

World Vision



# Australia Program

Partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
communities, organisations and peoples





We walk hand in hand with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, working with them to deliver on their goals and aspirations.

# Our story

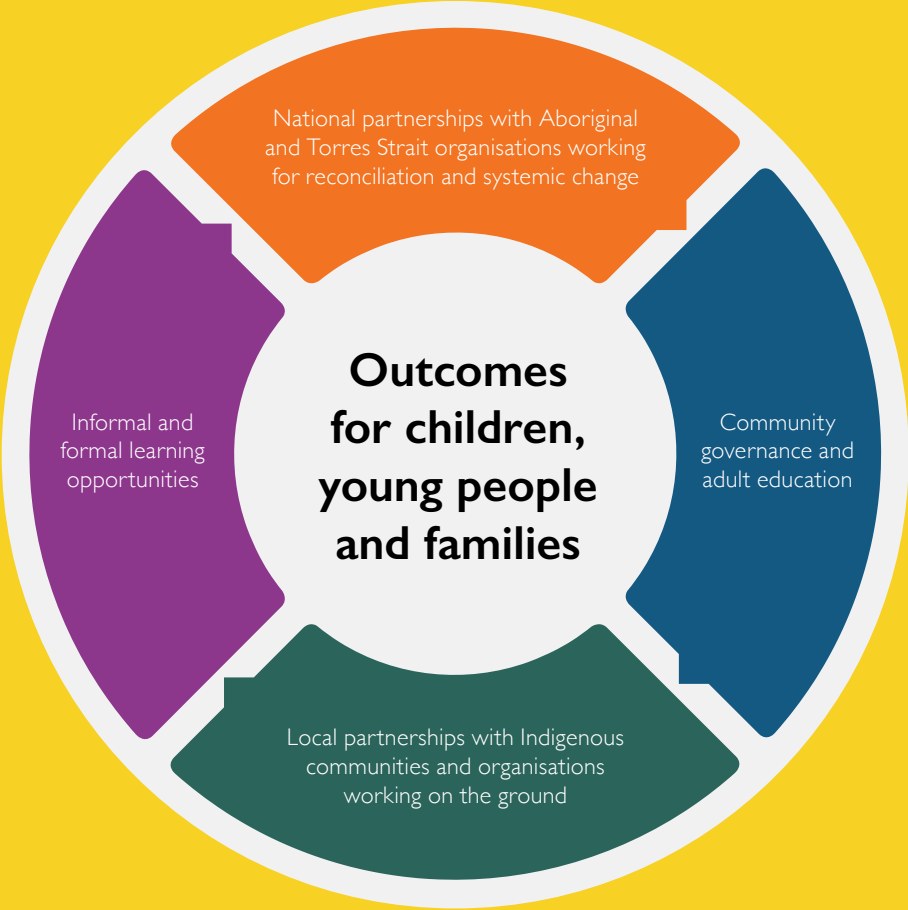
People are sometimes surprised to know that the Australia Program at World Vision Australia has worked for over forty years with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations. We are part of the global World Vision partnership that currently works in 90 countries on humanitarian and development initiatives supporting communities to realise their aspirations for a better future.

We are committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities achieve their own development goals, build on their strengths and create solutions to their own challenges.

### We work:

- Nationally, by partnering with Indigenous and non-Indigenous organisations, Government leaders, policy-makers, corporate supporters and research institutions on initiatives and advocacy positions endorsed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Locally, with communities, Indigenous and non-Indigenous organisations and relevant stakeholders on our core strategic focus of learning and education. This includes a focus on empowerment, both-ways learning, governance, local leadership and culturally informed ways of working in partnerships.

We believe that World Vision has something unique to offer Aboriginal and Torres Strait organisations and communities. We are committed to share our knowledge and experiences from our work here in Australia and internationally to support meaningful and sustainable development. This means we prioritise the building of trust, good relationships and strong partnership which lay the foundation for good community-led development.





# Work with us

Our focus is specifically on children and youth, working with communities to create a strong, positive environment for young people and families. We have experience in a broad range of sectors and locations around Australia. We currently work in the Pilbara, West Kimberley, the Northern Territory and the East Coast in Sydney, the Hunter Valley, Brisbane and Melbourne.

We have seven evidence-based programs that can be tailored to support communities realise their aspirations and goals. These encompass early years' development, parent support, positive youth development including life and learning skills development; faith-based programs addressing family violence, improving literacy for early readers, and enhancing governance capacity. See the following sections for more details.

Where necessary we can provide direct service delivery (when there are no other options) but our primary objective is to support communities and Indigenous organisations to further develop or strengthen their own services. We are committed to the principle of partnership and will not seek funding that would place us in competition with Aboriginal organisations. Our partnerships are founded on a clear and ongoing invitation from the communities we work with where we share areas of interest in improving the lives of families and communities.

**Working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations can take many different forms. Depending on partner requirements we are available to:**

- Work directly alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to support them develop their own service and programs for children and young people.

- Support Indigenous organisations, faith communities and churches to develop greater capacity and technical expertise to extend the programs they deliver for the communities they serve.
- Support the advocacy objectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations that align with World Vision's mission.

**Partnering with World Vision enables our partners to access:**

- Evidence-based models from local and global experiences available to be tailored and adapted to local contexts, language and culture.
- Private funding through World Vision supporters to assist capacity building.
- Additional promotion and publicity of success stories and stories of change through experienced staff managing communications and supporter relations.
- Access to technical expertise in the design, monitoring and evaluation of programs.
- On the ground support where required.

Our Early Years program recognise parents as children's first teachers. Supporting parents to give their children the best start in life is a major focus of our playgroups, delivered by local community members, helping get kids get ready for school and life.



# Our approach



**Community-led:** We understand that community ownership, support and leadership is critical to the realisation of community aspirations and goals. We offer a holistic approach that recognises that no-one holds all the answers, and that complex challenges require multiple perspectives, innovation and adaptability with strong community guidance and leadership. We pride ourselves on listening well, taking time to get things right in partnership and making sure we create safe and strong spaces for meaningful dialogue and discussion.

**Partnerships:** Working in partnership is fundamental to our way of working. Sharing skills and knowledge with others and learning from them are central to our approach. We are well positioned to partner with and support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' and organisations' that work with others, to deliver on their own aspirations. In many cases, we support communities to identify approaches, services and programs that can respond to their priorities and goals. This includes identifying available resources and facilitating new partnerships with potential funders, as well as with organisations that can deliver on the ground.

**Place-based:** Our holistic approach ensures we are focusing on the issues, strengths and solutions in local contexts. We recognise that the unique history, culture and context of each community is an important factor and strength in finding answers to complex problems. Our aim is to explore these elements in partnership, learning from communities to tailor and adapt evidence based programs to local places and contexts.

**Strengths-based:** We recognise the existing array of knowledge, skills and capacities within Indigenous communities and organisations. Our aim is to support these and collaborate in ways to enhance and grow them. We take the time to listen well and learn from others to develop solutions that come from these strengths.

**Relationships:** Strong and respectful relationships and partnerships are fundamental to our way of working. These take time and are vital to longer-term sustainable change. We know that local partners are the key to longer-term sustainability and we play a supportive role to their lead. We are signatories to the Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APONT) partnership principles. We have been actively involved in developing the principles and processes to support Aboriginal communities develop strong partnerships with non-Aboriginal organisations and vice versa.

**Strong spirit:** From our experiences working with communities and collaborating with Indigenous leaders and academics, we have also developed a practice framework. This acknowledges and embeds the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander spirituality through connection to language, land, law, kinship, and ceremony. This is reflected in our community engagement processes for all stages of our projects and our attention to protocols, language use and respect for community processes, events and decisions.

**Both-ways learning and doing:** An important element of our work is responding to community concerns that children as well as adults are learning both-ways. We support the focus on 'mainstream' learning alongside culture and language and build this into all our projects. This includes initiatives like bush playgroups, cultural camps for young people and the development in resources in language and guidance from Elders. The involvement of cultural authorities in our work ensures we are working with the right people at the right time in the right way.

**Technical support:** Our international development experience built over 50 years in over 90 countries, is one of our major assets that we can bring to partnerships. This includes a strong technical support team as well as the potential to link to broader learnings and experience across the World Vision global partnership. We are also part of the ACFID (Australian Council for International Development) Working Group on Indigenous programming that brings together INGOs from the international development sector to support learning between INGOs, Government, organisations and communities.

**Telling the story:** We also recognise that there is a wealth of good news stories that do not get aired in the media and in reporting on programs. We are committed to amplifying the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities. We place high importance on telling the story of our shared work to a variety of audiences. Transparency and accountability are an important aspect of this work and involves collaborative ways of building meaningful evidence and having clear roles and responsibilities. This includes holding 'money story' meetings, having a transparent complaints process and planning regular reporting, reflections and evaluations.





Maria is a community facilitator in our Pilbara ECCD project. She is one of the Martu women employed to support and deliver playgroups services in Martu communities supporting children to develop well, enhance their school readiness and build the capacity of parents.

# Our current work

## Early Childhood Care and Development: Both-ways learning

The focus of this work is on collaborating with communities who wish to increase support to families with young children and raise the profile of the early years in their communities.

We have found that an effective way of doing this work is to assist communities establish supported playgroups that provide exposure to an appropriate and rich learning environment.

This reduces the risk of developmental vulnerability and creates foundations for learning both-ways. The playgroups provide opportunities for parents to socialise, increase their confidence with other early years' development services such as schools and clinics, as well as to share and build their knowledge about children's development. They also provide employment opportunities and practical training to local parents who facilitate the playgroups. This ensures they are culturally rich and drawing on the best of the local culture and mainstream approaches. Cultural elements for children include bush trips, using local language in early literacy books and songs, and engaging

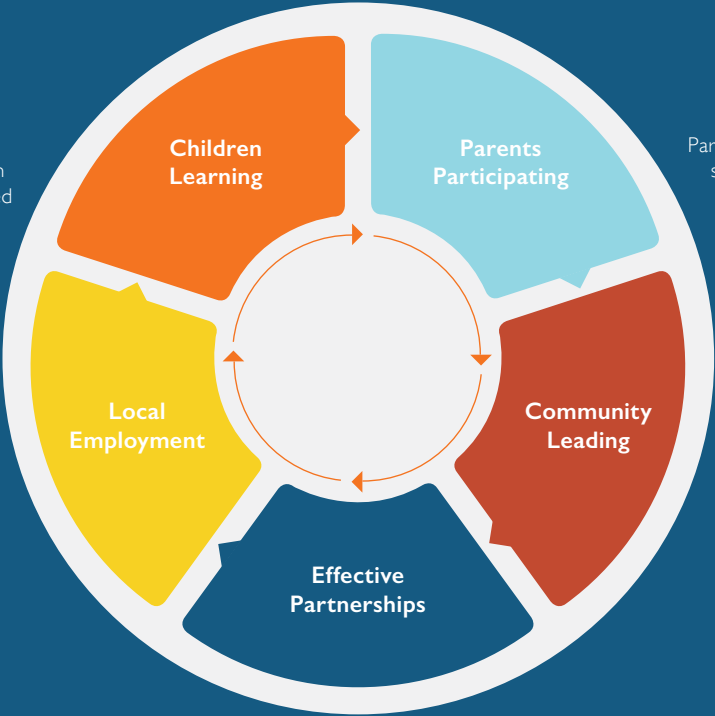
in important cultural events. Parents and other family members are encouraged to form playgroup committees or reference groups to ensure that the playgroup service is community-led and managed.

### Our work has primarily been in three locations:

- Central Australia with Warlpiri communities in partnership with the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust;
- West Kimberley with communities on the Gibb River Road and in and around Derby with the support of Winun Ngari Aboriginal Corporation; and
- East Pilbara in partnership with remote Martu communities and in Newman.

Children have improved developmental outcomes through culturally strong, community based Early Childhood activities

Local ECCD staff have the capacity to support both-ways learning for children's development and parents learning



Parents and caregivers are providing strong support for their children's 'both-ways' development

Early Childhood Reference Groups are a strong voice for children in their region

Local Indigenous Organisations are effectively implementing early childhood programs



## Youth Development: Young Mob strengthening connections to culture

Young Mob is a positive youth development program for Indigenous youth that equips participants, aged from 10 to 20 years old, with cultural knowledge and values to strengthen their self-identity, resilience and essential life skills.

Based in secondary schools in NSW and Victoria, it is delivered in partnership with schools, First Hand Solutions Aboriginal Corporation (in NSW) and local stakeholders. Young Mob focuses on experiential activities in school, community and on country led by Indigenous facilitators using an Indigenous pedagogy. Supported by schools, the program provides a positive space for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to strengthen their links to culture. Evidence shows that this is a crucial factor in their health and social and emotional wellbeing.

Students are taken through a series of tailored sessions focusing on topics including identity,

culture, resilience, social justice, public speaking, goal setting, health and others. They also participate in extension activities such as camps, road trips, on-country visits and cultural exchanges engaging with Elders and community members to grow their knowledge and strengthen their confidence.

Overall, Young Mob is working to strengthen confidence, improve school engagement and enrich cultural identity and sense of pride to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their goals.

“Our culture is  
important to us.”

Christine is a young Bundjalung woman from Sydney. She's been part of the NSW Young Mob Program – developed through a partnership between World Vision Australia and First Hand Solutions Aboriginal Corporation – for four years now and she's determined to help other Indigenous youth recognise the importance of culture and realise their goals.





Lynette is the Associate Pastor of a Baptist Church and a local Warlpiri Community Leader. She's been working with the Channels of Hope program with World Vision Australia in the Northern Territory to address family violence and improve gender relations in the community.

## Communities addressing family violence: Channels of Hope for Gender

**Channels of Hope for Gender** is an international program developed by World Vision to support faith communities in taking a stronger leadership role in addressing gender-based violence. The program aims to harness the faith communities' passion for change and commitment to take on leadership roles and partnering with services and community members to reduce and prevent family violence.

Two Aboriginal faith communities are collaborating with World Vision to adapt the program through the tailoring of resources to reflect local language, faith and culture. These resources are focused on highlighting the gender equality focus of biblical teachings and their alignment with local cultural and social norms around relationships, responsibilities and violence. Through this, faith leaders and communities are exploring and challenging gender norms, roles, values and perspectives.

Action groups are formed to work closely with relevant services. They collaborate on initiatives to reduce the incidence of family violence, improve gender relations and support services to work more effectively together, and with communities. This process has resulted in increased visibility of these issues and provided a safe space to discuss sensitive issues.



Clifton is a local Martu man from Western Australia and one of the leaders of the Martu Leadership Program – a program developed in partnership with Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ). Here he is speaking up about how he and many others are participating in the program that is at the forefront of change for Martu communities.

## Community leadership: Martu Leadership Program

**Since 2013 the Martu Leadership Program (MLP)** has been delivered through a partnership between World Vision and Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ), a Martu organisation that was established in 2005 to look after Martu culture and help build sustainable Martu communities.

The MLP was inspired by Martu communities wanting to have more say over things happening around them and look for solutions to local issues that were in many instances spiralling out of control. Today this program goes to the heart of deeply ingrained social issues that have been identified by the community. The MLP is considered a lifeline to many Martu that have made it clear they are hungry for knowledge and understanding of the mainstream world. The program is oversubscribed from many Martu wanting to participate. A key component is developing aspirations and partnerships. The program is designed to engage participants in a variety of activities aimed at

building their knowledge and confidence to work within the mainstream world. This is achieved through activities which contribute to building knowledge, strategies, networks, and skills for Martu. It also helps mainstream services and organisations learn more about Martu and how to work with them to realise their community aspirations. The MLP is building strong foundations for Martu to strengthen their capacity to drive their own development. This includes realising their community vision for improvements in areas such as the criminal justice system, education, economy and housing amongst others.



# Our new work

In 2018 World Vision worked with local communities to adapt four innovative programs that have proven very successful in many different countries around the world.

These will be available for implementation in 2019.

**Unlock Literacy** is an evidence based program for improving literacy levels for 'early readers' – children aged 6 - 9. The key components of the model include:

- (a) parent/caregiver activities;
- (b) Book Banks - both developing new material in community languages and/or supporting community to source such material where it already exists; and
- (c) Out-of-school literacy activities - creating fun and engaging opportunities outside of school where literacy and learning is built in; these can include reading camps, reading buddies, reading festivals and story times.

**SKYE Club** is an integrated approach to support young people aged 16-24 develop or strengthen the skills, behaviours, and attitudes necessary to obtain sustainable livelihoods and participate constructively in their communities. The program draws upon experiential education and provides practical and customised support for groups of young people. The curriculum has four learning pillars: active citizenship, employability, social entrepreneurship and leadership. Through this curriculum, SKYE Club members develop competencies necessary for participation in social, civic, and economic activities.

**IMPACT Club** is a positive youth development program for young people aged 13-17 years, that fosters the skills, behaviours, and attitudes necessary for participation in social, civic, and economic life. The program encourages adolescents to think critically and actively address the structural issues and social and cultural barriers in place, through to participating in their community and in work. The IMPACT Club model encourages the development of confident, self-aware and resilient young people who contribute positively to their communities. Key components of the program are:

- a) experiential education and
- b) youth led community 'service-learning' projects and
- c) youth led evaluation and planning.

**Citizen Voice and Action (CV&A)** is an evidence based, community development program that equips citizens to better understand and assess government services, and, in collaboration with these services, provides a framework to work with them to improve delivery and effectiveness. CV&A is often used as a component of other programs to improve services that focus on the wellbeing of children, such as in the health and education sectors. Through improving relationships between community, government and service providers, mutual learning and awareness are achieved to enable communities to have a better-informed say on services to achieve better results and impact.

Working together we focus on sharing, learning and developing relationships and trust. These are the bedrock to our community-led approach.



**We can't change  
the past, but we can  
change the future**

For more information contact us on **13 32 40**  
or email us at **[philanthropy@worldvision.com.au](mailto:philanthropy@worldvision.com.au)**.

**[worldvision.com.au/ausprogram](https://worldvision.com.au/ausprogram)**

*We would like to acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander custodians of this land and pay our respects  
to the Elders of the past, present and future.*