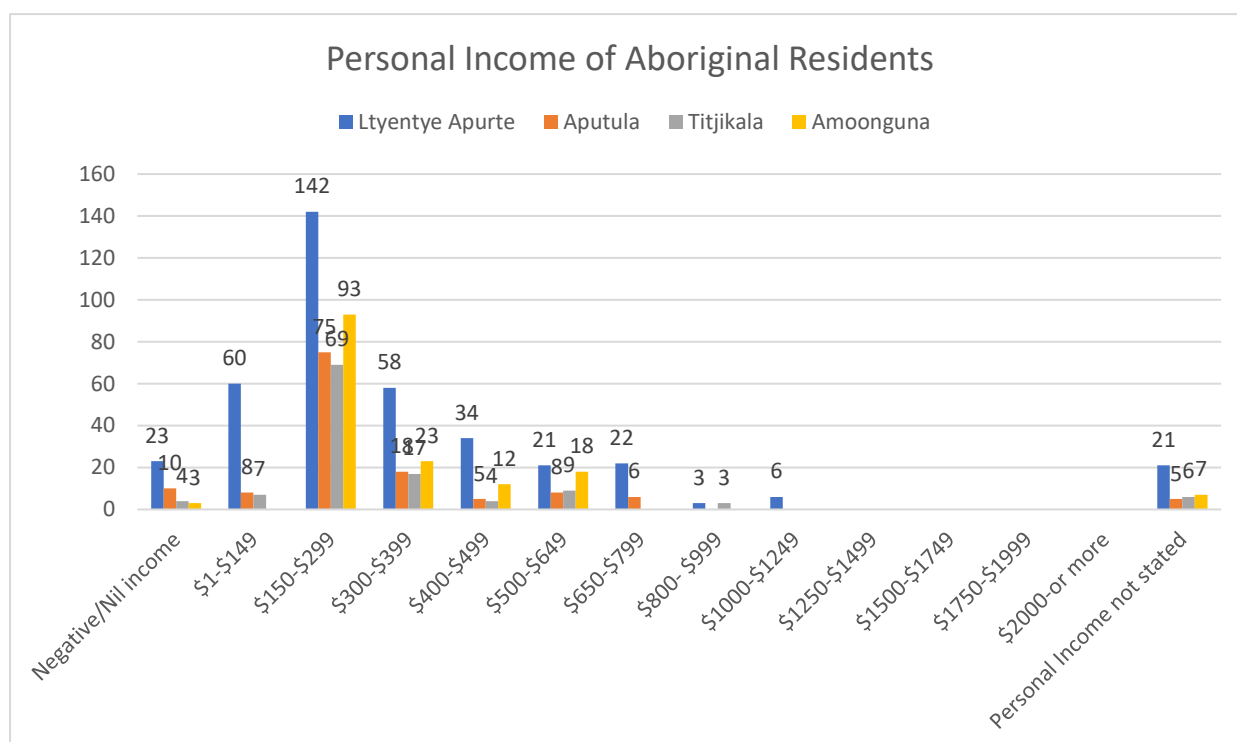


Figure 7: Personal Income of Aboriginal Residents

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

2021 Census data on Aboriginal personal incomes shows³³:

- On average, 83% of Aboriginal residents (665 individuals) across the four communities reported a personal income of less than \$500 per week. This closely reflects the proportions in each individual community: Ltyentye Apurte 81% (317), Aputula 86% (116), Titjikala 85% (101), and Amoonguna 84% (131), showing a variance of no more than 5%.
- The most common personal income range across the four communities is \$150-\$299 per week, with an average of 47% of Aboriginal residents (379 individuals) falling into this bracket. However, there is notable variation between Ltyentye Apurte with 36% (142 people) compared to 56% (75) in Aputula, 58% (69) in Titjikala and 60% (93) in Amoonguna.
- 9.3% of total regional Aboriginal residents (75 individuals) reported personal incomes of under \$150 per week, with the largest community percentage of 15% (60 people) from Ltyentye Apurte. Amoonguna had zero people receiving incomes between \$1-\$149.
- 5% of total regional Aboriginal residents (40 individuals) reported negative or no personal incomes, with the highest community percentage of 7.4% (10 people) being in Aputula, followed

³² Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte (Ltyentye Apurte), Aputula (Aputula), Titjikala and Amoonguna:108 Total Household Income (weekly by sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons)

³³ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte (Ltyentye Apurte), Aputula (Aputula), Titjikala and Amoonguna:108 Total Household Income (weekly by sex for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons)

by 6% (23 people) in Ltyentye Apurte.

- 11.25% of total regional Aboriginal residents (90 individuals) reported earning between \$500 and \$999 per week, which closely reflected the percentages in each community. The highest number of residents was Ltyentye Apurte at 11.79% and the lowest was Titjikala at 10%.
- 6 people (0.75%) earn between \$1,000 and \$1,249 per week. All 6 residents were from Ltyentye Apurte.
- No residents earned \$1,250 or more per week.

The above demographic and employment data presented highlights several key considerations for workforce planning:

1. Labour Force Potential: 28.3% (224) of Aboriginal working-age residents are currently participating in the labour force. This untapped labour supply represents an opportunity to increase local economic participation and growth.
2. A Need for Tailored Approaches: Each community has distinct demographic and employment profiles requiring customised workforce planning strategies rather than one-size-fits-all solutions. For example, Amoonguna has the highest non-participation labour force rate at 87%, and fewer active community services due to its proximity to Alice Springs (20km).

2.2 Skills in the Community

This section analyses education and training levels across Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna 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. Core competencies in literacy, numeracy, and access to higher levels of schooling and vocational training are essential for equipping students with the skills needed for future employment. The data presented below from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024) highlights key hurdles in future workforce readiness for students, including low school attendance rates, limited secondary education options, and a lack of vocational training opportunities within the communities. 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 15: 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
Ltyentye Apurte ³⁴	0-4 years	55	13	24%
	5-14 years	126	122	97%

³⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ltyentye Apurte. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

	15-24 years	105	20	19%
Aputula ³⁵	0-4 years	12	0	0%
	5-14 years	33	29	88%
	15-24 years	29	4	14%
Titjikala ³⁶	0-4 years	25	10	40%
	5-14 years	33	33	100%
	15-24 years	21	0	0%
Amoonguna ³⁷	0-4 years	22	4	18%
	5-14 years	43	38	88%
	15-24 years	32	3	9%

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

Table 16: School Profile Data

Metric	Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School ³⁸	Finke School ³⁹	Titjikala School ⁴⁰	Amoonguna School ⁴¹
Location	Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa)	Aputula (Finke)	Titjikala	Amoonguna
Year Range	T-10	T-7	T-7	T-6
Enrolment Numbers	116	42	24	25
Aboriginal Students	96%	100%	100%	100%
Non-English Language Background	78%	94%	100%	100%
Student-to-Teacher Ratio	11.4	6.6	6.8	2.8
Attendance Rate (Semester 1, 2024)	52%	53%	50%	59%
Students Attending 90% or more of the time	9%	2%	8%	25%
ICSEA Value (National Average)	570 (1000)	682 (1000)	587 (1000)	557 (1000)

³⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Aputula. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

³⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Titjikala. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

³⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Amoonguna. I01 Selected Person Characteristics by Indigenous Status by Sex. Canberra: ABS, 2021

³⁸ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024), Ltyentye Apurte School Profile, My School 2024. www.myschool.edu.au/school/50142

³⁹ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024), Finke School Profile, My School 2024. www.myschool.edu.au/school/50090

⁴⁰ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024), Titjikala School Profile, My School 2024. www.myschool.edu.au/school/50123

⁴¹ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024), Amoonguna School Profile, My School 2024. www.myschool.edu.au/school/50076

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

- **Cultural Context:** All four schools serve predominantly 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.
- **Low Socio-Educational Advantage:** The low ICSEA values means the schools fall within the lowest 1-6% of all schools nationally in terms of socio-educational advantage, placing them in the bottom decile and in some cases, bottom 1% of Australian schools. This reflects systemic socio-economic challenges such as poverty, limited access to resources, and geographic isolation, which hinder academic achievement and reduce opportunities for students to transition into further education or employment.
- **Attendance Challenges:** Attendance rates across the region reflect significant disruption to educational continuity, with overall attendance between 50–59% and low proportions of students attending school regularly (i.e., 90% or more of the time). Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula and Titjikala has fewer than 9% of students attending regularly, indicating that irregular attendance is widespread. While Amoonguna shows a slightly higher rate of regular attendance (25%), consistent engagement remains a challenge. These patterns are shaped by a combination of remoteness, cultural factors, and socioeconomic disadvantage, further underscored by very low ICSEA values (ranging from 570 to 682, well below the national average of 1000).
- **Access to Secondary Schooling and VET in Schools:** Only Ltyentye Apurte offers secondary education up to Year 10. The lack of access to secondary schooling creates a barrier to further education for students. It also limits pathways to VET which can serve as a vital bridge between school and future employment.

Literacy and Numeracy

NAPLAN Performance data indicates that scores across all four schools were below national average and low participation rates. National averages have been provided in brackets next to the NAPLAN scores in the table below. The NAPLAN results for Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School are from 2024, while the most recent available scores for Titjikala School is 2023, Finke school is 2021, and Amoonguna School is 2017.

Table 17: NAPLAN Scores

Subject	Year Level	Ltyentye Apurte ⁴² Catholic School T-10 (2024 Results)	Finke School ⁴³ T-7 (2021 Results)	Titjikala School ⁴⁴ T-7 (2023 Results)	Amoonguna School ⁴⁵ T-6 (2017 Results)
Reading	3	233 (404) * ⁴⁶	No scores provided	No scores provided	70 (431)
	5	310 (492)	256 (511)	322 (496)	No scores provided
	7	325 (535)	No scores provided	No scores provided	N/A
	9	No scores provided	N/A	N/A	N/A
Writing	3	198 (416)	No scores provided	No scores provided	291(414)
	5	295 (485)	306 (480)	No scores provided	No scores provided
	7	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided	N/A
	9	378 (574)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spelling	3	220 (401)	No scores provided	No scores provided	287 (416)
	5	301 (486)	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided
	7	328 (540)	No scores provided	No scores provided	N/A
	9	438 (567)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grammar	3	222 (409)	No scores provided	No scores provided	140 (439)
	5	307 (498)	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided
	7	275 (537)	No scores provided	No scores provided	N/A
	9	320 (555)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Numeracy	3	242 (404)	No scores provided	No scores provided	288 (409)
	5	299 (489)	No scores provided	No scores provided	No scores provided
	7	360 (540)	No scores	No scores	N/A

⁴² Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024) Student results: Ltyentye Apurte. My School. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50142/naplan/results>

⁴³ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024) Student results: Aputula. My School. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50090/naplan/results/2021#results>

⁴⁴ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024) Student results: Titjikala. My School. <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50123/naplan/results>

⁴⁵ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2024), Student results: Amoonguna. My School <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50076/naplan/results>

⁴⁶ * The score in the bracket is the 'all Australian students' score.

			provided	provided	
	9	393 (565) Finke	N/A	N/A	N/A
Participation Rate		72% (95%)	100% (95%)	83% (95%)	100% (95%)

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

The data shows:

- **A significant performance gap:** Most of the NAPLAN scores are significantly lower than national averages across all subjects and year levels. These indicate students are performing well below grade level, likely reflecting challenges in foundational literacy and numeracy skills.
- **Lower participation rates:** Ltyentye Apurte’s participation rate (72%) is below the national expectation, suggesting many students are not engaged or attending on test days. Lower participation can both mask full performance trends and indicate broader attendance or engagement issues.
- **Incomplete data:** Most schools have incomplete or outdated data, indicating potential issues with test administration, student participation, potential small student cohorts or reporting inconsistencies. Amoonguna School’s NAPLAN scores last reported data from 2017 (8 years ago). Aputula has reported 2 out of a possible 21-year level/ subject scores and Titjikala reported 1 of 21, indicating missing results for many year levels/subjects.
- **Remote education challenges:** This data reflects the broader trend of educational disparities for Indigenous and remote students highlighted through the National NAPLAN results.⁴⁷ As English is not the first language for most students, assessment results should be interpreted within the broader linguistic context of the communities. The 2021 Census indicates that Indigenous languages are the primary languages spoken at home with an average of 89% of Aboriginal residents across the four communities indicating that they primarily speak an Australian Indigenous language at home.⁴⁸

The data highlights a pattern of educational disadvantage across these remote schools, characterised by extremely low academic performance, particularly in the early years, alongside gaps in assessment and

⁴⁷ 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/>

⁴⁸ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, Amoonguna I05 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

reporting, and inconsistent student participation. These challenges reflect broader systemic barriers commonly faced by remote communities, including socioeconomic disadvantage, cultural and linguistic diversity, remoteness, and chronic attendance issues. The context of low literacy and numeracy outcomes has significant implications for future workforce planning. It underscores the need for targeted, sustained support that addresses foundational learning needs and recognises the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of students.

As such, employment pathways should be flexible, culturally responsive, and inclusive, while also providing opportunities for ongoing skill development to support long-term participation in the workforce.

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

This section provides an overview of Vocational Education and Training (VET) activity in the Rodinga region, including the remote Northern Territory communities of Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, and Amoonguna. It details the general VET program participation and the specific apprenticeship and traineeship pathways that support local workforce planning.

Across 2022-2024, 26 Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs were undertaken by students utilising DET funding.

Table 18: Student count for DET Funded VET Programs in Rodinga

Program:	2022	2023	2024
4WD Operations on Unsealed Roads	-	5	5
Certificate I in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care	12	-	-
Certificate I in Retail Services	5	7	-
Certificate I in Workplace Skills	21	5	9
Certificate II in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care	5	-	-
Certificate II in Civil Construction	-	-	5
Certificate II in Community Services	5	16	17
Certificate II in Local Government	-	15	14
Certificate II in Resources and Infrastructure Work Preparation	-	-	25
Certificate II in Retail Services	5	9	7
Certificate II in Visual Arts	-	-	10
Certificate II in Workplace Skills	-	7	5
Certificate III in Civil Construction Plant Operations	6	12	--
Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care	5	-	-
Certificate III in Individual Support	5	5	5
Certificate III in Learning an Australian First Nation's Language	-	-	8
Certificate III in Local Government	-	-	6
Certificate III in Retail	5	5	5
Certificate IV in Conservation and Ecosystem Management	-	6	-
Certificate IV in Local Government	-	-	5

Diploma of Local Government	-	-	5
Essential Skills for Community Aged Care Workers	-	-	7
Heavy Vehicle Driving Skills	-	13	-
Learner Support	8	6	-
License to Drive a Multi Combination Vehicle	-	5	-
Traffic Controller Skill Set	-	5	-
Traffic Management Work Zone 2 & 3	-	5	-

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

Table 19: A&T count for Apprenticeships and Traineeships in Rodinga

Program:	2022	2023	2024	2025
Certificate II in Retail Services	5	5	5	5
Certificate III in Hairdressing	5	5	5	5
Certificate III in Local Government	5	-	-	5
Certificate III in Retail	-	-	5	5
Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs	5	5	-	-
Certificate IV in Local Government	-	-	-	5
Certificate IV in Retail Management	-	-	5	-

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

**The A&T count for all other programs from 2022-2025 was zero.

Source for Table 18 & Table 19: Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations. (2025). Data provided to Desert Knowledge Australia for report purposes only. [Unpublished raw data].

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

The information shows:

- Certificate II in Community Services and Certificate I in Workplace Skills had consistent enrollments across all three years. They also had the highest total enrollments across the three years with 38 and 35 enrollments respectively. This was followed by Certificate II in Local Government which had 29 enrollments.
- Enrollments in Certificate II in Early Childhood Education and Care, and Certificate I and II in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care only received enrollments in 2022, with zero enrolments following on.
- Across the three years several programs received enrolments in 2024 (e.g., Certificate II in Civil Construction, Certificate II in Resources and Infrastructure, Certificate II in Visual Arts.)

The 2022-2024 VET course offerings, and 2025 apprenticeships and traineeships in Rodinga show a moderate but meaningful alignment with the region's employment landscape, which is heavily shaped by public administration and safety, health care and social assistance, and education and training⁴⁹.

⁴⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census of Population and Housing. General Community Profile, Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, Amoonguna G54 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

The largest local employer across all 4 communities - Public Administration and Safety accounts for over 40%⁵⁰ of employment, supported by substantial VET enrolments in local government-related qualifications (e.g. Certificate II, III, IV, and Diploma in Local Government), indicating a positive alignment with workforce needs in governance and community administration. Similarly, strong enrolment in community services, aged care, and individual support qualifications aligns well with the region's third-largest employer, Health Care and Social Assistance, which employs nearly 28%⁵¹ of the local workforce.

The recent enrolment in infrastructure-related training (Certificate II in Civil Construction, Certificate II in Resources and Infrastructure Work Preparation and Certificate III in Civil Construction Plant Operations) match the growing demand for skilled workers in the infrastructure sector.

However, despite Education and Training being the third-largest employment sector (23%) which generally requires formal qualifications and are often entry points into education careers, there are no enrolments in Early Childhood Education and Care, and School Based Education Support Certificates apart from Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care which received ≤5 in 2022 and zero enrolments thereafter.

Courses like Certificate II in Visual Arts and Certificate III in Learning an Australian First Nation's Language demonstrate cultural responsiveness and community relevance but are less directly aligned with major employment sectors.

Engagement in Tertiary Education

According to the 2021 Census, no Aboriginal residents in the four communities were recorded as having attended university, 7 responded as having attended VET.

Table 20: Tertiary Educational Institute Attended

Educational Institution Type	Ltyentye Apurte ⁵²	Aputula ⁵³	Titjikala ⁵⁴	Amoonguna ⁵⁵
University or other higher education	0	0	0	0
Vocational education (including TAFE and private training providers)	4	0	0	3
Other types of educational institution	4	0	0	0
Type of educational institution not stated	12	8	4	4

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

⁵⁰ *Ibid*

⁵¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census of Population and Housing. General Community Profile, Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, Amoonguna G54 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

⁵² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ltyentye Apurte, I06 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

⁵³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Aputula, I06 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

⁵⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Titjikala, I06 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

⁵⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Amoonguna, I06 (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

The data highlights a need to improve access to further education in remote communities such as Aputula and Titjikala. While communities like Ltyentye Apurte, which has a Catholic school offering education up to Year 10, and Amoonguna, located 20 km from the regional hub of Alice Springs, have seen participation in VET programs, Aputula and Titjikala have had no VET engagement. Both lack secondary schools and are located more than 110 km from Alice Springs, making access significantly more challenging. As previously noted, access to secondary schooling is a key pathway into VET, which in turn supports long-term employment and skill development. To address this gap, it is vital to improve the availability of information, strengthen support systems, and deliver education that is culturally responsive and aligned with local ways of learning.

Qualifications

Table 21: Highest Qualification (Non-School)

Non-School Qualification	SantaTeresa ⁵⁶	Aputula ⁵⁷	Titjikala ⁵⁸	Amoonguna ⁵⁹
Postgraduate Degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate	3	0	0	0
Bachelor's degree	5	0	0	0
Advanced Diploma or Diploma	0	3	0	0
Certificate III & IV Level	29	4	14	4
Certificate I & II Level	14	4	0	0
Certificate Level, nfd (not for degree)	0	4	4	0
Total	51	15	18	4

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

The 2021 Census reveals few formal qualifications across the four communities:

- No residents hold Postgraduate or degree qualification in Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna.
- 3 residents hold Diploma qualifications in Aputula, with zero in the other communities.
- No Certificate I & II qualifications are recorded in Titjikala or Amoonguna.
- All four communities recorded residents holding Certificate III & IV Level qualifications.

When considered alongside current job vacancies (see Table 23: Qualifications Required and Education Pathways to 2025 Role Vacancies, page 42), this data highlights the challenge posed by qualification requirements for many of the available roles. Addressing this barrier could involve expanding on-Country educational opportunities, fostering on-the-job training and traineeships, and creating a Community Skills Capability Directory to connect community members with available jobs and employers.

⁵⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ltyentye Apurte, I20c (Canberra: ABS, 2021).

⁵⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Aputula, I20c (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

⁵⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Titjikala, I20c (Canberra: ABS, 2021)

⁵⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Amoonguna, I20c (Canberra: ABS, 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. The employment landscape across Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna reveal both trends and opportunities to inform workforce planning. Understanding where jobs currently exist and where demand is growing provides context for aligning training opportunities with employment pathways.

Key Employment Industries

2021 Census data reveal a strong dependence on public sector employment across the four communities, with three sectors accounting for 84.81% (201 of 237)⁶⁰ of total employment:

- Public Administration and Safety: Employed 89 people (37.55% of total)⁶¹, and is the largest industry employer.
- Health Care and Social Assistance: Employs 61 people (25.74%) and is the second-largest employer.
- Education and Training: Employs 51 people (21.52%), with zero employment in Aputula.
- Retail Trade: Employs 6 people (2.83%) in Ltyentye Apurte.
- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing: Employs 5 people (2.36%) in Ltyentye Apurte.

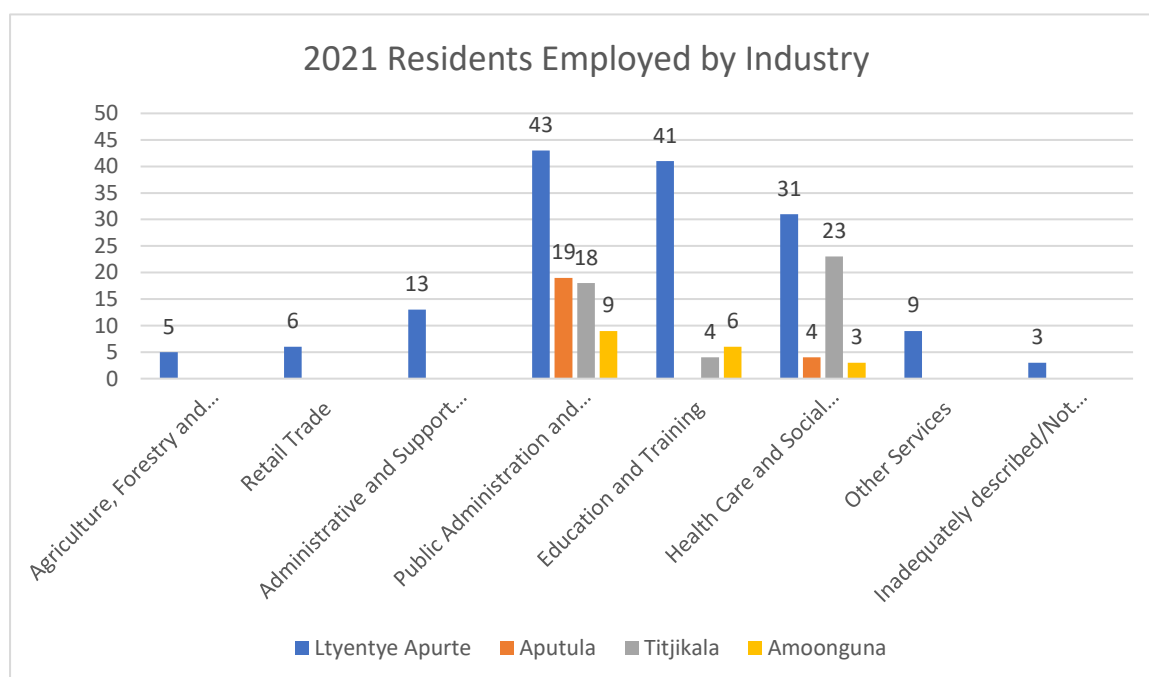


Figure 8: 2021 Residents Employed by Industry

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

⁶⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, Amoonguna G54 (Canberra: ABS, 2021).

⁶¹ Ibid

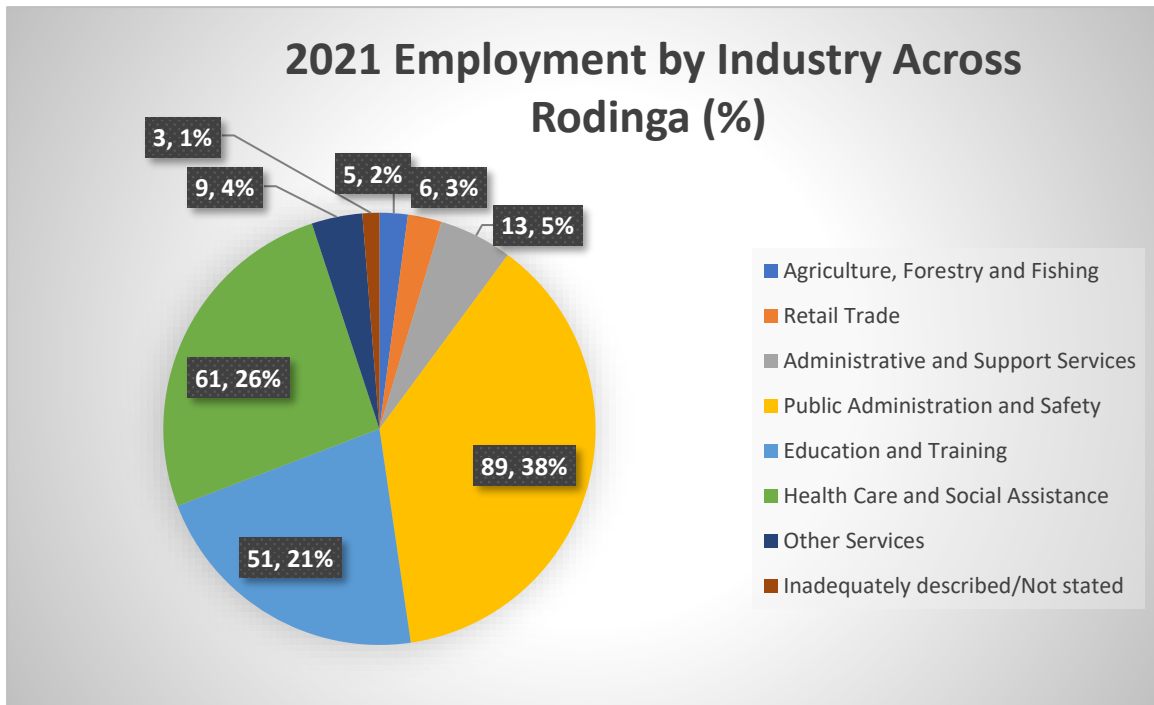


Figure 9: 2021 Employment by Industry Across Rodinga (%)

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

Occupational Distribution

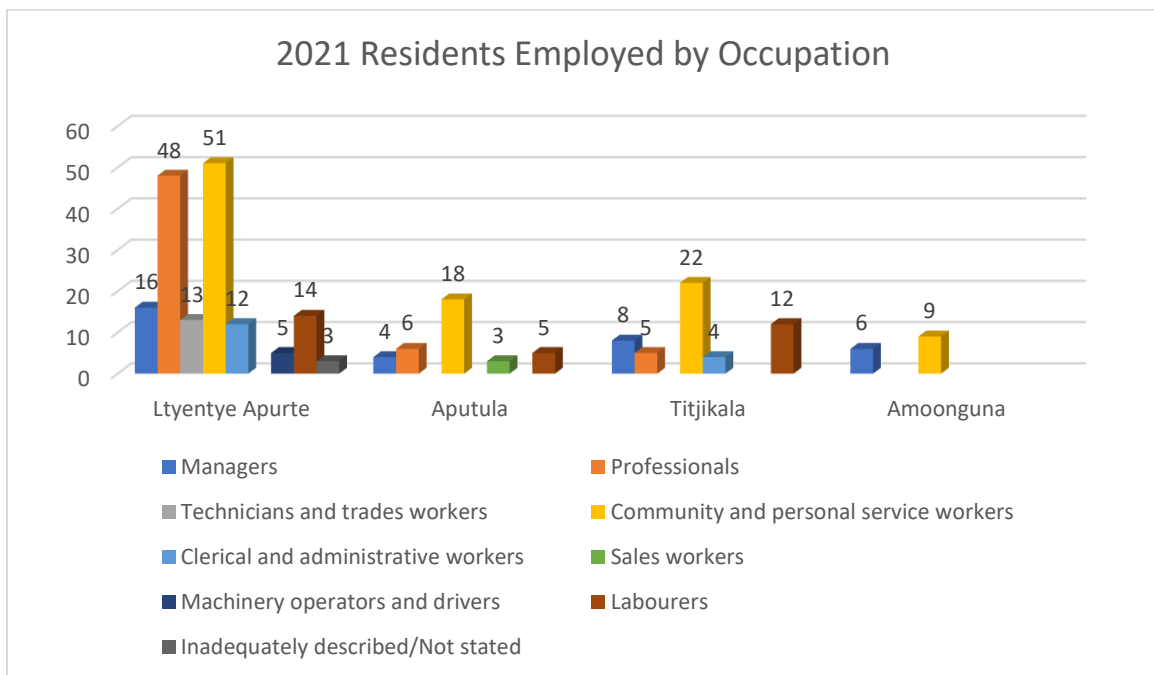


Figure 10: 2021 Residents Employed by Occupation

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

2021 Employment by Occupation Across Rodinga (%)

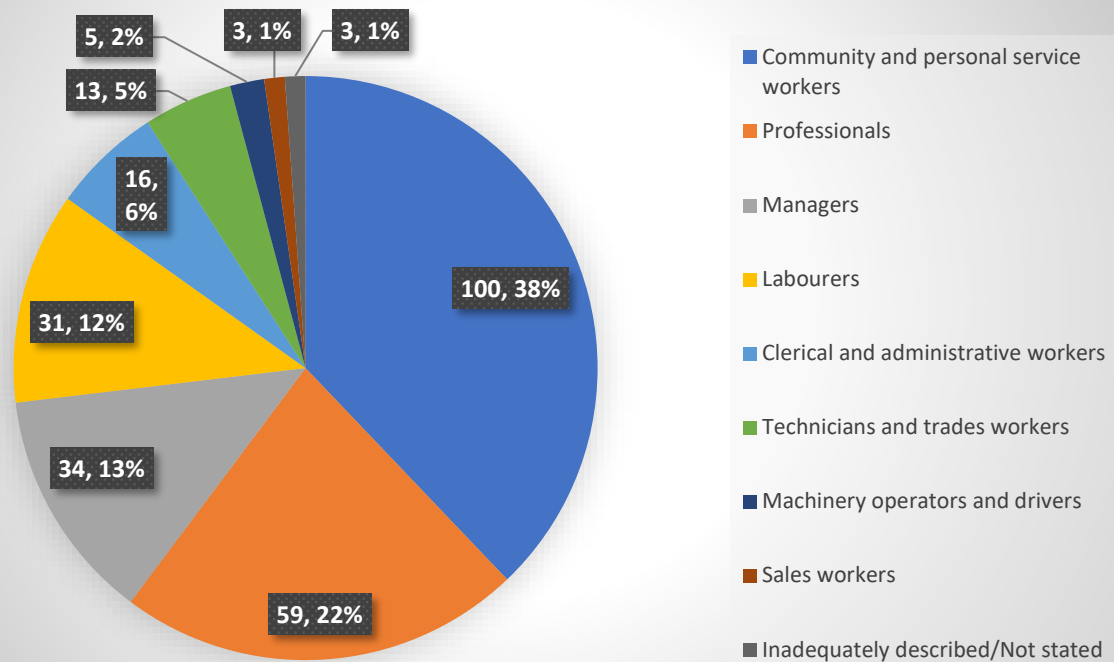


Figure 11: 2021 Employment by Occupation Across Rodinga (%)

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

Employment across the four communities is largely focused in four key occupational groups:

- **Community and Personal Service Workers:** This is the largest category, comprising 100 roles. These positions involve delivering direct support and services to community members and often require a deep understanding of local culture and community needs.
- **Professionals:** 59 roles fall within this occupational group, including teachers, health practitioners, and other qualified professionals. Ltyentye Apurte accounts for 48 of the total professionals employed across the four communities. These roles generally require formal qualifications or specialised training. Amoonguna recorded zero professionals employed during the 2021 census, this could be due to roles being temporarily vacant or individuals being away from the community during the census period, or the roles were not identified or misclassified in the survey. It could also be services rely on external providers based elsewhere or the roles are filled by staff commuting from Alice Springs.
- **Managers:** There are a total of 34 manager roles across Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, and Amoonguna. These jobs focus on planning, organising and leading teams or services within community organisations or government agencies.
- **Labourers:** account for 31 of the roles across three of the communities, Amoonguna has zero labourers recorded. Labourers perform a wide range of manual and physical tasks across different industries. These roles typically require low formal qualifications but demand physical fitness, practical skills, and a willingness to work in varied conditions.

The occupational profile highlights a workforce primarily engaged in service-oriented and government-supported roles, with significant representation in health, education, and public administration sectors.

Workforce Demand

A review of the MacDonnell Regional Council Local Authority meeting agendas for Ltyentye Apurte⁶², Aputula⁶³, Titjikala and Amoonguna - item 9.5 MRC Position Vacancies Report reveals the following vacancies between May-July 2025.



Position Vacancies Santa Teresa

Position #	Service	Description	Type	Weekly Hours
403123	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Part-Time	19
403124	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Part-Time	19
403132	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Part-Time	9.5
403133	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Part-Time	19
500340	Council Serv	Essential Services Officer	Full-Time	38
500327	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
500330	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: 12/03/2025

Figure 12: MacDonnell Regional Council Position Vacancies in Ltyentye Apurte
 Source: Agenda Ltyentye Apurte Local Authority Meeting 4 June 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report

Position Vacancies Finke

Position #	Service	Description	Type	Weekly Hours
401123	MacSafe	Senior Community Safety Officer	Part-Time	25
401124	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Part-Time	20
401125	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Part-Time	20
402136	MacCare	Home Care Assistant	Part-Time	19
500224	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
500226	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
500202	Council Serv	Customer Service Officer	Part-Time	19
500203	Council Serv	Customer Service Officer	Full-Time	38

Table data derived from XLOne Position Vacancy Report of Active Open Positions in the MRC Org Structure as at: 16/02/2025

⁶² MRC Agenda Ltyentye Apurte Local Authority Meeting 4 June 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report: https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/council-meetings/local-authority-meetings/santa-teresa-local-authority-meeting/421/documents/stla_04062025_agm_at.pdf

⁶³ MRC Agenda Teresa Local Authority Meeting 4 June 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report: https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/council-meetings/local-authority-meetings/Aputula-local-authority-meeting/418/documents/fja_21052025_agm_at.pdf

Figure 13: MacDonnell Regional Council Position Vacancies in Aputula

Source: Agenda Aputula Local Authority Meeting 21 May 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report

Position Vacancies Amoonguna

Position #	Service	Description	Type	Weekly Hours
401307	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Casual	As Rostered
401309	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Casual	As Rostered
401316	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Casual	As Rostered
401317	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Casual	As Rostered
402018	MacCare	Home Care Assistant	Casual	As Rostered
403104	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Part-time	19
403108	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Casual	As Rostered
403109	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Casual	As Rostered
403112	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Part-time	9.5
500102	Council Serv	Customer Service Officer	Part-Time	19
500125	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
500126	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
500127	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
500128	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Casual	As Rostered

Table data derived from XLOne Position Vacancy Report of Active Open Positions in the MRC Org Structure and approved by Managers: 29/01/2025

Figure 14: MacDonnell Regional Council Position Vacancies in Amoonguna⁶⁴

Source: Agenda Amoonguna Local Authority Meeting 2 July 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report

Position Vacancies Titjikala

Position #	Service	Description	Type	Weekly Hours
400383	MacKids	Educator - Early Learning	Part-Time	27.4
400385	MacKids	Educator - Early Learning	Part-Time	19
400386	MacKids	Educator - Early Learning	Part-Time	19
400390	MacKids	Educator - Early Learning	Part-Time	27.4
401162	MacSafe	Team Leader Community Safety	Part-Time	30.4
401165	MacSafe	Community Safety Officer	Part-Time	20
403149	MacYouth	Youth Services Officer	Part-Time	9.5
500425	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
500427	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
500428	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
500429	Council Serv	Works Assistant	Part-Time	19
500433	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: 12/03/2025

Figure 15: MacDonnell Regional Council Position Vacancies in Titjikala⁶⁵

Source: Agenda Titjikala Local Authority Meeting 13 June 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report

⁶⁴ MRC Agenda Amoonguna Local Authority Meeting 2 July 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report: https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/council-meetings/local-authority-meetings/amoonguna-local-authority-meeting/426/documents/amla_02072025_agn_at_saved.pdf

⁶⁵ MRC Agenda Titjikala Local Authority Meeting 13 June 2025: MRC Position Vacancies Report: https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/council-meetings/local-authority-meetings/titjikala-local-authority-meeting-13-june-2025/478/documents/tla_13062025_agn_at_saved.pdf

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

Table 22: May 2025 Education Vacancies (excluding teaching vacancies)

School	Finke School	Titjikala School	Amoonguna School
Location:	Aputula (Finke)	Titjikala	Amoonguna
Total Vacant Positions:	1	1	2
Position Title:			
Administrative Officer	1		
School Administration Officer			1
Maintenance Officer		1	
Cleaner			1

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

Phone calls to CDP in the four communities as well as a search of online job engines in July 2025 revealed the following further vacancies:

Table 23: Vacancies Across Rodinga as at July 2025

Ltyentye Apurte		
Service	Description	Type
Central Australian Aboriginal Congress	Remote Area Nurse	Full Time
CatholicCareNT	Education Engagement & Attainment Initiative (EEAI) Coordinator and Community Development Program Case Worker	Full Time
Titjikala		
Titjikala Arts Centre	Activities Coordinator	Full Time
Titjikala Arts Centre	Admin Officer	Full Time
Titjikala Arts Centre	Cleaner	Casual
Titjikala Home Care Service (MacCare)	Cleaner	Casual

Source: Data compiled from Ethical Jobs and phone calls to CDP services (July 2025)






Aputula had zero further vacancies and Amoonguna CDP directed inquiries to the MacDonnell Regional Council's vacancy listings.








Of the above vacancies:



- Entry-level positions requiring minimal formal qualifications: 3 positions
 - Cleaner (3)
- Roles with accessible training support pathways and qualifications account for 13 positions:
 - Community Safety Officer (3 part time and 4 casual) – MRC solely employs local Aboriginal community members in the Community Safety Team. Their primary focus is the safety of young people and assisting vulnerable community members. Candidates would need to obtain a child clearance and hold a driver's license.

- Customer Service Officer (2 part time and 1 full time) – a customer service officer could be supported through on the job training but would need to have good communications skills, and a basic understanding of administrative processes.
- Youth Services Officer (7 part time and 2 casual) – while youth worker positions can require formal qualifications, youth service officer positions can be supported through on the job training and seek candidates that would already have experience volunteering or working with young people and can obtain a child clearance.
- Home Care Assistant (1 part time and 1 casual)

Table 24: Qualifications Required and Education Pathways to 2025 Role Vacancies

Qualifications required and education pathways to 2025 role vacancies					
Occupation	No. of Roles	Qualification	Details	Education/ Training Provider	Cultural Framework
Cleaner	3	On the job training	-	-	Servicing the Community 
Home Care Assistant	2	Certificate III in Individual Support	12 months Fee Free TAFE	Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs Campus)	Caring for Family and Community 
Admin Officer	3	Certificate IV in Business	12 months, subsidised by NT Government, nominal fees apply	Batchelor Institute	Servicing the Community 
Youth Services Worker	9	On the job training Certificate IV in Community Services	1 year, fee free TAFE	Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs, Casuarina Campus)	Caring for Family and Community 
Customer Service Officer	3	On the job training Certificate III in Business	6 months, Fee Free TAFE	Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs, Danala, Tennant Creek)	Servicing the Community 

Community Safety Officer	7	On the job training Ochre Card Driver's License	12-18 months Free for DriveSafe NT participants	DriveSafe NT remote program	Caring for Family and Community 
Activities Coordinator	1	Certificate IV in Community Services	1 year, fee free TAFE	Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs, Casuarina Campus)	Caring for Family and Community 
Remote Nurse	1	Batchelor of Nursing	3 years full time Commonwealth supported places available	Charles Darwin University (Casuarina Campus)	Caring for Family and Community 
EEAI Coordinator and Community Development Program Case Worker	1	Certificate IV in Community Services	1 year, fee free TAFE	Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs, Casuarina Campus)	Caring for Family and Community 
Senior Community Safety Officer	1	Certificate IV in Community Services	1 year, fee free TAFE	Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs, Casuarina Campus)	Caring for Family and Community 
Team Leader Community Safety	1	Certificate IV in Community Services	1 year, fee free TAFE	Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs, Casuarina Campus)	Caring for Family and Community 
Educator – Early Learning	4	Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care	1 year, fee free TAFE	Charles Darwin University (Alice Springs, Palmerston, Katherine, Remote)	Caring for Family and Community 
Works Assistant	13	Certificate II in Construction Pathways	3 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Batchelor Institute	Building the Community 

Essential Services Officer	1	Certificate II in Construction Pathways	3 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Batchelor Institute	 Building the Community
Maintenance Officer	1	Certificate II in Construction Pathways	3 months, fee free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Batchelor Institute	 Building the Community

Source: Ethical Jobs (2025), MRC Position Vacancies (2025)

This employment analysis highlights the following workforce planning priorities:

1. Align Training with Local Job Demand: Most job vacancies (community safety, youth services, customer service, home care) align with qualifications available through VET pathways. Expanding access to these programs can address job vacancies and reduce unemployment.
2. Support Entry into Service-Oriented Roles: Service roles dominate local employment, especially in community support, education, and health. Some of these positions can be filled by residents with the right support, such as on-the-job training, mentoring, and cultural adaptation of training content.
3. Target Workforce Participation Among CDP Participants: With 567 CDP participants and 51 job vacancies (as of July 2025), increasing workforce engagement depends on not only matching skills to jobs but creating more accessible jobs and reducing barriers to employment, such as transport, childcare, and license acquisition.
4. Promote Culturally Appropriate and On-Country Training: To increase uptake, training delivery should be embedded in community contexts, with flexible, culturally informed approaches that support learners with literacy, digital skills, and wraparound services.

2.4 Economic Context

Economic conditions play a critical role in shaping workforce participation across Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, Amoonguna, and surrounding areas. This section explores key economic indicators including Gross Regional Product (GRP), major industries, employment levels, and income distribution. Understanding the dynamics of these factors is important to developing tailored strategies to address workforce barriers and support sustainable economic development.

Gross Regional Product (GRP)

The economic profile of Rodinga, provides important context for understanding local economic activity and workforce opportunities.

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

- Total Place of Work (POW) Gross Regional Product (GRP): \$102.4 million⁶⁶ - which represents all economic value generated within a region, produced by workers who are employed in the region, regardless of where those workers reside.
- Employed Resident GRP: \$64.8 million⁶⁷ – measures the economic value generated by residents of a particular region through their employment, regardless of where they work (even if it is outside the region).

The 37% gap between these two figures (resident GRP is 63% of Total POW GRP) suggests the local economy is significantly supported by non-resident workers, indicating that commuters or external labour plays a key role in local production.

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.

⁶⁶ ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Tanami Region. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025. Demographic data is sourced from ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021, and ABS Regional Population Growth. Economic data is sourced from NIEIR, 2024; and .id modelling of NIEIR and ABS Census data.

⁶⁷ Ibid

Table 25: Total Regional versus Indigenous GRP Data

Category	Regional Workforce Size	Employed Residents Workforce Size	POW GRP (\$)	Employed Resident GRP (\$)	POW GRP Per Capita (\$)	Employed Resident GRP Per Capita (\$)
Regional Workforce	773	502	102,489,925	64,860,403	132,587	129,204
Indigenous Workforce	378	329	43,936,554	35,647,690	116,234	108,352

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

- POW GRP per capita for Rodinga (\$132,615) suggests a moderate level of economic output, consistent with service-based regional economies.
- The region produces more economic output than what its residents contribute. The total Place of Work GRP is \$102.5 million, while the Employed Resident GRP is \$64.9 million. This means that the region depends on people who commute in from outside to help generate economic activity.
- Indigenous workers generate less output per person compared to the overall workforce. The GRP per capita for the regional workforce is \$132,587 (Place of Work) and \$129,204 (Employed Residents), while for the Indigenous workforce it's \$116,234 and \$108,352 respectively. This suggests that Indigenous workers may be more likely to hold lower-paid or part-time jobs, or face barriers to accessing higher-value employment.
- The number of people working in the region (773) is higher than the number of employed residents (502), showing that about 271 people commute into the region for work. Among the Indigenous workforce, 378 work in the region, while 329 are residents, meaning about 49 Indigenous workers commute in. This indicates the region is a net importer of labour.

Table 26: GRP Value added -Employed Regional Residents

GRP Value added – Employed Regional Residents ⁶⁸ :						
Sector	Total Employed Residents Value Added	Indigenous Employed Residents Vale Added	Indigenous Employed Residents % of Total Value Added	Total Employed Residents	Indigenous Employed Residents	Indigenous % of Total Employed Residents (in industry)
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	19,600,905	1,441,243	7%	75	6	7%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	656,427	656,427	100%	3	3	100%

⁶⁸ Ibid

Construction	4,024,703	4,024,703	100%	11	11	100%
Retail Trade	1,716,172	908,562	53%	33	17	53%
Accommodation and Food Services	581,856	581,856	100%	6	6	100%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	485,116	-	0%	7	0	0%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1,170,001	910,000	78%	10	7	78%
Administrative and Support Services	2,758,080	1,896,180	69%	27	19	69%
Public Administration and Safety	13,401,245	11,028,108	82%	113	93	82%
Education and Training	5,706,192	3,464,474	61%	60	36	61%
Health Care and Social Assistance	8,000,639	6,537,107	82%	127	103	82%
Arts and Recreation Services	585,666	439,250	75%	10	8	80%
Other Services	1,089,544	792,396	73%	23	17	73%

Data sourced: ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). *Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Rodinga Region*⁶⁹

The Demographic data is sourced from ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021, and ABS Regional Population Growth. Economic data is sourced from NIEIR, 2024; and .id modelling of NIEIR and ABS Census data.

The regional economy is dominated by Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, which contributes \$19.6 million (30%) to the Resident Gross Regional Product, followed by Public Administration and Safety at \$13.4 million (21%). However, employment patterns do not mirror this economic output. Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest employer accounting for 127 resident employees or 25% of the local workforce. Public Administration and Safety employs 113 people (22%) and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing despite its economic dominance employs 75 people (14%). Of the total employed residents, 65% are Indigenous people, with the highest Indigenous employment concentrated in Health Care and Social Assistance (103 people, 32% of Indigenous workforce) and Public Administration and Safety (93 people, 28%).

The Construction sector, the fifth-largest contributor to GRP at \$4 million, employed an entirely Indigenous workforce, accounting for 11 jobs. This trend aligns with the uptake of Certificate II in Civil Construction and the Certificate II in Resources and Infrastructure Work VET courses.

Similarly, according to this data⁷⁰, the Accommodation and Food Services sector (6 jobs) and the Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services sector (3 jobs) also had an entirely Indigenous workforces.

Other sectors such as Manufacturing, Information Media and Telecommunications, Financial and Insurance Services and Wholesale Trade did not contribute to the Rodina GRP, indicating limited diversification beyond government and essential services.

Key Insights

- High levels of employment concentration in public sector and essential services.

⁶⁹ ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). *Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Tanami Region*. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025. Demographic data is sourced from ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021, and ABS Regional Population Growth. Economic data is sourced from NIEIR, 2024; and .id modelling of NIEIR and ABS Census data.

⁷⁰ ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). *Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Tanami Region*. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025. Demographic data is sourced from ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021, and ABS Regional Population Growth. Economic data is sourced from NIEIR, 2024; and .id modelling of NIEIR and ABS Census data.

- The main source of regional resident income is government benefits (73%) compared to employment (25%).⁷¹
- The data shows alignment between VET enrolments and Indigenous employment across several key sectors. In the Construction sector, where all 11 jobs are held by Indigenous workers, enrolments in Civil Construction, Plant Operations, and Traffic Management VET courses directly support this workforce outcome. Health Care and Social Assistance, the largest Indigenous employer with 103 workers, is well-supported by VET training in Primary Health Care, Individual Support, and Community Aged Care courses. Similarly, Public Administration and Safety, employing 93 Indigenous residents, aligns closely with strong enrolment in Local Government VET programs ranging from Certificate II to Diploma level. Finally, the Retail Trade sector, with 17 Indigenous employees, is backed by consistent participation in Retail Services and Certificates I to III in Retail, indicating a link between training pathways and local employment outcomes.

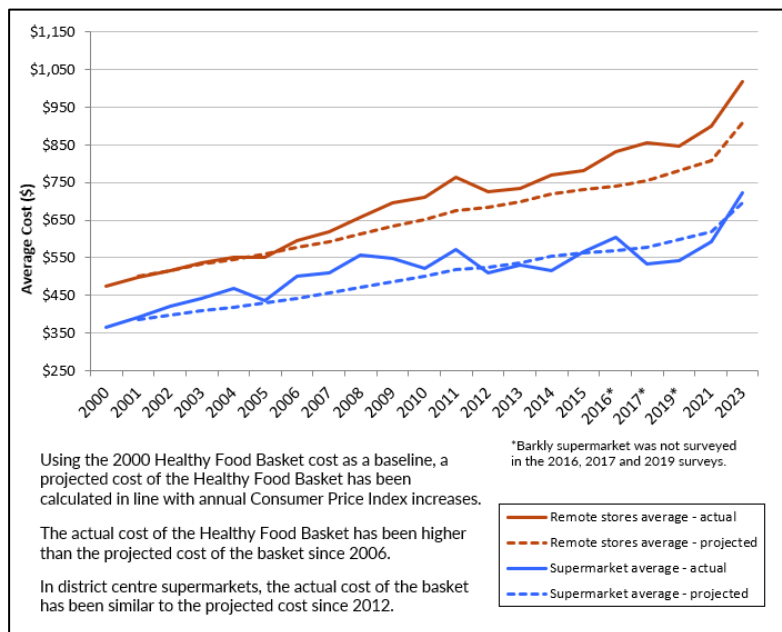
Cost of Living in Remote Communities

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

Food Security and Affordability

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

Figure 16: Market Basket Survey - Cost of a Food Basket from 2000-2023



Source: Northern Territory Government, NT Market Basket Survey 2023

⁷¹ ID Consulting Pty Ltd (2025). *Economic and Demographic Analysis of the Tanami Region*. Unpublished report prepared for Desert Knowledge Australia, 2025. Demographic data is sourced from ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021, and ABS Regional Population Growth. Economic data is sourced from NIEIR, 2024; and .id modelling of NIEIR and ABS Census data.

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.⁷²

The "Current Diet Basket" sometimes called the 'unhealthy' diet basket reflects the actual purchasing and consumption patterns of the population, based on national dietary intake surveys. It costs \$1,072 in remote stores compared to \$890 in Alice Springs.⁷³

From 2021 to 2023, the cost of the Healthy Food Basket rose by 13% in remote stores,⁷⁴ 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 fortnight⁷⁵ 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 cannot meet basic needs and emphasises the importance of local employment opportunities.

Transport and Travel Costs

Transport is a major cost of living issue for people living in remote communities. These communities are geographically isolated, and people often need to travel long distances to access essential services in Alice Springs.

Distance from Alice Springs (regional centre):

- Aputula: 270 km
- Titjikala: 130 km
- Ltyentye Apurte: 85 km
- Amoonguna: 20 km

According to the 2024 NTCOSS Transport Factsheet, petrol prices in remote communities remain high. Unleaded fuel has reached 268.7 cents per litre, which is 16.7 cents more than last year. These prices are above the national average and place extra financial stress on people in remote areas.

The Centre Bush Bus offers weekly services connecting these communities to Alice Springs, however one-way fares range from \$115 to \$150 for an adult. A return bus trip for one person from Ltyentye Apurte would cost \$230⁷⁶. If they lived in Aputula, the return trip per person would cost \$300,⁷⁷ making travel to and from Alice Springs very expensive and financially unviable for larger households.

High transport costs make it harder for people to access training, jobs, and essential services outside their own communities. The long distances and high fuel prices mean many people can't afford to travel

⁷² NT Health (2023). Attachment A - 2023 NT Market Basket Survey Summary Report. Darwin.

⁷³ Ibid.

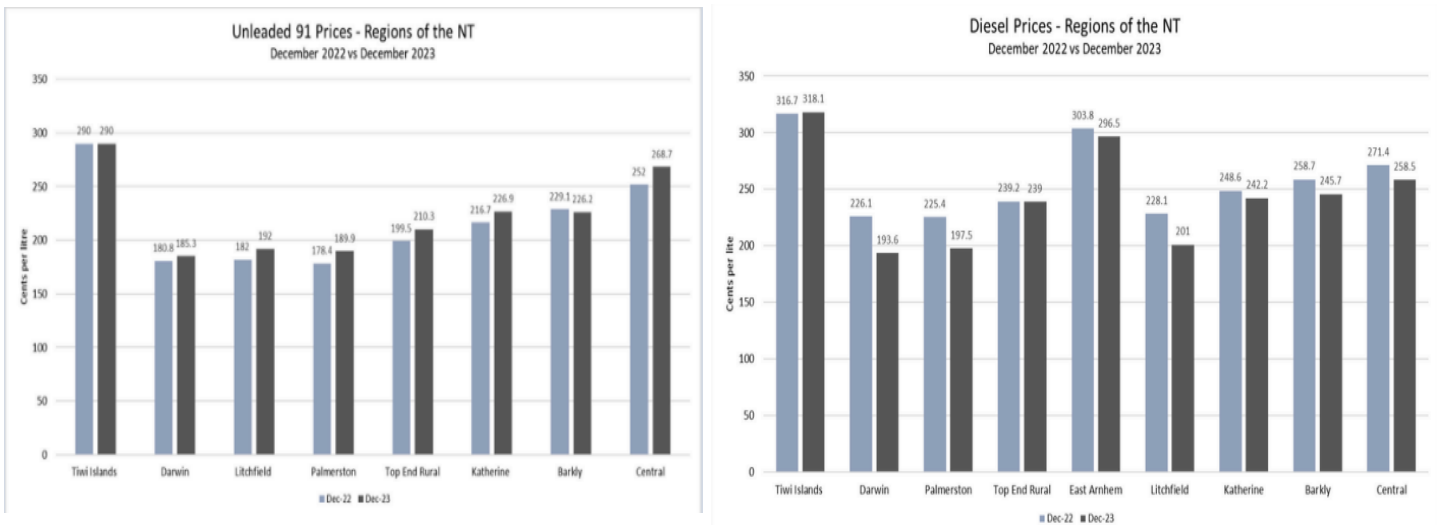
⁷⁴ NT Health (2023). Attachment A - 2023 NT Market Basket Survey Summary Report. Darwin.

⁷⁵ Services Australia (2025). Jobseeker Payment. <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/how-much-jobseeker-payment-you-can-get?context=51411>

⁷⁶ Centre Bush Bus (n.d.) Bus Timetables. www.centrebushbus.com.au/bus-timetables/

⁷⁷ Ibid

regularly. This isolation limits people’s ability to join the wider workforce or take up opportunities in Alice



Springs or other larger towns.

Figure 17: Unleaded 91 and Diesel Prices 2022-23 - Regions of the NT

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

Regional Household Expenditure

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

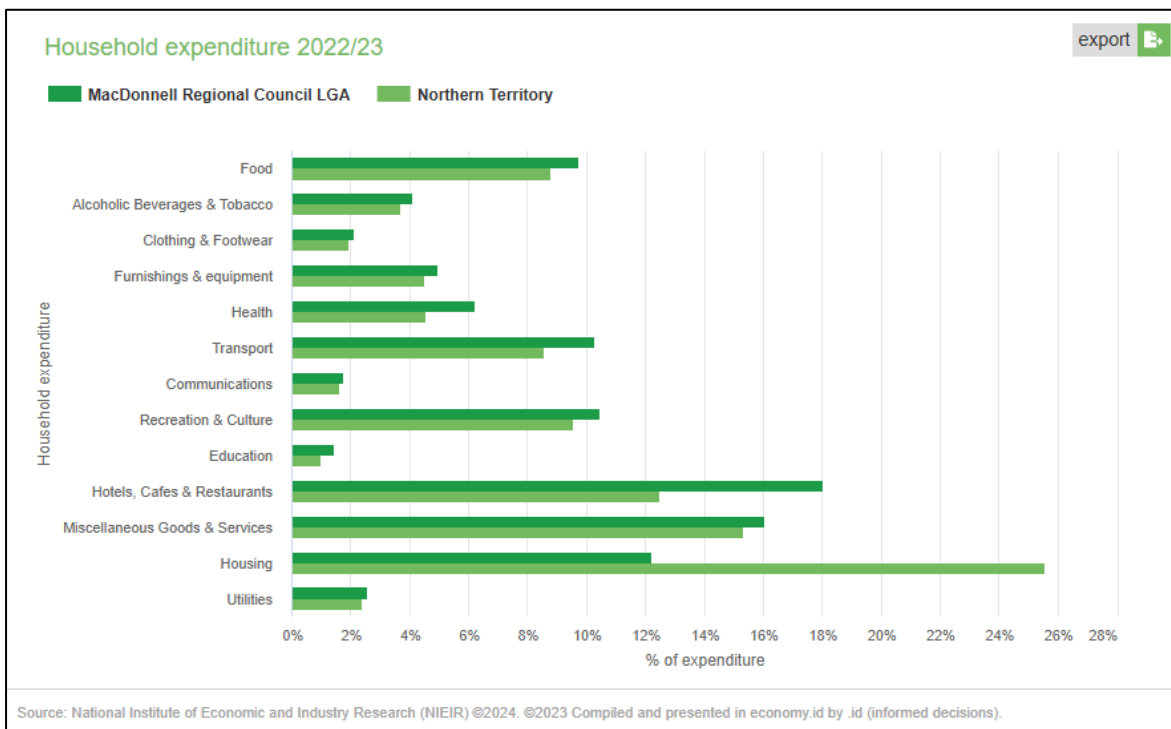


Figure 18: Household Expenditure 2022-23 MacDonnell Regional Council LGA and Northern Territory

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

- 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%),⁷⁸ 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%⁷⁹, 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.⁸⁰

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

Household Income

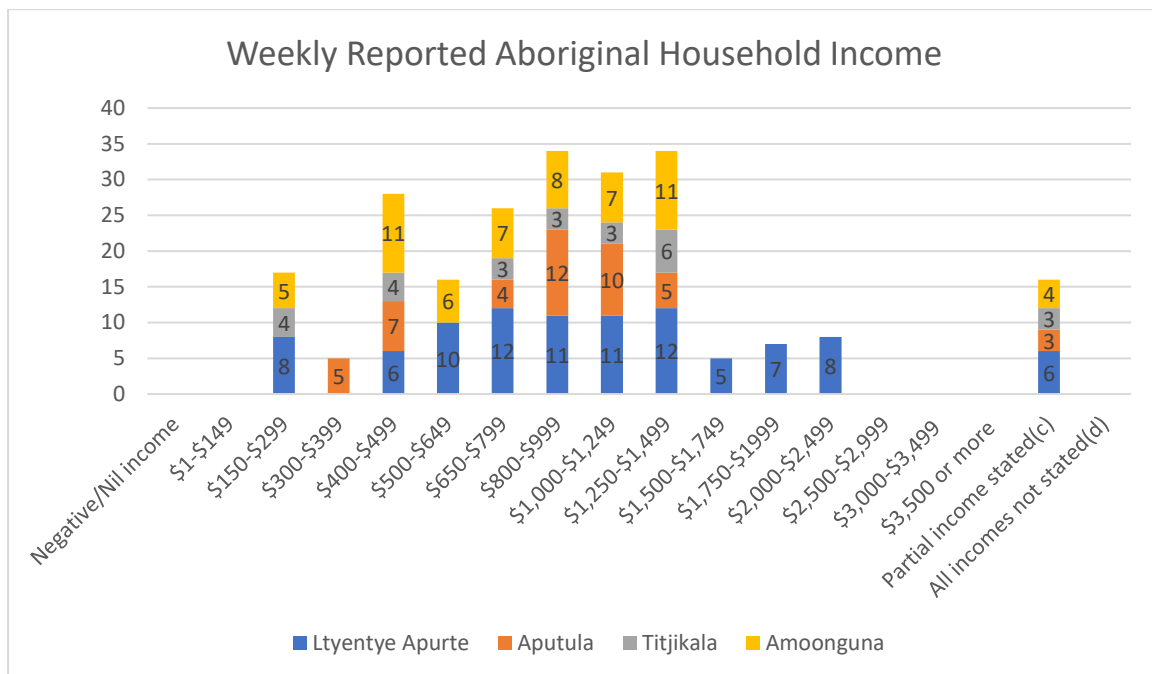


Figure 19: Weekly Reported Aboriginal Household Income

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

Aboriginal household incomes⁸¹ from the census data from 2021 for Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna reveals that:

⁷⁸ .id (Informed Decisions) (2024). Household Expenditure. <https://economy.id.com.au/rda-northern-territory/household-expenditure?IndkeyNieir=23402&WebID=130>.

⁷⁹ .id (Informed Decisions) (2024). Household Expenditure. <https://economy.id.com.au/rda-northern-territory/household-expenditure?IndkeyNieir=23402&WebID=130>.

⁸⁰ Ibid

⁸¹ Data compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Ltyentye Apurte, I17 total household income (weekly) by Indigenous status of household (Canberra: ABS, 2021); Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Aputula, I17 total household income (weekly) by Indigenous status of household (Canberra: ABS, 2021); Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Titjikala, I17 total household income (weekly) by Indigenous status of household (Canberra: ABS, 2021); Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), 2021 Census: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile, Amoonguna, I17 total household income (weekly) by Indigenous status of household (Canberra: ABS, 2021).

- 7% (17 of 232 responding households) reports an income of less than \$299 per week
- 14% (33) of responding households had an income between \$300- \$499 per week
- 42% (76) of responding households had an income between \$500 - \$999 a week
- 28% (65) reported an income between \$1,000-\$1,499 per week
- 8% (20) reported an income between \$1,500-\$2,499 per week – all 20 households were in Ltyentye Apurte
- Zero households reported an income of more than \$2500 per week.

The most common household income bracket:

- in Ltyentye Apurte was \$650-\$799 (12 households) and \$1,250-\$1,499 (12 households)
- in Aputula was \$800-\$999 (12 households)
- in Titjikala was \$1250-\$1499 (6 households)
- in Amoonguna it was \$400-\$499 and \$1250-\$1499 with both having 11 households in each category.

Table 27: Median Weekly Income and Average People per Household

Community	Median Household Income (\$)	Average people per household
Ltyentye Apurte ⁸²	\$1178	4.4 people
Aputula ⁸³	\$850	3.7 people
Titjikala ⁸⁴	\$1053	3.9 people
Amoonguna ⁸⁵	\$814	4 people

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Community Profiles 2021 Census Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people QuickStats

Ltyentye Apurte appears to be the most economically active community of the four, with 43 households (43%) having an income of above \$1,000 per week, and 20% (20) reporting an income above \$1500 per week.

Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna shows a mixed income profile, with a notable group in both low- and mid-income brackets and zero households earning \$1500 or above.

Socio Economic Advantage and Disadvantage

The 2021 SEIFA (Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas) results confirm that MacDonnell is among the most socio-economically disadvantaged regions in Australia.

⁸² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Ltyentye Apurte 2021 Census Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people QuickStats (<https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/SAL70239>) accessed July 2025

⁸³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Aputula 2021 Census Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people QuickStats (<https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/SAL70099>) accessed July 2025

⁸⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Titjikala 2021 Census Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people QuickStats (<https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/SAL70260>) accessed July 2025

⁸⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Amoonguna 2021 Census Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people QuickStats (<https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/SAL70008>) accessed July 2025

Across all four SEIFA indexes which assess factors such as income, employment, education, and access to resources, MacDonnell consistently ranks in the bottom 1% nationally:

- Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage: Ranked 20th lowest in Australia
- Index of Disadvantage: 19th lowest nationally
- Index of Economic Resources: 23rd lowest
- Index of Education and Occupation: 30th lowest

Within the Northern Territory, MacDonnell remains one of the five most disadvantaged areas across all measures.

These findings underscore persistent and systemic challenges, particularly in remote Aboriginal communities, where barriers to education, employment, and access to essential services remain deeply entrenched.

To address these issues, the data reinforces the urgent need for targeted, community-driven investment in:

- Education and training
- Employment pathways
- Community-led development initiatives
- Culturally safe and responsive services

These insights should guide workforce planning, service delivery models, and policy development across the region, ensuring that efforts are equitable, place-based, and responsive to local needs.

Table 28: SEIFA Indexes for the MacDonnell LGA

index	Score ⁸⁶	Decile ⁸⁷	Percentile ⁸⁸
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>

⁸⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA). SEIFA 2021 by Local Government Area (LGA) ([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\[c\]=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[c]=SEIFA_MEASURE&ly[rw]=SEIFAINDEXTYPE&to[TIME_PERIOD]=false)) accessed June 2025

⁸⁷ *Ibid*

⁸⁸ *Ibid*

Note: SEIFA 2021 Comparison: MacDonnell Regional Council vs Northern Territory

The 2021 SEIFA data show a significant difference in socio-economic conditions between the MacDonnell Regional Council area and the Northern Territory (NT) overall.

- **SEIFA 2021 Summary: MacDonnell vs Northern Territory**
MacDonnell ranks in the lowest 6% nationally across all SEIFA indexes, showing severe disadvantage in education, income, employment, and access to resources. In contrast, the Northern Territory ranks in Deciles 3–5, indicating relatively better—though still below average—conditions.
- **Understanding the Gap – Overview**
MacDonnell scores 727 on the Index of Advantage and Disadvantage (Decile 1), compared to the NT’s 608 (Decile 4). It also ranks lowest on the Index of Disadvantage (566), Economic Resources (590), and Education and Occupation (861), while the NT scores higher across all categories. These results show MacDonnell faces deeper, more persistent hardship than the NT overall, highlighting the need for targeted, place-based support.

Investment and Opportunity: Current Funding Allocations

Government investments in the region present significant opportunities for workforce planning and economic participation. An analysis of projects and grants published by BushTel for Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala and Amoonguna reveals approximately \$254 million in total grants investment. This investment is distributed across two main categories: **Regional Investments** and **Community-Specific Allocations**.

Regional investments are typically administered by recipient organisations and may be distributed across 4 to 25 communities, making it difficult to determine the exact value allocated to each individual community.

It is important to note that this report acknowledges the existence of additional investment beyond those included in this analysis.

Regional Investments (\$254 million)

Most of the funding (\$254M⁸⁹) is allocated to regional programs that benefit multiple communities, rather than being directed to individual communities. This makes it challenging to determine the exact amount received by any single community. For example, a single organisational program may support initiatives across as many as 17 communities. Regional funding primarily supports employment and community development, with substantial investment also directed toward family support, education, and health services.

⁸⁹ BushTel (n.d.) *Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, and Amoonguna*. www.bushstel.nt.gov.au/profile

Table 29: Regional Investments in Rodinga

Program Category	Amount* (\$M)	No: of communities shared across	% of Total Regional Funding	Primary Initiatives	Timeframes*
Health	\$108,702,066.68	9	42.73%	Improve health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	2022-2028
Indigenous Employment and Economic Development	\$59,099,434.32	17	23.23%	Focuses on getting Indigenous Australians into work and fostering business	2021-2028
Education (Children, Youth)	\$30,075,643.48	13	11.82%	Getting children and youth to school and improving education outcomes	2022-2027
Family Support and Intervention	\$19,248,467.39	25	7.57%	Reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care	2021-2027
Aged Care and Health	\$11,540,505.43	15	4.54%	Support eligible older people to live independently at home and in community	2018-2026
Law and Wellbeing	\$10,057,929.12	15	3.95%	Strategic activities that ensure ordinary law of the land applies in Indigenous communities and supports physical, emotional and social wellbeing	2022-2027
Indigenous Arts and Culture	\$5,321,520.52	5	2.09%	To provide visual arts services to Indigenous artists and strategic activities to support Indigenous Australians to maintain their culture	2021-2027
Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Services	\$3,193,141.70	5	1.26%	Support existing or emerging family domestic and sexual violence programs	2022-2027
Suicide Prevention	\$2,394,523.07	5	0.94%	Reduce suicide and suicidal behaviour among at risk groups	2022-2028
Disability Services	\$1,962,694.57	5	0.77%	Supporting disability services for eligible community members	2020-2026
Early Childhood Education	\$1,057,146.20	9	0.42%	Support early childhood education and care	2023-2027
Community Accessibility	\$1,040,000.00	13	0.41%	To make outdoor activities more accessible year-round.	2024-2026
Infrastructure	\$718,247.00	13	0.28%	Deliver benefits to communities, such as improved road safety, accessibility and visual amenity	2023-2026

Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, Amoonguna. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile

*Each program category received multiple grants that have been totalled up and the total entered above. The timeframes listed is the earliest start date and the latest finish date of the ongoing grants within the category.

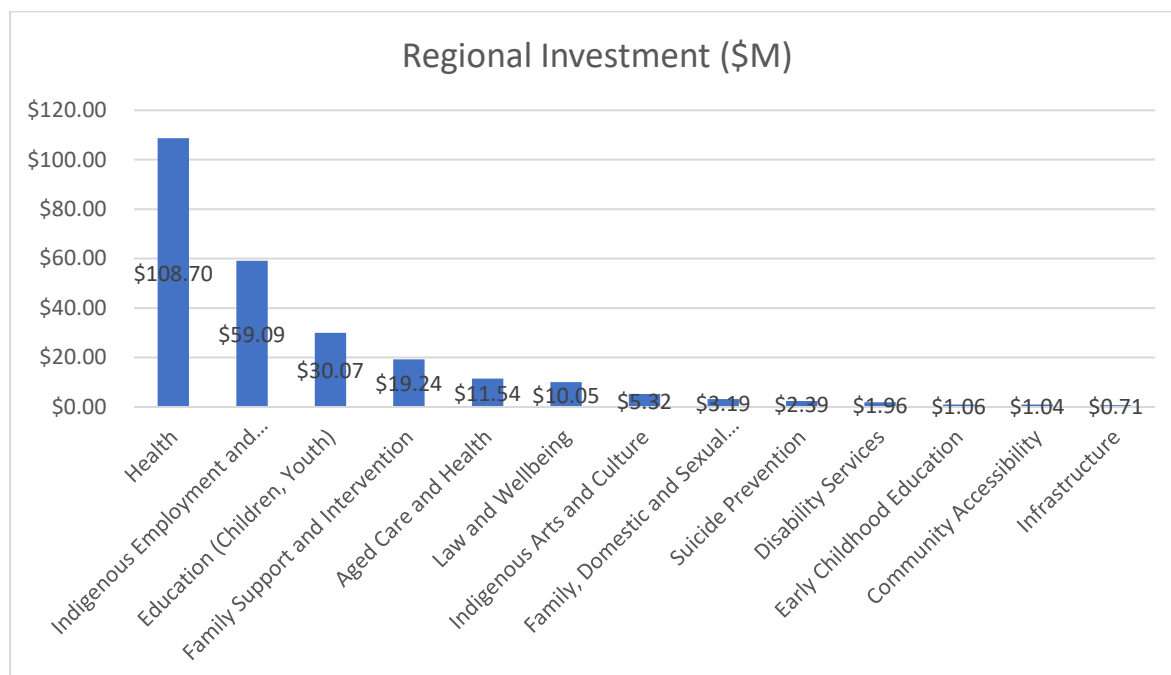


Figure 20: Regional Investments (\$M) in Rodinga

Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, Amoonguna. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile

From the data it can be seen the category that received the highest funding was Health - \$109.70 million, followed by Indigenous Employment and Economic Development - \$59.09 million, Education (Children, Youth) - \$30.07 million, Family Support and Intervention - \$19.24 million, and Aged Care and Health at \$11.54 million.

The organisations across the region that received funding are as follows:

Table 30: Funding Received by Organisations

Organisation	Grants \$	%
Central Australian Aboriginal Congress	108,615,911	42.69
Central Land Council	57,075,121	22.43
NPY Women's Council (Aboriginal Corporation)	38,832,569	15.26
MacDonnell Regional Council	24,725,836	9.72
Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi (Aboriginal Corporation)	7,245,600	2.85
Catholic Education Office	4,178,348	1.64
Atyenhenge-Atherre Aboriginal Corporation	3,467,156	1.36
Australian Regional and Remote Community Services Ltd	1,874,137	0.74
CASSE Australia Limited	1,417,020	0.56
Central Desert Regional Council	1,348,119	0.53
Keringke Arts Aboriginal Corporation	1,254,000	0.49
Literacy for Life Foundation	1,193,500	0.47
Ltyentye Apurte Arelhe-Ingkerrenyekene Apmere AC	1,188,782	0.47
Tapatjatjaka Art and Craft Aboriginal Corporation	882,200	0.35

CatholicCare NT	519,021	0.20
Anangu Uwankaraku Punu Aboriginal Corporation	374,000	0.15
Children's Ground Ltd	220,000	0.09

Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, Amoonguna. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile

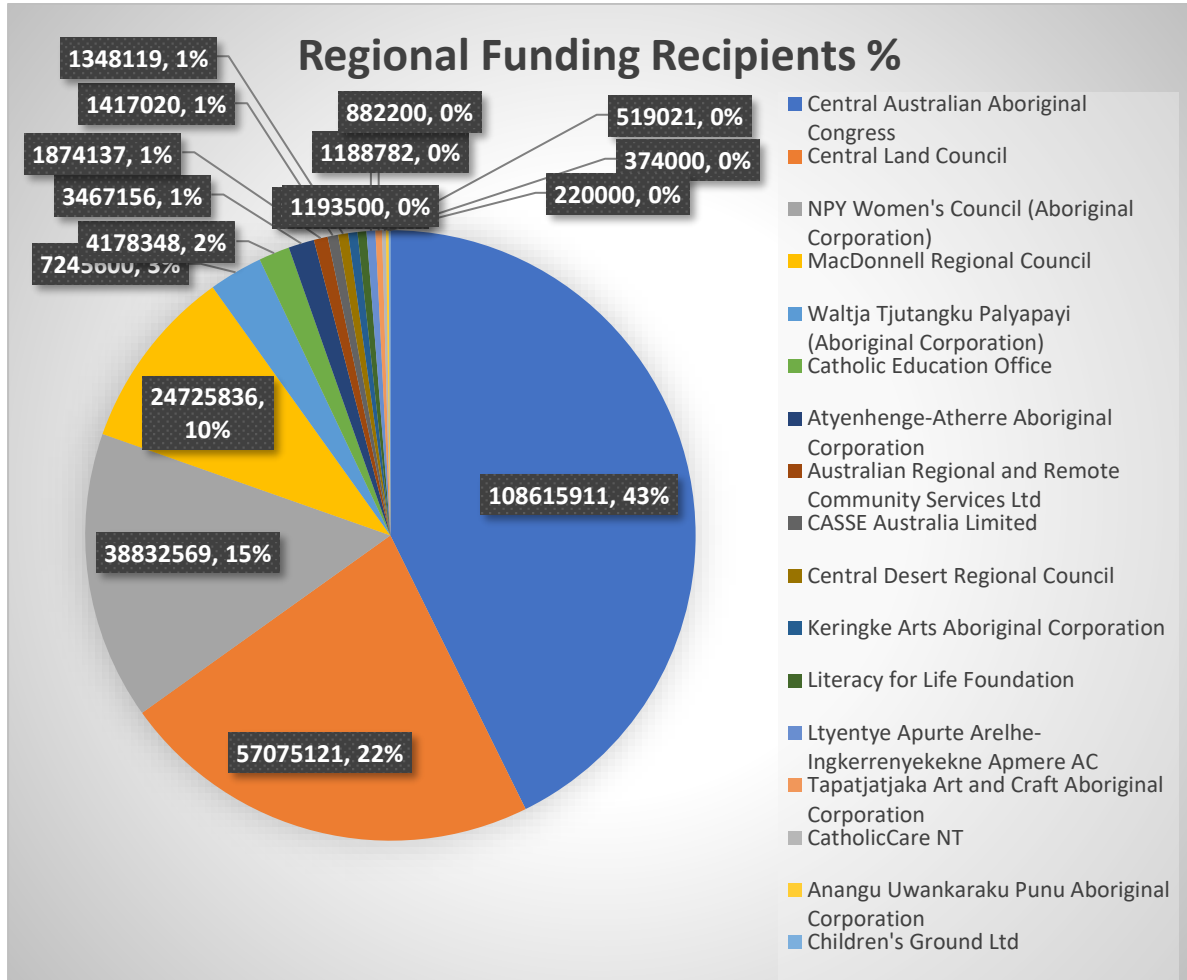


Figure 21: Percentage of Funding received by Organisations

Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, Amoonguna. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile

Community-Specific Investment (\$10.75 million⁹⁰)

All four communities were the beneficiaries of community specific funding for the following program categories:

⁹⁰ BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, and Amoonguna. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile

Table 31: Community Specific Grants

Program Category	Community	Project Funding (\$M)	No. of Grants	Organisation	Key Investment Areas	Timeframe
Aged Care and Health	Ltyentye Apurte	1.18M	5 total	Ltyentye Apurte Arelhe-Ingkerrenyekekne Apmere Aboriginal Corporation	Support eligible older people to live independently at home and in community	01/07/2020 - 31/07/2025
			\$0.04M,			01/07/2018 - 31/07/2025 (2 grants)
			\$0.07M			14/11/2024 - 30/06/2026
			\$0.17M			01/07/2018 - 31/07/2025
Education (Children, Youth)	Ltyentye Apurte	4.39M	4:	Athyehenge-Atherre Aboriginal Corporation CatholicCare NT Literacy for Life Foundation	Getting children and youth to school and improving education outcomes	01/07/2024 - 30/06/2027
			\$1.12M,			01/01/2025 - 31/12/2026
			\$1.55M,			01/01/2025 - 31/12/2026
			\$0.51M			01/07/2023 - 31/12/2025
	Amoonguna	1.87M	1	Australian Regional and Remote Community Services Ltd	01/01/2023 - 31/12/2026	
Indigenous Arts and Culture	Aputula	0.37M	1	Anangu Uwankaraku Punu Aboriginal Corporation	To provide visual arts services to Indigenous artists and strategic activities to support Indigenous Australians to maintain their culture	04/08/2023 - 30/11/2025
	Ltyentye Apurte	1.25M	1	Keringke Arts Aboriginal Corporation		09/07/2024 - 30/11/2027
	Titjikala	0.88M	2	Tapatjatjaka Art and Craft Aboriginal Corporation		28/06/2024 - 30/11/2026
						15/08/2023 - 30/11/2026
Indigenous Employment and Economic Development	Ltyentye Apurte	0.78M	2	Athyehenge-Atherre Aboriginal Corporation	Focuses on getting Indigenous Australians into work and fostering business	20/09/2022 - 30/09/2025 20/09/2024 - 20/09/2025
TOTAL	Ltyentye Apurte	7.62M	12 Grants			
TOTAL	Aputula	0.37M	1 Grant			
TOTAL	Titjikala	0.88M	2 Grants			
TOTAL	Amoonguna	1.87M	1 Grant			

Source: Data compiled from BushTel (n.d.) Community Profiles for Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula, Titjikala, Amoonguna. www.bushtel.nt.gov.au/profile

Government investment in the region totals approximately \$254 million, primarily delivered through regional programs shared across multiple communities. While this funding strongly aligns with workforce related areas, including health, Indigenous employment, education, and family support, its diffuse distribution makes it difficult to measure impact at the individual community level.

A small portion (\$10.75 million) is community-specific, mostly concentrated in Ltyentye Apurte, with smaller allocations to Titjikala, Aputula, and Amoonguna. These targeted investments support local priorities such as education, aged care, arts, and employment pathways.

Four key organisations, Congress, Central Land Council, NPY Women’s Council, and MacDonnell Regional Council receive over 90% of total funding and play a central role in delivering services and enabling regional employment.

The data highlights foundations for workforce planning but also points to gaps in place-based investment.

Opportunities exist to:

- Scale up tailored workforce strategies at the local level by developing workforce action plans to align with funded programs
- Embed employment outcomes into the design of funded projects (e.g. require local hiring or training components).
- Partner with funded service providers (e.g. Congress, MacDonnell Regional Council, CLC) to create training-to-employment pipelines
- Integrate Vocational Education and Training (VET) into funded sectors
- Use employment-focused grants to support on-the-job training, mentoring, and apprenticeships for Indigenous people.
- Advocate for funding flexibility to allow training delivery as part of service delivery
- Introduce clear KPIs (e.g. number of Indigenous people trained/hired) into grant agreements for place-based funding.
- Strengthen outcomes tracking for small-scale grants
- Build capacity in underfunded communities by providing grant-writing support and training to local Aboriginal Corporations and community groups and encouraging government agencies to target new funding rounds to underfunded areas like Aputula and Titjikala with tailored support

To realise the full impact of investments, workforce planning strategies should align program investments with skills pathways, Indigenous employment opportunities, and community-led development.

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

Workforce planning efforts are most effective when they are aligned with the aspirations and priorities of the communities they serve. Across the four communities, numerous grassroots initiatives have been identified that address local needs while simultaneously creating employment pathways for residents.

Office of the Central Australian Regional Controller (OCARC) Community Meetings: Expressing Local Priorities

In 2023, the OCARC community meetings conducted in Ltyentye Apurte, Aputula and Titjikala surfaced a range of community-driven priorities that offer potential for workforce planning. These initiatives, identified and championed by residents span various sectors and represent opportunities to both strengthen local economies and empower community members through employment and skill-building.

Table 32: Ltyentye Apurte Initiatives Identified via the OCARC Consultation

Issue Category:	Issue Sub-category:	Details:
Access	Access	Communication with community regarding planning and governance. AAAC is interested in being the Community 'Front Door'.
	Essential Services	Community store prices are high, remote stores are struggling to make profits.
	Centrelink	Improve services for new mothers to register birth of children with Centrelink
Housing	Repairs and Maintenance	Housing maintenance is an ongoing issue and can take months to be fixed. Create a local workforce of community members who can fix minor maintenance issues. Potential to create training pathways to upskill.
	Town Planning	More consultation with community regarding housing design specification, stages and dates of program.
Infrastructure	Roads	Community requesting road sealing on the community end of the road as well – not only the Alice Springs end of the road.
Employment	Regulation	Create easier pathways for people to access white card training and acquire ochre cards to secure jobs.
	Centrelink	Create a hub and spoke service with local language /translators in community so members don't have to travel into Alice Springs.
Planning	Communication	Communities want to be kept informed of actions following on from community meetings – to close the loop.
Health	Renal Services	Requesting access to community dialysis services.
Community Support	Other	Requesting Aboriginal Liaison Police Officer or Aboriginal Liaison Officer in community. Requesting information regarding recruitment and the number of positions available.

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

Table 33: Aputula Initiatives Identified via the OCARC Consultation

Issue Category:	Issue Sub-category:	Details:
Community Support	Service Coordination / Communication	The community is keen to have its own Local Decision Making (LDM) Authority.
Council	Other	Fix water issues for the Orchard and Graveyard.
Outstation (OS)	Funding	More transparency regarding OS funding and how it is being spent by

Management		MRC.
	Repairs and Maintenance	Outstations need repairs – (housing maintenance, broken turbine, no lighting)
Infrastructure	Town planning	Construct a new basketball and recreation hall, football club and playground.
	Training	Re-establish a resource centre including a mechanic shop for fixing cars in a workshop and access to tools. Training programs can be run in the centre.
Employment	Training	Create jobs for community members as part of the Home Build program – some residents have white cards but are not being employed. Training to learn fencing and welding.
Housing	Overcrowding	Build single men’s and women’s quarters.
	Repairs and Maintenance	Housing maintenance is an ongoing issue and can take months to be fixed. Create a local workforce of community members who can fix minor maintenance issues. Potential to create training pathways to upskill.
Enterprise	Art Centre	Create an art centre and cafe in the community to promote tourism.
	Funding	Capitalise on Aputula Desert Race to create tourist attractions for camping for a fee. Training in business.
Education	Secondary Education	More education options for secondary schooling in the community, so young people don’t have to leave the community if they want to finish schooling.
	Training	CDU to deliver VET training in the community – community models.
Community Support	Assets and Machinery	Set up a resource centre including a mechanic shop in community.
	Centrelink	Increase the number of positions for both male and female rangers.
	Other	Community requesting support accessing NDIS for disability services.
	Youth programs	More services to engage young people who are easily bored in community.
Health	Essential Services	Improved remote health service including palliative care and renal services. Provide education to the community on early intervention and prevention. Employ more local staff.
	Communication	More cultural awareness training for visiting/ FIFO medical staff. Community members offer to attend study institutions and speak to students about what is needed for culturally aware nursing.
	Renal Service	Requesting access to community dialysis services.
Employment	Centrelink	Create a hub and spoke service with local language /translators in community so members don’t have to travel into Alice Springs.
	Access CDP	Create opportunities for employment of people in the region and create a community connector role.
Planning	Communication	Communities want to be kept informed of actions following on from community meetings – to close the loop.
Access	Centrelink	Improve services for new mothers to register birth of children with Centrelink

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

Table 34: Titjikala Initiatives Identified via the OCARC Consultation

Issue Category:	Issue Sub-category:	Details:
Council	Assets and Machinery	Access to a grader and repair tools for community use.
Access	Access / Communication	The community is keen to have its own Local Decision Making (LDM) Authority – a front door to community.
	Centrelink	Improve services for new mothers to register birth of children with Centrelink

Finance	Funding	Requesting transparency on how grant money is spent in the community.
Infrastructure	Roads	Requesting an upgrade to the road and streetlights, so the community is not cut off when it floods. Also requesting a bridge be built across the river.
Housing	Repairs and Maintenance	Housing maintenance is an ongoing issue and can take months to be fixed. Create a local workforce of community members who can fix minor maintenance issues. Potential to create training pathways to upskill. Also requesting clearer pathways for reporting maintenance issues.
Employment	Training	Create easier pathways for people to access white card training and acquire ochre cards to secure jobs.
	CDP	Create VET training on community, and employment pathways via CDP.
	CDP	Employment pathways for young people to transition from school to work
	CDP	Set up a resource centre Training for locals alongside contractors. Create NDIS/Aged care, more rural jobs in community.
Education	Secondary School	Requesting a boarding school officer to support young people with boarding school enrollment to access secondary schooling.
	Secondary School	More education options for secondary schooling in the community, so young people don't have to leave the community if they want to finish schooling.
	Secondary School	A school bus service so kids can get to school.
	Secondary School	Support families to support disengaged youth.
Community Support	Other	Requesting a Ranger Program
	Youth Program	More services to engage young people who are easily bored in community.
	Other	Support with accessing NDIS services.
Planning	Communication	Communities want to be kept informed of actions following on from community meetings – to close the loop.
Health	Essential Services	Improved renal services. Provide education to the community on early intervention and prevention. Employ more local staff. More health checks for children and vulnerable people. Access to after-hours appointments for children. Support with transport to town to access medical appointments.
	Communication	More cultural awareness training for medical staff, staff to work with translators.
	Renal Service	Requesting access to community dialysis services.
Housing	Overcrowding	Pest control for vermin. Houses sitting vacant as residents have moved communities but still paying rent. Requesting policy review as there is overcrowding.
Outstation (OS) Management	Essential services	Outstations need renovation – no water, no showers to conduct women's ceremony. More transparency regarding OS funding and how it is being spent.
Access	Centrelink	Improve services for new mothers to register birth of children with Centrelink

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

Delivering local projects with local workers, allow communities to strengthen their economies while cultivating a skilled workforce. In regions where employment opportunities and businesses are limited, community led initiatives do more than improve infrastructure. They generate jobs, build local capabilities, and ensure that the social and economic benefits stay within the community, while training and employing locals fosters a sense of pride.

Recent project updates from the Community Infrastructure Package, part of the Australian Government's *A Better, Safer Future for Central Australia* (announced February 2023) includes:

- Oval lights in Titjikala⁹¹
- Construction of new BMX pump tracks and refurbishment of the recreation hall in Titjikala⁹²
- Development of a new orchard and garden in Finke⁹³

The above projects are part of a group project which represent over \$28 million of investment in Central Australia, that were selected after consultation with the Central Australia Plan's Aboriginal Leadership Group⁹⁴.

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 are developed collaboratively with community members, cultural authorities, school staff, and students, and create potential local employment pathways.⁹⁵

This community-guided approach to workforce planning addresses immediate employment needs while building long-term skills and leadership within Central Australian communities. By positioning schools as hubs for local training and employment, it empowers community members to take active roles in shaping education and career pathways for future generations.

Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School's Improvement Plan identified the following areas for strategic planning activities:⁹⁶

- Catholic Identity
- Teaching and Learning
- Leadership
- Pastoral Care and Well being
- Community and Culture
- Finance, Facilities and Resources

⁹¹ King, C. (2024, March 8). *Nine New Community Infrastructure Projects for Central Australia* | ministers for the Department of Infrastructure. Minister for Infrastructure, Transport Regional Development and Local Government. <https://minister.infrastructure.gov.au/c-king/media-release/nine-new-community-infrastructure-projects-central-australia>

⁹² King, C. (2024, July 24). *Twenty-three new community infrastructure projects for Central Australia*. | ministers for the Department of Infrastructure. Minister for Infrastructure, Transport Regional Development and Local Government. <https://minister.infrastructure.gov.au/c-king/media-release/twenty-three-new-community-infrastructure-projects-central-australia>

⁹³ *Ibid*

⁹⁴ King, C. (2024, July 24). *Twenty-three new community infrastructure projects for Central Australia*. | ministers for the Department of Infrastructure. Minister for Infrastructure, Transport Regional Development and Local Government. <https://minister.infrastructure.gov.au/c-king/media-release/twenty-three-new-community-infrastructure-projects-central-australia>

⁹⁵ 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>

⁹⁶ *Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School Ltyentye Apurte (2025) Action Plan: LACS School Improvement Plan*. http://www.lacecnt.catholic.edu.au/__files/f/3579/Annual%20Improvement%20Plan%202021.pdf

Finke School Action Plan Prioritised:⁹⁷

- Growing school attendance by working together with families and the community.
- Teaching local language and culture through extra support people in the classroom with reading, writing and maths.
- Attracting and retaining Aboriginal Educators by creating more jobs, training opportunities, and making more full-time positions available to community members.
- Educating children in partnership with the community. Teachers and Families working together to make school interesting.
- Learning on country through bush trips to support increased local knowledge and education.

Titjikala School Action Plan Prioritised:⁹⁸

- Improving school attendance, by employing more local Yankunytjatjara speaking staff in the classroom to help kids with reading, writing and maths and providing smaller group learning for students who need extra help.
- More learning on country by working with community, parents and LEaD committee members to include culture and language - supporting two-way learning as a core part of everyday teaching.
- Intensive literacy and numeracy support by strengthening the teaching of reading, writing and maths with training for all staff, so there is a consistent and strong whole school way of teaching and learning.
- Titji Kunpuringanyi School staff work with families to make sure kids are happy, healthy and ready for learning.

Amoonguna School Community Members Prioritised:⁹⁹

- Improving school attendance by employing more people to help kids learn in the classroom.
- Meaningful learning through extra support people in the classroom to help children with reading, writing and maths, and more learning on and about country.
- Employing the right people by attracting and retaining Aboriginal Educators by creating more jobs, training opportunities, and making more full-time positions available to community members.
- Educating children in partnership with the community. Teachers and Families working together to make school interesting.
- Wellbeing and inclusion of all students. Teachers and the school staff understand the children and how to help them learn.

⁹⁷Education NT (2025) Finke School Action Plan. https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1369491/Aputula-school-action-plan.PDF

⁹⁸Education NT (2025) Titjikala School Action Plan. https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1369506/titjikala-school-action-plan.PDF

⁹⁹Education NT (2025) Amoonguna School Action Plan. https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1369485/amoonguna-school-action-plan.PDF

Identified Roles Supporting these Priorities are:

- School Engagement Officers – Building trust and attendance by maintaining strong community-school relationships.
- Aboriginal Cultural Liaison Officers – Supporting culturally inclusive education, including on-Country learning activities.
- Classroom Support Officers (CSOs) – Assisting teachers with culturally aligned locally relevant curriculum delivery.
- Homework Officers – Helping students and families with reading, writing, and study skills.
- Cultural Educators – Collaborating with school staff to teach language, history, and cultural knowledge.
- Community Liaison Officers – Bridging communication between schools and families.
- School Nutrition and Wellbeing Staff – Enhancing student readiness and wellbeing through meal and support programs.
- Youth and Attendance Officers – Supporting regular school attendance and youth transitions to further training or work.
- VET Coordinators – Facilitating school-based apprenticeships and vocational training.

Three key shared priorities emerged across these plans that support workforce planning:

- Incorporating learning in Indigenous language
- Creating more permanent, full-time roles for residents, rather than relying on casual employment
- Investing in training and development for all staff

MacDonnell Regional Council - Regional Plan

The MacDonnell Regional Council (MRC) 2025–26 Regional Plan identifies opportunities to advance workforce planning across its remote communities. Central to the plan is a commitment to increasing Aboriginal employment, support local enterprise, and aligning training with job opportunities.

The plan sets a clear direction for community development through targeted employment initiatives, investment in infrastructure, and support for Aboriginal-led businesses. Reaching Aboriginal employment targets particularly within commercial contracts and infrastructure projects will be critical to building local workforce capacity, strengthening skills, and ensuring that economic benefits remain within the region.

Table 35: MacDonnell Regional Council (MRC) 2025-26 Regional Plan Goals

Goals	Objective	Target Completion Date
1. Develop Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MCR's infrastructure meets community needs ➤ Create employment opportunities ➤ Increase Aboriginal employment opportunities ➤ Support local Aboriginal enterprise 	June 2029
2. Healthy Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support active and healthy lifestyles ➤ Improve environmental health outcomes ➤ Improve access to cultural and recreational activities 	June 2027
3. Empowered Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Young people are empowered to be engaged representatives. ➤ Local Authority and Council members are trained and empowered in their roles to lead into the future. ➤ Local authority and Council members, constituents and stakeholders are engaged and informed 	June 2026
4. Supportive Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Build a skilled and motivated workforce ➤ Support the development and advancement of our staff ➤ Improve efficiencies through our use of technology ➤ Support staff safety and wellbeing ➤ Staff are empowered to inform MRC decision-makings 	June 2026

Sourced: MacDonnell Regional Council (2024): MacDonnell Regional Council 2025-2026 Regional Plan.

<https://www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/documents/230/2025-26-regional-plan-of-macdonnell-regional-council-draft>

Workforce Planning Opportunities

An analysis of local population trends, education and training pathways, employment data, and community aspirations has revealed several key needs and opportunities. These opportunities aim to address workforce challenges, leverage community strengths, and maximise the impact of existing investments. All initiatives should be guided by strong community leadership and inclusive decision-making to ensure lasting local benefit.

Table 36: Workforce Planning Opportunities

Gap/ Barrier Identified:	Opportunities	Actions
1. Expand On-Country Learning Models		
Lack of local training access: residents need to travel to access training, creating a barrier to skills acquisition, especially for young people, parents, and people with transport limitations. Additionally Low VET completion, declining engagement, and significant literacy/numeracy challenges are exacerbated by English being a second, third or fourth language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ CDU outreach ✓ Mobile Learning Units ✓ Bilingual curriculums ✓ School Action Plans ✓ MacDonnell Regional Council (MRC) workforce goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partner with CDU and RTOs to deliver in-community VET and accredited short courses (e.g. white card, aged care, childcare, mechanics). Establish mobile or digital training hubs in Aputula, Titjikala and Ltyentye Apurte. - Invest in training local people as cultural educators, classroom aides, and leadership staff in remote schools. - Introduce bilingual curriculums for literacy and numeracy in schools from a young age through to secondary and VET training.
2. Community-Led Employment Pathways		
Limited job pathways post-training: even when residents gain qualifications (e.g. white cards), they struggle to secure local employment due to a lack of structured job pipelines or contractors not employing local labour. This can result in skills remaining under utilised, and unemployment remaining high despite training efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Existing infrastructure projects (housing, roads, repairs and maintenance) ✓ VET alignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Link job guarantees or traineeships to funded infrastructure and maintenance projects, and local employers. - Embed 'Training and Employment' clauses in housing, road, and community service contracts. - Create a local employment brokerage service to match trainees with job openings.
3. Invest in More Permanent, Full-Time Community Roles		
Casualisation of roles: Community-facing roles in schools, health, and community services are often casual or short-term, limiting career progression and income stability for local workers. This also results in higher turnover, reduced retention, and underrepresentation of local Aboriginal staff in leadership roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ School engagement roles ✓ MRC priority for permanent jobs ✓ Steppingstone programs - leadership pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convert part-time classroom and support positions into full-time community roles. - Fund and secure Aboriginal educator pathways in schools (e.g. CSO to qualified teacher). - Prioritise hiring community members in school support roles, with mentorship and professional development pathways.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create more permanent positions in health, wellbeing and community liaison roles.
4. Link Infrastructure Grants to Local Jobs		
<p>Underutilised infrastructure grants for workforce planning: infrastructure projects (housing, roads, halls) are not consistently leveraged to create local jobs or traineeships.</p> <p>External contractors complete work with little community involvement, resulting in missed economic and training opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Housing repairs, community halls, road upgrades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Require community contractors to hire and train locals as part of the tenders. - Create 'learn while you build' training models (e.g. apprenticeships in construction, fencing, maintenance). - Establish local housing maintenance teams with accredited skills.
5. Create Local Workforce Hubs		
<p>Fragmented services: workforce planning efforts are not coordinated across sectors (e.g. education, housing, health), leading to duplication or missed opportunities.</p> <p>Training programs are developed in silos, with few mechanisms to connect them to actual job needs in community services or enterprise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ LDM aspirations articulated by communities-desire for "community front door" model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Local Decision-Making (LDM) processes to integrate services (e.g. Centrelink, NDIS, CDP) locally. - Support LDM governance models to give communities oversight into workforce investment. - Fund a Community Connector role to coordinate training, services, and job referrals. - Leverage existing CDP infrastructure to provide pathways from training to employment. - Use AAAC or similar as a "workforce hub" for training and employment coordination.
6. Create school-to-work training and employment pathways		
<p>Youth employment transition gaps: an absence of structured transition-to-work support for young people, especially school leavers, means young people face disengagement, limited career pathways, and are overrepresented in CDP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Build into school Action Plans ✓ MRC youth empowerment objective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fund youth-to-work programs including mentoring, career pathway mapping, and pre-employment training. - Introduce transition support officers to guide students into local jobs or further study. - Leverage bush trips and on-Country learning for VET credit.
7. Strengthen Service Access Roles		
<p>Lack of local service roles (NDIS, Centrelink, Health): essential services rely heavily on FIFO staff or external service models, with limited employment of local people in delivery roles which can lead to a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identified need for Aboriginal Liaison Officers, NDIS workers, and translators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and fund community-based service roles (e.g. NDIS Support Workers, Aboriginal Health Workers, Centrelink Assistants). - Develop micro-credentials or short

cultural disconnect and lost opportunities for employment.		<p>courses in service navigation and communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train bilingual locals for translator or interpreter roles across all services.
8. Support Local Enterprise and Tourism		
Enterprise development support is lacking tourism, arts and cultural enterprise opportunities exist, but there is limited support for small business training and enterprise incubation. The potential for economic development and job creation is under realised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Aputula Desert Race ✓ Art Centres ✓ Café and tourism ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fund small business incubators linked to arts, culture and tourism. - Provide enterprise training (financial literacy, marketing, tourism operations). - Support pop-up businesses or microenterprises during community events (e.g. Aputula Race).
9. Coordinate Investment and Monitor Impact		
Limited monitoring and accountability of workforce outcomes means there is no regional mechanism for tracking Aboriginal employment outcomes, training effectiveness, or investment impact on workforce growth, which can result in success being difficult to measure and gaps remaining unaddressed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Regional Investments ✓ Community services programs currently underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Rodinga Regional Workforce Planning Taskforce with representation from communities, schools, regional councils, CDP providers, and funders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Align training with demand ▪ Share job opportunities ▪ Track Aboriginal employment outcomes ▪ Ensure accountability for workforce targets in funded projects - Require funded programs to report on training-to-employment conversion rates. - Conduct annual community workforce forums to review progress and adjust strategies.

Culturally appropriate approaches are not only effective in increasing employment rates but also play a vital role in building stronger, healthier, and more resilient communities.

To ensure long-term impact, it is essential to establish community-led governance for workforce initiatives, invest in local labour market data systems to inform planning and decision-making, and continuously monitor progress. Adapting strategies in genuine partnership with communities will help ensure that workforce planning efforts remain relevant, effective, and culturally grounded.

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