



Karrkad Kanjdji Trust

Supporting country, culture and community

Bi-cultural Education on Country

A Philanthropic Proposal



Nawarddeken Academy students on a bush camp, Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area, 2020

A partnership between the Karrkad Kanjdji Trust, Warddeken rangers and the Nawarddeken Academy is bringing community owned, community led, bicultural education to all children across the 1.4-million-hectare Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area in west Arnhem Land.

Executive Summary

In 2015 philanthropists and community members came together to establish the Nawarddeken Academy. It is a unique approach to remote Indigenous education which provides children with a brighter future while supporting ranger families as they manage fire, conservation efforts and cultural heritage projects across the region. Scaling from one school at the Kabulwarnamyo ranger base community, in 2021 we aim to establish schools at Warddeken's other two ranger base communities, Manmoyi and Mamardawerre.

Manmoyi and Mamardawerre communities have been provided with little to no access to education under the public school system and have been campaigning for change. Within the space of the next twelve months, we will use philanthropic funding to establish two new schools, embed a locally developed Indigenous Language and Culture Curriculum, and employ teachers - core operational costs will then be transitioned to federal funding under the Independent Schools framework.



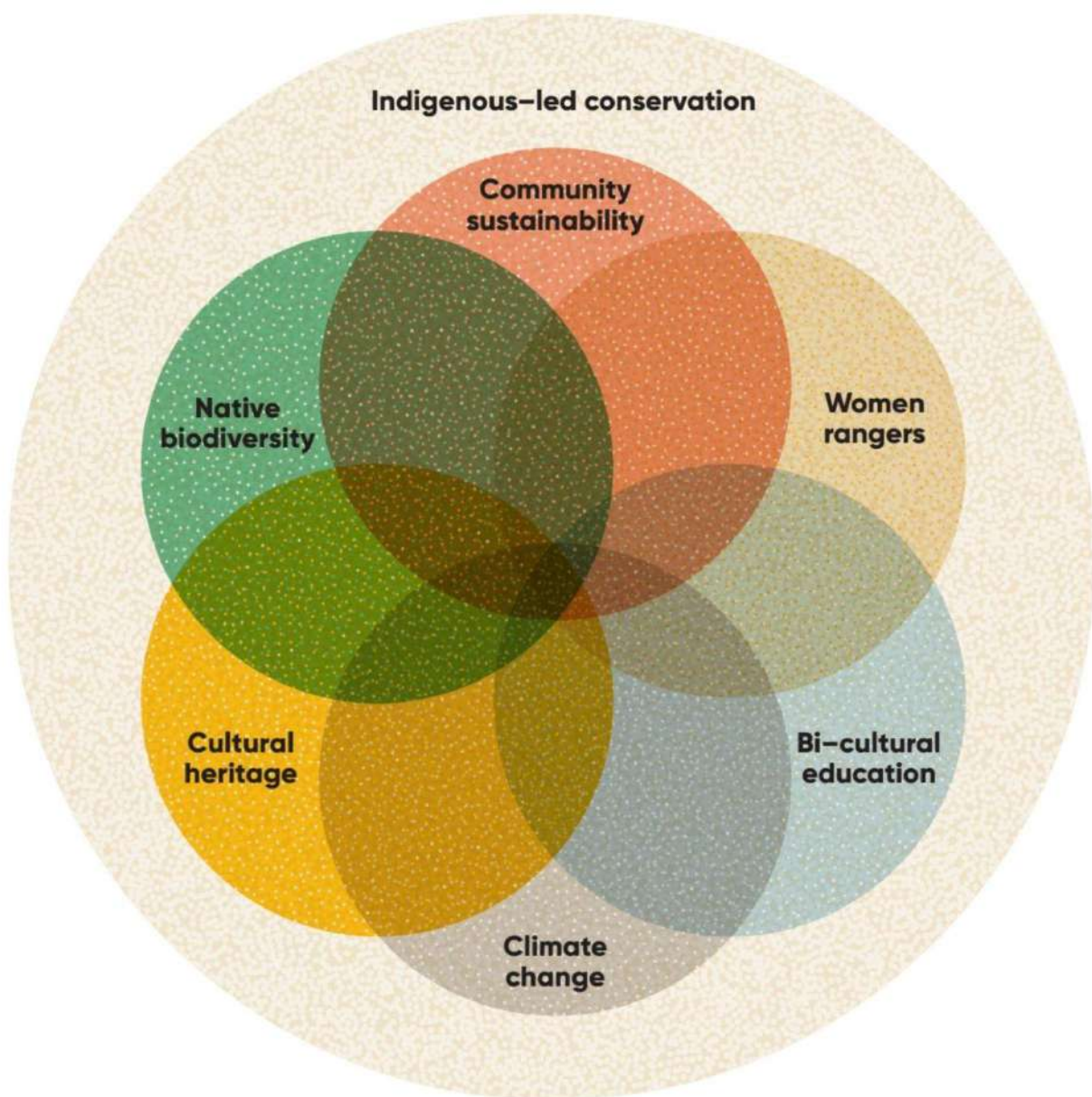
Karrkad Kanjdji Trust's partnership map, Warddeken, Mimal, Bawinanga, Adjumarllarl and ALFA (NT).

The Karrkad Kanjdji Trust

The Karrkad Kanjdji Trust (KKT) works to protect, restore, and enhance the unique natural environment of West and Central Arnhem Land, NT. KKT acts as the philanthropic fundraising arm of the region's Indigenous ranger groups, partnering with on-ground land management organisations to realise this mission.

Our name, Karrkad Kanjdji (pronounced gar-gut gun-jee), refers to the stone country highlands and savanna lowlands of Arnhem Land that we work together to protect.

KKT was established by Traditional Owners of the Warddeken and Djelk IPAs in 2010. Today, KKT is working with four Indigenous ranger groups, who manage over 50,000 square kilometres of Country. Our approach to conservation is holistic - each project we support strengthens the ability of communities to manage their natural and cultural assets. Our projects span six key focus areas



Our vision is that current and future generations of Bininj (Indigenous people) and balanda (non-Indigenous people) can work together to support the sustainability of land management and cultural heritage work, while enabling the ongoing self-determination of the people of West and Central Arnhem Land.

Education in Arnhem Land

Accessing education can be difficult for the children of Indigenous rangers in West and Central Arnhem Land. The homeland outstation communities that house ranger bases can be incredibly remote and are often too small to qualify for full-time government public school funding. Rangers have had to move away into towns (which have fewer employment opportunities) to enrol their children in full-time education. The Northern Territory has the lowest proportion of students at or above the national minimum standards for literacy and numeracy, and attendance rates for Indigenous students across the very remote areas of the NT are currently sitting at 50% – well below the national average of 80% for Indigenous students.



Remote community of Kabulwarnamyo, home to the Nawarddeen Academy. Photo by Sally Tsoutas

Orphaned Country is the Bininj term to describe a landscape without its people. Orphaned Country is one of the biggest threats to conserving biodiversity and passing down intricate Indigenous ecological knowledge. Elders want to see the next generation of Traditional Custodians growing up and being educated on Country, in both local traditional knowledge and the Australian Curriculum.

Establishing locally delivered bi-cultural education aims to address low rates of formal education in remote Indigenous communities, enable rangers to continue to live and work on Country, and ensure that critical cultural knowledge is passed down from one generation to the next and is practiced into the future. Bi-cultural education involves children, from early learners to high school students, regularly spending time on Country with Elders, community members and rangers. It's about getting children out of the classroom and onto their ancestral lands, hearing the stories, singing songs, gathering food and learning how to manage Country. Contextually appropriate content can then be incorporated into the Australian Curriculum, making for a more engaging school experience.

Indigenous rangers are recognised by their communities as being well positioned to facilitate better learning outcomes on Country. The Karrkad Kanjdji Trust recognises the implicit link between cultural heritage, community strength and conservation outcomes, and thus supports bi-cultural education projects where government funding is insufficient. Together with our partners, we are investing in the next generation of rangers.

The Nawarddeken Academy



Nawarddeken Academy students and teachers in their brand new uniforms. Photo care of Nawarddeken Academy

At the request of local Indigenous Elders and community members in 2015, Warddeken Land Management (Warddeken), in partnership with KKT, assisted the community of Kabulwarnamyo to establish a remote, bi-cultural school. The community opened Nawarddeken Academy to keep the families of rangers together on Country and ensure children learn Bininj knowledge, alongside mainstream education.

The following year, at the request of community elders and mothers of young children, Nawarddeken opened an Early Learning Program for preschool age children. The program is well supported by local women, who share responsibility for planning and delivery of early learning activities. It also provides valuable training and part-time employment opportunities for young mothers.

This school was the result of the vision of local Indigenous rangers at Kabulwarnamyo, and relied on philanthropic support for the first three and a half years. The school operated under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Gunbalanya School; a government run school in the town of Gunbalanya.

In December 2018, the Nawarddeken Academy was granted Independent School Registration, commencing January 2019, which means that recurrent federal government funding now secures the financial future of the Academy and, more importantly, provides Kabulwarnamyo students with the education they deserve.

The Academy at Kabulwarnamyo is a deep source of pride and a critical piece of socioeconomic infrastructure for the community. It now provides full-time education for school aged students and employment for the local community. Since 2015, NAL has employed 103 people, 82 of whom are Indigenous. In addition to Government recurrent funding, the Academy continues to receive logistical support from Warddeken Land Management, and philanthropic support from KKT to help develop the bi-cultural curriculum.

Philanthropic funding is needed to establish two new schools, bringing full time, community led, bi-cultural and contextually relevant education to the next generation of Traditional Custodians for the first time.

Expanding Opportunities to Manmoyi and Mamardawerre

Over the last twelve years, the ranger program on the Warddeken IPA has grown to employ over 180 people. Warddeken rangers work across the IPA from the outstation bases at Kabulwarnamyo, Manmoyi and Mamardawerre. The number of people at any one outstation fluctuates over time as people move between locations for a variety of reasons, including the needs of the ranger program and customary/cultural reasons, with approximately 50 people at any one outstation at any given time.

With more people moving back into the IPA to work for Warddeken the need for remote, full-time schooling is more evident than ever. Currently, the only full-time educational options for many children living in the outstations of Manmoyi and Mamardawerre involve relocation, boarding or the use of charter planes in the wet season.

There are up to 30 students at Manmoyi and 30 students at Mamardawerre who would attend local schooling if it were available full-time. As with the teaching currently taking place at Kabulwarnamyo, the teaching at the new schools will bring together the Australian Curriculum with the opportunity for students to engage with elders and rangers to undertake on Country learning. Field trips would be conducted weekly so students can learn about their Country.

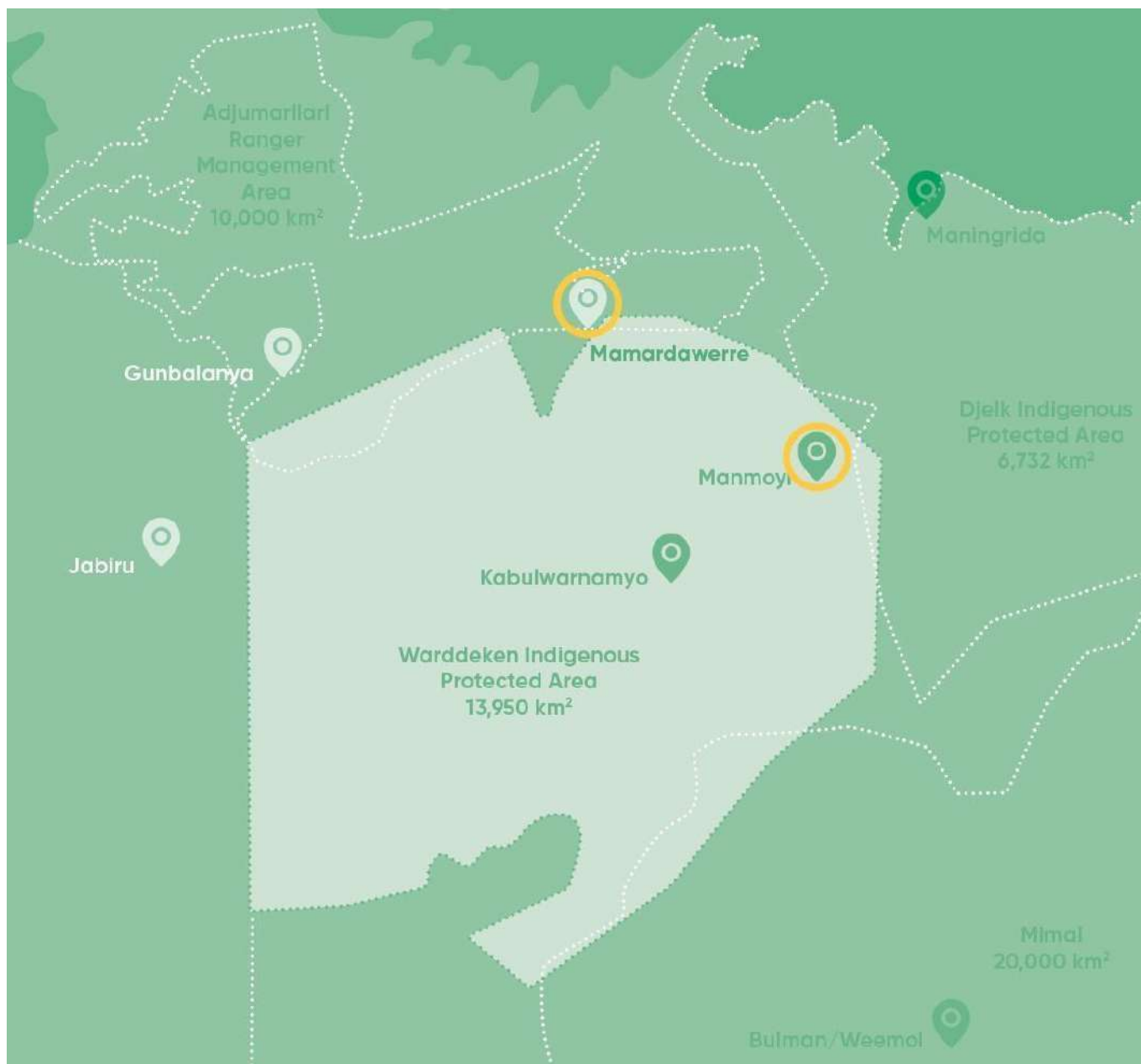
Teaching at the schools would be delivered by registered teachers, with the support of local Indigenous teachers, creating more employment opportunities.



Nawarddeken Academy students, Delsanto and Richard documenting kunwarddebim (rock art) during a learning on country lesson with the Warddeken Rangers. Photo care of Warddeken

Within the IPA, families often move between outstations. Through establishing two new schools, the Nawarddeken Academy will have a consistent curriculum throughout the IPA, ensuring that the full-time education delivered is consistent across schools and communities. Through its design as a locally owned operation, the Nawarddeken Academy is well positioned to meet the needs of local communities and local students. Additionally, the integration of the Nawarddeken Academy with Warddeken Land Management is providing lesson material, inspiration and clear future employment pathways for students.

Since August 2015 and as a registered independent school since January 2019, the Academy has developed a successful governance, financial and teaching model which can be replicated. The Academy is well staffed with qualified teachers who have remote Indigenous teaching experience and can provide a strong support base for the commencement of schools at Manmoyi and Mamardawerre.



Soon after the Nawarddeken Academy was established, the communities of Manmoyi and Mamardawerre requested the Nawarddeken Academy's assistance in exploring options for the provision of full-time, on Country education for their communities.

At the moment there are limited and intermittent educational opportunities for children at Manmoyi and Mamardawerre. As of January 2021, Manmoyi students have had about 10 days of access to a registered teacher, and Mamardawerre is receiving about 2 days a week of education. Children at Manmoyi and Mamardawerre have not had access to five days a week of education for many years. Often children go for weeks, during school terms, without access to a registered teacher. Establishing new schools will enable children in these communities to achieve equitable access to education in the most efficient and immediate manner possible.

The communities of Manmoyi and Mamardawerre want to:

- Empower young people to be strong and confident in both worlds and become ambassadors for their communities;
- Preserve local languages and culture through bilingual and bi-cultural experiential learning.
- Promote intergenerational education where communities share learning experiences; and
- Support the social, cultural, emotional and physical wellbeing of every child.

Establishing new schools within these communities will make this vision a reality.

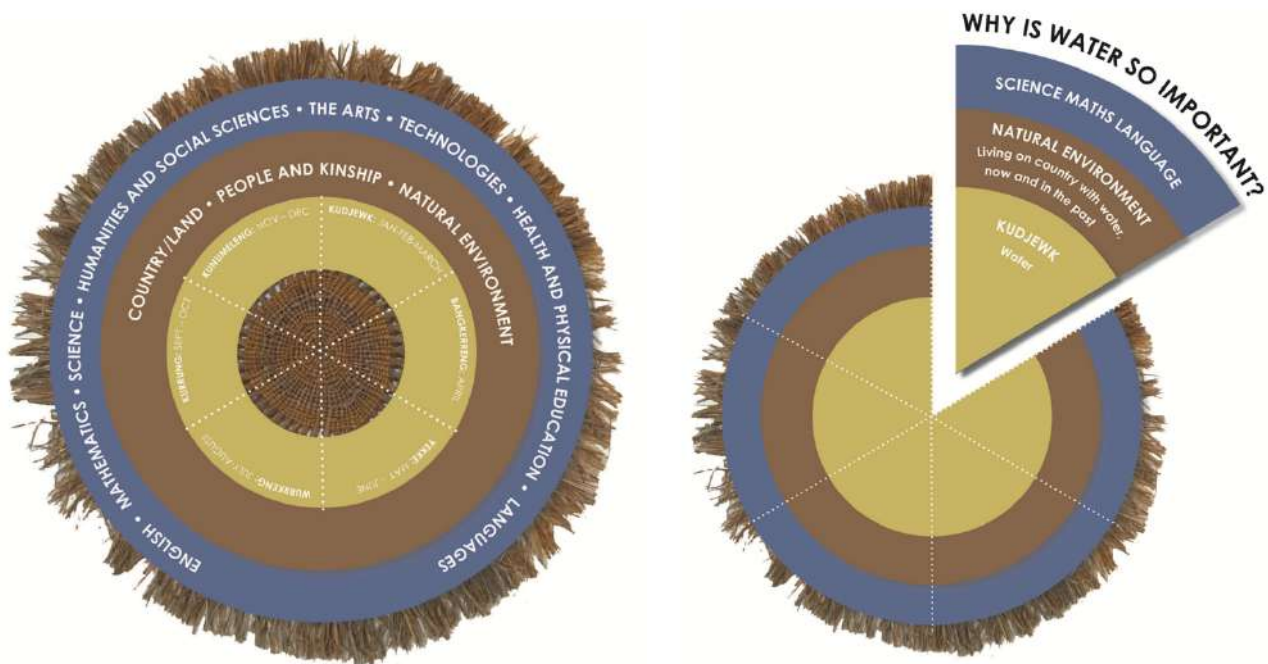


The remote outstations of Manmoyi (left) and Mamardawerre (right)

Educating beyond the core-curriculum

Communities across the Warddeken IPA have expressed how important it is to preserve and pass on Indigenous Ecological knowledge. The knowledge system often clearly reflects local connection to place, with the continual acquisition of knowledge generated by communities heavily reliant on natural resources. Key to preserving this knowledge is embedding it within the core school curriculum. By embedding the local environmental context within the curriculum, a place-based education approach is supported.

Knowledge is being taught by developing a Curriculum Map - a unique educational feature that will mean that new schools in Manmoyi and Mamardawerre will be able to teach a curriculum embedded in local, relevant knowledge.



This curriculum framework is built upon the Kuwarddewardde Malkno (Stone Country Seasonal Calendar), a colourful and visually appealing resource that is a powerful and flexible educational tool. This calendar (see page 10) will form the thematic epicentre of the Nawarddeken Academy Curriculum Map, and by extension the curriculums of the new schools. The calendar documents seasonal-specific knowledge of Country, including the environmental indicators that act as cues for many customary activities such as seasonal burning and bush tucker collection. Elders are passionate about recording and preserving knowledge for future generations and feel a sense of urgency in preserving this knowledge as many senior knowledge holders are passing away.

Timelines and process

- 2015: Warddeken Land Management and the Karrkad Kanjdji Trust worked together to establish the Nawarddeken Academy at Kabulwarnamyo. Philanthropic funding delivered education for three years and a half years.
- 2018: the communities of Manmoyi and Mamardawerre requested Nawarddeken Academy's assistance in exploring options for the provision of full-time, on Country education. Subsequently, this became a directive of the Nawarddeken Academy Board. Late in 2018 the Nawarddeken Academy secured Independent School status and core operations began to be funded through federal funding from 2019.

- 2019 - 2020: extensive community consultations. After numerous meetings and independent consultations, the Manmoyi and Mamardawerre communities requested that the Academy engage the Northern Land Council (NLC) and submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) for a Section 19 Aboriginal Land Use Agreement for the purpose of the establishment and operation of independent schools at both of these sites.
- 2021: Section 19 Aboriginal Land Use Agreements secured with unanimous support from all associated Traditional Owners. At the request of Traditional Owners, Elders and community members, the Academy then submitted an application to register two new independent schools. Given the registration process can be a lengthy one, the Academy has engaged law firm Minter Ellison to assist in ensuring the application is compliant with the Education Act and meets the registration requirements.

Once established using philanthropy, recurrent government funding attracted through enrolments would provide funding for full-time qualified teachers and local indigenous teachers at the new schools. The Nawarddeken Academy will be able to use the existing school infrastructure in both communities (with some infrastructure and furnishing upgrades) but will need to build teacher accommodation to house registered full-time teaching staff.



Nawarddeken Academy students loaded into the troop carrier for an afternoon of learning on country with Elders and rangers, Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area.

'We want to see the next generation have better education. We want to see two-way learning, our own Bininj (Indigenous) education and balanda (non-Indigenous) education. We live here on Country, this is where our ancestors walked and lived and we want to have school and jobs for our children when they grow up, on Country'

Terrah Guymala, Bordoh clan member and a Traditional Owner of the Ngorkwarre estate within the Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area, KKT alternate Director.

Kuwarddewardde Malkno



OCTOBER

SEPTEMBER
Kuning

NOVEMBER
Kunumeleng

DECEMBER

JANUARY

FEBRUARY
Kudjawk

MARCH

APRIL
Bangkereng

MAY

JUNE
Yeke

JULY

Wurkeng



Opportunities for philanthropic support

Philanthropic support is needed to establish new schools at Manmoyi and Mamardawerre, after which time Federal funding will fund the ongoing operations of each school. Your donation will go towards the following start-up costs, for example but not limited to; teacher salaries, teacher accommodation*, technology, micro towers for internet connection**, 4WD for bush trips etc.

We aim to build a community of supporters for the establishment of the schools, funding will be allocated first to salaries and infrastructure.

We are asking that ACF members form part of this community by contributing up to \$100,000 to go towards these establishment costs.



Example of a balabbala- teacher accommodation

*** Teacher accommodation - balabbala**

Outstations like Manmoyi and Mamardawerre lack adequate housing and infrastructure and are currently not adequately supported by government policy. For the establishment of each school, dwellings for staff need to be built. Balabbalas are cost effective and weather appropriate. Mamardawerre Outstation requires structures to be cyclone proof and are constructed with iron/metal (as below). Manmoyi Outstation is further south and does not require cyclone protection and balabbalas there are built with an army grade tarp roof, and local cypress beams.

**** Micro Towers**

Currently there is no mobile reception at Manmoyi, Mamardawerre or Kabulwarnamyo and only one or two shared landlines per community. Internet access is limited for all residents and can only be accessed through the respective Warddeken ranger offices or through the Kabulwarnamyo school. There are three significant shortcomings of the current satellite NBN set up:

- 1. Satellites are often oversubscribed with limited bandwidth so speeds can be very slow or connection intermittent during business hours;*
- 2. Satellite NBN plans have data limits and given the number of people sharing the one plan, it often exceeds the data limit;*
- 3. During the wet season (November-March) connectivity and internet speeds are further affected by storm activity and thick clouds.*

The installation of micro towers would give the Nawarddeken Academy, Warddeken rangers, as well as local residents, reliable and accessible phone and internet communication services. The same services that we take for granted. Corporate and government funding options are being explored, and if unavailable, we will need the support of the philanthropic community.

Project Partners:

The Nawarddeken Academy



The Nawarddeken Academy is a unique bi-cultural school in the remote Indigenous community of Kabulwarnamyo, in the Warddeken IPA. It was established at the request of local indigenous elders and has been operating since August 2015 and was registered as an independent school in 2019. The Academy employs two permanent teachers, three casual Indigenous teaching assistants, and an Executive Officer. The Kabulwarnamyo community has joint ownership of the Nawarddeken Academy, overseeing the school's direction and participating in the education of children.

Warddeken Land Management Limited



Warddeken Rangers work across 14,000 km² of the Kuwarddewardde (stone country) out of 3 ranger bases: Kabulwarnamyo, Manmoyi and Mamardawerre. The Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area is owned and managed by the Traditional Owners of 36 different clan groups, through a complex system of customary law. Their vision is to have healthy people living and working on healthy Country. Each year up to 130 Indigenous rangers are employed to work on: fire management and carbon abatement, weed and feral-animal control, rock art conservation, education and cultural heritage management.



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Opportunities for Philanthropic Support

The Karrkad Kanjdji Trust is currently seeking philanthropic support to extend schooling opportunities to the communities of Manmoyi and Mamardawerre. If you wish to learn more, or discuss contributing, please contact:

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