

**How are we doing?**

**Project Evaluation of Community Organisation and  
Development Certificate III delivered by  
Wontulp Bi-Buya College  
2008 – 2010.**



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## **Reflections and acknowledgements**

**Fr Leslie Baird**

Firstly, I would like to thank my Lord and saviour for his blessings to me on this journey to fulfil my long-term vision and dream to bring about an Addictions Management and Community Development training program. This is a grassroots culturally appropriate vocational educational training program for the empowerment of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people in Spiritual and Community leadership. It has also been a long term vision of Wontulp-Bi-Buya College so the blessing has been both way.

I would also like to acknowledge the traditional owners the Irrakanji and Yidinji people of the land in which Wontulp-Bi-Buya College residential blocks take place. I would also like to acknowledge Fr Victor Joseph, Davena Munro, Nola Graham, Evelyn Parkins, Fr David Thompson, Fr Michael & Val Connolly, Fr Wayne & Valmai Connolly, Fr Barry & Janine Paterson, Fr Des Rumble, Patrick Lopaz, the Wontulp board members David Spinagle and Fr Edward Murgaha and my close friend and colleague Edward Turpin. I acknowledge that 2010 was not a good year for me and I thank you for your patience and prayers that has seen me go through many personal changes in my life as I feel The Lord is taking me on a healing journey of hope and for me to obey his word and do his work amongst his people to bring the message of hope for God's people

Marvelous!, isn't it? Eddie Turpin was my student who graduated and started as a trainee teacher and is now the Community Development Coordinator at Wontulp-Bi-Buya College. Eddie is like a little Les Baird, (Just joking, Ha, ha) meaning both Ed and I have the same heart for Our Triune God whom we love and we are willing to be used as God's vessel to empower our people in social justice and righteousness as this is in line with the word of God;

*Psalms 97 v 1-2; "The Lord reigns, let the earth be glad; let the distant shores rejoice. Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne. Fire goes before Him."*

The training that is taking place at Wontulp-Bi-Buya College is about Christianity and community development and we thank the Lord for all that He has done to bring us to this point however the Lord want us to reach much more people that we now do.

I would like to thank the Lord for his servants Dr Komla Tsey, Associate Professor at James Cook University who has been my brother, friend, and work colleague for the last ten years. Komla and his team, Janya McCalman, Cath Brown and Mary Whiteside, continue to produce excellent research and evaluation work in the field of Indigenous empowerment using community development principles.

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Last but not least, I acknowledge the work of Barbara Deuchman and the TEAR Australia committee for their faith and trust in God's work at Wontulp-Bi-Buya College, which has proven to make a ripple effect impact in the communities and is also a proven sound investment.

Thank you, May the Lord continue to bless you in every way and the ministry he has called us into.

**Reverend Leslie Baird**

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## 1. Executive Summary

The Wontulp Bi-Buya (WBB) College teaches a range of courses for Indigenous Australians with a view to empowering, promoting and achieving personal, professional and spiritual development of individuals. The College is funded by TEAR Australia to deliver the Certificate III Community Organising and Development (COD) for community leaders. The two-year course has been operating since 2006 and graduated over 50 students. A team from James Cook University evaluated the COD course to learn more about the impact the course is having in Indigenous Communities. The evaluators found that there is a strong correlation between Indigenous training in community development, and Indigenous empowerment, both at the personal and community level.

A key objective of the evaluation was to report on key learnings from the study. These have been summarised into recommendations, listed below, to expand, improve and strengthen the delivery of COD courses through WBB College.

- Invest in the induction, education and strengthen the role of the sponsors who reside in communities. Sponsors provide material and mentoring support to students, and might take an active role in the students' progress, encourage and facilitate applied learning, and promote the work of WBB College. Foster several communication strategies to better engage with and build the support of sponsor's are provided.
- Monitoring and tracking of past, present and graduate student progress can be strengthened to generate complete and timely information concerning student outcomes, attrition, attendance, and reporting of individual progress. Networks within the student body can be enculturated, including a student alumni group.
- A student alumni, or graduates group, would be a value-adding service provided by the College for graduates. The study found that graduates are more likely to undertake and complete successful community development projects when supported by other COD graduates. Students value the professional network of people from across cultures and communities, and foster new friendships. A supported alumni provides Wontulp with an up-to-date pool of resource personnel for employment, mentor relationship building and guest speakers etc.
- Funding for the course should remain independent of enrolment numbers to avoid the tendency of educational facilities to 'sign-up' students who may be inadequately prepared to undertake the course. WBB was found to be highly effective and efficient in course delivery, comparative to other service providers. There is scope to consider strengthening the present levels of support.

- The COD Certificate III course is highly relevant to its learners. The curriculum is beneficial to Indigenous people providing much needed knowledge and skill sets to design and enact empowering community development projects. Strategies to strengthen the core curriculum to maintain its relevance to learners, course content and offerings and post Certificate III training, are provided in Section 5 of the report. These include: Business and social enterprise management; Native Title and Land Corporation governance; IT business opportunities; and, sustainable development and Climate Change adaptation actions.
- The curriculum development may also be enhanced by the engagement of a one-off, short-term curriculum writer.
- Offsite modes of delivery should be considered with two sites identified as suitable centres for two-week residential training on Cape York and in Torres Strait.
- WBB needs to remain proactive in the recruit of casual trainers with appropriate knowledge and skills to fill the knowledge gaps of current trainers to develop the course in directions that take trainers beyond their field of comfort and expertise, with priority given to people with Torres Strait Islander descent.
- Ongoing staff professional development is essential building on utilising the skills, interests and capabilities of existing staff.
- Resources to build up the Colleges teaching hardware, including projectors, DVD players and other appliances, needs to be made available.
- Expand range of post COD Certificate III offerings. Accredited courses in the following fields may include but is not limited to: Business management; Childcare; and Youth Leadership.
- Investment in a long-term research agenda ought to be commissioned to continue to document the ongoing empowerment, leadership and impact of the COD Certificate III on Indigenous Australian communities.

TEAR's assistance of WBB College has been used to great effect in the development of a leading course for training and applied learning in Indigenous community organisation and development. This report establishes a connection between community development training, with a focus on community and personal empowerment, and successful

community development projects, across health, education, culture, and community cohesion.

## **2. Introduction**

Wontulp Bi-Buya (WBB) College has been providing adult education to Indigenous students from across Australia since 1983. From a strong experience base with theological courses, the College has diversified and delivered a Certificate III Community Organising and Development (COD) course since 2006 and a Certificate III in Alcohol and Other Addictions. There have been 50 graduates of the COD Certificate III since 2006, and 15 students set to graduate in November this year. The COD course is taught over a two year period and includes eight, two-week teaching blocks, in Cairns. Students are provided with workbooks to complement the residential learning experience for the completion of modules containing core course content such as; Foundations for community development; evaluating research; and communication skills. Modules are completed by students in their home communities between their visits to Cairns. The course is adapted to cover a range of issues identified by course participants and trainers as relevant to the specific needs of Australian Indigenous people. COD Certificate III explores with its students, alcohol and drug abuse, community violence, leadership, suicide and mental health, loss of culture and spirit, and the lack of skills, knowledge and positive leadership within communities, in a safe and supportive environment (Wontulp-Bi-Buya College, 2010, p. 5). The curricular and pedagogical relevance of the COD course to students is a great strength of the highly popular course.

A major funding body, TEAR Australia, commissioned this evaluation to learn more about the impact the course is having in Indigenous Communities. The outcomes of the evaluation will inform course planning and design over the next three year funding cycle. The objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Encourage reflection and analysis of the progress toward the stated goal to train people to lead in community development in their communities.
- Inform TEAR Australia about the outcomes of the course during 2008-2010 to enable its accountability to donors and for satisfaction of TEAR Board requirements.
- Help WBB to clarify, measure and achieve its objectives for the COD course, and
- Lay the foundation for sustainable impacts into the future.

TEAR Australia had several key concerns, or Terms of Reference (TORs), identified as key objectives, that guided this study and the survey instruments. The methodology and survey instruments were developed consultatively with a Steering Committee formed to oversee the progress and completion of the project. The committee members included WBB College staff, course trainers, a representative of TEAR Australia and the evaluator/authors AS and

KT. Changes to the original wording of the TORs were made by the committee, to reflect the foundational methodological epistemology of the study. The findings of the study are reported under each TOR. The original and amended TORs are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Original and amended Terms of Reference.

TOR	Originally proposed	Agreed changes
	<p>1. Effectiveness</p> <p>Has the COD course achieved its goal of training people to lead in community development over the duration of the last 3 years?</p> <p>How effective was the learning for the participants? How was the learning applied?</p>	<p>1. Effectiveness</p> <p>Has the COD course enhanced individuals' personal and professional development towards leading community development over the duration of the last 3 years?</p> <p>How effective was the learning for the participants? How was the learning applied?</p>
	<p>2. Impact</p> <p>What are the impacts on the individual, family, community and other groups? How has the community been involved in the COD course?</p> <p>Some reflection on whether the COD course the best method to achieve the goal would be helpful.</p>	<p>No changes</p>
	<p>3. Sustainability</p> <p>How sustainable are the impacts into the future? What has been done to ensure this?</p>	<p>No changes</p>
	<p>4. Efficiency</p> <p>How efficiently have resources (both personal and financial) been used to obtain the impacts?</p>	<p>4. Resource allocation (was Efficiency)</p> <p>How have the resources (both personal and financial) been used to best obtain the identified impacts?</p> <p>What improvements to resource allocation and spending can be made?</p>

	<p>5. Management</p> <p>How well have the COD course and the learning outcomes been managed by WBB?</p>	<p>No changes</p>
	<p>6. Future Learning</p> <p>What can be learned from this project about the effectiveness of CD training courses as a strategy for community development in marginal communities?</p>	<p>No changes</p>

The COD course objectives are also considered, as secondary research objectives. These are to develop:

- Community organising and development skills and attitudes that are culturally and holistically sensitive, with an emphasis on consultation and participation by the people in processes of decision-making and action that affect their lives.
- Knowledge and practice of facilitative styles of leadership that empower others, and
- An (w)holistic outlook on community leadership and organising that integrates spiritual, social and physical aspects of life.

This evaluation builds upon, and complements, work completed in 2007 by David MacLaren. His report recognised several limitations which this study has sought to redress. MacLaren was unable to focus on the long-term impacts of the course. The participants of his study were enrolled students, as opposed to graduates, of the course. By contrast this study's focus is less on the experience of the students during learning blocks in Cairns, and more on the application of their learning in their communities. Students (both graduate and non-completion) enrolled from 2006 were interviewed for this study, to explore the impacts of course participation. MacLaren (2007) identifies and discusses 31 themes. This report does not find any contradictions to MacLaren's work. Some of his themes are developed, and gaps identified as limitations to the original study, are filled.

Another advantage of this study is that most contemporary reports on social indicators of Indigenous outcomes are at a state/national level of reporting. This study collected local level data, analysed at the community level for impact and relevance. High level averages do not reveal the different outcomes experienced by different groups of Indigenous people (SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision), 2011). The evaluator of this report spent two weeks with WBB staff visiting a range of communities for up to two days at a time living with, and speaking extensively, to COD participants, their families and community networks. With semi-structured and open interview techniques, 41 participants were interviewed at locations across Far North Queensland. Most locations



could be described as regional; however, several students live and work within urban Indigenous communities. The locations included Yarrabah Indigenous Community, Thursday Island, St Paul's and Kubin, Mao Island, Horn Island, Cooktown, Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Community, Mossman, and Cairns. Telephone interviews were conducted with people from Poruma (Coconut) Island and Thursday Island. People who have started, but were unable to complete the course, were included. It was found that even partial completion of the course has left an impact on the learner. Their insights, reasons for leaving, and knowledge retained and practiced, were valuable to this evaluation. Table 2 summarises the occupation and completion status of every male and female interviewee. The survey instrument is attached in Appendix 1.

Table 2: Completed interviews, occupation and course completion (if known)

Male	Female	Year of course completion	Reason for non-completion	Current employment by sector
1	8	2007 – 2010. 3 currently enrolled		Community/Public Health
2	2		Personal or work commitments – would like to complete in future	
1	8	2007 – 2010		Administration
2	1	2009 – 2010		Justice/ Community policing
1			work commitments – would like to complete in future	
	3	2007 – 2009		Education
	1		work commitments – would like to complete in future	
3		2010		Priest
	2	2007 – 2010		Small business
1			work commitments – would like to complete in future	Agricultural
	1	2007 – 2010		Employment Officer
	2	2007 – 2010		Unemployed
1	1		Personal or work	

			commitments – would like to complete in future	
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The evaluator observed the nature and extent of the issues facing each community, and the implementation and impact of a wide and diverse range of projects. The barriers and limitations to individuals trying to implement projects are considered, the cost of delivering the course in relation to comparable services delivered at the Far North Queensland TAFE, and the nature of the relationships between college staff, and past and present students.

### 3. Methodological Framework: A developmental approach

This study engages a developmental approach to research and evaluation. This work is not quantitative, but sets out to provide a rich picture of the layers of effectiveness, impact and longevity the COD Certificate III is making within a variety of communities. Research participants include the students, trainers and administrators of the COD course. The perspective of “local”, “insider” knowledge and viewpoints is sought. The research plan, implementation, reflection and evaluation is undertaken as a process, or learning journey, with high levels of involvement from key participant/stakeholders of the study (Eversole, 2003; Wallerstein & Duran, 2006). In this way it resembles and an Action Research design, where the researcher can also be regarded as a participant of the research process, distinctive for its four stages of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The evaluation is an example of research that is grounded in the experience of its participants, and action-oriented. We seek to move beyond explanation of social phenomenon, towards providing the grounds to effect change and improvements, with the establishment of a learning community and culture towards continual improvement in response to, and reflection upon, the feedback of participants (Balatti, Gargan, Goldman, Wood, & Woodlock, 2004).

#### 3.1. Method

The methods of collection of material for this study included a:

- Desk top review of the literature and Wontulp-Bi-Buya College documents including interim and annual TEAR reports.
- Interviews with current trainers, other relevant staff/stakeholders, and other Registered Training Organisations delivering Certificate III level courses for Indigenous clients.
- Semi-structured, face-to-face and telephone interviews with 41 students both present, discontinued, and graduates of the WBB COD Certificate III course from a range of communities.
- Researcher observation and participation.

### **3.2. Case studies**

Three projects were identified as demonstrating outstanding success in terms of the COD primary teaching and learning objectives. The case studies are featured throughout the body of this paper.

### **3.3. Analysis**

The findings below have been analysed using two qualitative techniques. These have been impression analysis and phenomenology. Impression analysis involves observer commentary and observation of the key issues, examined through multiple data set analysis. Phenomenology is the interpretation and evaluation of these findings which has been presented in this report, through the lens of the core TOR questions. The findings draw together all the available information collected and relevant literature supporting the key issues. Under each TOR, a rich synthesis of the impact of the WBB COD Certificate III course for the communities visited is provided.. Draft findings and recommendations were presented to the Steering Committee and key stakeholders for comment and the emergent themes were reviewed and incorporated into the current report.

## **4. Findings**

### **4. 1. Effectiveness**

The following discussion reports on the personal and professional development of COD Certificate III participants over the previous three years. This TOR has been intended to shed light upon how the student's personal and professional capacity has improved. The discussion points to instances where, as a direct consequence of participation in the COD Certificate III course, individuals have either secured employment or promotion in the work place, or implemented and led a community development project. The second half of the discussion considers the effectiveness of the learning for participants. This discussion draws upon the work of MacLaren (2007) and the recent interviews conducted.

This report concurs with MacLaren's (2007) identification of two early success themes; 'Personal Development and Growth' and 'Students growing as leaders in community'. It was observed that "Staff aimed to allow students to reflect on their own life journey and ground students in the reality of their own experience and build from there. Personal development and growth was a constantly evident outcome of the course" (MacLaren, 2007, p. 9). The following comments are extracts from recent interviewee transcripts. The

comments relate the individual's experience of personal development to skills and insights gained from doing the COD course.

*"I'm still working as a community organiser, so it empowered me. I was empowered and energised to deal with my social and emotional problems. We lost three kids to suicide and two close family members we had alcohol and domestic violence and all that. All I learnt empowered me to go forward and manage [project title]."*

*"I've learned personal communications skills. I used to swear and get mad. Now I stick to the point. I've gained confidence in speaking in public. Talking in front of others and at Department meetings. I've opened up. Take the shy away."*

*"I am very shy. WBB helped me not feel shame. When I done course I was the quiet one. I've gained confidence." [was accepted into and completed a Youth Leadership course in Canberra].*

*"I know how to go about things. Find funding and support. How to write letters. Tap into other organisations. I enjoyed it. It opened my eyes to what needs to be done in community. I realise I need to do it."*

*"COD bring soothing and healing. Open up more so I can relate to someone who has been through the same trauma."*

There were nine instances of students reporting that the COD Certificate III course helped them gain employment or receive a career promotion.

*"I work with the Men's group. I was working in another position at the health centre, and the training in COD helped my resume and I do this job now [community health/counselling]. The course is very relevant to my current position."*

*"I completed in 2007, and [name deleted] was my sponsor. I'd been working as the Justice Coordinator and then I was promoted to programme manager (Men, Women, Life Promotion, and Bringing Them Home Linkup programmes)."*

*"Drug and Alcohol module has been very helpful to me in community policing." [Officer's skills and strategies to manage Drug and Alcohol in the community was recognised with a promotion, despite not completing the course].*

*"I became the full time employment coordinator."*

*“I am an assistant medical receptionist and I am aiming to go higher. The course has helped me so much in my job. My boss sees my potential to go higher.”*

There were 11 reported instances of students who continued in further education as a result of completing Certificate III COD. These courses included:

- Certificate in Public Health
- Sea and Land Conservation and Management
- Early Childhood
- Teacher Training Course at JCU
- Certificate IV in Community Teaching

Three students of the nine interviewed who had not completed the course, suggested that they would like to re-commence the course if they can. One stated that:

*“I regret not completing the course. I wonder what would have happened and what I’d be doing now if I kept going. I want to finish it.”*

Students are also interested in other courses offered at WBB College.

*“I was going to do the Drug and Alcohol Certificate with Father Les, and set up a rehab at Laura. I couldn’t get into their last course. It was all full up.”*

The interviewees were mostly of mature age, recruited to undertake the course because of their pre-existing positions of authority and leadership within community. Since 2007, 78 % of the people who have completed/or are completing the course, interviewed for this study, were female. The study did not find that project outcomes, or course completions differed according to Torres Strait or Aboriginal descent.

Serious gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous outcomes remain in literacy, numeracy, student attendance, retention into senior secondary education, Year 12 certificates and some completion rates in VET and higher education (Al-Yaman & Higgins, 2011; Hunter, 1997; Malin, 2002). Balatti et al., (2004) site a cause of attrition rates of Indigenous students from courses delivered within the mainstream TAFE sector as related to a contradiction between finding appropriate learning experiences for students, whilst needing to ‘sign up’ students for courses to secure funding. They warn that:

*“This emphasis can lead to a focus on ‘signing up’ people at the expense of providing the most appropriate learning experience for any given learner. One teacher explained the dilemma when signing up students in her program. Past experience had taught her delivery team that up to 80% of students sign up without adequate*

understanding of what the course entails and of their own aspirations. In response, the team had put in place a process that aimed at producing more informed choices.” (p 27)

The implications for funding in this way will be discussed in the final Section 5 Future Learnings. It became apparent, however, that prepared and ready students sign up for the COD Certificate III course with an understanding of what they are going to learn, and the institutional arrangements concerning how that learning is to take place. Interviewees were asked if the course met their expectations. Every interviewee stated that the course did meet with, or exceeded, their expectations. The reasons for these answers varied. Most students did not expect the course to suite their learning style as well as it did. MacLaren (2007) noted that, “Success is enjoyed despite modest educational background” (p. 10). Students repeatedly described the teaching and the resources as meeting ‘us at our level’. There were many comments concerning the nature of the teaching and learning:

*“I learnt a lot of things. I learnt through explanation, simple at our level. Grassroots. I’ve done some other workshops – but they weren’t as simple as what [WBB] gave. They let me open my eyes.”*

*“I didn’t know how it would be set up. But the classroom set up was really good. Father Les was very good. Father Les come round at night and took the boys out. It was more like family.”*

Other comments concerned the nature of the knowledge gained.

*“I learnt a lot of knew things I didn’t expect to learnt. I didn’t think I’d become so well informed.”*

*“Some of the things [Father Les] taught us, opened up my mind.”*

*“I got an insight into community development and community organisation - a basic understanding of organisations and their responsibilities.”*

*“I didn’t think I’d become so well informed. A lot of helpful detail in the books. It was recommended to me to get this qualification. Learning about how to preach and how to approach people. We have 3 languages here. Understanding and learning how to talk to them... I can see what is wrong with community and can focus on bringing people together as family.”*

*“People doing the course speak English as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lang. Teaching through their own languages shows them how to get about doing things in English.”*

Teaching and learning has been highly effective. WBB's COD Certificate III course is contextually literate. The diverse and distinct cultural and social life experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is acknowledged in the teaching, and demonstrated through the humble approach of the trainers, Father Les Baird, Mr Eddie Turpin and the literacy support officer, Anne Mohun, to learn more from their students than they themselves can impart. They do not egregiously assume an undifferentiated whole when considering Indigenous people. WBB Trainers are mindful of the need to distinguish between different circumstances and contexts, as they exist for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in relation to access, participation, remaining in or returning to, education.

An overwhelming number of students commented on the teachers' ability to break down information in a language which they understood. Over 80 % of interviewees rated the quality of the workbooks as 'excellent' or 'very good'. No student rated them as 'bad' or 'very bad'. The evaluator asked interviewees to compare their learning experience at WBB with other training courses they had completed (i.e. TAFE). Typical comments included:

*"TAFE too quick. People not given chances. People from community are basic people and TAFE push too hard. No help. They just write in on the board and then you're on your own and onto the next thing."*

*"I need something simple and understandable. Not the big words."*

*"WBB is flexible hands on and I got to know all my class mates. You can converse with them on your notes and in discussion groups. At TAFE we were not allowed to share answers with other students. It is all individualised. Submit assignments on your own and practical work all on your own. Wontulp prepared materials in a timely manner. Gave extensions on completing modules if needed. It was very well prepared and delivered."*

Balatti et al., (2004), and her team, found that the quality of the learning opportunity available to Indigenous students is a function of the intellectual capital (skills and knowledge), cultural capital (beliefs and practices) and social capital (relationships, networks and trust) circulating within the organisation. WBB College, through Father Les Baird, demonstrated qualities of leadership and social responsibility. As MacLaren (2007) noted;

*"Rev. Les Baird, an Indigenous leader with more than 10 years community development experience [demonstrated] his willingness to share his life experience and journey he has personally travelled... The use of personal testimony was a powerful tool that made an impact on students." (p. 12)*

With a participatory approach to classroom management, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives as foremost in the approach to every module, the sharing of

stories, use of case studies, excursions, hands-on learning and multiple opportunities to reflect both individually and within a community of learners, contribute to highly effective teaching and learning strategies that suit the course participants. MacLaren (2007) observed genuine love and support shown by teachers and students within groups of learners. During the community visits, the evaluator/author observed joyous reunions of students meeting with Father Les and Eddie Turpin. Communities regard Father Les and Mr Turpin in very high regard in every community visited.

By contrast Balatti et al., (2004), reveal that the majority of Indigenous students are participating in mainstream courses (over 60%) rather than in specially designed Indigenous courses. However, little or no monitoring of students in these mainstream courses was taking place and that little attention had been given to developing strategies to improve outcomes and reduce attrition rates. It is with this experience and background of higher education courses, that makes WBB College, and the COD Certificate III course a stand-out success for engaging, motivating, supporting and effectively teaching Indigenous Australians a range of appropriate and demanded skills.

Boughton, (2000), comments on the connection between education and control, as a 'pedagogical' as well as a 'political' principle. Effective learning by Indigenous people occurred when issues of culture and control were acknowledged towards personal 'control of destiny', the ability of people to influence the events that impinge on their lives. A significant outcome of the pedagogical approach taken by the WBB Trainers is that students grow as leaders. Several respondents commented on their motivation to take action and utilise their insights and understanding. As MacLaren (2007) noted, the course teaches students 'practical tools' that bring changes to the community (p. 11). Substantive pathways towards improved social conditions in the general population are provided by WBB College through the COD Certificate III training. The variety, extent and success of students' ongoing projects bears this feature of the COD Certificate III course out, and is discussed in the following section.

#### **4.2. Impact**

To reflect upon the impact of the projects, the evaluators built in a series of discussion questions:

- What projects are you now involved in, because of doing the course?
- How does this project help your community?
- How long will your project go for?
- Who is funding and helping you with your project?

These were questions used to stimulate conversation in a semi-structured interview format. Students were encouraged to chat with the evaluator, over a cup of tea, and throughout the



course of the conversation, a great deal of detail was recorded around each of these focus questions.

From the discussion transcripts the following summary table (Table 3 below) has been assembled to list the variety of projects and positions which COD Certificate III students are currently engaged. Many of these projects have been initiated by students since undertaking the course (graduate/ongoing student or un-completed). This list is both extensive and impressive, covering all the communities visited by the evaluator.

It is clear that the projects led by COD Certificate III students address multiple indicators. The projects were reviewed in terms of the National Close the Gap Clearinghouse summary paper: *What works to overcome Indigenous disadvantage: Key learnings and gaps in the evidence* by Dr Fadwa Al-Yaman and Dr Daryl Higgins, and the most recent *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators report* (OID) for the Productivity Commission released in August 2011. Both reports provide greater insight into the importance, suitability and potential success of these projects. The Clearinghouse is a collection of assessed resources that cover the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) building blocks: early childhood, schooling, health, economic participation, healthy homes, safe communities and governance and leadership. The OID reports have been used by governments and the broader community to understand the nature of Indigenous disadvantage. In addition to the COAG targets, it documents findings around six 'headline indicators' and seven 'strategic areas for action' that underpin the COAG targets. The evidence shows that action is needed in these areas to achieve the COAG targets.

Table 3: Projects and positions of COD Certificate III students, impact on community and correlation to stated close the gap 'building blocks' and the OID report. Source: (Al-Yaman & Higgins, 2011; SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision), 2011).

Project name or position held	Community	Impact on community if known	What's known to close the gap of key disadvantage from current available literature. Key indicators addressed:		
			COAG Targets	OID Headline Indicators	Strategic Areas for Action
Council Board member	Kubin (Torres Strait)	Community development plan for 150 people. Justice group		Family and community violence  Imprisonment and juvenile	Safe and supportive communities  Governance and

				detention	leadership
Community Garden	St Pauls	Local fresh produce 'kai kai' grown for community events. Surplus given to Elders/ volunteers. Education and health promotion. Primary school curriculum integration. Expansion plans and mentoring/replicating gardens on neighbouring island communities. Impacting upward of 150 people.	School readiness and attendance	Disability and chronic disease	Healthy lives Economic participation Safe and supportive communities Governance and leadership
Women's Group	St Pauls	Mentoring and supporting young women and mothers.	Safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children	Family and community violence	Early child development Healthy lives Safe and supportive communities
Media Project	St Pauls	Public Speaking for personal confidence on radio and local television to prepare young people for dual roles in community and mainstream Australia. Upper primary school students.			Education and training Economic participation Governance and leadership
Community Development Plan	St Pauls	Led by COD Certificate III graduate in whole of community consultation process.		Family and community violence	Safe and supportive communities Governance

					and leadership
Young people sporting and games	St Pauls	Families of youth in community.	Health: Chronic Diseases  Reducing alcohol and other drug related harm  School readiness and attendance	Disability and chronic disease	Early child development  Safe and supportive communities  Healthy lives
Home Rule Training Centre	Wujul Wujul	Operating for 22 months. Residential training centre for Land and Sea Conservation and Management. Employs 9 people fulltime. Trained 32 people. Venue for workshops. Has managed 6 workshops with 15-20 participants. Plans to expand courses and services.	Economic participation	Post-secondary education  Household and individual income	Education and training  Economic participation  Governance and leadership
Housing Project	Thursday Island	Finding medium to long term accommodation for Indigenous people.			Home environment
Church Leadership Course	Thursday Island	Leadership training for youth. Dealing with drug and alcohol abuse/misuse.		Family and community violence  Imprisonment and juvenile	Healthy lives  Safe and supportive communities

				detention	
Board member of newly formed Land Corporation	Cooktown	Return of lands through Native Title. Management and negotiation of Land Use Agreements on behalf of 5000 Traditional Owners.		Household and individual income	Economic participation  Governance and leadership
Dance Troupe	Coconut Island	Addressing youth alcohol and drug misuse, cultural awareness, and economic opportunities. The troupe tours and plans to visit London in 2012. All ages between 22 – 30 people. Restoring mentoring and teaching roles to Elders.	Reducing alcohol and other drug related harm  Economic participation	Family and community violence  Imprisonment and juvenile detention	Healthy lives  Safe and supportive communities  Economic participation
Community Health projects: Men's, women's, child welfare, mums with bubs.	St Pauls	Locally employed and appropriately skilled/trained indigenous people to staff the local health clinic.	Safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children	Family and community violence  Substantiated child abuse and neglect	Early child development  Healthy lives  Safe and supportive communities
Cultural Arts and Crafts Centre	St Pauls	Workshop, training centre and shop to sell locally produced arts, crafts and clothing. Teaching young women sewing skills.	Economic participation	Household and individual income	Economic participation  Governance and leadership
Rekindling TSI family values	St Pauls	Whole of family approach to mentoring and family	Safety and wellbeing of Indigenous	Family and community violence	Early child development

through cultural learning		wellbeing.	children	Imprisonment and juvenile detention	Healthy lives Safe and supportive communities
Live Long, Live Strong	St Pauls	Addressing physical activity. Addressing chronic disease, child and adult obesity. Pilot project already indicating reduced rates of sickness and childhood obesity.	Health: Chronic Diseases  Reducing alcohol and other drug related harm	Disability and chronic disease	Early child development  Safe and supportive communities  Healthy lives
St Pauls Men Protecting Families	St Pauls	Bringing families together. Men establishing a football team. All ages.	Safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children  Reducing alcohol and other drug related harm	Family and community violence  Imprisonment and juvenile detention	Early child development  Healthy lives  Safe and supportive communities
Healthy Island Homes	St Pauls	Women helping women to look after home and family. Working closely with the Women's group.	Safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children  Reducing alcohol and other drug related harm	Family and community violence  Imprisonment and juvenile detention	Early child development  Healthy lives  Safe and supportive communities
Board Member Jabalbina Yalanji	Mossman	Management and negotiation of Land Use Agreement and tourism enterprises		Household and individual income	Economic participation  Governance

Aboriginal Corporation and Land Trust.		for major tourism destination, Mossman Gorge NP. Representing up to 250 people.			and leadership
Murri Court Justice Committee (Chair)	Cairns	Sits on bench with Magistrate, involved in hearing cases, perspective of the defendant and 'growling' a customary method of shaming the perpetrator to encourage maturity and growth.		Family and community violence  Imprisonment and juvenile detention	Governance and leadership
Survival Day organiser	Yarrabah	Participant in organising Survival Day activities (Australia Day) for community of 4500 people.	Reducing alcohol and other drug related harm	Family and community violence	Safe and supportive communities  Healthy lives
Young Women's Group through Church	Yarrabah	Counselling and support for young mothers.	Safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children	Family and community violence	Early child development  Healthy lives  Safe and supportive communities
Men's Group	Yarrabah	Coordinates weekly meetings, counselling services.	Safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children  Reducing alcohol and other drug related harm	Family and community violence  Imprisonment and juvenile detention	Early child development  Healthy lives  Safe and supportive communities

NAIDOC Week Organiser	Yarrabah	Week long activities for community of 4500 people engaging government departments, schools (primary/secondary), health services and NGOs working within the community.	Reducing alcohol and other drug related harm	Family and community violence	Safe and supportive communities  Healthy lives
Children's Cultural Awareness programme	Yarrabah	School holiday programme for school-aged children.	Health: Chronic Diseases		Early child development  Safe and supportive communities  Healthy lives

From the above list of projects that have been initiated, or enhanced, due to student participation in the COD Certificate III course, several observations can be made. The natures of the activities are culturally and socially relevant to the communities in which the projects have emerged. With the exception of Queensland Health, Murri Courts and Land Corporations established under Native Title, the programmes are grounded in, and led by, individuals or groups within the community, making them locally responsive to identified need rather than driven 'from above'. The projects cover a range of social needs including education and training, parenting, domestic violence prevention, counselling and healing, preventative health and sporting participation, youth and adult alcohol and drug abuse/misuse, adult housing and media. Cultural projects include dance, arts, craft and textiles. Each of these projects reflect learnings from the COD course including Community Organisation, principles of community development, communication skills, drug and alcohol awareness and identifying issues within community.

In the instances where COD graduates are working to implement pre-identified programmes i.e. community policing or Queensland Health community health care, the graduates identified learnings from the course that have helped them carry out their duties with greater effectiveness. Drug and alcohol awareness, communication and organisational management of mainstream institutions were all cited as valuable insights and learnings that have assisted them in their employment. Several participants had been promoted in their roles as a direct consequence of applying these learnings in their workplaces.

Projects that involve a primary school in a family/community relationship are known to build school readiness and address attendance. The St Paul's Community Garden (Case Study 1) is an example. The safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children is addressed in a number of projects. These are projects that can be seen to be managed by Indigenous people to provide wholistic services, and support for all families when they need it, addressing child welfare risk factors through mentoring parenting skills. The projects empower families to make decisions to protect children or create safe arrangements for their care. Programmes that prioritise cultural safety, through actions that take into account the historical context, are reported as improving levels of safety and wellbeing in communities. These are examples of community-level strategies based on social inclusion and situational crime prevention principles (Al-Yaman & Higgins, 2011, p. 36).

Actions to reducing alcohol and other drug related harm is prevalent through a variety of programmes that are characteristic for being Indigenous community controlled, resourced and supported. Several projects created employment opportunities; however, one project is contributing to labour market programme delivery. From what is understood as working in the field of economic participation, barriers to overcome disadvantage result from Indigenous participation in education and training. Indigenous input is imperative for all activities aimed at increasing Indigenous participation in programs, and hence, enhancing their effect. The story of Home Rule Training Centre is a featured case study within this paper. Finally, several projects target preventative health. Two interviewees applied their COD Certificate III learnings to their roles as community health workers. However, several other projects addressed chronic diseases, in particular, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other lifestyle related illnesses.

The projects listed in Table 3 above had generated strong levels of community engagement. Interviewees described strong turn-outs at meetings, working-bees, sporting events, cultural events and funding renewal for projects. A variety of funding sources were obtained to fund their projects, summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: Funding bodies involved with COD students.

- Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA)
- Career Employment Australia Inc. (CEA)
- Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services (RIBS)
- Kazin Assesre Le, women and children's services
- Education Queensland
- Indigenous Coordination Centre (ICC)
- Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation
- Queensland Health
- RioTinto



- Police and Citizens Youth Club (PCYC)
- Mission Australia

According to analysis of the ‘things that work’ several success factors can be determined. These include cooperative approaches between Indigenous people and government; community involvement in program design and decision-making; good governance at the organisation, community and government levels; and ongoing support. The lack of any of these factors can result in program failure (Al-Yaman & Higgins, 2011; SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision), 2011; Tsey & Every, 2000). These are factors present within the projects examined, and there is a correlation between the course training, and effective understanding and delivery of community development projects which lays the foundation for long lasting social change in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, which will be discussed in greater depth in Section 4.3 below.

#### **Case Study 1. Community Garden St Pauls**

*During our recent visit to St Pauls, the evaluator, AS interviewed two residents and graduates of the COD Certificate III course about their ongoing Community Garden project.*

*The garden was originally established by the Council under a CDEP Scheme. But with the changes to CDEP the workforce was unable to continue. The garden became wild and overgrown. The irrigation system rundown and the fencing was all that remained.*

*Two graduates from the 2008/09 saw this as a wonderful opportunity to apply what they were learning from the COD course. The pair bought in the expertise of their elders, obtained council equipment and restored the garden beds, pathways and irrigation systems. They obtained funding and support to buy trees and planted an orchard adjacent to a recreational area and the gardens. The beds were planted out with 3 varieties of bananas, and local tropical staple foods including tarro, cassava, and sweet potato amongst other herbs, spices and fruits. They encountered set-backs with the recent heavy wet season, but used this time to re-evaluate and plan for the change in seasons. The garden attracts a host of volunteers from the community, including their Elders, classes from the primary school, and everyone in between. They host open days, working bees, community barbecues and plan to use the space for mothers groups and public meetings. They collect green waste*

*from the nearby shop, build their own compost and make their own mulch. The gardens are organic and promote physical and mental health, ensuring that every event they have is filled with laughter.*

*The garden supplements the diets of the community with fresh food and is being planted out again now, after a recent harvest, to grow food to meet the needs of a December wedding and another community event in January. Further to this, there is significant interest in the garden from neighbouring communities on at least four Torres Strait Islands. The COD graduates from St Pauls are interested in mentoring, sharing plants and seeds and helping to promote the personal health and wellbeing that comes from volunteering in community gardens.*

*“We’re a role model to other islands. We started small, and now it’s getting bigger and better,” said one of the project coordinators and COD graduate. “The Aunties approve and support us so it’s on our backs to make it succeed and be better than other island gardens. ‘Don’t let ‘em get in the lead’ the Aunties say to us. ‘You gotta stay on top!’”*

### **Case Study 2: Home Rule Training Centre**

*“I’m a member of the Kukunyangkal clan group and CEO of the Bana Yarralji Bubu Corporation.” Aunty M is a proud traditional owner and community leader. “This my father and mothers country.”*

*The Bana Yarralji Bubu Corporation represents the interests of about 5000 people, and is in the process of having Native Title conferred on their traditional lands.*

*“At about the time that I completed the [COD] course, CDEP (Community Development Employment Projects) was phased out. So we did the Certificate IV Land and Sea Conservation Management and started the Ranger programme here at Home Rule. We’ve been going for nearly two years.”*

*Aunty M manages the training centre and registered training organisation (RTO). She has a lease agreement with the current landowner for access to the facilities on the property at Home Rule. The business employs nine people and has trained over 30 Indigenous Rangers. In addition to this, the facility has hosted over six workshops, and meetings for the community. During our visit, a group of ecology students from the UK were staying at, and utilising the facility, to study orchids of the Wet Tropics. It is a non-profit enterprise with plans to expand.*

*“We want to develop people’s skills to go back to country and manage country,” she said. “We want to help our people get more skills. We can expand into counselling and business*

management. We want to empower our people and provide opportunities. Give them freedom of choice. Today we must recognise people's rights and not be dictated to."

### **Case Study 3: Poruma (Coconut Island) Dance Troupe**

Poruma is a small community of 150 people, but it is not small when it comes to big ideas and grand ambition. In the recent downscaling of the Torres Strait Regional Council, the Island's resort has been handed back to the Traditional Owners Trust. Management and marketing of the resort now resides with the community who see this as 'a new beginning'.

The Poruma Dance Troup is a social and economic community project designed to "take the image of the product" on tour. The troupe is for all ages, but places particular emphasis on the importance and value of the Island's Elders. Cultural and eco-tourism opportunities are garnished with every public performance the troupe undertakes around Australia including a performance at the Federal Parliament in Canberra.

The project serves the social needs of the Islands' young people. Whilst on tour, the organiser, a COD graduate, arranges for Indigenous guests to come and talk to their youth about employment and training opportunities in Australian cities.

"The Dance Troupe makes young people into leaders. When they feel that there is cultural obligation to promote their ancestry, stories, culture and traditions of the land and sea, they get a sense of belonging and an awakening. They recognise the different qualities of leadership in each other," explained the coordinator.

"We get a lot of media attention. Our young people talk about how climate change is affecting traditional practices. It is a wonderful experience to see them talking about our connection and existence to this place. It brings tears to my eyes to see how much they feel about their home."

The Troupe fund raises with concerts at home, and has a range of private donor sponsors. They are presently negotiating a tour to the United Kingdom in 2012.

The coordinator, who holds a Bachelor of Arts in Community Management and Development, credits this project, and several others on the island, to the participants of the COD Certificate III course. They are now "advocates for community development and validate the reasons why we do things this way. The COD graduates and current students are key people in our projects. I strongly recommend the course to others."

### **4.3. Sustainability**

To address the question of how 'sustainable' the impacts of the COD Certificate III learning amongst the community, it is helpful to ask what the term sustainable means. It was agreed by the steering committee of the research that 'sustainable' refers to the longevity of the course outcomes. This is a question about the ripple effect the course has had, and may continue to have, on Indigenous communities.

Within social systems, a solution to a problem cannot be derived from outside experts alone. The long-lasting nature of the impacts may be unintended consequences brought about when students implement their understanding, attract engagement from other community members and influence people to take actions in unforeseeable ways. "When actions are resolved by the stakeholders... the answers will be grounded within the context of the unique sets of issues or concerns" (Stephens, Jacobson, & King, 2010).

From the array of projects documented in Table 3 above, a number of enabling factors are identified through the discussions participants had with the evaluator.

#### ***i. Critical mass of graduates within a community***

In communities that supported several students to attend and complete the course, a number of projects emerged. Students utilised their network of students within the community for information, support and guidance. Examples include St Pauls, Yarrabah, Poruma Island Dance Troupe, Wujal Wujal and Thursday Island. In these communities, the presence of other students who had completed, participated or were currently enrolled, recognised the leadership, objectives and aspirations of the organiser. Students who did not have these networks reported feeling isolated and less able to initiate their project ideas.

#### ***ii. Community engagement with the project***

Projects that have a long-lasting impact on community, i.e. Home Rule Training Centre, St Pauls Community Gardens and Poruma Dance Troupe, have high levels of community engagement from within their own, and neighbouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. These projects also attracted external funding and interest from non-Indigenous organisations. They are projects that demonstrate high standards of good governance (governing institution, leadership, self-determination, capacity building, cultural match, and resourcing) (SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision), 2011); are responding to local need and attract the support, and permission, from the communities' Elders. Individuals involved accrue benefits. For some, it is employment. For others it is increased personal wellbeing through education, cultural understanding, health and physical improvement and a sense of belonging. One student

reported occasions of being 'run-down' by other people, that is, openly criticised, but they felt they had the authority from their communities and the COD Certificate III qualification.

The study documents instances of graduates from WBB who have successfully influenced local governance bodies to allocate more resources to the health of their communities. Having a community development project to allocate resources to, however, may depend less on the education of the graduate, but on the political power of the community to attract resources in its favour. This reminds us of the value of students remaining networked and empowered through the generation of a critical mass of students and graduates.

### ***iii. Networking***

Eleven interviewees claimed that a strength of the course was in developing a network of Indigenous Leaders. In describing the teaching blocks in Cairns as social and fun, they also enjoyed the opportunity to learn from one another. They want to, and many have, remained in communication with people from other communities. This is a professional network and community of learners and has remained a valuable resource in the development, implementation and management of peoples' projects. By contrast, Balatti et al., (2004), report that Indigenous students in mainstream courses have no or limited opportunities to meet as a group and miss out on the sense of solidarity found among students in a similar situation, and the moral support that this engenders (p. 26). In relation to TAFE courses;

“...the general lack of a 'critical mass' of Indigenous students in any given mainstream program leads to institutional silence regarding Indigenous students' perceptions. Rarely, if ever, is their combined voice concerning their experience, expectations, difficulties and suggestions for change sought by the organisation. (p. 26)

### ***iv. Funding***

Projects with sustainable impacts have sourced funding from channels beyond their regular gambit, including private corporations. Several projects are funding reliant. They are not-for-profit projects that produce social impacts such as obesity amelioration. Others have the potential to generate revenue, i.e. community gardens, and sponsorship opportunities, i.e. dance troupes.

There are barriers identified that impede the sustainable impact the course may have in communities. The first barrier can be ameliorated through a strengthening of the role of sponsors by WBB College, and recommendations to this effect are made in Section 5 Future

Learnings. The second issue is presently beyond the scope of WBB College but has an important bearing on student's likelihood to complete the course, and apply its learnings. WBB is well placed to expand its course offerings and deepen the foundational work achieved by the COD Certificate III course.

***i. Sponsors and employers***

Students who reported having supportive employers and sponsors were more likely to complete the course. Most students who did not complete the course reported having to withdraw due to work circumstances. Students were more likely to successfully complete learning objectives between the Cairns based teaching blocks, when they had an available and supportive sponsor/employer.

***ii. Leaving community***

Students commented on the lack of employment opportunities within their community. People are leaving communities for work and employment opportunities elsewhere. The COD Certificate III is likely to be useful in their quest for employment elsewhere. The course, however, is presently geared towards encouraging students to think about, and apply, community development and organisation principles and skills within their own communities. While this factor represents a potential loss of community development skilled individuals, it is likely that in time they may return with newly acquired and complementary workforce skills.

***iii. The role of the WBB College***

WBB College staff are well placed to provide ongoing support to graduates and with some additional content in the COD Certificate III curriculum and Certificate IV offerings can help to address the ongoing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Australia.

**4.4. Efficiency**

A conventional Cost Benefit Analysis is beyond the scope of this project, however, given the resources invested by TEAR Australia and the documented impact of the learning of students in the context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage in Australia, the following comments are provided to support the contention that this project represents a very sound investment. The evaluator was overwhelmed by the positive contribution the COD Certificate III course has made to peoples personal and community wellbeing as documented in the discussion above.

According to Balatti et al., (2004), Indigenous engagement with vocational education and training (VET) has improved significantly in recent years. Successful completion rates, however, remain lower, nationally, when compared with the overall population. TAFE enrolment figures, reported in 2001, state that the successful completion rate of assessed subject enrolments for Indigenous students was 77%, compared to 86% for the rest of the population. The Indigenous withdrawal rate in 2001 was 13.8%, whereas the withdrawal rate for the rest of the student population was 8.3% (p. 10).

Table 5: Completion of COD course of average yearly intake 25 students. Source: Wontulp Bi-Buya College.

2007	19 Students Graduated
2008	9 students Graduated
2009	10 students Graduated
2010	12 students Graduated

Between 2007 – 2010, an average of 100 students were accepted into the course, with a total of 50 students graduating and another 15 expected to graduate in November this year. This equates to completion rates of around 65% of total enrolments since 2006. These figures are approximates, but do provide an indication that WBB College is achieving its stated objective to have “65% of commencing students graduate within 3 years” (Wontulp-Bi-Buya College, 2010). It also demonstrates that the completion rate is comparable to 2001 TAFE data. Causes of course withdrawal were explored by the evaluator. Nine interviewees were unable to complete the course citing personal reasons (which may have included expulsion), and three explaining that their employment prevented them from attending residential blocks. They therefore withdrew from the course. Three interviewees said they would like to re-commence. It was interesting to note that even students who were asked to leave the course remained loyal to WBB College. MacLaren (2007) noted occasions where “Some students have had their enrolments deferred because of breaking rules about drugs and alcohol on the college” (p. 21). Two students were interviewed, who had been sent home from Cairns due to breaching these rules. Interestingly, they did not hold any resentment towards Father Les, or the College.

The annual investment by TEAR Australia of \$110,936 per year is nearly comparable to current TAFE estimates of equivalent course delivery. The delivery cost of a one year, Certificate III Business Management course, delivered within remote communities with up to four one-week intensives is estimated at \$48,000. In addition to this, the client would have to meet the transport and accommodation costs for up to two trainers, approximately \$20,000. Courses cater for up to 12 students (Personal Communication with the Business

Development Officer Indigenous Delivery, 2011). A comparison of the two delivery services is presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Summary of comparative costs. Source: Wontulp Bi-Buya College (2011) and Business Development Officer: Indigenous Delivery (2011).

	TAFE Cert III Bus Management	WBB COD Cert III
Course duration	1 year	2 years
Residential blocks/year	4 one-week	4 two-week
Trainers	2 (Band 9 Teachers or above)	2 plus Literacy Support
No. of students	12	Up to 25 (av. 12)
Cost of delivery	\$48,000	\$110,936 inclusive
Additional costs	\$20,000	
Indicative cost per head	\$5800	\$4437

Given the outcomes being achieved by the College, completion rates and the present funding levels, the College is efficiently delivering COD Certificate III. Two specific institutional factors influence the quality of the learning opportunities for Indigenous people. Firstly, learning depends upon the expertise of the institution's personnel to respond to the Indigenous clientele; and secondly, the ways in which the existing networks and relationships within the Institution and the external world influence how Indigenous-specific policies are implemented at the grassroots level (Balatti, et al., 2004). Regarding the former, WBB College staff and trainers are led by competent and experienced Indigenous leaders. The trainers are experienced and passionate educators. The evaluator was struck by the extent to which the trainers care for and support their students with exceptional out-of-hour efforts being made during the residential blocks. As a point of contrast, Indigenous students doing mainstream programs in the TAFE sector run the risk of being ignored, according to Balatti et al., (2004). The risk is increased when:

- The number of Indigenous students in any given course is small;
- Learning interactions do not sufficiently draw on the intellectual, social and cultural capital that students bring by virtue of being Indigenous;
- The monitoring of Indigenous students' learning as a group in mainstream programs is not a specific responsibility in any manager's portfolio; and
- There are limited opportunities for students to influence the learning opportunities offered. (Balatti, et al., 2004, p. 5)

The second influencing factor refers to the extent to which the institutional arrangements are influenced by internal and external networks. This includes the sponsors of students



attending the course and funding agencies. It would appear that WBB College has sound relationships with its stakeholders. The sponsors have minimal impact over curriculum and pedagogical issues, but play a vital role in the ongoing, nurturing function, financial and tutorial support within students' home communities. The strength of the sponsor/student relationship can influence course completion. Strengthening and utilising the role of sponsors, will be discussed further in the recommendations Section 5 below.

There is scope to involve past students as mentors. There are several past students who would make very suitable guest speakers to discuss their experience in community organisation, project management, funding and governance. Their experience is highly relevant to new students. Students can also gain exposure to current and recent experience in the field of Native Title land claims and Land Management Agreements. This point will be further discussed in Section 5 below.

#### **4.5. Management**

WBB was praised for being organisationally efficient, responsive and supportive for students. Over 80% of students interviewed rated the support they received in getting to and from the blocks in Cairns as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

WBB can also be described as 'leadership smart'. They act with others and focus on areas where they can make a difference, and use a range of pedagogical styles develop leadership in others. The College has the capacity to change in a reflexive and responsive manner, but most importantly, has developed an informal network amongst its current and alumni students based on trust and respect. The communities visited by the evaluator demonstrated strong goodwill and support for the work of WBB and Father Les Baird. All students interviewed, regardless of whether they finished the COD Certificate III or not, and the circumstances in which they may have left the course, recommended the course to others. Managing student's learning between the residential blocks may be strengthened with a combination of, (1) greater visitation from College staff including off-site modes of delivery, (2) strengthening the role of the students' online and social networks, and (3), the influence and mentoring role of sponsors. These issues are addressed as recommendations in Section 5, Future Learnings below.

There is much room for growth within WBB College's non-theological post COD Certificate III course offerings, also addressed in Section 5 below. Given the focus on personal empowerment, as well as tangible workplace skills and knowledge, WBB meets the demand for culturally appropriate delivered vocational education and training, with options to continue into the higher education sector including Under-Graduate and Masters level university courses.

There is a need to become proactive in the recruitment and training of teaching staff. The evaluator commends the College for fostering the skills, employment and training of Eddie Turpin, who demonstrates outstanding talent in teaching and interpersonal communication skills, which are clearly appreciated and respected by the student cohorts. Students would welcome a qualified trainer from Torres Strait Islander descent, and in the interests of gender balance, the College should be proactive in finding female trainers. Several students have been approached by Father Les, but, for personal reasons have declined the invitation. The College needs to look beyond its graduate population seeking experience and resonance with the spiritual values of the College.

Student enrolment data is managed with PowerPro, a registered training organisation standard requirement. Student data, prior to 2010, appears in multiple duplicate form. The current administrator has spent many hours to rectify past student data, and is continuing her efforts in the rectification of past records. The system is backed up weekly. The College can retrieve information on past students, track their current locations and activities, and communicate via email with newsletters or other communications information. Record keeping and monitoring systems assist in the event of staff turnover, and reduce the College's dependence on their Trainers to know the whereabouts, contact details and activities of students. The creation of a WBB COD Alumni will be discussed further below.

The current delivery of residential courses at the Tropicana Motel, as a model and mode of delivery, is working well for the College. The students reflected on their experience at the Motel as 'clean, air conditioned and comfortable' reinforcing the insights from the MacLaren (2007) report. However, in the recommendations set out below, the site has limitations and other locations for the delivery of the COD Certificate III course are suggested.

## **5. Future Learning**

This is the final TOR, and focuses on 13 recommendations to expand, improve and strengthen the delivery of COD courses through WBB College, given the learnings of this evaluation. The discussion is organised under the following headings: Organisational Student Support and Course Delivery.

### **5.1. Organisational Support**

1. Invest in the induction, education and seek stronger support of the sponsors. Students spoke warmly about sponsors who provided more than material support. Several sponsors gave students assistance in completing workbooks, developing project ideas and plans, and sourcing funding. They were individuals who took an active role in the students' progress.

Weak sponsors provided in-principle support to do the course and little more. One student noted that the sponsor 'didn't even attend my graduation'.

The College could utilise sponsors by communicating with them their role and responsibilities as sponsors. Strategies to engage with sponsors may include a formal induction session, regular updates of their student's progress and suggest ways they might take an active role in mentoring students. Sponsors can also help the College to monitor students. Sponsors can report on graduate's projects and whole of community involvement/responses to graduates initiatives. Sponsors might be encouraged to be an advocate for the College in communities, recommending the course/s, and suggesting the course to potential students. Sponsors can be invited to get more involved in course planning, for example, providing a seat at a curriculum advisory committee.

2. Monitoring and tracking of past, present and graduate student progress. As mentioned above, the College will continue with PowerPro student enrolment data management system, and rectify past student records where possible. The system collects relevant student contact information, for example, occupations, sponsors, age, community, language group, honorary and customary positions, skills sets and other details as required by administration for logistical support. The College may also consider recording the causes of student withdrawal from the course, attendance and reporting of individual progress, including the dates and nature of communications with students. Students requiring, and resources available for greater literacy support, for example, can be easily determined as can generating an email list by individual or group criterion. Networks within the student body can be enculturated and supported, such as a student alumni group.

3. A student alumni, or graduates group, would be a value-adding service provided by the College for graduates. A College employee would be responsible for maintaining graduate records including contact details, sending regular email correspondence, such as a newsletter, and stimulating ongoing discussions of graduates between graduates. An important and highly beneficial theme that emerged from the interviews was the value of the professional network students developed with people from across cultures and communities. Many students have continued to foster their friendships with others. The College could play an active role in maintaining and strengthening networks. A newsletter to alumni groups might; inform them of course offerings, update them with developments in the field of community organisation and indigenous community development, advertise employment opportunities, and feature individual's or community 'best practice'.

There is a strong field of candidates for future trainers, mentors and guest experts. Maintaining this information also provides WBB with an up-to-date pool of highly relevant personnel for ongoing courses.

The connection between education and development has been well known, and understood, for decades. In Australia, Hunter (1997) found education to be the largest single factor associated with improving employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians and reducing rates of anti-social behaviours leading to arrest. In addition to this, Malin (2002) argues that the extent to which Indigenous students are socially incorporated and supported within their classroom has implications for reducing poverty and stress and improving student's health in the longer term. Both these factors contribute to long-term positive impacts on students' personal health, development and the wellbeing of their communities, and needs to be the focus of further monitoring of graduate students.

4. Funding for the course should not be on the basis of the total number of enrolments. That is, funding should remain independent of the target and actual enrolment numbers due to the tendency of mainstream educational facilities to drive staff to 'sign-up' students who may be inadequately prepared to undertake the course. Continuing to target students who may have the most to gain from completing the course, either as recognised community leaders, or people in workplace employment positions to enact influential projects for example, is a sound model in which to continue to strengthen the impact of the COD Certificate III course in Indigenous communities, and one in which is not funded by government.

## **5.2. Course Delivery**

5. A great strength of the COD Certificate III course delivered through WBB College is its relevance to learners. The curriculum is highly beneficial to Indigenous people providing much needed knowledge and skill sets to motivate and take positive actions in Indigenous communities (both urban and regional). To maintain the course's high level of relevance and acceptance to Indigenous learners, future course programmes, and delivery modes, could be developed through consultative processes. The College could facilitate a workshop with graduate alumni students; telephone survey or nominate up to three 'advisers' to participate in a curriculum advisory board. As the course outcomes are so closely aligned with high value community development initiatives, participation by Indigenous people in the development of this course will contribute towards Eversole's (2003) observation that, "strengthening democracies' and promoting 'good governance' are key to the increased participation of marginalized social groups—enabling them to be involved in influencing the direction of policy and social change" (p. 782).

6. Offsite modes of delivery should be considered for their multiple benefits. At least two suitable communities, Home Rule Training Centre near Wujal Wujal and St Pauls in the Torres Strait, would be potential 'satellite' locations to deliver two-week residential blocks.

Off-site delivery has been successfully applied in the TAFE sector to improve student engagement, course completion and accessibility.

“Off-site collaborative modes of delivery have permitted many Indigenous people to access training that previously was out of reach geographically and/or culturally. Owing to the training being delivered to the home communities of Indigenous students, successful completions have increased in the two sites where this form of delivery was studied. Another positive outcome of community-based training was the increased readiness of some students to experience training and/or work in larger centres—a prospect that would have proved daunting previously. Success in vocational education and training at home had increased the confidence of students to reach out and experience new learning and work environments.” (Balatti, et al., 2004, p. 23)

Collaborative relationships between WBB, the host community, sponsors, and relevant government agencies, need to be in place. The Training Centre at Home Rule is interested in expanding courses offered, and would welcome COD training at the facility. It can accommodate up to 35 people, has a functional commercial kitchen, large classroom/training spaces and office facilities including phone/fax and internet connections. A large network of Elders and COD students would be on hand to mentor and socialise with students away from the allure of Cairns night-spots and entertainment venues. Similarly, St Pauls is a welcoming community with a critical mass of COD students and successful ‘showcase’ projects. St Pauls would be a suitable and accessible location for other Islander communities interested in completing the course. WBB has expressed an interest in developing a third satellite location on the West Coast of Cape York.

Providing several or all residential blocks in off-site community locations also reduces the need for trainers to visit students. Opportunities to follow up on the progress of past students would be a dual purpose of the visit.

7. Develop modules within COD Certificate III course including:

- Business and social enterprise management;
- Native Title and Land Corporation governance and opportunities;
- IT business opportunities, and
- Sustainable development and climate change adaptation.

Within these modules the following topics could well be included:

- The purpose of, and how to get the most out of a commissioned economic feasibility study; sustainable land use and management planning;
- Climate Change adaptation planning and response for Indigenous communities;
- The structure and governance principles of land corporations;

- Negotiation and communication skills (for community and government department staff);
- Funding opportunities and grant application writing; and
- Marketing and online social network marketing.

Where relevant, curriculum materials and resources would benefit from drawing on current case studies and examples of Indigenous community development sourced from around the globe. As one respondent stated, “We learn from other’s experiences. We yarn about it and we do it.”

The impact of Climate Change is already being noticed in the Torres Strait communities. Communities are dependent upon the sea for their cultural relevance, food security and health. Increasing regulation on the range and activity of fisher-people is being felt by Islander people who understand that this is ‘just the beginning’ of the impending issues of Climate Change to low-lying Islander communities. The issue has great relevance to all Indigenous communities, and it is recommended that the College utilise current research of the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility <http://www.nccarf.edu.au/home> which has a research component devoted solely to the development of adaptation strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

8. The curriculum development may also be enhanced by the engagement of a one-off, short-term curriculum writer to assist in the development of new modules at an estimated cost of \$20,000.

9. Recruit casual trainers, with appropriate knowledge and skills, to fill the knowledge gaps of current trainers. As a strategy, the College can both attract, and review, potential new teaching staff. Torres Strait Islander interviewees recognised a curriculum gap in both trainers’ knowledge, and course materials, concerning Torres Strait Islander culture and tradition. It is recommended that a high priority be placed on employing a trainer/s with Torres Strait Islander descent.

10. Adequate resourcing to provide for ongoing staff professional development is essential. Professional development provides staff with teaching confidence and competence. Ongoing staff professional development builds the skills, interests and capabilities of existing staff. Eddie Turpin is an IT Marketing enthusiast with online business development and marketing skills. Eddie has an impressive array of profitable online business interests. He is capable and willing to share this knowledge. We recommend that the College build Eddie’s professional development and utilise his skills, knowledge and understanding to the development of new curriculum materials.

11. The College requires additional resources including projectors, DVD players and other hardware appliances. These would improve the physical delivery and comfort of both trainers and students. Devices that are easily transportable to suit training in satellite locations is recommended.

12. Expand range of post COD Certificate III offerings. Accredited courses in the following fields may include:

- Business management;
- Social enterprise management;
- Sustainable development and Climate Change adaptation for Indigenous Communities;
- IT, e-commerce and e-marketing;
- Childcare;
- Managing a social enterprise, i.e. community gardens; and
- Youth Leadership.

13. The extent and nature of community development programmes arising directly from training in the WBB COD Certificate III course, establishes a strong causal relationship between training in community development and grounded, practical and empowering projects within communities. Participants acquire a set of problem solving skills that equip them to take on the challenges that they identify in their communities. This is enhanced when they are supported and nurtured by their peers and sponsors. To better understand these early observations, we suggest that a longer-term approach to research, including a longitudinal study, be commissioned to continue to document the ongoing empowerment, leadership and impact of the COD Certificate III on Indigenous Australian communities.

TEAR's assistance of WBB College has been used to great effect in the development of a leading course for training and applied learning in Indigenous community organisation and development. There is scope to consider strengthening the present levels of support given the demonstrated benefits of the course, efficient use of present funding by the College, and comparative costs of equivalent service providers (i.e. TAFE).

The College and TEAR Australia need to consider the appropriate level of support required to continue Father Les Baird, Eddie Turpin, Ann Mohan (literacy officer) in their present roles. Funding is required to recruit, train and develop other staff, beginning with the College on a casual basis. TEAR Australia could also assist WBB College provide professional development of staff, curriculum development of courses (a curriculum writer) and the acquisition of teaching resources. If off-site course delivery were to commence, a review of both savings and costs will be required.

## 6. Concluding comments

This evaluation of the COD Certificate III course delivered through WBB College demonstrates that there is a strong causal link between community development training and the implementation of locally grounded, Indigenous inspired and responsive to community concerns, development projects. We argue that community development training and community leadership and empowerment are connected, in the same way that education affects public and community health (Tsey, 1997) and poverty alleviation (Al-Yaman & Higgins, 2011; Balatti, et al., 2004; Boughton, 2000). Therefore, investing in community development training is a sound strategy for encouraging community development in Indigenous communities.

After meeting with, and visiting several communities, the evaluator is left in no doubt that the COD Certificate III is having a profound impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The success of the course can be credited to a range of factors including the quality of the training provided by skilled, resourceful and dedicated staff, the culturally appropriate perspectives taken to the curriculum, sponsorship arrangements for students, and selection of prepared and ready students to undertake the course. The course does not reflect an institutional paternalism, neither does it require an assimilation process by students to experience success.

The principle objectives of this evaluation were to:

- Encourage reflection and analysis of the progress toward the stated goal to train people to lead in community development in their communities.
- Inform TEAR Australia about the outcomes of the course during 2008-2010 to enable its accountability to donors and for satisfaction of TEAR Board requirements.
- Help WBB to clarify, measure and achieve its objectives for the COD course, and
- Lay the foundation for sustainable impacts into the future.

In response to these, it is clear that the goal to train people to lead is well developed. There are several outstanding people, working to make ongoing changes in their community, addressing issues that they themselves have identified as priority areas of need. They are working within a Christian framework and do not engage in alcohol or drugs. The evaluator, and evaluation Steering Committee, has attempted to satisfy the TEAR Board that financial resources provided to maintain and deliver the COD Certificate III course are utilised in an appropriately managed manner, maximising long term community development outcomes. College personnel devote considerable out-of-hours time to developing teaching resources (updating booklets), sourcing high value hands-on learning experiences (arranging excursions and guest speakers), student assessment and feedback and engaging in their own personal and professional development.



WBB's objectives for the COD Certificate III course are to develop:

- Community organising and development skills and attitudes that are culturally and holistically sensitive, with an emphasis on consultation and participation by the people in processes of decision-making and action that affect their lives.
- Knowledge and practice of facilitative styles of leadership that empower others, and
- An wholistic outlook on community leadership and organising that integrates spiritual, social and physical aspects of life.

In so far as these objectives are met, this evaluation is a testament to the success WBB is having in delivering culturally appropriate training. It is wholistic, in that, the benefits of training are affecting organisations and communities, as trainees are developing skill sets that are best expressed in their service to others. With a strong focus on empowerment, the curriculum delivered is promoting styles of leadership and modes of practice that students intend will have a knock-on effect, and empower others through better communications, advocacy and representation through Land Corporations; family values through leading men's and women's groups; establishing social services where councils have failed, i.e. community gardens; training, skills and employment opportunities, and health and active lifestyle projects to name just a few. As mentioned above, graduates have, or are developing, a strong spiritual basis for their work, loving God, their community, families and themselves.

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## Appendix 1: Survey instrument for written response/semi-structured interviews



### ***Wontulp-Bi-Buya College***

#### ***How Are We Doing?***

#### ***Working together to evaluate the WBB COD course 2008-2010.***

#### Course Participant Survey

This survey is to find out more about the course, how you have used what you learnt in the course since graduating, and ways that Wontulp Bi Buya, and sponsors, can provide better student support.

Information provided to us will be in confidence and no one will be named. You do not have to put your name on this survey.

#### Questions:

1. When did you complete the course?
2. Do you have any other qualifications?
3. Are you currently enrolled in another course?
4. Did you attend every teaching block in Cairns?

5. On a scale of 1 – 5, where:

1 is excellent

2 is really good

3 is good

4 is not so good

5 is bad

Can you rate each of the following things about the course.

	Excellent	Really good	Good	Not so good	Bad
	1	2	3	4	5
Workbooks you were given to complete each module					
Explanations and instructions from the trainers					
Support from your Sponsor					
Support in getting you to and from the blocks in Cairns					
The help that you received when you were back at home					
The graduation ceremony					

6. Did the course meet your expectations?

7. Which module do you remember being the most useful?

8. Which module do you remember being the least useful?
9. What projects are you now involved in, because of doing the course?
10. How does this project help your community?
11. How long will your project go for?
12. Who is funding and helping you with your project?
13. What improvements to the course and/or its delivery would you like to suggest.
14. Would you recommend the course to others?

Appendix 2: Comments from transcripts of open interview discussions

<p>Comments/ instances of personal development</p>	<p>I really progressed through WBB. Look at what it got me! What I was taught at that time helped me get to where I am today and added to my potential.</p> <p>The thinking I got was that I was shy about speaking/interviews. We had to interview people and this gave me confidence to speak and ask questions.</p> <p>The course has helped me to learn how to speak up. We weren't allowed to speak. I've jumped the boundary. Now I want to be an example and say to others 'you don't have to sit back and be quiet. We can help you speak up'.</p> <p>I attended every block. It was a joy to get away from Yarrabah. It gave me self confidence and skills. I contribute to community in a more hands on way. This course helped me get to where I am today.</p> <p>My partner and I both did the course. He wants to start up a fishing business. I know where to write submissions. What channels to go through. I can be the bookkeeper for his business.</p>
<p>Comments/ instances of leading COD projects:</p>	<p>Aboriginal Land Management. Chair and board member of Native Title Land corporations.</p> <p>I volunteer in a range of CD projects across housing, caring for the needs of our people. I'm a church leader of all denominations.</p> <p>Justice group, and council board member.</p> <p>Community of St Pauls benefited enormously: Community garden (with plans to build hydroponic garden and home gardens), awareness programs to link up with community garden (wellbeing, healthy eating etc), writing a community development plan (in consultation with community) and community radio/TV to help young people build confidence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Rekindling TSI family Values through cultural learning</li> <li>2) Live Long, Live Strong health project</li> <li>3) St Pauls Men Protecting Families</li> <li>4) Healthy Island Homes</li> </ol>

	<p>1 – 3 Pilot projects completed. 4 to start. Funding RioTinto (1) waiting for repeat funding.</p> <p>I helped get a women’s group going. I’m being a mentor for young ladies. In cultural activities and in our language we call it wakaiwian. It like assisting and teaching them things we used to do. Encourage young people to keep on going.</p> <p>Helping with young people and motivation, and to get off drugs and alcohol. One of our main problems. I was involved in running activities to get their minds off D&amp;A. I run family days and games to get the whole family together. Indoor/outdoor cricket, football, tennis and touch.</p> <p>It’s helped me talk with and stop red neck businesses and more peaceful and harmonious community and race relations. I learnt these through the Advocacy and Empowerment modules of the course.</p> <p>I’m starting a Young Women’s group at Church to have a counselling session. Young women here needs lots of extra help. Young mothers hold back with male priests. When they know a woman figure is around they feel more comfortable. One on one counselling. I see a big need for rehab here. A lot of my people are too shame to seek that help when they know they got that problem. And chronic illness is high here. Every family here is affected by D&amp;A. Not one family misses out. We’re all children of alcoholics. Cert III opened my eyes to the dysfunctional lifestyle.</p> <p>I am now helping a lady to help children’s cultural awareness. It’s a small holidays project but we want to do it over school holidays and Christmas Holidays. We work with Mission Australia and the PCYC. I realise doing Community Organising was really good to put the skills into action.</p> <p>Now I know what community organising is all about. Healing women’s group/children group. Helped me a lot. I get involved in community events.</p>
<p>Strengthening current projects</p>	<p>Strengthened skills in work as a priest.</p> <p>Understanding of how to manage things</p> <p>I’m a volunteer/mentor. I’m helping with the art and craft centre. Working out of the old IBIS store. We make jewellery, dresses, craft work and dancing. We sell that. Now that I go up and down and do the course,</p>

	<p>it gives me plenty of work and keeps me on my toes. It's motivational and helping.</p> <p>I use knowledge from the course in projects with QLD Health: men's health, women's health, child welfare, mums with bubs, assist with allied health workers' projects.</p> <p>Teacher Training at the local Primary School.</p> <p>Gives us the understanding, know how, to make changes and how to go about seeking which/who about certain problems and how to fix them.</p> <p>Elders Committee Murrie Court Justice group (jail visits) Attend land meetings.</p> <p>I was in these roles before I did the COD course, but I learnt more about what's involved in community. I visit jails and I know better about what to do to help them. Communicating and help them now better about themselves.</p> <p>I will work for Jabalbina and get funding through them for my projects. We do things for Wujal and Laura Country too. Will work with my son to bring others out of their shells to learn how to organise community development.</p> <p>Community organising helped me with the Church, Parish Council for a number of years. People in the community ask 'How come she's in that position?' and I can show them my qualification. I got the paper and done the work for it. My work includes being on the committee for Survival Day.</p> <p>I work on the NAIDOC events here. It helped me a lot. A real boost. I didn't know I was doing community organising until I did the Certificate.</p>
<p>Instances where students reported COD course helping them in promotion/employment:</p>	<p>Became a community organiser employed by Wujal Council.</p> <p>Invited to apply for Com Health Worker position which he credits to completion of COD course and volunteer work in COD projects since completing the course 2010.</p> <p>I'm starting my own business – I'm going to work for me and be self-employed. I've built capacity to generate income of my own.</p>



	<p>I had my job prior to doing the course but has helped me in communicating with different people.</p> <p>After completing the course I came straight to Public Health.</p> <p>Community policing: Drug and Alcohol module has been very helpful to me in community policing.</p> <p>I became the full time employment coordinator</p> <p>Assistant medical receptionist and I am aiming to go higher. The course has helped me so much in my job. My boss sees my potential to go higher.</p> <p>I will be counselling at Mookai Rosies Bi-Bayan</p> <p>I want to be a teacher at Wontulp.</p> <p>I work with the Men's group. I was working in another position at the health centre, and the training in COD helped my resume and I do this job now. The course is very relevant to my current position.</p> <p>I completed in 2007, and [name omitted] was my sponsor. I'd been working as the Justice Coordinator and then I was promoted to programme manager (men/women/life promotion/bringing them home linkup).</p>
<p>Instances/ comments of going onto to complete further education, Cert IV COD or other</p>	<p>Public Health Certificate Sea and Land Conservation and Management Early Childhood Teaching Course at JCU Cert 4 Community Teaching.</p> <p>I regret not completing the COD course. I wonder what would have happened and what I'd be doing now if I kept going. I want to finish it.</p> <p>I was going to do the D&amp;A cert with Les and set up a rehab at Laura. I couldn't get into their last course. It was all full up.</p>