

Think Martu. Think Differently. Act Differently.

Evaluation of KJ against Martu outcomes

June 2021



Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa

A note from the evaluators

We acknowledge and pay our respect to Martu

We were welcomed onto Martu Country and into community to sit with, listen to and learn from Martu as they told their stories, history and shared their culture and language with us. We were privileged to visit and learn the names of sacred waterholes that had been cared for by generations of Martu men and women. We were given the opportunity to learn about the journey of Martu over the past ten years and in so doing, capture the role that Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ) has played in that story.

We acknowledge and pay our respect to Martu Country where the work for this evaluation took place. We also acknowledge and pay our respect to Martu Elders and people who welcomed us into their communities and shared their culture, stories and history with us.

We also acknowledge and show our gratitude to the numerous KJ staff who travelled with us into the desert, enabling our journey as visitors through Martu Country.

About the title

The title for this evaluation report is unique and intends to bring the reader into the story about how Martu, with KJ, have sought to preserve their identity and culture while redefining their future in the modern world. This report attempts to translate the story of Martu so that Government, investors and the general public can appreciate the value, strength and resilience of Martu and how KJ has helped Martu protect their past and redefine their future.



Photo taken on the sand dunes near Punmu, Martu Country, at sunset

Credit: Alison Kwok, November 2020

Contents

A note from the evaluators	2
Executive Summary	4
1. Purpose of this Report	11
2. Evaluation Methodology	12
3. About Martu	16
The Martu.....	16
The challenges for, and strengths of, Martu	17
4. About KJ	18
Land Programs	18
Cultural Knowledge Programs	18
Social Programs.....	19
Additional Programs.....	20
Martu Access to KJ Programs	20
5. Martu Outcomes	21
Developing Martu outcomes	21
The 11 outcomes important to Martu.....	21
6. Evaluation of KJ’s Contribution to Martu Outcomes	24
At a glance: KJ contribution to Martu outcomes	24
1. <i>Ngurra</i> - Looking after and caring for country	25
2. <i>Wangka</i> – Keeping language strong.....	27
3. <i>Ninti</i> – Learning from and respecting old people	29
4. <i>Walyja</i> – Looking after kids and family	32
5. <i>Kujungkarrini</i> – Unity and harmony between Martu.....	36
6. Making community strong for a higher standard of living	39
7. Building confidence through two-way learning	43
8. Getting people out of town/out of ‘lock-up’ and back home.....	47
9. Better respect and relationship with ‘whitefellas’	53
10. Work and training.....	56
11. Being healthy	59
7. Conclusions and Observations	62
Concluding remarks	62
Other important observations	63
Annexure 1: KJ and Martu outcomes voting exercise	67
Annexure 2: Reference list	69
Addendum: Safety	70

Executive Summary

Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ) is a Martu organisation. KJ engaged Social Ventures Australia Consulting to evaluate their impact on Martu communities between 2010 and 2020. The evaluation intends to understand the extent to which KJ has contributed to outcomes which are important to Martu over the past 10 years.

Importantly, the evaluation also created an opportunity for Martu to articulate the outcomes that matter to them and for the impact of programs involving Martu to be measured against those outcomes.

About Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa

KJ is a Martu organisation created in 2005 to achieve three objectives: to preserve Martu culture; to build a viable, sustainable economy in Martu communities; and to build realistic pathways for young Martu to a healthy and prosperous future.

In addressing these high-level objectives, KJ runs a suite of cultural, environmental and social programs in Martu communities and in Newman. As outlined more extensively in Section 4, these address a diverse array of issues, and include many aspects of cultural knowledge preservation, a substantial ranger program and associated land management programs and programs addressing myriad social issues including early childhood education, adult education, reduction of incarceration, substance abuse and governance.

These programs seek to provide employment while preserving the deep Martu relationship with their country, maintaining the natural and cultural values of that country, creating greater Martu capacity to engage with Western agencies and developing Martu-led approaches to entrenched social problems.

Due to the dominant focus on preservation of the natural and cultural values of Martu country, KJ's programs are directed predominantly, although not exclusively, to Martu living in or near the Martu native title determination. As Section 4 outlines in more detail, only about 50% of the total Martu population now live close to their traditional homelands. This is due to a historical dispersal of a diaspora around the edges of the Western Desert, the effects of the Stolen Generation on some families and relocation of some Martu families to Perth.

The 11 Martu outcomes important to Martu

A key part of the evaluation was to have Martu develop a set of outcomes that they believe encapsulate the most important aspects of Martu community, way of life and aspirations. They are an articulation of what Martu believe they need to preserve their traditional identity and culture while redefining their future in their modern engagement with the Western world. KJ's impact on Martu communities was assessed against these outcomes.

The 11 Martu outcomes have been grouped into *traditional* (outcomes relating to the traditional Martu identity) and *modern* outcomes (outcomes relating to how Martu live in the modern world). It should be noted that the outcomes were defined by the evaluators after the consultations, rather than reflecting a Martu classification. The outcomes fell neatly into these two categories which capture the dual focus that Martu retain: to strengthen their traditional way of life while redefining their relationship with the modern world.

Traditional outcomes

1. *Ngurra* – Looking after and caring for country

Country is sacred to Martu. Martu identity, beliefs, creation stories, sacred sites, cultural practices and traditional livelihoods are embedded in and inextricably linked to country. Martu describe looking after

country as akin to looking after their sense of identity and family. Martu believe country looks after them and they must look after country.

2. Wangka – Keeping language strong

Martu want to keep their language strong so they can pass it onto future generations. For Martu, language is important for cultural continuity and keeping the traditional knowledge strong. Language is also a direct link to country. Language allows them to speak to and maintain their relationship and connection with country. Martu feel a sense of urgency to preserve their language due to the decreasing number of elders in communities.

3. Ninti – Learning from and respecting old people

Old people are the leaders and teachers in Martu communities. They hold the connection to the *pujiman* (desert born) way of life and have extensive traditional ecological and cultural knowledge of their country. Martu want to learn cultural knowledge from the old people, to respect them and to earn their respect in return. They want to learn about clans, family, country, language, lore and identity. Martu feel a sense of urgency to learn from their old people due to the decreasing numbers of elders in communities.

4. Walyja – Looking after kids and family

Martu want their children to stay away from trouble (particularly in town), to establish a strong connection with family and country at a young age and to engage meaningfully in learning (both Martu way and 'whitefella' way). Martu are concerned that their children are increasingly becoming involved in trouble in town, losing respect for family and their connection to culture and country.

5. Kujungkarrini – Unity and harmony between Martu

Martu want all Martu to live in unity and harmony with each other. Martu acknowledge that in the past fighting and tension between communities and families was destructive. Martu want more productive relationships where all Martu can work together for a better future.

Modern outcomes

6. Making community strong with a high standard of living

Desert communities are important to Martu. They are where Martu can live close to their traditional lands in a society that is predominantly Martu, thereby enabling them to fulfil deep cultural obligations to look after country within an environment they can shape.¹ It is where they want to live but Martu are increasingly concerned about the deteriorating state of the infrastructure in their communities (particularly housing). They want to build stronger communities to improve their standard of living and ultimately attract more Martu back to communities and back to country.

7. Building confidence through two-way learning

Martu, particularly young men and women, have a strong desire to learn about 'whitefella' ways (e.g., modern technology, corporate governance, justice system) while continuing to strengthen their knowledge of Martu ways. Martu see this synergy between the 'whitefella' way and Martu way, and building confidence through learning both, as critical to them shaping a new future for Martu in modern Australia.

8. Getting people out of town, out of 'lock up' (prison) and back to community

Martu have been plagued by the destructive consequences of living in town (Newman and Port Hedland) over generations. Martu consistently associate 'lock-up' (prison), police, court, fighting, *wama* (alcohol), drugs and jealousy with their experience of town. Martu want their people, particularly young people, to move back to communities where alcohol and drugs are not available, where they can be closer to country and away from toxic influences in town.

¹ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, 'The Martu Leadership Program – Evaluation of a Pilot Program Using the Social Return on Investment Methodology', April 2017, Page 13.

9. Better respect and relationship with 'whitefellas'²

Martu want to be genuinely respected by 'whitefellas'. They want their extensive cultural, traditional and ecological knowledge that has been built and cultivated over thousands of years and generations to be recognised. They want to build a productive working relationship with 'whitefellas' grounded in mutual respect that acknowledges the strength and legitimacy of Martu society. Martu see this as an important step to shaping a new future for Martu, together with 'whitefellas', in modern Australia.

10. Work and training

Martu want more opportunities for training and diverse work options. Martu aspire to a stronger economy with work, training and economic forms that align with Martu social aspirations and constraints. Martu also want more training opportunities based in community so that more Martu will move away from town and back home closer to country.

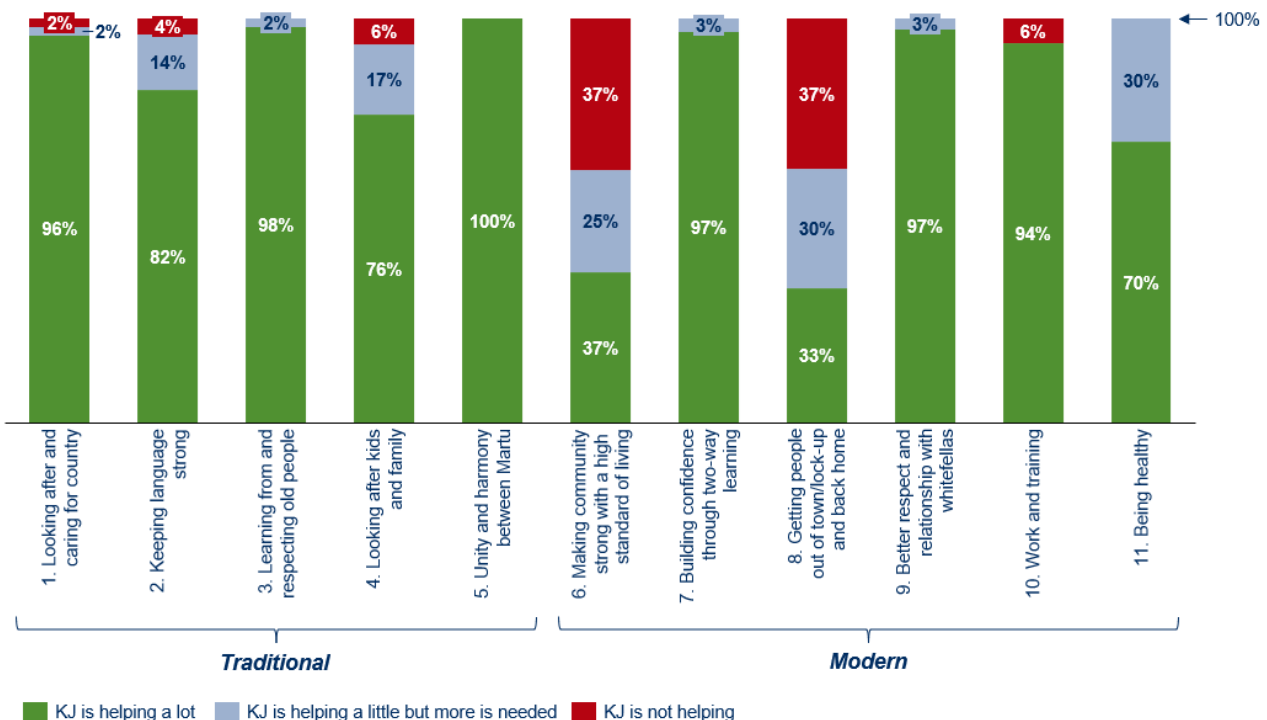
11. Being healthy

Martu want to be healthier. Martu experience very high levels of disadvantage in their health outcomes, primarily caused by "whitefella poison", namely *wama* (alcohol), drugs and high sugar diets. Martu often reflect on the spiritual and physical strength of *pujiman* (desert born Martu) and aspire to become healthier like their ancestors.

KJ's contribution to Martu outcomes

KJ's contribution to Martu communities over the past 10 years has been measured against the 11 Martu outcomes. At each community consultation session in Newman, Jigalong, Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarrtiji, Martu were asked to vote on whether in the past 10 years, they believed KJ had contributed positively to each of the 11 outcomes.

Green indicated that they believed KJ was helping a lot and contributing positively to that outcome, blue indicated that they believed KJ was helping a little but more work is needed and red indicated that they did not believe KJ was helping and making a positive impact.



² Martu characterise Western society and mainstream systems, government and organisations as 'whitefellas'. This report adopts that term for consistency with the Martu world view.

This figure indicates that overall, Martu believe that KJ has contributed positively to Martu outcomes over the past 10 years. In particular, Martu feel that KJ has contributed positively to traditional Martu outcomes of looking after and caring for country, learning from and respecting old people, and unity and harmony between Martu. Overall KJ is also contributing positively to keeping language strong and looking after kids and family, however, some Martu feel more work is needed in these areas.

Regarding modern Martu outcomes, overall Martu feel KJ is helping with building confidence through two-way learning, developing better respect and relationships with ‘whitefellas’ and accessing work and training. KJ is also contributing to Martu being healthier, however, some feel more work and focus is needed in this area.

Two outcomes of particular concern to Martu are ‘making communities strong with a high standard of living’ and ‘getting people out of town or lock-up and back home’. During community consultation sessions, Martu consistently expressed that these outcomes are of increasing concern and many Martu feel that not enough traction and improvement are happening in these two areas.

KJ’s contribution to each individual outcome is summarised in the table below.

Martu outcome	Key evaluation findings
Traditional outcomes	
<p>1. <i>Ngurra – Looking after and caring for country</i> See page 25</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu have overwhelmingly confirmed that KJ has made a significantly positive contribution to their ability to look after and care for country. • KJ’s contribution to this outcome has primarily been achieved through providing transport, equipment and logistical support, and creating opportunities for Martu to work on country as KJ rangers.
<p>2. <i>Wangka – Keeping language strong</i> See page 27</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KJ has helped preserve Martu <i>wangka</i> (language) through language and on-country programs and by teaching ‘whitefellas’. • There is still a high risk of losing language and Martu feel more needs to be done. Martu want to see KJ’s language program expanded to incorporate more language groups with an increased number of Martu involved in this area.
<p>3. <i>Ninti – Learning from and respecting old people</i> See page 29</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu strongly feel that KJ has helped them learn from and respect old people again. Martu reported that before KJ, old people were not teaching young people and that without KJ “old people would be finished and passed away”. • KJ’s on-country programs and the Martu Leadership Program (MLP) have been primarily responsible for creating positive change against this outcome. • Some families living in Newman, however, feel that their young people are losing respect for old people, indicating that more needs to be done to build this outcome in Newman.
<p>4. <i>Walyja – Looking after kids and family</i> See page 32</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KJ is helping the majority of Martu look after kids and family. KJ is helping kids go on country to learn about family, culture and engage in productive work. Kids are learning both ways (Martu and ‘whitefella’) through KJ’s new families program. Archives and family trees are teaching kids about their history. • Some Martu feel more could be done to get young children on country more often. Martu also want more help travelling to funerals. • Families living in Newman and Jigalong feel that more needs to be done to help steer their kids away from destructive influences.
<p>5. <i>Kujungkarrini – Unity and harmony between Martu</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu have overwhelmingly confirmed that KJ has helped restore unity and harmony between Martu. KJ helped revive traditional structures that bind Martu society together, created opportunities for Martu to work together, reinstated

<p>See page 36</p>	<p>the importance of sharing knowledge for the benefit of all Martu and created a platform for collaboration in the face of modern Australia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KJ primarily supported Martu through on-country programs and the MLP.
<p>Modern outcomes</p>	
<p><i>6. Making community strong for a higher standard of living</i></p> <p>See page 39</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu are worried about the state of their communities, with the chief concern being housing. • Martu acknowledge that KJ has contributed to making communities stronger, but are increasingly frustrated due to the lack of overall progress on housing and infrastructure. Martu look to KJ for a solution but as a non-government community organisation, KJ has limited ability to ultimately resolve housing issues within communities. • Martu also want KJ to help develop partnerships with community corporations and encourage rangers and young people to do more work in community.
<p><i>7. Building confidence through two-way learning</i></p> <p>See page 43</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KJ has played a vital role in helping Martu build confidence through learning both Martu and 'whitefella' ways. Martu feel more confident using modern technology to enhance traditional practices and speaking up for themselves and communities. Communities are also feeling more confident in the future with young Martu emerging as role models. • Martu want more leadership and learning opportunities in the future.
<p><i>8. Getting people out of town/out of 'lock-up' and back home</i></p> <p>See page 47</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KJ has made an important contribution to helping Martu get out of town, out of 'lock-up' and back home to communities. This support has primarily been through KJ's on-country programs, Martu archives, transportation support, Roebourne Regional Prison visits, building relationships with police and the local Magistrate and the new Wama Wangka program. • While Martu acknowledge this contribution, many feel more needs to be done to fundamentally break the destructive cycles gripping their communities. Martu want stronger communities, a Martu diversionary program and to grow the Wama Wangka program. • It should be noted that a Martu Diversionary Program and expansion of the Wama Wangka program are due to be implemented in 2021.
<p><i>9. Better respect and relationship with 'whitefellas'</i></p> <p>See page 53</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu have overwhelmingly confirmed that KJ has made a significant contribution to helping them develop better relationships with 'whitefellas', grounded in mutual respect. • KJ has supported Martu primarily through facilitating on-country trips with key 'whitefella' stakeholders and through the MLP.
<p><i>10. Work and training</i></p> <p>See page 56</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu have consistently reported that KJ has created work and training opportunities that they want and that without KJ, there would be very few work opportunities. • While KJ has created positive outcomes, Martu want more work opportunities beyond ranger work that are diverse and aligned with Martu aspirations and constraints. They also want more training delivered in communities.
<p><i>11. Being healthy</i></p> <p>See page 59</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu have confirmed that KJ has helped them improve health outcomes primarily through on-country programs. • While Martu acknowledge KJ's contribution, some feel more needs to be done to improve very high levels of disadvantage in their health outcomes. This includes increasing education and strengthening communities so more people come back to country from town.

How Martu want to shape their future

Martu have acknowledged the substantial contribution KJ has made towards outcomes that are important to them. Martu have also expressed what they believe needs to be done in the future to continue improving outcomes for their communities (in no particular order).

1. *Expand KJ's language program* – There is still a high risk of losing language and Martu feel more deliberate efforts are needed. In particular, Martu would like to see KJ's language program expanded to incorporate more language groups with greater involvement from Martu.
2. *Increase support to look after kids and families* – Martu would like more support to help families take young kids on country and travel to funerals. Newman and Jigalong families in particular are asking for more support to care for their children.
3. *Strengthen communities for higher standard of living* – Martu are worried about the state of their communities, with the chief concern being housing. Martu look to KJ for a solution but as a non-government community organisation, KJ has limited ability to improve and expand housing stock within communities. There is a need for further government investment to resolve this problem. Martu also want to develop better partnerships with community corporations and encourage KJ rangers and young people to do more work in community. Martu have also stressed that the success of many other outcomes depends on stronger communities.
4. *Increase leadership opportunities to continue building confidence* – Leadership programs like the MLP and opportunities to learn both ways are working for Martu. Martu want more of these opportunities so more Martu can become more confident and speak up for communities.
5. *Start Martu diversionary program and grow Wama Wangka to get people out of town/'lock-up' and back home* – Martu want more to be done to break the destructive cycles in their communities. Most importantly, communities need to be stronger with better standards of living. Martu also want a diversionary program and for the Wama Wangka program to grow (diversionary program and expansion of Wama Wangka are expected to commence in 2021).
6. *Work beyond ranger work and training in communities* – Martu want more work opportunities beyond ranger work. They want to take increasingly responsible roles in KJ programs and to see the range of employment opportunities substantially expanded while remaining congruent with Martu values, preferences, social and cultural priorities and societal constraints. Martu also want more training opportunities delivered in communities rather than in town.
7. *Increase efforts to help Martu be healthy* – Martu feel more needs to be done to improve health outcomes. Martu want more health education for young and old people. Martu also re-emphasised the need to strengthen communities so more people come back to country, stop drinking alcohol and eat healthier.

What KJ has already started

It is important to note that KJ already have plans to implement a suite of programs later in 2021 to address some Martu aspirations above. These programs include:

- *Martu Diversionary Program*: the diversionary program is already in development and due to commence later in 2021. It is a program to reduce Martu incarceration by facilitating and supporting the diversion of people from the criminal justice system (from court, on parole, after release) into life, employment, learning and mentoring in alcohol-free remote communities.
- *Getting Back Home*: a transport program to help Martu who live in remote communities to get back to those communities from towns, rather than being stuck in town.

- *Staying at Home*: a program to help Martu in remote communities conduct a vast array of government and other transactions (court, licensing, police, Centrelink, banking, etc.) from those communities through the provision of supported, high-quality digital capability.
- *Kids on Country*: a program to divert young people at risk of getting into trouble in town or communities, focussed on the development of cultural learning and identity through trips and camps on country with older Martu.

A note about the Addendum: This report includes an addendum. The Addendum was prepared by an KJ advisory director and not by SVA Consulting. After this evaluation report was completed, it was presented to KJ board of directors in early August 2021. At that board meeting, Martu members identified *safety* as an additional twelfth outcome. As safety was not raised during the evaluation itself, the additional outcome has not been included in the body of the report but rather captured as an addendum. Its inclusion was important to ensure Martu's evolving voice and articulation of what is important to them continues to be captured.

1. Purpose of this Report

Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ) engaged Social Ventures Australia (SVA) Consulting to evaluate their impact on Martu communities between 2010 and 2020. The evaluation has three purposes:

1. Create an opportunity for Martu to articulate the outcomes that matter to them and for the impact of programs involving Martu to be measured against those outcomes.
2. Understand KJ's contribution to outcomes that are important to Martu communities over the past 10 years.
3. Reflect on KJ's organisational values and how KJ works with Martu.

For simplicity, the evaluation is separated into two reports. The first report (this document) addresses the first two purposes (outcomes) and the second report addresses the third purpose (values). The two documents form a set of “twin reports” and the reader is encouraged to read both together.

This first report is presented in six chapters:

1. **Evaluation Methodology:** This chapter sets out the methodology used for this evaluation. In particular, it discusses guiding principles, evidence, community consultation approaches and alignment with the Productivity Commission Indigenous Evaluation Strategy 2020.
2. **About Martu:** This chapter provides background information about Martu. In particular, introducing Martu history, geography and the strength and resilience of Martu.
3. **About KJ:** This chapter summarises KJ's purpose and activities.
4. **Martu Outcomes:** This chapter sets out 11 Martu outcomes, which were developed by Martu as part of this evaluation. The list encapsulates what Martu believe to be the most important aspects of community, their way of life and aspirations. These outcomes form the foundation of this evaluation.
5. **Evaluation of KJ's Contribution to Martu Outcomes:** This chapter evaluates the extent to which KJ has contributed to each of the 11 Martu outcomes. The evaluation methodology used is summarised below with further detail contained in Annexure 1.
6. **Conclusions and Observations:** This chapter sets out concluding remarks drawn from overall evaluation. It also discusses broader observations of key themes that have emerged through the project.

2. Evaluation Methodology

Guiding principles for evaluation

In undertaking this project, the following principles guided the evaluation:

- **Who: This is a Martu story, by Martu, for Martu and 'whitefellas'** – This project was a chance for Martu to describe what outcomes are important to them and for all programs impacting Martu to be measured against those outcomes. It was also a chance for Martu to reflect on and describe how they want organisations to work with them. The Martu outcomes and organisational values will be important for all organisations that work with Martu. The project was also a chance for Martu to consider what has been successful (or not) from KJ's work over the past 10 years, using a Martu frame of reference. Martu were also able to consider whether the way KJ has worked with them has been appropriate.
- **How: Martu voices are central to the evaluation** – The evaluation needed to tell the story of Martu experiences as a result of KJ's contribution. Martu informed the design of the evaluation criteria and method for consultation. The consultation approach in Martu communities also needed to be led by Martu wherever possible and appropriate.
- **What: The output will be shared with different audiences and complement other Martu and KJ research and stories** – For Martu communities, this evaluation needed to support the evolution of how KJ and other organisations work with Martu. For funding bodies, this evaluation demonstrates the impact KJ has made on Martu communities through their support and investment over the past 10 years.

There were two key design elements that ensured Martu voices were central to the evaluation:

- Two discovery workshops were held at the beginning of the evaluation with Martu Leadership Program (MLP) members to develop a list of Martu outcomes. These outcomes formed the foundation of the project and were used as indicators to assess KJ's contribution. MLP members also reviewed KJ's organisational values. The outcomes and values were reviewed at each community consultation to ensure there was confirmation by the broader community.
- Three to five MLP members were involved as co-facilitators in subsequent community consultation sessions. MLP members led workshops and acted as translators.

It was important that the methodology was pegged by outcomes that Martu value, was adaptive to Martu communities and captured the Martu voice. It was therefore critical that the evaluation did not impose conventional evaluative methods to quantify impact at the expense of authentic Martu assessments of KJ. This approach of centring the methodology around Martu (as opposed to imposing conventional methods) is in line with the Indigenous Evaluation Strategy (discussed further below).

Evidence used for evaluation

The evaluation drew on numerous data sources. The primary data source for evaluating KJ's contribution to outcomes was community consultations with Martu held in 2020 by the evaluators for this project. As the scope of the evaluation covers the last 10 years from 2010 to 2020, data collected in previous consultations with Martu was also considered.

Other data sources to provide context to the evaluation included:

- Consultations with Martu undertaken by Social Ventures Australia as part of previous evaluations of KJ and its programs, including those evaluations themselves.
- Previous recordings of interviews and consultation sessions held by KJ for their own projects.
- KJ annual reports.

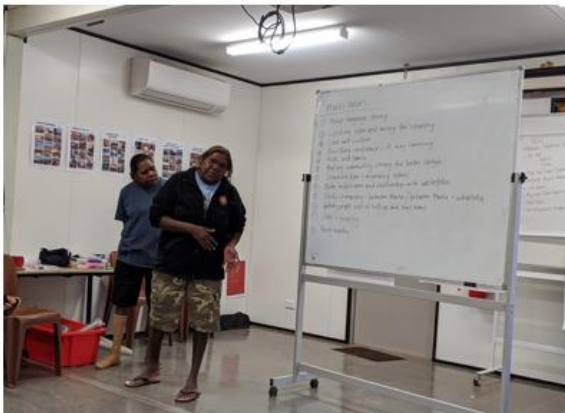
Community consultation

The evaluation took place over approximately seven months. During that time, three separate community consultation trips were undertaken to engage with Martu in Newman, Parnngurr, Punmu, Kunawarritji and Jigalong. 75 Martu were consulted through a series of community workshops and individual interviews as set out in the table below.

Community consultation sessions or individual interviews	Number of Martu consulted
Martu Leadership Program members consultation session	18
Newman community consultation session*	11
Parnngurr community consultation session*	7
Punmu community consultation session*	5
Kunawarritji community consultation session*	4
Jigalong community consultation session*	8
KJ Martu board member consultation session	18
Additional individual interviews with Martu**	4
Total	75

* MLP members and KJ Martu board members also represented their individual communities in their consultation sessions.

** In total there were 14 individual interviews undertaken with Martu, however 10 of these interviewees were also present in other consultation sessions and so have been removed from this line to avoid double counting.



MLP member testing outcomes with workshop participants



MLP member explaining voting to workshop participants



Speaking with Martu



Community voting against Martu outcomes

Adapting methodology to meet community dynamics

The evaluation team adapted the methodology through the process to ensure the Martu voice was captured and community dynamics were respected. For example:

- Initially, the evaluation team intended to assess individual KJ activities against the outcomes as a rigorous way of understanding what activities were making a difference and in what way. It was quickly discovered that that approach was not well received by community as it was too rigid and not fluid. Martu were far more amenable to talking more freely in conversation.
- Martu co-facilitators increasingly led community consultations as they became more familiar and confident with the evaluation process. It was observed that when co-facilitators led discussions, communities better understood the process and their role, were more engaged and spoke more openly about their experiences. The co-facilitators also became increasingly invested in the process and volunteered to help facilitate conversations more frequently to ensure the evaluators heard what community members had to say.
- The consultation approach was adapted in each workshop to align with community dynamics and the use of Martu languages and English. For example, younger female community members were less likely to speak in a bigger group but were more open to giving feedback during one-on-one interviews. Older Martu community members were less likely to speak English therefore one-on-one interviews with local translators were more appropriate to ensure the richness of what they wanted to say was captured.

Alignment with Productivity Commission Indigenous Evaluation Strategy 2020³

In October 2020, the Productivity Commission released an Indigenous Evaluation Strategy setting out a new approach to evaluating policies and programs affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aimed at improving the quality and usefulness of evaluation.

The Strategy includes a set of guiding principles of what good practice looks like and what agencies should consider when undertaking evaluations. In particular, it articulates an overarching evaluation principle of *Centring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, perspectives and knowledges*.⁴

This principle emphasises that what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people value, their knowledges and lived experiences need to be reflected in what is evaluated, how evaluation is undertaken and the objectives of policies and programs.

Practically, this means that:

- Evaluations are undertaken in the areas, and address the issues, that are most important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Evaluation processes strengthen and support the evaluation capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations and communities have the opportunity to decide how they want to be involved in evaluations.

The evaluation methodology for this project aligns with this overarching evaluation principle because:

- The evaluation was grounded in the 11 outcomes developed by Martu to articulate what is important to Martu and what Martu believe they need to preserve their traditional identity and culture while redefining their future in their modern engagement with the Western world. KJ's

³ Productivity Commission, *Indigenous Evaluation Strategy*, October 2020.

⁴ As above, Page 10.

contribution to Martu has been assessed against these 11 outcomes. In this way, the evaluation focusses in the areas that are most important to Martu.

- The evaluation was an opportunity for Martu to describe what outcomes are important to them and for all programs impacting Martu to be measured against those outcomes. In this way, the project has been a chance for Martu to develop a set of outcomes that they can use to hold organisations and government to account when working with their communities.
- The evaluation process was co-designed with Martu from the MLP and also involved Martu in co-facilitation of consultation sessions. In this way, the evaluation has strengthened and supported the evaluation capability of Martu and has given Martu the opportunity to decide how they want to be involved in the evaluation.

3. About Martu

The Martu

The Martu are the traditional custodians of a vast area of the Great Sandy, Little Sandy and Gibson Deserts in the Western Desert of the Pilbara.⁵

Their country stretches from the Percival Lakes in the north to south of Lake Disappointment and far to the east of the Canning Stock Route, stretching towards the Western Australia and Northern Territory border. This vast area of desert has been described as *“the harshest physical environment on earth ever inhabited by man before the Industrial Revolution”*.⁶

Martu include people from several traditional language groups spread over their vast desert lands: Manyjilyjarra, Kartujarra, Putijarra, Warnman, Nyangajarra and Pijakarli.

Martu are among the last of Australia’s Indigenous people to make contact with the European world with many coming into stations and missions from a completely traditional desert way of life as recently as the 1960s. This happened in two main waves: Martu living around Lake Disappointment came out of the desert to Jigalong first in the 1930s and 1940s, but Martu living deep in the Western deserts did not move into stations and missions until the 1950s and 1960s.

In the early 1980s a group of four old men led the Martu who had come in from the deep desert back from modern settlements in the Pilbara to remote desert locations. They began a process to build communities and gain native title over their country from the Australian Government. When these old leaders died in the mid-1990s it left a significant leadership vacuum in the communities.

The Martu now identify as one people. Their identity and their rights to their country were acknowledged in 2002, when their native title over much of their country was formally recognised. As the Native Title Tribunal noted:

“There was no serious cultural break with their traditional roots. The return of people to live on the country has supported the maintenance of law and custom among them. They remain one of the most strongly ‘tradition-oriented’ groups of Aboriginal people in Australia today partly because of the protection that their physical environment gave them against non-Aboriginal intruders. It is not a welcoming environment for those who do not know how to locate and use its resources for survival. Of great importance is the continuing strength of their belief in the Dreaming”.⁷



The Martu are now concentrated in Port Hedland, Newman, Perth and several WA desert communities: Jigalong, Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarritji. They remain a strong and distinctive Indigenous community, with a proud identity and history. Their story through the 20th century provides a fascinating insight into the experience of contact between Indigenous and white Australians.

⁵ Much of this section is taken from SVA Consulting's 2014 evaluative SROI of KJ's On Country programs, which can be accessed from KJ's website: <http://www.kj.org.au/evaluationprograms/>.

⁶ Gould, Richard in Trautmann, Thomas and Peter Whiteley, Crow-Omaha: New Light on a Classic Problem of Analysis, 2012.

⁷ Federal Court of Australia, James on behalf of the Martu People v State of Western Australia, [2002] FCA 1208.

The challenges for, and strengths of, Martu

Whilst the approximately 2,000 Martu remain strongly tradition oriented, many live in towns and communities on the edge of the desert, rather than on the country with which they are deeply connected. The challenges they face integrating traditional life with modern 'whitefella' existence in both the towns and desert communities have been significant.

In recent decades, traditional authority structures have been eroded and many young people lack both traditional and modern opportunities to forge a strong sense of identity and purpose and to develop pride and confidence in that identity. Young Martu men commonly leave school after progressing through Lore in their mid-teens, as school is only viewed by them as being relevant for young children.

Excessive consumption of alcohol is common. There have been few positive role models to demonstrate successful integration of a Martu life within the modern context. The older people experience a sense of the spiritual and cultural loss that grips their young people and their communities but lack a sense of power to clearly shape a positive future for their young.

The 'dry' (no alcohol) Martu communities are small (approximately 100 – 400 regular residents), very remote and have limited industry that offers sustainable work to community members beyond more regular work offered through KJ's programs.

In each town and community, there are very few secure jobs (outside of KJ work). Few Martu have taken up work in the mining industry and there are no other significant industries in the region. Some Martu have participated in training through the mines, however few have taken up longer term work opportunities. In any case, mining workforces have severely contracted in recent years. The Community Development Program (CDP) has offered sporadic maintenance jobs in the communities, but few Martu have undertaken this work on a regular basis.

The desert communities offer Martu the opportunity to live close to their traditional lands in a society which is still predominantly Martu, thereby enabling them to continue fulfilling their deep cultural obligations to look after their country within an environment they can shape. Martu remain incredibly resilient. Strengths of Martu society include high engagement with, and commitment to, community, country and culture; young Martu have enormous and distinctive knowledge within their world; and there are strong structures within Martu society, both kinship and age based, that can ground a teaching/mentoring framework across generations for broad dissemination and regeneration of knowledge and skills.

4. About KJ

KJ was originally established to assist to look after Martu culture and heritage and to ensure that the ongoing connection that Martu have with country would remain strong.

Over time KJ broadened its scope to focus on working with Martu to build strong, sustainable communities with the following core objectives:

- Support Martu to look after culture and country
- Build a sustainable economy in the Martu communities
- Build pathways for young Martu to a healthy future

The governing body is referred to as the KJ Board and consists of 12 Martu directors and three non-voting advisory directors. The 12 Martu directors include two each from five Martu communities and two from the Martu diaspora.

KJ has grown significantly over the past 10 years and currently administers programs in three fields, as listed below. It should be noted that this listing does not represent the administrative organisation of programs within the company, nor that they are distinct, as there is substantial overlap and interaction among the programs:

- Land Programs
- Cultural Programs
- Social Programs

Land Programs

Non-Martu would see the land programs as environmentally focussed. Martu see them as culturally focussed. These programs are:

- *Ranger Program* – focusses on location, monitoring and protection of areas of natural and cultural value such as waterholes, monitoring and protection of threatened species and against invasive flora.
- *Junior Ranger Program* – engages with the local community schools and provides opportunities for high school students to accompany rangers on country and participate in a variety of work. On country learning is taken back into the classroom and integrated with the mainstream curriculum.
- *Fire Program* – protection and regeneration of flora and animal habitat, complementing ground burning by rangers and aerial burning.
- *Feral Animal Program* – a program in which rangers and others work to reduce or control the numbers of destructive feral animals, whether in particular high-value areas or throughout Martu country.

Cultural Knowledge Programs

The cultural knowledge programs and functions are focussed on the preservation and propagation of a wide range of cultural knowledge, including but not limited to traditional knowledge. This includes:

- *Martu Archive* – a digital archive of over 70,000 images, hundreds of hours of audio recordings and films and other items, made available to Martu in every community.

- *Oral History* – collection, preservation and dissemination of oral history and stories from Martu, particularly from *pujiman* and other old people, using both audio recordings and filmed interviews.
- *History* – collection and publication of historical materials relating to Martu, relating to the time and events since contact with the Western world.
- *Family Trees* – a genealogical record of every Martu family, usually stretching back several generations into *pujiman* times, and accessible to Martu.
- *Mapping* – a program to map all waterholes and other sites of cultural significance on Martu country, using helicopters and land-based trips to locate and record details of those sites and the production of maps for use by other programs.
- *Language* – a program focussed on the long-term preservation and vital use of rich Martu languages, throughout the Martu community.
- *Kalyuku Ninti* (Knowledge of Waterholes) – a ‘return to country’ program that provides large trips taking old and young people back to remote traditional country, so that young people can learn from the elders about waterholes and other cultural knowledge.
- *Traditional Ecological Knowledge* – a program with diverse activities to preserve and disseminate the deep ecological knowledge held by *pujiman* and keep that traditional knowledge and associated skills alive.
- *Heritage Research* – the research and production of material on cultural sites, precincts, landscapes and values to assist in the protection of Martu native title.
- *Staff cultural training* – professional development for KJ staff in language and cultural knowledge to assist them to work closely and appropriately with Martu.
- *Partnerships* – partnerships with major cultural institutions at both national and state levels, to assist in the collection or long-term preservation of materials of value to Martu.

Social Programs

KJ’s social programs are focused on a diverse array of contemporary social issues:

- *Families Program* – an early childhood and family development program, combining traditional and Western knowledge and methods.
- *Martu Leadership Program* – an adult community education and development program, focused on equipping Martu to engage effectively with Western systems such as governance, Government, finance and law, and equipping Government agencies to engage effectively with Martu.
- *Criminal Justice Program* – a program focused on developing initiatives between Martu and police, court and other agencies involved in the criminal justice system.
- *Prison Program* – regular visitation by Martu to Roebourne Regional Prison to provide training in cultural knowledge, to encourage and assist in parole applications and to provide support for the transition from prison to community.
- *Government Program* – engagement by Martu with Government agencies to lobby for investment, policy change and change to practice and to facilitate joint initiatives across many agencies, including through the provision of cultural immersion camps for senior executives.

- *Wama Wangka* – a Martu program to address alcohol and substance abuse, suicide, mental health issues and other problems, particularly through the development and reinforcement of strong cultural knowledge and identity, as well as through adaptation of Western techniques.
- *Cultural Awareness* – both basic and advanced cultural training for agencies who work with Martu and any other interested agencies.
- *Communications* – the production of films, newsletters, magazines, web materials and social media to keep Martu informed, to celebrate Martu people, culture and achievements and to inform and educate external audiences.

Additional Programs

The following programs will start in 2021, specifically in response to long-voiced Martu aspirations and concerns.

- *Martu Diversionary Program* – a program to reduce Martu incarceration by facilitating and supporting the diversion of people from the criminal justice system (from court, on parole, after release) into life, employment, learning and mentoring in alcohol-free remote communities.
- *Getting Back Home* – a transport program to help Martu who live in remote communities to get back to the communities from towns, rather than being stuck in town.
- *Staying at Home* – a program to help Martu in remote communities to conduct a vast array of government and other transactions (court, licensing, police, Centrelink, banking, etc.) from those communities through the provision of supported, high-quality digital capability.
- *Kids on Country* – a program to divert young people at risk of getting into trouble in town or communities, focused on the development of cultural learning and identity through trips and camps on country with older Martu.

Martu Access to KJ Programs

Due to the dominant focus on preservation of the natural and cultural values of Martu country, KJ's programs are directed predominantly, although not exclusively, to Martu living in or near the Martu native title determination. Only about 50% of the total Martu population now live close to their traditional homelands. This is due to a historical dispersal of a diaspora around the edges of the Western Desert, the effects of the Stolen Generation on some families and relocation of some Martu families to Perth.

Some of KJ's programs, such as access to genealogical information, archival information and *Kalyuku Ninti* trips are available to Martu from all of these areas, although it can be practically difficult for some people in the diaspora to access them. Other programs, such as the MLP, are only effectively accessible by people who live in Newman and the remote communities, or, to a lesser extent, Port Hedland, Nullagine and Bidyadanga. Core land-based programs, such as the ranger program, are only available in the Martu Western Desert communities.

In general, when this report speaks of Martu engagement with KJ, the focus is on those Martu who live in the geographic region primarily serviced by KJ: Newman and the remote Western Desert Martu communities.

5. Martu Outcomes

Developing Martu outcomes

A key guiding philosophy underlying this project is that the evaluation must be a Martu story by Martu, speaking both to Martu and to the Western world. The evaluation therefore strived to use a Martu frame of reference and to use the project as an opportunity for Martu to describe what is important to them rather than assuming or adopting a set of evaluation criteria set by non-Martu. For instance, while the evaluation team were aware of mainstream targets to track progress in Aboriginal communities such as Close the Gap, an important part of this evaluation was allowing Martu to describe what matters most to them.

At the beginning of the evaluation, two workshops were held with 18 members of the KJ Martu Leadership Program (MLP). The MLP is made up of young Martu (aged between 25 to 40) who are building their capability through the MLP to become leaders at the interface between ‘whitefella’ and Martu worlds. During these workshops, MLP members were asked to identify what they believed to be the most important outcomes for Martu. Members initially identified a list of 20 outcomes. Through further discussion and consolidation, this was reduced to a final list of 11. These 11 outcomes were then tested with and confirmed by other Martu in community consultation sessions held in Newman, Jigalong, Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarritji.

These outcomes encapsulate the most important aspects of Martu community, way of life and aspirations. To Martu, they are also universal. That is, they are not limited to the context of KJ’s work but are a more general statement of the outcomes Martu want overall.

The 11 outcomes important to Martu

The 11 Martu outcomes have been grouped into *traditional* (outcomes relating to the traditional Martu identity) and *modern* outcomes (outcomes relating to how Martu live in the modern world). It should be noted that the two groupings were not discussed or developed during consultations by Martu, however, they fell neatly into these categories after consultations.

Each of the traditional outcomes also begin with a word in Martu language. The reader should be advised that these words capture the essence of the outcomes in Martu language but are not direct translations of the English words that follow. For example, *ngurra* means country or home in Martu language. It does not specifically translate to mean ‘looking after and caring for country’. Martu words have been included to capture the essence and spirit of traditional outcomes as they relate to Martu.

The modern outcomes are not preceded by a Martu word as they are not easily translatable into Martu language. Martu also often refer to those modern outcomes in English.

Traditional outcomes

1. *Ngurra* – Looking after and caring for country

Country is sacred to Martu. Martu identity, beliefs, creation stories, sacred sites, cultural practices and traditional livelihoods are embedded in and inextricably linked to country. Martu describe looking after country as akin to looking after their sense of identity and family. Martu believe country looks after them and they must look after country.

“*You go home and you tell country you are coming and country knows you are coming*”
– MLP member (2020)

2. *Wangka* – Keeping language strong

Martu want to keep their language strong so they can pass it onto future generations. For Martu, language is important for cultural continuity and keeping the traditional knowledge

strong. Language is also a direct link to country. Language allows them to speak to and maintain their relationship and connection with country. Martu feel a sense of urgency to preserve their language due to the decreasing number of elders in communities.

“Language is in the country and the country is alive. Martu need to know language, to know the country.” – MLP member (2020)

3. Ninti – Learning from and respecting old people

Old people are the leaders and teachers in Martu communities. They hold the connection to the *pujiman* (desert born) way of life and have extensive traditional ecological and cultural knowledge of their country. Martu want to learn cultural knowledge from the old people, to respect them and to earn their respect in return. They want to learn about clans, family, country, language, lore and identity. Martu feel a sense of urgency to learn from their old people due to the decreasing numbers of elders in communities.

“Old people are the boss and the teachers. Listen to them. Make them feel happy and proud.” – MLP member (2020)

4. Walyja – Looking after kids and family

Martu want their children to stay away from trouble (particularly in town), to establish a strong connection with family and country at a young age and to engage meaningfully in learning (both Martu way and ‘whitefella’ way). Martu are concerned that their children are increasingly becoming involved in trouble in town, losing respect for family and their connection to culture and country.

“If you don’t know your family you are nobody. Look after family and funerals.” – MLP member (2020)

5. Kujungkarrini – Unity and harmony between Martu

Martu want all Martu to live in unity and harmony with each other. Martu acknowledge that in the past fighting and tension between communities and families was destructive. Martu want more productive relationships where all Martu can work together for a better future.

“Before, we [Martu] were really close long time ago. We used to have good meetings but now today the politics of meetings are bad. Pujiman got together.” – Newman community member (2020)

Modern outcomes

6. Making community strong with a high standard of living

Desert communities are important to Martu. It is where they can live close to their traditional lands in a society that is predominantly Martu, thereby enabling them to fulfil deep cultural obligations to look after country within an environment they can shape.⁸ It is where they want to live but Martu are increasingly concerned about the deteriorating state of the infrastructure in their communities (particularly housing). They want to build stronger communities to improve their standard of living and attract Martu back to communities and back to country.

“In community we need better houses... We need better housing, so people come back to community... we are going around in circles and need action.” – Parnngurr community member (2020)

7. Building confidence through two-way learning

Martu, particularly young men and women, have a strong desire to learn about ‘whitefella’ ways (e.g., modern technology, corporate governance, justice system) while continuing to

⁸ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, ‘The Martu Leadership Program – Evaluation of a Pilot Program Using the Social Return on Investment Methodology’, April 2017, Page 13.

strengthen their knowledge of Martu ways. Martu see this synergy between the 'whitefella' way and Martu way and building confidence through learning both as critical to them shaping a new future for Martu in modern Australia.

"We learn about white man world and black man world together."

– Parnngurr community member (2020)

8. Getting people out of town, out of 'lock-up' and back to community

Martu have been plagued by the destructive consequences of living in town (Newman and Port Hedland) over generations. Martu consistently associate 'lock-up' (prison), police, court, fighting, *wama* (alcohol), drugs and jealousy with their experience of town. Martu want their people, particularly young people, to move back to communities where alcohol and drugs are not available, where they can be closer to country and away from toxic influences in town.

"Most of the time Martu in town on wama [alcohol] or on drugs. Hardly any in communities. Would be better if Martu living in community." – Parnngurr community member (2020)

9. Better respect and relationship with 'whitefellas'

Martu want to be genuinely respected by 'whitefellas'. They want their extensive cultural, traditional and ecological knowledge that has been built and cultivated over thousands of years and generations to be recognised. They want to build a productive working relationship with 'whitefellas' grounded in mutual respect that acknowledges the strength and legitimacy of Martu society. Martu see this as an important step to shaping a new future for Martu, together with 'whitefellas', in modern Australia.

"Whitefella and Martu understanding each other and working together properly in a way that respects Martu." – MLP member (2020)

10. Work and training

Martu want more opportunities for training and employment. Martu aspire to a stronger economy with jobs and economic forms that conform with Martu social aspirations and constraints and the training and qualifications to make that happen. Martu want more training and job opportunities based in community so that more Martu will move away from town and back home closer to country.

"More courses and more training and more skills and different jobs." – MLP member (2020)

11. Being healthy

Martu want to be healthier. Martu experience very high levels of disadvantage in their health outcomes, primarily caused by "*whitefella poison*", namely *wama* (alcohol), drugs and high sugar diets. Martu often reflect on the spiritual and physical strength of *pujiman* (desert born Martu) and aspire to become healthier like their ancestors.

"There are a lot of problems. Blood pressure, diabetes, wama [alcohol], blocked arteries, ice, drugs coming in." – MLP member (2020)

As stated above, these 11 outcomes reflect what is most important to Martu. They are an articulation of what Martu believe they need to preserve their traditional identity and culture while redefining their future in a Western world. Martu believe that these traditional and modern outcomes will enable their communities to thrive in modern Australia.

6. Evaluation of KJ’s Contribution to Martu Outcomes

KJ’s contribution to Martu communities over the past 10 years has been measured against the 11 Martu outcomes. This evaluation was intentionally grounded in these outcomes as opposed to other government targets (such as Closing the Gap) to ensure that KJ is evaluated against what is relevant and valuable to Martu communities.

It is also useful to note that while the Martu outcomes were developed by 18 Martu (members of MLP) initially, they were tested and confirmed by 57 other community members across Newman, Jigalong, Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarritji communities.

This chapter evaluates the extent to which KJ has contributed to each of the 11 Martu outcomes.

At a glance: KJ contribution to Martu outcomes

At each community consultation session in Newman, Jigalong, Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarritji, Martu were asked to vote on whether, in the past 10 years, they believed KJ had contributed positively to each of the 11 outcomes.

Green indicated that they believed KJ was helping a lot and contributing positively to that outcome, blue indicated that they believed KJ was helping a little but more work is needed and red indicated that they did not believe KJ was helping and making a positive impact.

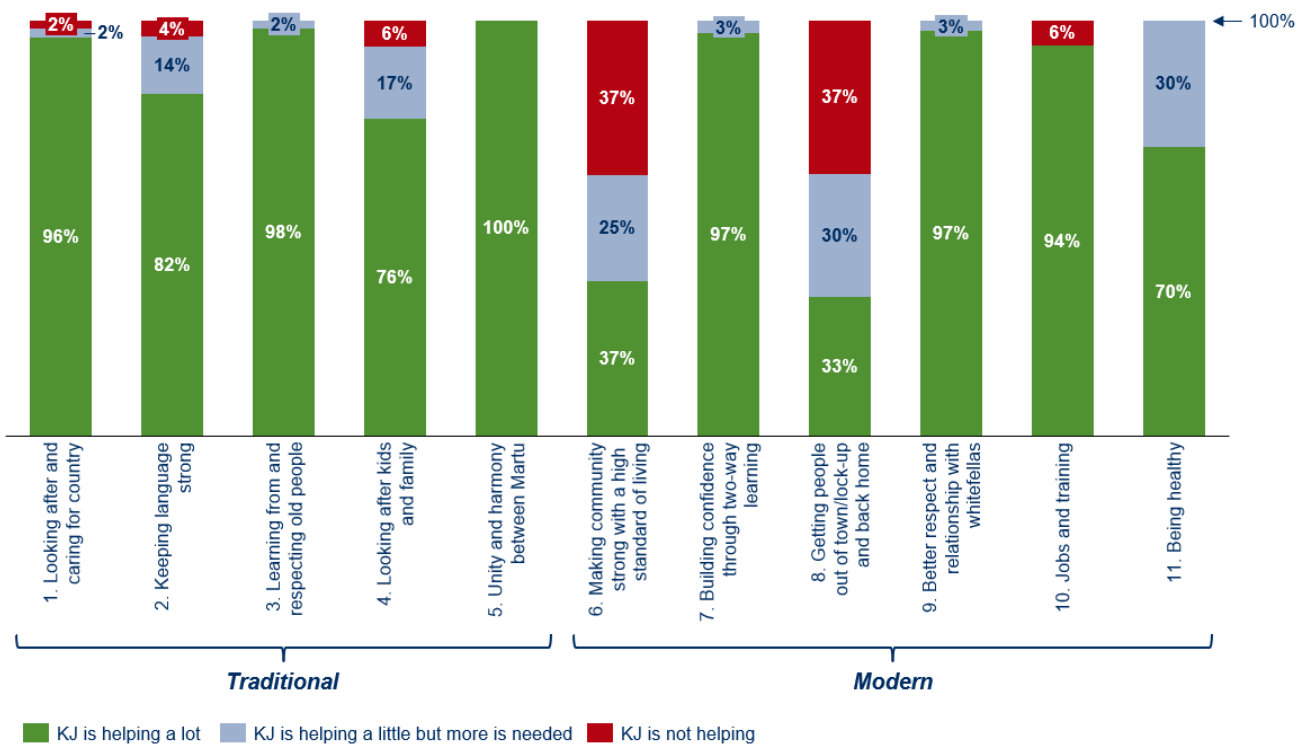


Figure 1: KJ contribution to Martu outcomes⁹

Figure 1 indicates that overall, Martu believe that KJ has contributed positively to Martu outcomes over the past 10 years. In particular, Martu feel that KJ has contributed positively to traditional Martu outcomes of looking after and caring for country, learning from and respecting old people, and unity and harmony between Martu. Overall KJ is also contributing positively to keeping language strong and looking after kids and family, however some Martu feel more work is needed in these areas.

⁹ See Annexure 2 for the methodology and sampling behind this analysis; note that percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Regarding modern Martu outcomes, overall Martu feel KJ is helping with building confidence through two-way learning, developing better respect and relationships with ‘whitefellas’ and accessing work and training. KJ is also contributing to Martu being healthier, however some feel more work and focus is needed in this area.

Two outcomes of particular concern to Martu are ‘making communities strong with a high standard of living’ and ‘getting people out of town or lock-up and back home’. During community consultation sessions, Martu consistently expressed that these outcomes are of increasing concern and many Martu feel that not enough traction and improvement are happening in these two areas.

It is important to note that some of these outcomes are experienced differently by Martu depending on which community they primarily reside in. For example, Martu living in Newman experience additional challenges which other Martu may experience less profoundly (for example, the prevalence of alcohol). There is therefore some nuance in how outcomes are felt across communities. These nuances are discussed in more detail within the relevant outcomes listed below.

KJ’s contribution to each of the 11 Martu outcomes is discussed in the following sections.

1. Ngurra - Looking after and caring for country



Key evaluation finding: Martu have overwhelmingly confirmed that KJ has made a significantly positive contribution to their ability to look after and care for country. KJ’s contribution to this outcome has primarily been achieved through providing transport, equipment and logistical support, and creating opportunities for Martu to work on country as KJ rangers.

As stated above, country is sacred for Martu. Country is inextricably linked to Martu identity, beliefs and cultural practices. Martu describe looking after country as akin to looking after their sense of identity, family and the future of their people.

KJ has played a vital role in helping Martu look after and care for country

Consultations revealed that 96% of surveyed community members felt KJ was helping a lot against this outcome. People stressed that without KJ, Martu would not have visited their country to look after and care for it over the past 10 years, or at the very least that it would have been substantially more challenging to do so. This feeling was consistent across age groups, genders and communities.

Some Martu described KJ as giving them hope that they could go back and look after country in the first place and that without KJ, there was no hope that they could do so at all.

“KJ give us hope that we can go back and look after our country. No hope without KJ.” – MLP member (2020)

“KJ is helping Martu care for and look after country. KJ looks after Martu people.” – Martu elder (2020)

“[KJ] is doing well. They go around and look after country – our grandfathers’ country. If there was no KJ it would be a lot harder to look after country. People worry about grandparents’ country. KJ is doing really well to help us care for country.” – Punmu community member (2020)

“If there was no KJ, then there would be no Martu. If no KJ, no visiting waterholes and no going on country.” – Parnngurr community member (2020)

The significance of KJ's contribution to this Martu outcome cannot be overstated. As emphasised at the beginning of this section, Martu connection to country is sacred and is the foundation of their identity as individuals and as a people. It is also the bedrock of their culture and of the continuation of that culture for future generations. Enabling and supporting Martu to reconnect with their country and to care for that country, is profoundly important to Martu.

KJ has helped Martu look after country by providing transport, equipment and ranger work

In community consultations, Martu frequently referred to two main ways that KJ has helped them look after and care for country – providing transport and equipment and ranger work.

- *Transport and equipment* – Travelling long distances deep into desert country requires transport and equipment. Martu have often stressed that without the benefit of KJ's vehicles (sometimes referred to as 'Toyotas'), equipment, logistical support and provisions, regularly connecting with and caring for country would be very difficult (if not impossible in some cases). In some instances, KJ has also arranged helicopters to quickly survey, map waterholes and other sacred sites and access Martu country.

"It is too much for us. Need vehicles to go out on country to explore. No one has a vehicle so no one could go on country and then we can't look after country and see great grandparents' country." – Parnngurr community member (2020)

"We would want to go out on country but there are no cars so they [KJ] can do it. Equipment to go out." – Martu elder (2020)

"People used to visit waterholes but only if they had a Toyota." – MLP member (2020)

- *Ranger work* – The ranger program is one of KJ's flagship initiatives. Beginning in 2009 in Jigalong with only six rangers, the program has now grown to employ over 300 Martu¹⁰ across Jigalong, Punmu, Parnngurr and Kunawarritji communities. KJ's ranger teams work to protect and manage the natural and cultural assets across Martu country. Elders work together with young men and women to put 'right way' *waru* (fire) into country, clean and locate waterholes, manage weeds and feral animals and look after special sites.¹¹

Martu often refer to the opportunity to work as KJ rangers on country as a major way in which Martu regularly visit and look after their country. KJ rangers could then tell their families that they are taking care of and looking after their country.

"When KJ takes us out, we can waru [fire], we can clean out waterholes and respect the country." – Punmu community member (2020)

"More of the good things of being a ranger is when we go out to our country and then return back to the community and tell the people back home that we are looking after their country." – Martu ranger (2015)

"On country trips, we found [night] parrots and recorded them with sound recorders. This is important work because we need to try and protect the [night] parrots." – Punmu community member (2020)

A particularly notable example of KJ's ranger work enabling Martu to care for their country is the concerted effort KJ made to reduce the number of camels on Martu country. After more rangers began working on country, Martu observed the devastating damage herds of camels

¹⁰ Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa, *Country Programs*, <<https://www.kj.org.au/country-programs>>.

¹¹ Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa, *Annual Report 2016/2017*, Page 9.

were making to sacred waterholes. Martu talked with KJ about the concerning situation and it was agreed that rangers would shoot the camels to make country healthy again.

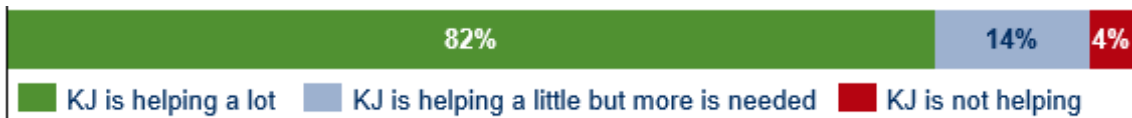
Rangers would look out for camels around communities and roads with helicopters in very remote country. Martu now report that waterholes and country are much healthier as a result. This is supported by other environmental reports about how the country has changed over the past decade. For example, The Nature Conservancy stated in a 2015 report:

*“Many of Australia’s arid lands have suffered serious declines of native fauna as a result of introduced predators (cats and foxes) and declining habitat quality (vegetation and water availability) resulting from feral herbivores (e.g., camels)...Although these same threats are present in the Martu lands to some extent, ongoing management by the Martu people through KJ, especially of fire and feral camel control, means that habitat quality is exceptionally high compared with other Australian arid lands”.*¹²

“Ranger trips are good because it helps look after and care for country. We go out and visit country. When there is a dead animal in the waterhole, we clean it out, like the camels. We take care of our waterholes.” – Parnngurr community ranger (2020)

“Camels are damaging waterholes but good that KJ rangers go out and shoot them. Now waterholes are much better and healthier. There are trees growing.” – MLP member (2020)

2. Wangka – Keeping language strong



Key evaluation finding: KJ has helped recover and preserve Martu *wangka* [language]. KJ take Martu on country so young people can learn language from old people, record traditional language for future generations and teach ‘whitefellas’ Martu *wangka* so that they may listen to and understand Martu better. While Martu confirm that KJ has contributed positively, many still see an increasing urgency to preserve language and want more deliberate efforts to keep *wangka* strong.

Language is important to Martu. It is the key to maintaining cultural continuity and keeping traditional *ninti* (knowledge) strong. Language represents a direct link to country and without connection to country, “*everything falls apart*”. It is also particularly important for young Martu to know their traditional language so that they may continue listening to and learning from elders and ultimately, so they may pass on cultural knowledge and language to their own children.

Martu are concerned about the future of their language. Old people are dying and more young people are learning English and forgetting their Martu *wangka*.

“They [future generations] must not accidentally leave behind languages that belong to eternity for the languages that belong to whitefellas and forget about the languages and stories that belong to us...” – Martu elder and senior cultural advisor to KJ (2018)

*“It’s important for young people. They need to learn Martu *wangka* [language] so they can learn from old people too. Sit with old people and keep the story going for future generations.”* – Martu elder (2020)

¹² The Nature Conservancy, ‘Martu Living Deserts Project – Phase III Final Selection Study’, March 2015. Page 8.

KJ is helping Martu keep language strong through language and on-country programs and by teaching ‘whitefellas’

Martu report that KJ has helped them keep traditional Martu language strong. 89% of surveyed Martu indicated that they felt KJ was contributing positively to this outcome.

In community consultations, Martu referred to three main ways that KJ is contributing to this outcome – KJ’s language program where stories and language are recorded, on-country programs which includes the *Kalyuku Ninti* (return to country) trips and ranger work and teaching ‘whitefellas’ language so they may listen to and understand Martu better.

- *KJ’s language program* – The recording of traditional Martu stories and language began when one of KJ’s founders collected oral histories in the mid-1980s. That work continued until the beginning of KJ’s formative years between 2005 and 2009 and has continued to the present day. In 2016, a formal language program was created as part of KJ’s *Cultural Knowledge* program. The language program focusses on preserving recordings of traditional speakers and creating materials for future generations. Those materials contain rich traditional language from *pujiman* (desert born Martu) and are used by younger generations to learn and understand Martu *wangka*. In 2019, over 50 Martu of all different ages also attended KJ’s language camp in Kunawarritji where people heard, learned and recorded Martu languages.¹³

Martu have reported in consultations that KJ’s recording and documentation of traditional stories and language have been valuable in helping them keep language strong. Martu have referred to KJ’s archives as helping to “*keep language safe*” for the next generation.

“Old people already gave stories to KJ. KJ helping to hold those stories to keep them for the kids.” – Martu elder (2020)

- *On-country programs* – While recordings have been useful to capture and store language, Martu have emphasised the importance of learning language and stories while sitting “*fire side*” with elders. KJ has enabled these “*fire side*” conversations to take place through their on-country programs which includes the *Kalyuku Ninti* (return to country) trips and ranger work. Those programs allow elders and young Martu to visit country and to work alongside one another. These programs create valuable opportunities for young Martu to sit with elders to learn the names of sacred sites and to listen to stories in traditional *wangka*.

“People need to go sit fireside with old people and not rely on recordings.” – MLP member (2020)

“KJ is helping us learn the names of waterholes. Learning to respect country through language, by taking people out.” – Punmu community members (2020)

“KJ is also good for language because elders like Muuki [name of Martu elder] are working with KJ and teaching young fellas how to speak.” - young Parnngurr community member (2020)

- *Teaching ‘whitefellas’ Martu wangka* – KJ has also helped teach ‘whitefellas’ Martu language including local teachers and service providers. For example, KJ’s applied linguist routinely speaks with and interprets for ‘whitefellas’ who work with Martu to help them understand and listen to Martu *wangka*.¹⁴ KJ’s staff also learn language enabling them to better communicate with Martu. Teaching ‘whitefellas’ helps to incorporate language into interactions between non-Martu and Martu. Ultimately this facilitates more understanding and respect for Martu culture and language.

¹³ Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa, Annual Report 2019/2020, Page 22.

¹⁴ Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa Annual Report 2018/2019, Page 26.

“Young people still learning and sometimes talk to PJ [KJ manager] and he knows Martu wangka [language]. They talk straight. Whitefella learning language too so they can talk straight.” – Martu elder (2020)

There is still a high risk of losing language and Martu feel more needs to be done

While Martu acknowledged KJ’s contribution, many feel that more needs to be done. There is a high risk of losing traditional language and a real urgency to preserve that language before they lose more of their old people. While KJ’s activities have been important, Martu emphasised that more *“deliberate and non-accidental”* efforts are needed.

“10 years ago, language was stronger. Now it is dying because old people are dying.” – MLP member (2020)

In particular, Martu have indicated that they want to see KJ’s language program expanded to incorporate more language groups and an increased number of Martu involved in this area:

- *Incorporate more language groups* – Martu have five language groups (Manyjilyjarra, Kartujarra, Warnman, Putijarra and Nyangajarra). These languages are from *Jukurpa* (dreamtime) and belong to the ancestors and the country.¹⁵ The majority of KJ’s efforts largely focus on the Manyjilyjarra language group. Martu have said they would like to see the other language groups preserved as well.

“Manyjilyjarra – focussing on that only. But there are more that KJ is not focussing on. Good they are recording but need to do that for other languages as well.” – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

- *Involve more Martu* – Martu have expressed a need for greater Martu involvement in the language program. People have noted that primarily, the language program currently relies on one KJ applied linguist, but they see a need to have greater Martu involvement in this area.

“KJ need to have Martu be more involved in language program. KJ need to do more language. Only [the applied linguist] right now. Need more Martu involved.” – Punmu community member (2020)

3. Ninti – Learning from and respecting old people



Key evaluation finding: Martu feel strongly that KJ has helped them learn from and respect old people again. Martu reported that before KJ, old people were not teaching young people and that without KJ, *“old people would be finished and passed away”*. KJ’s on-country programs and the MLP have been primarily responsible for creating positive change against this outcome. Some families living in Newman, however, feel that their young people are losing respect for old people.

It is important for Martu to continue learning from and respecting old people. Their elders are the leaders and teachers in Martu communities and they hold the connection to the *pujiman* (desert born) way of life. Martu want to learn from their old people, to respect them and to earn their respect in return. Martu feel a sense of urgency to do this as more and more old people are dying.

Before KJ, *kanyirninpa* (reciprocal connections between young and old) was diminished

Martu have seen their world turn upside down. In the space of two generations, Martu have gone from living a traditional way of life in the desert to living in modern Australia while trying to hold on to their traditions. Contact with mainstream Australia had a monumental impact on Martu social structures and systems of leadership and governance. Traditional structures of governance, learning and lore based

¹⁵ Ibid.

around a kinship system and *kanyirninpa* (reciprocal social connections between young and old) have been diminished.¹⁶

In recent community consultations, Martu explained that before KJ, old people were not teaching young people and different generations of Martu were not visiting country to share and learn about culture together. Martu were also increasingly running into trouble in town which exacerbated (and to an extent, continues to exacerbate) the erosion of traditional social structures between old and young.

“Before KJ, old people weren’t teaching young people.” – MLP member (2020)

KJ has played a vital role in reviving *kanyirninpa* – young people are learning *ninti* (knowledge) from and respecting old people again

Martu strongly feel that KJ has substantially contributed to the reinvigoration of Martu social structures such that young people are once again learning from and respecting old people and old people are fulfilling their obligation of passing on *jukurrpa* (cultural knowledge) to younger generations. 98% of recently surveyed Martu felt KJ has helped a lot against this outcome as shown in the figure above.

“KJ changed people’s lives. Good support for the old people. Bringing back history.” – Martu ranger (2014)

KJ’s contribution to this outcome is significant and cannot be overstated. As noted above, Martu traditional social structures were diminished and broken with many young people no longer learning from old people. The extent to which lore and culture was being passed on from old to young was diminished. Without a reinvigoration of cross-generational learning, *“old people would finish and passed away”*. KJ has helped Martu safeguard the continuation of their people and culture for generations to come.

Through KJ’s programs, young people have a growing appreciation for the knowledge of old people and are increasingly eager to learn more about culture, country and their identity as individuals and as a people. Many young people have also expressed a desire to ensure that they themselves are able to pass on those learnings to their children, indicating a commitment to the continuation of the Martu way of life and to *kanyirninpa* into the future.

“We got in the chopper and we looked for a waterhole...we sat down and I took out the recorder. I asked Kumpaya [the name of his grandmother and Martu elder] ‘what is the name of this place?’, ‘whose place is it?’, ‘who passed away here?’. She told me the name of the waterhole and we recorded that story and walked around together. I was very happy for my country. Happy to keep country alive and to keep our language, Manyjilyjarra, alive. So it won’t get lost. So that I can look after the country and pass it onto my son and then he can pass it onto his sons.” – MLP member (2014)

Old people are also proud, happier and more confident in the future of Martu because more young people want to learn from them and respect them. In consultations with elders, many expressed a sense of pride and happiness about what young people are doing and how things are changing for Martu. They feel like people are listening to them, their stories and their teachings and feel confident that those teachings are being heard and held by young people. In turn, young people have also reported seeing their grandparents happy, smiling and dancing.

“Long ago as kids, we went to play there now we are teaching young people. When we pass they will take our place. Show kids - future generations - their own kids. My own kids will see these places. Own family. We will teach them. They will learn and take people to those places. Water places.” – Martu elder (2020)

¹⁶ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, ‘The Martu Leadership Program – Evaluation of a Pilot Program Using the Social Return on Investment Methodology’, April 2017.

“We’re teaching them the country. We’re showing them so they can go around and look after country. It makes me happy inside to see the work they [young Martu] are doing – it’s good. They are working really well. Lively. They are working well. I’m happy in my spirit, it’s a good feeling.” – Maru elder (2014)

“Couldn’t share with young people – how it used to be. Couldn’t tell people but now they are showing us and they are really happy...Muuki [name of Martu elder] is proud...people walking around wanting to dance.”
– MLP member (2020)

KJ has primarily helped young people learn from and respect old people again through its on-country and leadership programs

Over the past 10 years, KJ’s on-country programs (*Kalyuku Ninti* trips and ranger work) and the MLP have played a major part in helping young people learn from and respect old people again:

- *On-country programs* – Much of the passing of cultural knowledge must take place while on-country. KJ’s on-country programs provide the opportunity for that knowledge to be shared from old to young. Prior to these programs, Martu had very few opportunities to go out on-country together.¹⁷ In consultations, Martu shared their profound experiences of going on-country alongside their elders and learning the names of waterholes, their storylines and language. Old people also explained that by going on-country, it has helped them regain a sense of authority and power within Martu society. When they go out to *ngurra* (country or home), people listen to them and respect them again.

“Ranger program has been good. Taking family out so everyone can learn from old people.”
– MLP member (2020)

*“When we go to ngurra [country or home] young people look after old people. Swags and blankets and tents and food. When we go out, they listen to old people and even little kids too...People get more power and young people only learning because old people know the *pujiman* [desert born] story.”*
– Martu elder (2020)

“When they go out bush, there’s more respect and acknowledgement given to the senior people. They then feel as though they have greater strength, which means that they are better placed to address the issues back in town. The relationships between younger and older people are strengthened and family disputes are broken down.” – Martu man (2014)

- *Martu Leadership Program* – the MLP started in 2014 and has built on the positive outcomes created by KJ’s on-country programs. In particular, young Martu participating in the program have strengthened relationships and the intergenerational roles of younger and older Martu. MLP members have actively included older members in the program and sought their guidance and approval to engage in certain activities. Through the program, elders have also been reinstated in their role of providing cultural guidance and political endorsement for younger generations.¹⁸

“[Martu leadership] is different to whitefella way. We always put elders in the front and what they tell us what to do. We got to listen to them so we can become a leader. It is like getting permission from them so we can move along and work together with old and young. If they are happy for me to do it, I will do it. That is how our law is. That is what we call leadership through Martu – through the old people.”
– MLP member (2017)

¹⁷ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, ‘Social Return on Investment Report: Social, Economic and Cultural Impact of Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa’s On-Country Programs’, December 2014, page 29.

¹⁸ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, ‘The Martu Leadership Program – Evaluation of a Pilot Program Using the Social Return on Investment Methodology’, April 2017, page 30.

While overall Martu feel there is a lot of improvement, Newman families feel that their young people are losing more respect for old people

It is important to acknowledge that in consultations with Martu living in Newman, some felt strongly that their families were not experiencing the same positive outcomes as reported by the vast majority of other communities. There are therefore some nuances in how this outcome has been experienced by Martu depending on where they live – in Newman or in desert communities away from town.

Martu living in Newman feel that their young people do not respect old people. In some instances, Martu also shared that young people abused old people to obtain money for their substance addictions. Some Newman families expressed a sense of despair that some young people are ‘so far over the hill’ that they cannot be brought back to family and the Martu way.

“Young people have no respect for old people. It used to be better.” – Newman community member (2020)

*“They just want money from old people. They need to go out to country and sit with old people. These days old people are getting abused. They are asking to get money for their substance abuse.”
– Newman community member (2020)*

“Young people can’t listen to old people – some people too far over the hill, can’t bring them back, they have gone mad.” – Newman community member (2020)

This reality speaks to the ongoing challenges experienced by Martu living in town, where alcohol and drugs are available, leading to violence and continuing to erode social structures and intergenerational connections.

Newman community members do, however, also acknowledge that while they face challenges in town, KJ’s programs are helping to take some young people back out on country and that without that opportunity, those young people would be in town drinking.

“Without KJ, people would just be in town but KJ helping to take people back out on country. Taking some people back.” – Newman community member (2020)

4. Walyja – Looking after kids and family



Key evaluation finding: KJ is helping Martu look after their kids and families. KJ is helping kids go on country to learn about family, culture and to engage in productive work. Kids are learning both ways at a young age through KJ’s new Families Program. Archives and family trees are teaching kids about their history. Some Martu feel more could be done to get young children on country more often. Martu also want more help travelling to funerals. Families living in Newman and Jigalong feel that more needs to be done to help steer their kids away from destructive influences.

It is important to Martu to look after their kids and family. For Martu, this includes making sure their kids connect to country and learn about their families from a very young age so that traditional cultural foundations are embedded early. It is also about keeping kids busy, productive and out of trouble.

“We need to keep showing them before we pass away. We’re teaching them like this. Then to those who will be in our footsteps, they will need to keep teaching the next generation. They will be teaching their children in our footsteps” – Martu elder (2016)

Martu also feel it is important that kids have the opportunity to learn both ways early ('whitefella' way and Martu way) so that future generations are prepared to shape their own future in modern Australia. Martu also spoke strongly about the importance of attending funerals to pay respect to family.

It is useful to note that when Martu used the term 'kids' in consultations, they referred to children from a broad age group – from zero years old to schooling age of about 13 or 14 years.

KJ is helping the majority of Martu look after kids and family

From consultations, 76% of surveyed Martu felt that KJ was contributing positively to their ability to look after kids and family. Martu families explained that because of KJ, kids have more opportunity to go back on country to learn about family and culture and to engage in productive work. They are also learning both ways at a young age ('whitefella' and Martu way), which is setting them up for the future.

In particular, Martu primarily referred to four main ways that KJ is contributing to this outcome – KJ's on-country programs (*Kalyuku Ninti* trips and ranger work), Martu archives where family videos and photos are stored, family trees and KJ's Families Program which commenced in 2019:

- *On-country programs* – KJ's *Kalyuku Ninti* trips create valuable opportunities for families to return to country together. Those trips are centred on a family unit coming together, from different communities or towns, to visit significant cultural sites and reconnect with country and culture as a family unit.¹⁹ Kids visit country for the first time with their parents and grandparents at a very young age to create strong cultural foundations early in life.

"We're going all around with the next generations; we're taking them so that they learn about our country and waterholes. We're showing them and teaching them. After having been there they will keep checking on and looking after waterholes. When we have died, they will grow up alongside them."
– Martu elder (2016)

"We are teaching all our children about their country. They see and learn about all the waterholes. They are seeing and knowing their grandmothers' and grandfathers' country. They will need to teach their children in turn. They will be able to teach their grandchildren about their country – our own country. Children will see and know their country forever. They will know their own country. Our old people are all gone now. My words are for the children. The country is the right school for the children."
– Martu elder (2015)

For school aged children, KJ's ranger work also creates opportunities to return to country. Martu families emphasised that ranger work is particularly important during school holidays when children often become bored and run into trouble. As rangers, kids engage in productive work during school holidays, remain connected to country and away from town.

"Taking kids out, school holidays, keeping them busy." – MLP member (2020)

"Family trips are big things that are changing for families." – MLP member (2020)

"Getting young people on the field working so they are not around town fighting because they are too busy working. KJ is doing a good job." – Jigalong community member (2020)

It should be noted that the ranger program has been running at a reduced level in Jigalong since 2019 due to difficulties hiring an appropriate ranger coordinator. Martu in Jigalong stressed a need to make the program available to their community again soon so that their kids may continue working, keeping busy and going out on-country.

¹⁹ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, 'Kanyiminpa Jukurrpa: social, economic and cultural impact of On-Country programs', November 2011, Page 56.

“There needs to be more ranger program...Need ranger coordinator. Need ranger program in Jigalong. Used to take school mob out in other communities too.” – Jigalong community member (2020)

*“High school and primary school ranger trips is good. But Jigalong don’t have any of this.”
– MLP member (2020)*

- **Martu archives** – KJ began the Martu digital archives in 2005. Photos, films and recorded stories are stored in the archives and computers providing access to this material have been placed in 12 locations across Martu communities for families to access. The archives started with 3,000 items but has since grown to over 64,000 photos, films and stories.²⁰ Martu value these archives. Many view photos and videos with their children to show them their grandfathers and grandmothers and how they lived in *pujiman* days.

“It’s really good for the Martu people to look at all the family photos so they can know their family and see their grandfather and grandmother. So, kids can watch and learn.” – Parnngurr community member (2014)

- **Family trees** – One of KJ’s founders began work to collect and record information about family trees in 2005. KJ combines and refines genealogical information collected between the 1950s and 2000s, to create one of the most comprehensive genealogical records of any Aboriginal group in Australia.²¹ KJ distributes these family trees to Martu. Families then take them home to show their children, so they know who their family members are and their family history.

“Family trees and family trips is a really good thing.” – MLP member (2020)

“Family trees and family history – all generations are able to teach each other. Helps people learn about their walyja [family].” – Newman community member (2020)

- **Families Program** – KJ started the Families Program in August 2019. It is currently being delivered in Jigalong and Punmu. The program aims to create a supportive environment for early years development activities while strengthening Martu families. The program incorporates both Martu and mainstream approaches to child development. It engages Martu children aged zero to five years old. In the 2019/2020 financial year, 33 children were engaged in the family program.²²

Martu reported positive outcomes for their families and communities as a result of this program. In particular, Martu emphasised that it was enabling their kids to learn both ‘whitefella’ and Martu knowledge. It is important for Martu families, however, that the balance of ‘two way’ learning continues to be well maintained such that ‘whitefella’ knowledge and the English language do not take priority over Martu knowledge and language.

*“[Families] Program is good – kids are learning. They teach them how to read and country. English and Martu wangka [language]. Kids are learning English through families program. They are learning more English than Martu wangka, but they should learn more Martu wangka.”
– Jigalong community member (2020)*

“KJ has playgroup – educate them. Birds have their own names and plants, teach bush food in playgroup. They go out and learn on country.” – Jigalong community member (2020)

²⁰ Kanyirninpa Jukurpa, ‘KJ 10 year film’, 2015.

²¹ Kanyirninpa Jukurpa, Annual Report 2019/2020, Page 23.

²² Ibid page 31.

“Families Program they are learning two way. They are learning from whitefella side and taking out on country so Martu too.” – Parngurr community member (2020)

Despite being a fairly young program, Martu from other communities have already expressed a strong desire to have the Families Program delivered in their communities as well.

*“Kids have nothing here. 33 [reference to Kunawarritji] doesn’t have Families Program. We used to have partnership with school but then nothing. Nothing here only ranger.”
– Kunawarritji community member (2020)*

Martu acknowledge KJ contributions but some feel that more needs to be done to help families take young kids on country and travel to funerals

While Martu acknowledged KJ’s positive contribution, some feel that more could be done to help kids and families. In particular, across communities, Martu consistently indicated that they want to see two things take place, both of which are of a logistical nature – the first is the opportunity to take very young children out on KJ’s on-country trips and the second is receiving transport support for funerals:

- *Taking young kids out on country:* Many Martu expressed a desire to take young kids out on country with KJ, which is not happening as regularly as they would like. Currently, KJ face a logistical and regulatory challenge of needing to obtain state mandated Working with Children Checks (WWCC) for staff and Martu adults who work on those trips before they are able to take young children out.

In addition, the WWCC policy, which assesses risk based on three ‘tiers’ of previous convictions, precludes some Martu from securing a clearance in circumstances that many regard as inappropriate to their context and society. To Martu, it strikes an unrealistic balance between child protection and essential education.

Unlike in mainstream society, taking children camping on country is more than a recreational pursuit but is seen as fundamental to cultural formation and continuity. Martu stress that they want to keep their children safe and acknowledge this requirement as a current barrier to broad participation in overnight camps with children but have stressed the importance of being able to take young kids on country more regularly.

“KJ is not taking young jiji [kids] out on country though, on ranger trip, because of [Working with Children Check]. Need to take more young people.” – Martu elder (2020)

It should be noted that KJ is already planning to implement a *Staying at Home* program to help Martu in remote communities conduct a vast array of government and other transactions (including court, licencing, banking, police clearance) from communities through technology. This may assist in expediting processes to obtain WWCC.

- *Transportation support for funerals:* Funerals are an important part of respecting family for Martu and there is a social obligation to attend. Martu want KJ to offer more logistical and transportation support to take Martu out on country for funerals. Currently, Martu may drive themselves but there are not enough licensed drivers within the community. In some cases, Martu may drive without a licence in order to attend, which leads to trouble with the police.

*“KJ should be taking Martu to funerals. Transport. They could get a bus or something. Every time we have funeral in Nullagine there are a lot of cars impounded and not enough licensed drivers. KJ is Martu corporation and should be helping...everyone has to be there. A lot of elders and young people when they don’t see them at funerals we think there is no respect.”
– Jigalong community member (2020)*

“Martu can’t get to funerals – KJ needs to help people get out.” – Newman community member (2020)

Newman and Jigalong families in particular are asking for more support to care for their kids

As stressed in earlier sections, Martu living in Newman face ongoing challenges associated with the availability of alcohol and drugs which have affected all families, causing violence and destructive behaviour. As it is close to Newman (approximately 2-hour drive), these toxic influences also impact Jigalong to an extent despite it being legally classified as a ‘dry’ (alcohol-free) community.

It is against this backdrop that Newman and Jigalong families reported wanting more help to steer their children away from destructive behaviours. Martu explained that kids are ‘sniffing’, ‘breaking in’, ‘fighting’ and that families feel they are losing control.

“Too many problems in town – wama [alcohol] and stealing, violence, drugs.” – Newman community member (2020)

“It is getting worse – no control – families have no control – drinking and fighting but some families are helping.” – Newman community member (2020)

“KJ is not doing enough because in community we can see that there are kids hanging out doing nothing. Sniffing and breaking in.” – Jigalong community member (2020)

“More support for looking after kids and family – kids are sniffing and so need program in place. Get in there to help.” – Jigalong community member (2020)

Martu in Newman and, to a lesser extent, Jigalong, feel that matters are getting worse and they would like to see KJ offer more support. Some Martu suggested a violence program in town for Martu kids. It was also noted that while there is a youth centre in town run by the local Shire, Martu felt it ‘is for whitefellas’ and not for Martu. A youth and family centre was also recently built in Jigalong; however, it is not fully functional due to staffing challenges.

“Need to set up a violence program in town for kids – a Martu program. There is a youth centre in town, but it is for whitefellas.” – Newman community member (2020)

It is important to note that KJ already have plans to commence a program late in 2021 to address the suggestion for a juvenile crime prevention program. The *Kids on Country* program diverts young people at risk of getting into trouble in town or in communities by focussing on the development of cultural learning and identity through trips and camps on country with older Martu.

5. Kujungkarrini – Unity and harmony between Martu



Key evaluation finding: Martu have overwhelmingly confirmed that KJ has helped restore unity and harmony between Martu. KJ helped revive traditional structures that bind Martu society together, created opportunities for Martu from different communities to work together, reinstated the importance of sharing knowledge for the benefit of all Martu and created a platform for collaboration in the face of modern Australia. KJ’s contribution has primarily been delivered through its on-country and leadership programs.

Martu want to live in unity and harmony and work collaboratively together for a better future, while continuing to respect the old ways.

“The old people talked together about all Martu country. One voice. We need to be strong together, like them.” – Martu elder (2011)

Before KJ, *kujungkarrini* (partnership) between Martu was broken; there was a lot of fighting

The tension and divisions within Martu society relate back to the 1960s. During that time, there were clashes in Jigalong between desert Martu (those born in the desert who moved to Jigalong in the early to mid-1960s) and long-term residents of the mission that was established in Jigalong in 1947.²³

Desert Martu regarded themselves as being more culturally knowledgeable than people born and raised in Jigalong. The “Jigalong mob” regarded themselves as more sophisticated in dealing with the mainstream world. This dynamic created a rift within Martu; between desert Martu and those who had grown up in Jigalong.²⁴

This rift continued into later years and still exists today with many Martu also reporting a perception that divisions are sometimes exacerbated by politics between Martu and organisations. Overall, however, Martu feel the rift exists to a lesser extent today.

Martu explained that before KJ, there was a lot of fighting and warring between different communities and families. Martu described the prevalence of bad politics, corruption and fighting.

“When people came from different communities into town, they would have a war and fight – people say ‘Jigalong boys are in town’.” – MLP member (2020)

“People used to come into town and fight each other and stealing.” – MLP member (2020)

KJ has played a vital role in restoring unity and harmony between Martu

KJ has made a substantially positive contribution to helping Martu restore unity and harmony. 100% of surveyed Martu share the feeling that KJ has helped a lot against this outcome (see figure 1). This means that all Martu who were consulted, across all age groups and communities, acknowledged that KJ’s work has brought Martu back together. KJ’s contribution to this outcome has been significant.

“We worked out where we fit together. We became kin with each other and not just individual families and fragmented.” - MLP member (2020)

“KJ bringing Martu together like family.” – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

“When KJ came in, it created harmony and more togetherness.” – MLP member (2020)

KJ has helped revive the traditional structures that bind Martu society together, created opportunities for Martu to work constructively alongside one another for a common cause, reinstated the importance of sharing knowledge for the benefit of all Martu and created a platform for collaboration in the face of modern Australia.

KJ has helped unify Martu primarily through its on-country and leadership programs

When explaining how KJ helped bring them together, Martu invariably referred to KJ’s on-country programs (*Kalyuku Ninti* family trips and ranger work) and for younger Martu in particular, the MLP:

- *On-country programs* – The ranger program has helped bring Martu together for a common cause, that of caring for and looking after country. Martu emphasised that the ranger program meant they could come together to regularly work alongside one another, thereby creating more togetherness and harmony. The *Kalyuku Ninti* trips also enabled families to visit country

²³ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, ‘Investment in Very Remote Communities, A Cost Benefit Analysis’, October 2018, Page 14.

²⁴ Ibid.

together, thereby reviving family connections and an appreciation of traditional structures that help bind Martu society together.

“Communities used to come together and fight before KJ but after the ranger program started, they all come together and work together. No more fighting. There was fighting before. Martu versus Martu.” – MLP member (2020)

“When KJ started, they were working together. No more big war.” - MLP member (2020)

“Because of KJ ranger work, fights are ending.” – Martu elder (2020)

Importantly, KJ’s on-country trips have also helped reinstate the importance of passing on and sharing knowledge between Martu, particularly from old to young, for the benefit of all Martu. An important tenet of the Martu way is passing on knowledge so that Martu as a collective people can continue on and become stronger together (as opposed to individuals holding knowledge for themselves).

“KJ rangers are strong for Martu. Good for everywhere...We work together for the future...You get ninti [knowledge] and you step aside. Go up and get to next level and then pass it on. Get strong through ninti...KJ is holding and bringing people up. Not about reaching the top yourself but keeping it going.” – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

- **Martu Leadership Program** – The ranger program introduced a platform for Martu to unify and work together around a shared cause. The MLP leverages off this effort and creates opportunities for young Martu leaders to collaborate and solve problems for the community.²⁵ Not only does this introduce collaborative practice into Martu communities, but it also role models collaboration and partnership to younger Martu. Since the coming together of Martu elders to establish native title in 2002, there have been few examples of this type of role modelling. The MLP is creating new examples of collaboration to address issues of concern to the community.

“Before it was like blind was leading the blind and deaf was leading the deaf. For me I’m still hungry, I want to learn more and more. I want to feed my own people. A little taste is not enough for me. The more we learn the more we can take it to others. It’s not just about us it’s about the community too, we feedback to them.” – MLP member (2017)

“When in KJ, Martu work together as a team, they work together every time, every morning, every week, every day, you’re there.” – MLP member (2016)

“Yeah it’s good. And all these groups are helping like some from Jigalong, some from Parnngurr, Punmu, all these different communities. Before we never do these sorts of things, now when we get together and it’s really working good for us Martu and it’s very good...Before we used to stay in one community, another bunch of people in another community, now we’re all getting together and working together.” – MLP member (2017)

²⁵ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, ‘The Martu Leadership Program – Evaluation of a Pilot Program Using the Social Return on Investment Methodology’, April 2017, page 30.

6. Making community strong for a higher standard of living



Key evaluation finding: Martu are worried about the state of their communities, with the chief concern being housing. Martu look to KJ to resolve this issue but as a non-government community organisation, KJ does not have the means to resolve the issue of poor housing stock in remote communities. Government investment is needed to address this concern. Martu acknowledged KJ’s contributions to making communities stronger but are increasingly frustrated due to the lack of progress overall. Martu also want KJ to help develop partnerships with community corporations and encourage rangers and young people to do more work in communities.

This outcome primarily relates to Jigalong and the three desert communities of Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarritji as opposed to town-based communities such as Newman or Port Hedland.

Communities are important to Martu. It is where they can live close to their traditional lands in a society that is predominantly Martu, thereby enabling them to fulfil deep cultural obligations to look after country within an environment they can shape. It is where they want to live but Martu are increasingly concerned about the deteriorating state of infrastructure, particularly housing, in their communities. They want to build stronger communities to improve their quality of life and ultimately attract more Martu back to communities, back to country and away from town.

Understanding how Martu communities work

At the outset, it is important to understand how Martu communities are managed and operate.

Each community is governed by a corporation established pursuant to government legislation. The corporations are responsible for operating the communities on behalf of its members which includes delivering municipal services and discharging administrative functions. The corporations work to develop the capacity of the community and provide improved community infrastructure and services. They also collect rent from local residents as a form of income.

Each corporation appoints a Chief Executive Officer (also referred to as a Community Coordinator) who is responsible for the day-to-day management and operation of the corporation and the development of the community. Duties include overseeing the delivery of municipal services (electricity, water, sewerage and housing maintenance), management of the community store and ensuring the community remains solvent and financially healthy.

In addition to the corporations, other stakeholders also play a role in the communities. Major stakeholders include the local schools and the Pilbara Aboriginal Medical Service (PAMS), responsible for running health clinics and providing remote health services to communities.

It is also useful to note that Parnngurr and Punmu communities are located within the Karlamilyi National Park. The Park was created in 1977, before exclusive possession Native Title was granted to Martu over land surrounding the Park in 2002. The Park was excluded from the determination of Native Title because the creation of the park was deemed to have extinguished Native Title.²⁶

The absence of Aboriginal owned title presents investment challenges for Parnngurr and Punmu. WA legislation prevents the WA Government from entering housing management agreements in relation to communities on non-Indigenous held land such as National Parks.²⁷ A housing management

²⁶ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, 'Investment in Very Remote Communities, A Cost Benefit Analysis', October 2018, Page 16.

²⁷ Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 'Remote Housing Review: A review of the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing and the Remote Housing Strategy (2008-2018)', at 4.12.2.

agreement would ordinarily govern tenancy management and maintenance arrangements in very remote Aboriginal communities. Communities also currently receive no housing support from the Commonwealth Government.

Without further government investment, the only source currently available for housing maintenance is the rent collected by community corporations from their residents.²⁸

Martu are very concerned about the state of their homes

The chief concern Martu have about their communities is the state of their homes. Consultations conducted by KJ in November 2017 identified housing as the number one concern for Martu living in Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarritji. People reported that, in some cases, they were forced to walk around the end of rooms in their houses to avoid holes in the floor.²⁹ Recent investment into housing and infrastructure may have improved the quality of homes in Jigalong, however, other communities have not received any additional support or funding to improve housing since 2008 when KJ secured government funding to refurbish seven derelict houses in Parnngurr, although noting that securing funding for housing is ultimately outside KJ's remit.

"I am homeless in my own country...I am homeless still." – MLP member (2020)

"Martu life like that – We are still left behind and not better life for Martu. Has not got better. We are still living in the past like a bushman." – MLP member (2020)

"Not enough housing. All houses have holes along the sides. Needs renewal."
– Punmu community members (2017)

"Community houses have been rubbish." – Punmu community member (2020)

Martu concern for housing extends beyond the immediate need of wanting to live in healthier and safer conditions. Martu also see housing and the state of the communities more generally as a bottleneck to further progress against other outcomes. In particular, Martu often explained in consultations that without greater volume and improved quality of housing, people will continue moving to and staying in town and will not come back to community to settle. To bring more Martu back to community and away from the destructive and toxic influences in town, there must be better housing and stronger communities in general.

"We need better housing, so people come back from town to community." – MLP member (2020)

"If you want to get people out of lockup [prison], you need to have a house." - Punmu community member (2020)

It is worth noting, however, that while Martu are very concerned about the state of housing in communities, consultations conducted by KJ in November 2017 also identified a number of areas that Martu feel are going well in their communities. For some communities these include the local schools, community office, Centrelink services, state government Home and Community Care (HACC) services and sporting events such as football carnivals. Martu also feel that power, water and airstrip infrastructure are working well.

Martu acknowledge KJ's contributions to improving their communities, but are increasingly frustrated due to the lack of overall progress

Martu have acknowledged that KJ has made some contributions to make their communities stronger.

²⁸ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, 'Investment in Very Remote Communities, A Cost Benefit Analysis', October 2018, Page 16.

²⁹ Ibid.

In particular, Martu primarily referred to KJ’s on-country programs and how they have helped build a strong purpose for Martu to continue returning to community. The programs attract people back to community as they are an opportunity to reconnect with country and share culture and language with family. As stressed in early sections, this is highly valued by Martu. The programs also provide Martu with a reliable and sustainable income source as an attractive alternative to working in the mines. These programs have helped maintain the ongoing relevance and importance of communities.

Martu have also reported instances where KJ helped them build houses, such as in 2008 when government funding was forthcoming to undertake this work. Notably, no similar funding is now available for at least two of the communities in need, due to their current lack of Martu tenure (being located in a national park). In addition, the last five years have seen a stand-off between the Australian and Western Australian Governments over respective responsibilities for provision of housing in remote Indigenous communities, which has further constrained the flow of funding for housing.³⁰

It is worth noting that in addition to these examples, KJ has also conducted significant lobbying efforts to advocate for more government investment into communities. In 2018, KJ commissioned, along with other stakeholders including the Shire of East Pilbara and Mission Australia, a cost benefit analysis making the case for investment in very remote Aboriginal communities, with a strong emphasis on the primacy of need for investment in housing.³¹

It should also be acknowledged that between 2009/2010 and 2019/2020, KJ has contributed a total of \$20 million to Martu communities (Jigalong, Kunawarritji, Parnngurr, Punmu and Newman) in the form of wages, fuel, rent and supplies (see Figure 2 below).³²

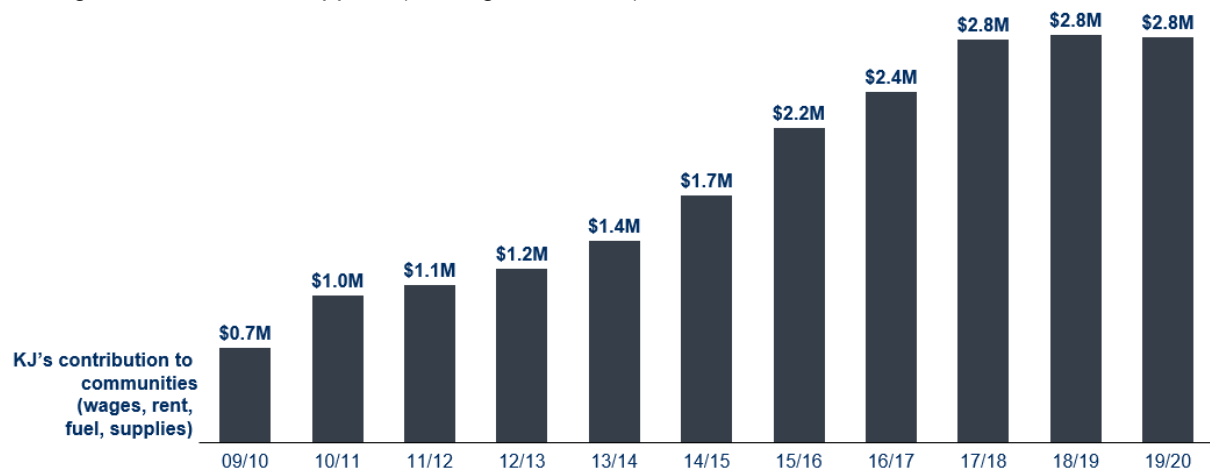


Figure 2: KJ contribution to Martu communities between 2009/2010 and 2019/2020³³

While Martu acknowledge KJ’s efforts, community members are becoming increasingly frustrated with the lack of meaningful change and progress in housing. Fairly or unfairly, they look to KJ to fix this.

As a non-government community organisation, however, KJ is not in a position to ultimately resolve the issue of poor housing stock within remote communities. KJ may contribute to progress by consulting with Martu, raising awareness of the issue and lobbying for more government investment into communities (which they have been doing). Ultimately, however, KJ cannot resolve the issue of poor housing stock without further government investment.

Without that investment, Martu communities simply do not have the funds to improve housing stock and KJ does not have the means to resolve this issue despite Martu looking to KJ for a solution.

³⁰ ABC News, ‘Twelve-year wait almost over for remote WA desert communities needing new law to build new houses’, 12 December 2018, accessed in April 2021 at <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-12/desert-communities-12-year-wait-for-permission-to-build-housing/10608168>.

³¹ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, ‘Investment in Very Remote Communities, A Cost Benefit Analysis’, October 2018.

³² Kanyirrinpa Jukurpa, wage and non-wage contribution to communities data.

³³ Ibid.

Despite these contextual factors, consultations indicated that Martu are attributing some degree of the lack of progress to KJ, which is impacting KJ's relationship with Martu.

"Not enough change. KJ needs to work on helping and doing more. They have built some houses, but more partnerships needed between companies." – MLP member (2020)

"KJ helped a bit but hasn't done anything to fix that. We have support like rangers and the leadership program but for this one, nothing." – MLP member (2020)

"We need better houses in community. KJ is not helping community with building houses. KJ should be helping community more. We need better housing, so people come back from town to community. KJ should help Martu elders by building houses and getting them essential services." – MLP member (2020)

"KJ needs to help the community and work on community more." – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

"KJ needs to give things back to community – housing and support. We need to push things back to community. Community can't go talk to government. KJ does." - MLP member (2020)

A handful of Martu (two to three) also expressed frustration that working for KJ at times felt as if they were advocating for or representing KJ and not their communities, as they have not seen how their efforts are ultimately leading to stronger communities and better housing. This sentiment further demonstrates Martu growing frustration and attribution of the lack of progress to KJ, despite KJ's limited ability to ultimately resolve Martu housing concerns.

"Where is the community support? We feel like KJ is moving further away from community. When we go to government we do not represent community, we represent KJ. I feel sorry for communities because community put rangers in there and then rangers move away from ngurra [home]." – MLP member (2020)

"KJ is moving away from us. Meant to do all this in the communities but we push towards KJ and not community because of government funding. It becomes a KJ story. We have to support KJ as a company, but it has to come back to community to make it stronger." – MLP member (2020)

"People have said they have done ranger and leadership but forgotten about community." - MLP member (2020)

Martu want to develop better partnerships with community corporations and encourage rangers and young people to do more work in community

To help strengthen their communities, Martu made a number of suggestions during consultations. The most frequently raised suggestion was the need to develop a more constructive partnership with community corporations and the Community Coordinators who manage the communities. Some Martu also suggested adjusting KJ's ranger program so that Martu work in community as well as on-country:

- *Partnerships with community corporations:* Martu acknowledge that the management of their communities is the responsibility of corporations and Community Coordinators. Martu also recognised that the partnerships between community members and corporations need to be improved to create better outcomes for community. Martu desire KJ to play a more active role in helping them broker and develop a constructive partnership with corporations.

"If Martu don't have communities they would be nothing. KJ built some houses with community company but the houses belong to the company and not Martu. We need more partnership with the community company." – Punmu community member (2020)

“KJ needs to help Martu build partnership.” – Punmu community member (2020)

“People not living in community. Maintenance. Partnership with community.” – Martu board member (2020)

*“KJ has to get in with the [Community Coordinators]. We are meant to be working with KJ rangers, but [Community Coordinator] wants us to go to Ashburton [an Aboriginal corporation] project. KJ should be helping with housing and partnering with [Community Coordinator] more.”
– Kunawarritji community member (2020)*

- **Rangers working in community:** Some Martu also highlighted a need to have rangers working in community as well as out on-country. It was suggested that rangers may work on a rotational basis with some spending time in community to clean up, repair and improve the communities, while others work out on-country looking after and caring for *ngurra* (country). It is worth noting that as the maintenance of community ultimately falls within the mandate of the corporation, establishing a partnership with the Community Coordinators may be a necessary preceding step before rangers may expand their footprint in community.

*“Instead of going on country all the time we need to do more in community and mixing it up. On country and then on community. That’s how you make community strong.”
- Kunawarritji community member (2020)*

“KJ needs to help out the community and work in community more. We take it on turn – 10 people may go on country and then 10 stay back helping out community.” - Kunawarritji community member (2020)

- **Young people working in community:** Some Martu have also suggested establishing a program whereby young people can engage in productive work to improve the community. Work may include building a nursery and planting trees to add value to their home.

“Nice houses with shade. Need something like nursery, plant some trees, get them to learn how to do planning. Opportunities for young people to do stuff like this.” - Jigalong community member (2020)

7. Building confidence through two-way learning



Key evaluation finding: KJ has played a vital role in helping Martu build confidence through learning both Martu and ‘whitefella’ ways. Martu feel more confident using modern technology to enhance traditional practices and speaking up for themselves and communities. Communities are also feeling more confident in the future with young Martu emerging as positive role models. Martu want more leadership and learning opportunities in the future. KJ’s contribution has primarily been delivered through its on-country and leadership programs.

Martu travel at the intersection of two worlds – the Martu world and ‘whitefella’ world. It is therefore important to Martu that they can learn and build confidence in both traditional Martu and ‘whitefella’ knowledge. Martu see this synergy between both ways and building confidence through learning both, as critical to them participating in and shaping a new future for Martu in modern Australia.

“Today the young people are travelling in both worlds, whitefella world and Martu world.” – Martu elder (2016)

“It is important for us to teach all this white law to our people because it’s two laws colliding.”
– MLP member (2017)

KJ has played a vital role in helping Martu build confidence through two-way learning

Community consultations revealed that 97% of surveyed Martu believed KJ significantly helped them build confidence through two-way learning. Some Martu explained that before KJ, *“nothing used to happen”* and that they felt *“useless”* and *“rubbish”*. Martu felt that were it not for KJ, learning ‘whitefella’ knowledge would have been much harder but with KJ’s support, they can climb both ladders together – the traditional Martu ladder and the ladder in the ‘whitefella’ world.³⁴

“Nothing used to happen here. Martu used to feel useless and rubbish. We were nintiparni [without knowledge], ngurrpa [ignorant], kawarn-kawarnpa [mad and frustrated]. Martu learning both ways now.” – MLP member (2020)

“I am learning both ways through KJ. I am Martu and talking to whitefellas.” – MLP member (2020)

“Lucky we have KJ starting and working with Martu. It would have been harder to learn whitefella way otherwise.” – MLP member (2020)

KJ’s contribution to this Martu outcome is significant. By helping Martu learn about Western knowledge and systems, KJ has brought Martu into the interface with mainstream Australia and has given them a pathway to not only participate in but to create a new future for Martu in modern Australia.

In consultations, Martu described three important changes that have happened because of KJ. The first is feeling more confident using modern technology to enhance traditional practices; the second is feeling empowered to speak up for themselves and their communities; and the third is making their communities feel more confident in the future by becoming role models through two-way learning.

- *Confident using modern technology to enhance traditional practices:* Martu are increasingly using modern technology to enhance their traditional practices and are becoming more confident with blending modern and traditional technology to care for country. For example, Martu explained in consultations that using helicopters and mapping tools in on-country work with KJ has helped them feel more confident burning and looking after country.

“Learning from KJ. We go out and do chopper and burning and look after country at the same time. Using whitefella technology to look after country. Learning two ways makes me feel more confident. Burning on the ground and on helicopter we are burning from chopper too. Then you feel more confident burning.” – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

- *Confident speaking up for themselves and communities:* Martu are learning about Western institutions, systems and corporations and how they operate. This knowledge has helped Martu understand roles and responsibilities and how those institutions are held accountable to the public and to their members. Having this knowledge has helped Martu feel more confident in speaking up for themselves and for their communities. For example, Martu said it was important for them to learn that members control companies and not CEOs and to also learn about the role of lawyers in the justice system. Martu also stressed that they are building more confidence speaking in public forums with government, corporations and partners.

“Most people when they come to a meeting or a course they never speak for themselves...Most of us used to sit back and let lawyer talk. Now I don’t have to worry about the lawyer; the lawyer is there to

³⁴ The imagery of climbing both ladders (traditional Martu ladder and ‘whitefella’ ladder) was utilised as part of the MLP. Martu who participated in the MLP often use that language when describing learning and becoming more confident in both the Martu way and ‘whitefella’ way.

support me; now we are talking to the lawyers. I never asked one of the lawyers anything before, now I found out lawyers there to help.” – MLP member (2017)

“Without KJ, no one would have been able to come out and speak in front of people. It has come from KJ. Support from KJ.” – MLP member (2020)

“I see the quietest young fella who never say boo but shocked me they can talk, and make me feel good inside, make me feel, I cry for myself and I cry for what they are doing you know, I have a happy heart and sometimes I cry with happiness.” – MLP member (2016)

- **Communities feeling more confident in the future:** Through KJ, young Martu in particular are learning both Martu way and ‘whitefella’ way and speaking up for themselves and their communities. They are becoming role models within the community and demonstrating to their families how Martu are shaping a new future in modern Australia.

“All these people living here you know they tell me that’s alright we seen you talking, we’ve never used to see you like that before, it’s good. We want to see more young people step up and talk, feel the confidence, feel strong for their people. It’s really good not only for me but for the whole Western Desert.” – MLP member (2016)

KJ has primarily helped Martu build confidence through on-country and leadership programs

Martu frequently referred to two main programs that have helped them build confidence through two-way learning – KJ’s on-country programs and the Martu leadership program:

- **On-country programs:** KJ’s on-country programs provided an opportunity for Martu to rekindle and reinforce their learning of Martu traditional practice and knowledge. Martu were able to learn alongside elders and practice traditional knowledge to care for country. Importantly, it helped Martu form a foundation of confidence, pride and strength in themselves, their communities and as a people.

“KJ has helped Martu learn from old people through return to country trips. It keeps their knowledge, people become more confident and give them pride and identity.”
– Newman community member (2020)

The impact created by KJ’s on-country programs has been significant for Martu (as discussed in other outcomes). The programs, however, provided limited opportunity for Martu to learn about ‘whitefella’ systems, law and institutions, and to build the confidence needed to put themselves forward, speak and make decisions in a public forum.³⁵ The MLP was created in 2014 to meet that gap and to build on the foundation laid by the on-country programs.

- **Martu Leadership Program:** The MLP has a diverse program of activities designed to increase understanding of ‘whitefella’ systems, laws and institutions; create opportunities to practice public speaking; and increase exposure to other Aboriginal groups. Core activities include group-based educational sessions where technical concepts are introduced and discussed. Concepts include companies, native title, criminal justice system and how Parliament and government agencies work. Other activities include meeting with mainstream companies and government, informal learning and immersion in ‘whitefella’ culture and delivering presentations to companies, government and at conferences.³⁶

As a result of the MLP, Martu have gained new knowledge about the mainstream world and better understand its relevance and importance to Martu. With this new knowledge and

³⁵ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, ‘The Martu Leadership Program – Evaluation of a Pilot Program Using the Social Return on Investment Methodology’, April 2017, Page 29.

³⁶ Ibid page 16.

exposure, Martu have become more confident in themselves and their capacity to change current realities for their communities.

"I used to work for PBC [Prescribed Body Corporate] but was deaf and blind. I didn't know what I needed to do in my job. But when I did the MLP, I found the truth and know what I needed to do. I learned who is the boss in the company. Members are the boss. It's good I know that now."
– MLP member (2020)

"I used to get nervous but now I got confidence through leadership, leadership changed me, now I have the knowledge to teach the young people." – MLP member (2017)

"We didn't know about the law and governance, and companies, how they work. That's why it's making us more stronger, so we can have a voice for Martu, and for the elders. So, we can build our confidence, build our communities, build it for our kids. So, they can follow in our footsteps"
– MLP member (2016)

"When leadership started that's all good. These days you see organisations and we are member. We learn about white man world and black man world together." – Parngurr community member (2020)

"This leadership program started with KJ, it's like for me going back to school learning new things which I did and I'm really proud of that. Leadership sort of opened our minds, how we look at laws differently, because we never get taught that at school or from our parents. But this leadership training is really, really very important for us and it's really good. We now understand who to talk to, this leadership sort of changed our ways of thinking about whitefella's law." – MLP member (2017)

Martu are asking for more leadership and learning opportunities

As discussed above, KJ's contribution to help Martu learn about Martu way and 'whitefella' way, and to become more confident in that intersection, has been very important to Martu.

In consultations, Martu consistently emphasised that they are hungry for more leadership and learning opportunities to help more Martu become confident in both ways so they may continue speaking up for themselves and for a better future for their communities.

"Now them young fellas they will and they always say they're hungry I hear them all the time, every meeting we go I'm hungry I want to learn more and more that's every wangka they say. That leadership is helping me and helping them and together we're learning. We want to continue they're saying." – MLP member (2016)

It should be noted that in recent consultations for this evaluation with Newman community members in particular, there was a strong desire for more opportunities to improve public speaking and higher English for Martu living in town. The need to build up more confidence among Martu to speak up for a better future may be particularly potent in town due to the unique challenges faced by Martu living in Newman as emphasised in other outcomes above.

"But not much is happening in town for public speaking. We want more of this so Martu can speak up in Parliament and go to Canberra. We want to speak up for ourselves." – Newman community member (2020)

"More Martu need to learn higher English." – Newman community member (2020)

8. Getting people out of town/out of 'lock-up' and back home



Key evaluation finding: KJ has made an important contribution to helping Martu get out of town, out of 'lock-up' (prison) and back home to communities. This support has primarily been through KJ's on-country programs, Martu archives, transportation support, Roebourne Regional Prison visits, building relationships with police and the local Magistrate and the new Wama Wangka program. While Martu acknowledge this contribution, many feel that more needs to be done to fundamentally break the destructive cycles gripping their communities. Martu want stronger communities, a Martu diversionary program and to grow the Wama Wangka program.

Martu want to break the cycles of destructive behaviour in their communities. They want Martu to stay away from toxic influences such as *wama* (alcohol) in town, stay out of 'lock-up' (prison) and move back home to communities where they can be closer to culture, family and country.

"We want all our Martu people to come out of prison. They are missing out on a lot of things."
– MLP member (2017)

"Leave wama [alcohol] behind. Leave that bad thing behind. Get back to your community and start working now. It's obviously because of wama that we Martu have lost so much" – Martu ranger (2017)

"They just fight for wama [alcohol] here in town – drunk. But out in the desert they are fine and living well. They get angry and hit each other for wama in town." – Martu elder (2020)

KJ has contributed to helping people get out of town, out of 'lock-up' and back to communities

In the consultations for this evaluation, Martu acknowledged KJ's efforts towards this outcome. In particular, people stressed that while many Martu continue to struggle with destructive behaviours exacerbated by toxic influences in town, without KJ, the situation would be far worse. Martu explained that without KJ, many more Martu would be in town drinking and in prison.

"If there was no KJ, Martu would be in town. More would be in town rather than in community. KJ is giving Martu opportunity to work. If no KJ, Martu would be in town drinking." – Kunawarrtiji community member (2020)

"Martu would be in prison, on wama [alcohol], in town, at home in one place playing games." – Punmu community member (2020)

When explaining how KJ has helped get people out of town, 'lock-up' and back to communities, Martu frequently referred to KJ's on-country programs, the Martu archives where photos, films and stories are stored and transportation support. Martu also acknowledged KJ's more recent efforts including visits to the Roebourne Regional Prison, building relationships with the police and local Magistrate, the MLP and the Wama Wangka program.

- *On-country programs* – The *Kalyuku Ninti* trips and ranger work help Martu stay out of trouble in town and to return home to communities and country more frequently. As a result of the ranger program, young Martu men have consistently stated that they went to town less, drank less and came back more quickly because of a desire to continue working as rangers. Ranger work is also out on remote country and therefore when Martu are involved in ranger work, they

do not go to town. Ranger work also gives Martu more purpose in their lives, which gives them less reason to go into town to drink.³⁷

“Without this [ranger program] I’d be bored. Probably go into town more.” – Young ranger (2011)

“[The ranger program] gets them away from sniffing and stealing.” – Young ranger (2011)

“We have started but need to finish this off. Rangers are helping to look after country and that is why people are coming home. These things are making a difference.” – MLP member (2020)

“They need to come back and work on the country. It is good for him or for her. There is a lot of opportunity out here looking after country and getting away from trouble.” - MLP member (2017)

Martu also believe that the *Kalyuku Ninti* trips and ranger work have helped Martu reconnect with their *ngurra* (country or home) and their families, which is critical to keeping people out of prison and out of trouble. Once Martu have knowledge of where they are from and who their family are, they are less likely to run into trouble and ‘lock-up’.

“When you’re in prison you don’t know where ngurra (home) is. If they have family trip, they will help to have the knowledge of family. If they have knowledge and the ninti they stay out of lock-up.” – Parnngurr community member (2020)

- **Martu archives** – Photos and films are storied in the archives and are highly valued by Martu. Martu have explained that the archives are particularly important for people in prison as they are able to access photos and videos to stay connected to their families. As stressed above, maintaining connection to family and communities is an important part of helping Martu stay away from trouble.

“KJ is talking to prisoners and providing information to them while they are in lock-up. KJ set up the archives in prison so they can look at photos. It helps people learn more about their family.” – Newman community member (2020)

“Recordings are good for getting people out of prison. Having the recordings in prison helps people out.” – Parnngurr community member (2020)

- **Transportation support** – KJ often provides transportation support to Martu by driving them from town back to communities. This gives Martu more options to travel away from town, away from trouble and back to communities. Martu have also reported instances where KJ has waited for Martu at the prison gates to pick them up and take them back to communities immediately upon release. This has been important to Martu as it helps remove them from town where they may run into trouble quickly after their release.

“KJ helping people go to funeral from lock-up is really good and KJ helping – car will be there in front at the gate to pick them back out to community when people come out on parole. Slowly happening more.” – Newman community member (2020)

“If someone is coming out of prison on parole, KJ car come and pick you up. If you keep mucking around in town we get back in trouble. It’s good KJ picks you up.” – Punmu community member (2020)

³⁷ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, ‘Kanyiminpa Jukurrpa: social, economic and cultural impact of On-Country programs’, November 2011, Pages 2 and 45.

KJ also plans to commence a formal transportation program in 2021 called *Getting Back Home*. The transport program helps Martu living in remote communities get back home from towns, rather than being stuck in town.

- *Roebourne Regional Prison visits* – In 2017, members of the MLP started visiting Martu to talk about what they can do when they get out of prison. They also talk about cultural knowledge, the cycle of drinking, trouble and prison and alternative pathways that people can take to break the circle when they leave prison.³⁸ Martu have reported that these visits help people maintain a connection to their people and, from a practical perspective, make plans for when they are released.

“We talk to people in prison. We help people think about where they can go on parole. We tell them to go to Parnngurr, Punmu or 33 [Kunawarritji]. Not Jigalong because too close to town.” – MLP member (2020)

- *Building relationships with police and the local Magistrate* – KJ has supported Martu to build relationships with local police, the Police Commissioner and the local Magistrate. This work has been important to bridge an understanding between mainstream law enforcement and Martu. It has also been vital to laying the foundations for a productive working relationship to co-design alternative solutions that may be more appropriate and effective for Martu.

For example, KJ supported Martu to hold a three-day camp in 2017 on country with the Pilbara Magistrate, senior officers from Newman police, Jigalong police officer, senior Roebourne Prison staff, lawyers from the Aboriginal Legal Service and the Perth-based police diversity officer. The camp was a way to bring law enforcement and Martu together so that Martu could share their aspirations and visions for change in the criminal justice system.³⁹ In 2018 and 2019, KJ held intensive cultural immersion camps for senior police officers, including the Police Commissioner, Assistant Commissioners and lower ranks, providing an extended opportunity for Martu and senior police to learn from each other and form relationships.

Martu have acknowledged the value of KJ’s support to build these relationships with law enforcement to create a better future for their people away from the criminal justice system.

“It is a good experience for all of us [3 day camp with police, magistrate and lawyers]. Getting together. Talking about issues and asking for help also.” - MLP member (2017)

“KJ has helped us build partnerships with policeman, lawyers, judges, criminal justice system. It is good start.” – MLP member (2020)

“Relationship with policeman and magistrate is good for getting people back out on country from lock-up.” – Newman community member (2020)

“KJ take us out to talk to Police Commissioner about Martu in prison. The big boss. We are going to Perth with KJ. KJ has been good for this. We need to put KJ in front otherwise whitefella wouldn’t talk.” – MLP member (2020)

- *Martu Leadership Program* – This leadership program has created a platform for MLP members to address serious social issues affecting Martu including *wama* (alcohol), ‘lock-up’ and the criminal justice system. Through the MLP, Martu are beginning to model healthier and safer choices for their communities and in so doing, they are writing a new narrative for their people. For example, MLP members have taken collective responsibility first to effectively

³⁸ Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa, Annual Report 2019/2020, Page 29.

³⁹ Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa, Annual Report from /2017, Page 25.

prohibit drinking on MLP study trips to cities and then to respond to a few cases when the ban on drinking was not followed.⁴⁰ MLP participants are also developing strategies to create better solutions for Martu and the criminal justice system that create better outcomes.

“Without the leadership program, we’d be doing that circle again and again. That one is a one-way road.” – MLP member (2017)

“I was in prison twice. Came back for leadership. Want to try and change this law. Because this law, we don’t know it, we want to change it through leadership. We got 100 Martu prisoners and it’s got to stop. The law rulebook is not right for Martu.” – MLP member (2017)

- *Wama Wangka* – Wama Wangka began in 2019 and is a Martu response to alcohol and drug abuse, family violence, depression, suicide and a range of other destructive forces. The program has been designed and led by Martu with KJ’s support. It has opened the door on talking about all of these things and allows people to come together to talk honestly about individual and social problems. The program focuses on building cultural knowledge about family, country, kinship obligations, language, waterholes and stories.⁴¹ Despite it being a very young program, many Martu in consultations reported very positively about the program and have expressed a strong desire for more and more Martu to participate.

“I went back and my spirit is good. Went to see my country. My spirit became itself again. I became reconnected to country. I went east and saw my country.” – Wama Wangka participant (2020)

“Wama Wangka has been good because it keeps people busy and out of town. We had a Wama Wangka trip recently and took kids out. We had bush tucker and tracked animals.” – MLP member (2020)

“Wama Wangka and rangers are good things.” – MLP member (2020)

While Martu acknowledge KJ’s contribution, many feel that more needs to be done to break the destructive cycles in their communities

Martu acknowledged KJ’s contribution to this outcome, however, many also stressed that more needs to be done to stop the destructive cycles plaguing their communities. In recent consultations for this evaluation, 33% of surveyed Martu felt that KJ was helping a little but that more work was needed and 37% believed that KJ was not helping at all.

“Need to get people out of town and into community. It’s the main one. Wama Wangka just started and making its way up to help people. KJ is not doing enough. That’s why people are in lock-up now.” – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

“KJ is not really helping people get out of town. If ranger go into town and ask people if they want to go back to community and get a lift back into town. That’s good but young people are passing away from too much wama [alcohol]. KJ need to do more. Help people in town and bring them back home away from wama. KJ need to go tell police and get people in town to move along back to community. Right now, KJ is not doing enough here. KJ need to get more people to come back home and work for KJ. Martu need to get away from town because too much violence.” – Punmu community member (2020)

“KJ needs to do more.” – Newman community member (2020)

⁴⁰ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, ‘The Martu Leadership Program – Evaluation of a Pilot Program Using the Social Return on Investment Methodology’, April 2017, Pages 36 and 37.

⁴¹ Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa, Annual Report 2019/2020, Page 27.

Martu reported that while KJ's efforts are undoubtedly supportive of Martu moving away from trouble in town and back to communities, ultimately, it has not been enough to break the destructive cycle that has gripped Martu across generations. For example, Martu explained that while KJ's ranger program has helped create valuable employment opportunities on country, after Martu earn money through ranger work, they often return to town to spend that money as there is not enough happening in communities for them to remain. Once they return to town, many Martu are again exposed to toxic influences including the prevalence of *wama* (alcohol) and the cycle begins again.

"When you have family in town you talk to them to get out of town and go back to country. They work for one month in community and make money and go back to town. They do KJ work in community. Their friends are back in town. People in town for appointments and they hang back and just hit it up and get back on the wama [alcohol]. People ending up in lock-up. It's a big problem and not happy." – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

"Money people are getting from KJ is going to wama [alcohol]." – MLP member (2020)

"Martu are doing the same thing – wama but need to come back to community." – Martu board member (2020)

One Martu board member described the Martu situation as a flat tyre that continues to roll. KJ helps Martu go back to communities to work where they reconnect with country, family and earn money on-country. Eventually, however, they return to town for appointments, social reasons, opportunities or more excitement and again fall into trouble.

"...Need to keep teaching other Martu because in town they lose it and then they come back. Then wama [alcohol]. Like a tire rolling...Martu are like a flat tyre. Go into community get money as ranger then go back to town." – Martu board member (2020)

Martu value KJ's contributions to get people out of town, out of 'lock-up' and back home, but they want this reality to fundamentally change. Martu want more structural solutions to break the cycle of destructive behaviours so they may create a more productive and safe future for communities.

Martu want to make communities stronger, start the Martu diversionary program and grow the Wama Wangka program

To fundamentally break destructive cycles and get Martu out of town, out of 'lock-up' and back home to communities, Martu have emphasised a number of areas that they feel need greater focus.

The most frequently stressed suggestion was the need to make communities stronger with better standards of living. As discussed in outcome 6 above, Martu see housing, and the state of communities more generally, as a bottleneck to further progress, particularly against this outcome of getting people out of town and out of 'lock-up'. Martu also discussed the need for a diversionary program to send Martu *kakarra* (east, to Martu homelands) and not *yapurra* (west, to prison). Finally, Martu also consistently expressed their support to grow the Wama Wangka program. It should be noted that a Martu Diversionary Program and expansion of the Wama Wangka program is already in motion and due to take place in 2021.

- *Making communities stronger with a higher standard of living* – Martu emphasis on the need to make communities stronger to bring more Martu back home from town echoes the discussion in outcome six above. Martu explained that without better infrastructure (particularly housing), a range of activities and opportunities in communities, Martu will continue moving to town.

Martu see making communities stronger as a powerful circuit breaker to the cycles of destructive behaviour experienced by many Martu today. Stronger communities with higher

standards of living and better opportunities will bring more Martu back to communities to settle for longer periods of time.

“If community gets stronger more people come home – if they see something changing. Some come back to ngurra [home/country] and they make money then go back to town. If community change then hooray! They will stay. If they come back and community change, then they will be happy and will stay.”
– Kunawarritji community member (2020)

- **Martu diversionary program** – Martu are currently working with police, the Pilbara Magistrate and the prison to develop a Martu Diversionary Program to help Martu build a new story for their futures instead of staying within an old circle of trouble. The program has been designed by Martu in the MLP and concentrates on getting Martu working in the ranger program, MLP and Wama Wangka. The program will also include a Martu Court that supports people to be diverted from custodial sentences, secure bail rather than remand and seek parole. It will provide mentoring, transport to communities and work.⁴² The diversionary program is still in development and is expected to be operational later in 2021.

In consultations, Martu have emphasised their support for a diversionary program, that will help to send Martu *kakarra* (east, to Martu homelands) rather than *yapurra* (west, to prison).

“Whenever we go to court, we just say we are guilty when we arrive...but we can have a Martu court so we can talk.” – Parnngurr community member (2020)

“We don’t want to send them yapurra [west, to prison], we want them kakarra [east, to Martu homelands] to a paradise where they can look after their ancestors. Ngurra [homelands]. Cleaning up rock holes like ranger jobs. Old people will be more happy.” – MLP member (2017)

“For not paying for their fines all building up, they need to go to prison to clear that up which is wrong. They should be out on country doing their parole thing out there.” – MLP member (2017)

- **Wama Wangka** – In recent consultations for this evaluation, Martu consistently reported a need to grow and expand the Wama Wangka program. Martu see real value in the program and believe it is already creating positive outcomes for communities. Wama Wangka allows Martu to talk honestly about individual and social problems within a Martu cultural frame while being on country. Many people feel that more Martu should attend the program in the future.

“Too much wama [alcohol]. Get Wama Wangka is good. Get more Martu to go to the program. More Martu to join the Wama Wangka program. A lot of young people dying from drinking and won’t have time to see kids and great grand kids.” – Parnngurr community member (2020)

“More and more people want to do Wama Wangka.” – MLP member (2020)

Some Martu have also identified an opportunity for Wama Wangka to continue when KJ’s ranger program pauses over the summer months (ranger programs stop over this period as high temperatures make it difficult to run activities in the desert). As Wama Wangka is a Martu directed program, Martu feel there is a possibility for it to continue over summer to keep community productively engaged while KJ field staff are on leave and ranger programs pause.

“Wama Wangka can happen and keep going after ranger program finishes.” – MLP member (2020)

⁴² Ibid page 27.

9. Better respect and relationship with ‘whitefellas’



Key evaluation finding: Martu want to walk together with ‘whitefellas’ towards reconciliation. Martu want to be respected by ‘whitefellas’ and to develop relationships grounded in mutual respect. Martu have overwhelmingly confirmed that KJ has made a significant contribution to helping them achieve this goal. KJ has supported Martu primarily through facilitating on-country trips with key ‘whitefella’ stakeholders and through the Martu leadership program.

Martu want to walk together with ‘whitefellas’ towards reconciliation

Martu want to be respected by ‘whitefellas’. They want their extensive cultural, traditional and ecological knowledge that has been built and cultivated over thousands of years and generations to be recognised. Martu also want to build a productive working relationship with ‘whitefellas’ that is grounded on mutual respect. Martu want to walk together, side by side, with ‘whitefellas’ towards a better future for everyone, towards reconciliation.

“Martu people, they have concerns, but like I said, let’s build this bridge together, let’s walk the walk and talk the talk together, with partnership, like we’re holding hands...let’s go together.” – MLP member (2018)

“We wanted to build a good relationship and try and work together for the future.” – MLP member (2018)

“Martu like us, we need a little bit of help to change a little bit of law to help us as Martu people on Martu country. Whitefellas, Martu, working together, working as one. Kujungkarrini [partnership]. Reconciliation you know?” – MLP member (2017)

“Good partnership is working together, learning both ways, Martu and whitefella side. That’s how you make a good partnership. We teach them, they teach us. It’s like a family.” – MLP member (2016)

Martu believe that building better relationships with ‘whitefellas’ is a prerequisite to writing a new narrative for their communities and a vital steppingstone to further progress against other outcomes. For example, Martu acknowledged that building better respect and relationships with ‘whitefellas’ will help build stronger communities (through better partnerships with Community Coordinators and community corporations as discussed under outcome 5). They also believe that it will help enable the creation of alternatives to the criminal justice system that work better for Martu.

“If more respect from whitefellas then better and stronger community and then more Martu back home.” – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

KJ has significantly helped Martu build better respect and relationships with ‘whitefellas’

Martu have overwhelmingly confirmed that KJ has made a significant contribution to helping them develop better respect and relationships with ‘whitefellas’. In recent consultations for this evaluation, 97% of surveyed Martu reported feeling that KJ had helped a lot against this outcome.

Martu explained that before KJ, there was no dialogue between Martu and ‘whitefellas’. Some described the situation as a door being shut where no one was able to speak to anyone else. Some Martu also shared that before KJ, there was a clear divide between Martu and ‘whitefellas’.

“Ten years ago, the door was shut and we weren’t able to and did not speak to anyone.” – MLP member (2020)

“No one was listening including state and federal [governments].” – MLP member (2020)

“If there was no KJ then whitefellas and Martu wouldn’t want to be talking to each other. Separate. Going different ways.” – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

Martu consistently reported that KJ has made a significant difference to the respect they feel from and the relationship they now have with ‘whitefellas’. Some Martu emphasised that the understanding and relationships Martu have with ‘whitefellas’ have *“come a long way”*. Not only are Martu and ‘whitefellas’ listening to one another more effectively but there are also practical examples of both parties coming together in partnership to find better solutions for Martu. Martu are also feeling more respect with more ‘whitefellas’ expressing a genuine interest in Martu knowledge and culture.

“Politicians are listening. Government, Freehills are listening. Now they are listening.” – MLP member (2020)

“We’ve come a long way, this has never happened and now it came a long way and now we’re working with the Magistrate and all the police, even the head of police. We’re all together now, we’re in it. This never happened before and I feel really happy what’s going to happen.” – MLP member (2017)

“Whitefella have changed and respect Martu more. They talk like Martu and they think like Martu. Whitefella know how to talk to Martu.” – Parnngurr community member (2020)

Overall, Martu feel a growing sense of respect and commitment from ‘whitefellas’ to walk with Martu. Martu have expressed a strong sense of hope for the future.

“They are listening to us right now and they want to walk the journey with us together. And we’re going to walk beside them and support the other people to come along with us, to support them, and they can support us, and we can work together, as a journey.” – MLP member (2018)

“They [whitefellas] want to learn language, they want to learn our culture, they want to learn about our country. It was amazing. They ended up getting a kinship, and even the big boss, he became our brother.” – MLP member (2018)

KJ has supported Martu primarily through facilitating on-country trips with ‘whitefellas’ and through the Martu Leadership Program

When explaining how KJ helped build better respect and relationships with ‘whitefellas’, Martu primarily referred to on-country cultural immersion trips with key ‘whitefella’ stakeholders and the Martu leadership program. Some Martu also acknowledged the important role KJ plays in ensuring financial accountability.

- *Trips with ‘whitefellas’ out on country* – In 2010, Martu invited BHP for a trip on country. Since then, Martu have conducted a further nine trips for BHP executives and have welcomed numerous other key ‘whitefella’ stakeholders. KJ has supported Martu in facilitating and organising these trips. In 2017, Martu invited police, the local Magistrate, lawyers and prison staff to a three-day camp on country. Additional trips were organised with the Police Commissioner, other senior police and justice staff in 2018 and 2019.

Martu have stressed that these trips have been one of the most effective ways to build better understanding, foster more respect and develop deeper relationships with ‘whitefellas’. Martu believe that being on country for a number of days with ‘whitefellas’ enables Martu to better share their stories, culture and experiences and to bridge the gap between Martu and ‘whitefellas’.

“Taking whitefellas out on country has been one of the best things. Policemen, BHP, Magistrate. This has helped build a relationship with them.” – Newman community member (2020)

“I think it’s really good, good set up [justice camp at Yulpu]. It’s good to bring all the whitefellas out to the Martu country. Yeah, it’s really, really good.” – MLP member (2017)

“It’s a good thing that, for the Commissioner coming out Martu country, and bringing all his colleagues to find more Martu, and it’s really good for them to learn more Martu...learning from our people, and the Commissioner and his colleagues are listening...Now we’ve got the big people in the high level, so we’ve got Commissioner here with us, listening to us, what we’re saying.” – MLP member (2018)

- **Martu Leadership Program** – The MLP has played a significant role in helping Martu work with ‘whitefellas’. The MLP helped Martu understand how ‘whitefellas’ could be effective partners with whom they could work to change things for Martu. The MLP also helped Martu grow in confidence in interacting and working with mainstream Australia. In this way, the MLP has strengthened Martu ability and assertiveness to form partnerships with ‘whitefellas’ including various State and Australian Government agencies, Deloitte Private, Aboriginal Legal Service, Herbert Smith Freehills and other corporate and not-for-profit entities. MLP members have spent time with ‘whitefellas’ in new contexts and in new conversations, enabling Martu to see some ‘whitefellas’ as valuable partners.⁴³ Lobbying trips and presentations undertaken by MLP members have also increased ‘whitefellas’ exposure to Martu culture, country and history. This has also been important in helping ‘whitefellas’ come to the table with Martu.

“Learning lots through MLP. Working with and talking to whitefellas. The good respect and relationship. Going out and talking to BHP and getting funding to work on country.” – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

“It would be harder without MLP program. MLP program good because whitefellas listen to us. We spoke to the Commissioner and the Sergeant.” – MLP member (2020)

- **Financial accountability** – Martu appreciate that it is important to show ‘whitefellas’ how they have used money provided to them. Some Martu have acknowledged that KJ has been valuable as it helps to discharge financial responsibilities in terms of appropriately managing funding received from partners. KJ’s innovative governance practices, including its methods for making corporate finances transparent to people without the capacity to read a conventional chart of accounts, was recognised when it was Highly Commended in the 2016 National Indigenous Governance Awards. The MLP also reports to participants on the financial performance of all Martu companies, illustrating the public nature of that information.

“Build good relationship together. Need to work together because they are the ones that hold the purse strings. Make sure that thing is working under and within the budget. KJ helps to show whitefellas how they have used money.” – Jigalong community member (2020)

⁴³ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, ‘The Martu Leadership Program – Evaluation of a Pilot Program Using the Social Return on Investment Methodology’, April 2017, Page 35.

10. Work and training



Key evaluation finding: Martu have consistently reported that KJ has created work and training opportunities that they want and that without KJ there would be very few work options. While KJ work has created positive outcomes, Martu now want opportunities beyond ranger work and more training to be delivered in communities. Martu want more opportunities for training and diverse work. Martu aspire to a stronger economy with work and economic forms that conform with Martu social aspirations and constraints, and the training and qualifications to make that happen.

Outside of KJ, there are limited work options for Martu

Martu live in one of the most remote places in the world where there are limited industries offering sustainable work to community members. In Newman and Hedland, there are very few secure jobs beyond those offered by the mining industry. Few Martu have taken up work in mining and there are no other significant industries in the region. Some Martu have participated in training through the mines, however, few engage in longer term work opportunities.

The Community Development Program⁴⁴ (CDP or “work for the dole”) operating in the Western Desert region offers sporadic maintenance jobs in communities, but few Martu take up this work on a regular basis. Ashburton Aboriginal Corporation is the provider of CDP services in the region.

Work options available for Martu are limited, difficult to maintain due to the need to travel back into town from remote communities (as is the case with CDP), or fundamentally clash with Martu values, particularly in relation to mining. For example, working for the mining industry involves digging up and destroying country, which is difficult to reconcile with Martu culture. Most Martu therefore find these employment opportunities impossible to maintain in the long term.

“It is destroying my own land...I am digging up my country...Every country has a dream...It is destroying our culture and lore.” – Parnngurr community member (2011)

“Ten years ago, before KJ, Martu were working in schools and some in clinics but there were really no jobs.” – MLP member (2020)

KJ has created work and training opportunities that Martu want

In recent consultations for this evaluation, 94% of surveyed community members reported that KJ has helped create work and training opportunities that Martu want and are right for Martu. Martu often explained that without the jobs created by KJ, there were very limited viable options at all.

KJ programs and work are aligned to Martu values and way of life, with the employment opportunity most commonly cited being KJ ranger work. The ranger program provides work and training opportunities. Rangers fulfil conventional responsibilities to manage the environment, but also protect the cultural values of their country. The ranger program began in 2009 with six Jigalong rangers. It has now grown to employ nearly 300 rangers.⁴⁵

Martu also receive training through the ranger program including four-wheel driving, helicopter emergency medical service, conservation and land management, firearms, destruction of large herbivores and basic fencing and gardening skills.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ The Community Development Program is a remote employment and community development initiative funded by the National Indigenous Australians Agency. In the Western Desert region, Ashburton Aboriginal Corporation is one of the largest CDP providers.

⁴⁵ Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa, *Country Programs*, <<https://www.kj.org.au/country-programs>>.

⁴⁶ Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa, Annual Reports 2015/2016 to 2018/2019.

Martu have consistently reported that working with KJ means they are able to earn an income while connecting to and caring for country, learning culture and language from elders and spending time in community away from troubles in town. This is in stark contrast to other work opportunities highlighted above that are currently not tenable for Martu in the long term.

“Martu were walking around with not much work to do in the communities. Some went to work with Kanyirrinpa Jukurpa. They got work, they got good money, they got knowledge, they got strong. The feeling inside, their spirit is happy and strong.” – Martu elder (2019/2020)

“Before KJ there was nothing. When KJ came up there was work everywhere. People were going to ngurra [country] and finding waterhole. KJ is doing proper thing and helping young people go out.” – Martu elder (2020)

“Part-time ranger. Been good. Working around community like rubbish and cleaning. It’s better being a ranger. My mother is a Punmu ranger. I learn from her on trips.” – Punmu community member

“Working with KJ is good because they can stay with ngurra [country] so KJ can take them out and see the countryside. It is good for them...KJ take Martu out on country as part of their job but Ashburton jobs you stay in town and in community.” – Punmu community member.

It is useful to note that KJ is the largest employer of Martu⁴⁷. Over the ten years since 2009/2010, the number of Martu employed by KJ has grown from 203 to 383 with wage payments to Martu increasing far more substantially from \$0.6 million to \$2.4 million over the same time frame.⁴⁸

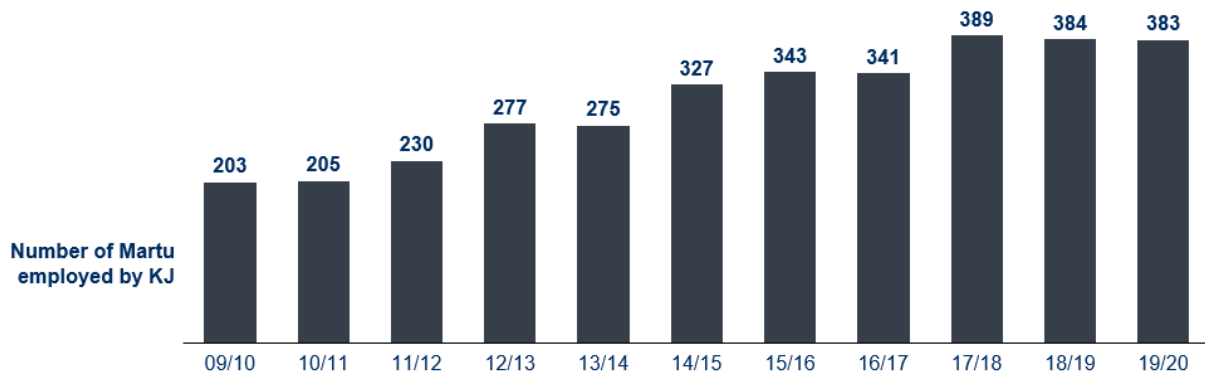


Figure 3: Number of Martu employed by KJ between 2009/2010 and 2019/2020

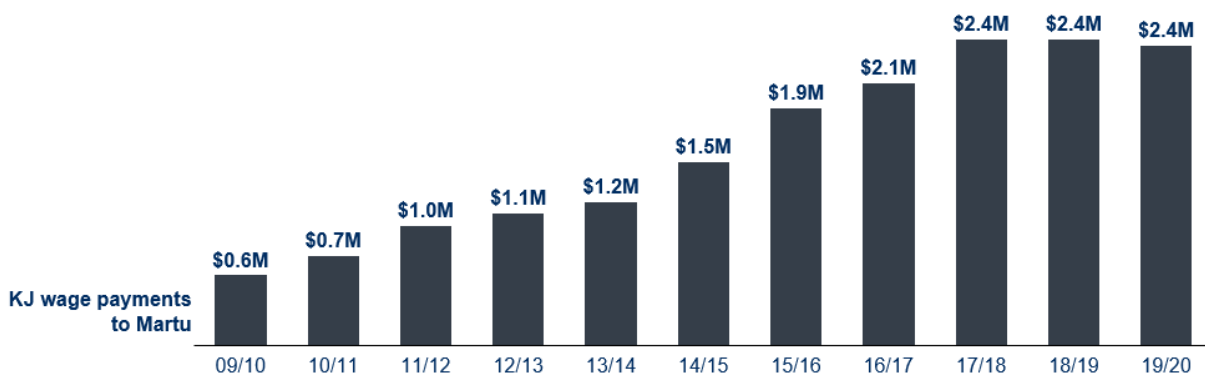


Figure 4: KJ wage payments made to Martu between 2009/2010 and 2019/2020

⁴⁷ Kanyirrinpa Jukurpa, Annual Report 2019/2020, Page 33.

⁴⁸ Kanyirrinpa Jukurpa employment and wage payment data.

Martu want more work opportunities beyond ranger work and more training in communities

While Martu consistently reported positive outcomes flowing from KJ's job and training opportunities, in recent consultations for this evaluation, Martu also expressed an aspiration for job opportunities beyond ranger work.

For instance, some stressed that they want to see more Martu working in the KJ office in an administrative capacity and in ranger coordinator roles. To this end, Martu expressed a desire to shadow KJ staff to build capacity and a need to undergo administrative training to fill office roles. These can be seen as immediately visible examples of broad aspirations for more diverse work and greater responsibility.

Having more Martu take on ranger coordinator roles is also important as Martu see it as an option to keep the ranger program running over the summer months when KJ staff typically go on leave due to higher temperatures. Martu feel that there will be more opportunities for ranger activities to continue during this period if more Martu were able to fill those staffing positions.

"No Martu are working in office in KJ in town. That's a problem. There should be more people in the office that are Martu." – MLP member (2020)

"Martu need more training. Admin training and Martu help in the office. Have someone in reception." – MLP member (2020)

"We want more training. KJ should be training Martu up next to KJ staff. Martu should work next to ranger coordinators but it's not happening. We want to be trained in computer stuff. This is also so that when KJ staff leave on holiday at end of the year, we can keep programs running. When KJ staff leave, there is nothing and everyone goes to town." – MLP member (2020)

"A little bit but we need more. We are doing the same thing over and over. Need to do more training." – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

Martu also want more training opportunities to be delivered in communities rather than in town. This is important to Martu as they see it as an opportunity to create positive outcomes on three fronts. Firstly, delivering training in community will create more interest in community living and draw more Martu away from town. Secondly, when Martu build skills such as plumbing, gardening, fencing and general house maintenance, Martu can use those skills directly to improve community if that work could be funded, organised and supported in a form that can secure strong Martu engagement. Thirdly, creating more training opportunities is generally a desired outcome.

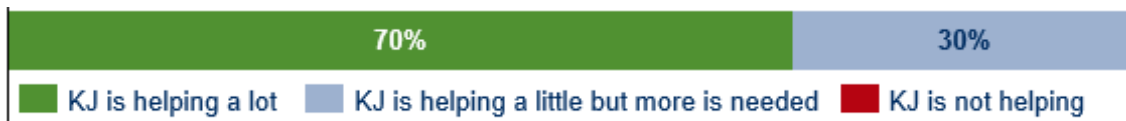
"Good that KJ give opportunity but we need to happen around community. Training should be happening in community and not in town." – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

"If I want to be a plumber, I need trainers to train me here [in community]. As a ranger doing other carpentry and construction so we can look after community." – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

"Get our people working. Not only going out field but when they come to community they should still have a job. Nothing is happening in community. No jobs no training in community. People need to be trained up so they can maintain and care for old people and maintain housing." – Jigalong community member (2020)

"Need to have more work and training. We just go to bush and come back. Then still doing same thing. Going to town and getting into trouble and coming back. Like a circle. Jobs in community so they don't have to go into town." – Jigalong community member (2020)

11. Being healthy



Key evaluation finding: Martu experience very high levels of disadvantage in their health outcomes and find current health services challenging to navigate and access. KJ has helped Martu be healthier primarily through its on-country programs. While Martu acknowledge KJ’s contribution, some feel more needs to be done to improve health outcomes.

Martu want to be healthier. Martu experience very high levels of disadvantage in their health outcomes, primarily caused by “*whitfella poison*”, namely *wama* (alcohol), drugs and high sugar diets. Martu often reflect on the spiritual and physical strength of *pujiman* (desert born Martu) and aspire to become healthier like their ancestors.

“Whitfella world created problems but got to learn about those problems so we can understand and get over it and come out with a better way.” – Parngurr community member (2020)

“Whitfella world created problem. Whitfella way I became diabetic.” – Parngurr community member (2020)

Current health services are challenging for Martu

Martu explained that current health services are challenging to access. This is due to numerous reasons including language barriers as health service staff typically do not speak Martu language. Some Martu also feel hospitals are not welcoming places and are fearful of attending if they need help. Martu do, however, acknowledge that hospitals are useful places that offer medical assistance. Martu have also reported long wait times in hospitals.

“Martu too frightened to go to clinic [hospital]. They need Martu to be there to make them feel comfortable. Need to look at your eyes. If yellow, it could be your kidney. Go to clinic [hospital]. They are there to help you live longer.” – Newman community member (2020)

“[Hospital] long waiting time. They just send people home.” – Newman community member (2020)

Some Martu have also identified that doctors and nurses typically address one issue in isolation and do not take a holistic view of their problems.

“Doctors and nurses are not helping Martu. They target one thing and do not look at whole person.” – MLP member (2020)

KJ has helped Martu be healthier primarily through on-country programs

In recent consultations for this evaluation, 70% of surveyed Martu felt KJ was helping Martu a lot to be healthier. Some Martu felt very strongly that without KJ, the health outcomes facing their people would be substantially worse. Some explained that if KJ did not exist, they would be in hospital, on dialysis and sick. Others expressed sincerely and seriously that they would be in prison or dead.

“Without KJ people would be in prison and dead, truly.” – MLP member (2020)

When explaining how KJ helped Martu be healthier, Martu most frequently referred to KJ’s on-country program. For Martu, being on and caring for country is synonymous to feeling healthy themselves. Martu often talk about their spirit being healthy on country, of country caring for them when they care for country and of reconnecting to traditional knowledge of bush tucker and bush medicine.

KJ's on-country programs enable Martu to go back to country to reconnect with country and to heal physically, emotionally and spiritually. The program also provides opportunities to spend less time in town where *wama* (alcohol), drugs and fast food are prevalent.

"When Martu go on country, it takes the bad spirits away." – Newman community member (2020)

"[Ranger work] is good when working out and tiring themselves out. Eat bush tucker too." – Martu elder (2020)

"I am healthy when country is healthy." – Parnngurr community member (2020)

Martu also explained that working with KJ helps them be healthier as KJ provides healthy food on trips and at events. Many Martu remarked that too many of their families eat fast food and do not often eat healthy options. This is particularly the case for Martu living in Newman where poor food options are easily accessible. KJ provides healthy food for Martu and often cook healthy meals for community.

"[KJ] feed Martu healthy food. On country trips there is healthy food. Takes too long for Martu to cook, some people eat junk food. Takeaway. Chicken treat. McDonalds." – Newman community member (2020)

While Martu acknowledge KJ's contribution, some feel more needs to be done to improve health outcomes

In recent consultations for this evaluation, 30% of surveyed Martu reported feeling that while KJ was helping a little, more needed to be done. Martu acknowledge that their people suffer from very poor health outcomes, particularly in relation to alcohol, and they want things to fundamentally improve.

In a 2016 study by *Social Ventures Australia*⁴⁹, data from the Newman Women's Shelter showed that the median age of death for male Martu was 43.5 years and 37 years for female Martu. In 2020, the median age for Martu was updated to 39 years for both male and female.⁵⁰ This is compared to Australia's median age of death of 78 years for males and 84 years for females (as at 2018).⁵¹

Furthermore, according to the Newman Women's Shelter data, between 2006 and 2016, 51% of deaths were caused by alcohol related illness, 14% of deaths related to diabetes, 14% were related to domestic and family violence and 11% was caused by suicide (with the balance categorised as 'other' causes). It is important to note that the domestic and family violence cases all involved alcohol in some way, with the perpetrator and victim being intoxicated.⁵²

Martu want this to change. While Martu acknowledge KJ's efforts, against this reality, Martu want more to be done to improve health outcomes for their communities.

"[In relation to 'being healthier' outcome] We are doing a little bit but need to do more." – MLP member (2020)

In particular, Martu have remarked on a need for more education for both young and older generations. Martu stressed that it was important to take education on healthier living to schools to embed healthy habits earlier. Martu also re-emphasised the need to strengthen communities so more people come back to country and away from town. When Martu are in community, they are not drinking alcohol; they are eating bush tucker and are healthier.

"If Martu are not drinking in community then healthy – if community is better then they are off wama [alcohol]. In community they are out on country more eating bush tucker." – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

⁴⁹ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, 'Analysis of Martu Deaths in the East Pilbara', September 2016, Page 3.

⁵⁰ A report was commissioned by KJ in 2020. That work identified the updated median age of death for Martu. At the time of this evaluation, however, the report was not ready for publishing and is still forthcoming.

⁵¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 'Deaths in Australia', 7 August 2020, Available at < <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/life-expectancy-death/deaths-in-australia/contents/age-at-death> >

⁵² Ibid.

“They [KJ] don’t come with books telling us this is bad stuff and this is healthy stuff. This is sugar. Take to school and teach younger generation. Go to old people what to eat. Can’t have too much sugar.”

– Jigalong community member (2020)

“Should make Martu posters. Educating people more. Don’t give up. Keep doing it.” - MLP member (2020)

7. Conclusions and Observations

This section is set out in two parts. The first concludes key findings of the evaluation focussing on KJ's overall contribution to Martu outcomes, where Martu want to take matters in the future and what KJ is already implementing to address those aspirations.

The second part discusses broader observations and key themes that have emerged through this project. The observations focus on Martu outcomes and how they compare to a Western perspective, major enablers of Martu outcomes and KJ's standing with Martu.

Concluding remarks

KJ's contribution to Martu outcomes

Over the past 10 years, KJ has made a substantial impact on outcomes that are important to Martu.

Before KJ, Martu described a world where connection to country, culture and family were on a decline while the divide between Martu and mainstream Australia was growing.

Martu started KJ in 2005 to write a better future for their people.

Since then, KJ has helped Martu revive, preserve and strengthen their traditional identity, culture and connection to country. Martu said that because of KJ, they have reconnected to *ngurra* (country), protected their *wangka* (language), revived learning between old and young for more *ninti* (knowledge), are looking after *walyja* (family) and are living *kujungkarrini* (in unity and harmony) again.

KJ is also helping Martu redefine their identity in the context of modern Australia and ultimately to write a new future for themselves in today's world. Martu feel more confident as they now possess and have access to two way learning of both Martu and 'whitefella' ways. Martu feel empowered to speak up for communities and participate in mainstream Australia for the benefit of their people.

KJ have supported Martu to garner deeper respect from 'whitefellas'. Many Martu now feel a sense of hope that they can walk together with 'whitefellas' towards a better future, towards reconciliation.

KJ's role in the journey of Martu over the past 10 years has been significant. The organisation has helped Martu protect their past and redefine their future.

How Martu want to shape their future

Martu have acknowledged the contribution KJ has made towards outcomes that are important to them. Martu have also expressed what they believe needs to be done in the future to continue improving outcomes for their communities (in no particular order):

- *Expand KJ's language program* – There is still a high risk of losing language and Martu feel more deliberate efforts are needed. In particular, Martu would like to see KJ's language program expanded to incorporate more language groups with greater involvement from Martu.
- *Increase support to look after kids and families* – Martu would like more support to help families take young kids on country and travel to funerals. Newman and Jigalong families in particular are asking for more support to care for their children and families in these ways.
- *Strengthen communities for a higher standard of living* – Martu are worried about the state of their communities, with the chief concern being housing. Martu look to KJ for a solution but as a non-government community organisation, KJ has limited ability to ultimately resolve housing issues within communities. There is a need for further government investment to resolve this problem. Martu also want to develop better partnerships with community corporations and encourage KJ rangers and young people to do more work in community. Martu have also stressed that the success of many other outcomes depends on stronger communities.

- *Increase leadership opportunities to continue building confidence* – Leadership programs like the MLP and opportunities to learn both ways are working for Martu. Martu want more of these opportunities so more Martu can become more confident and speak up for communities.
- *Start Martu diversionary program and grow Wama Wangka to get people out of town/‘lock up’ and back home* – Martu want more to be done to break the destructive cycles in their communities. Most importantly, communities need to be stronger with better standards of living. Martu also want a diversionary program and for the Wama Wangka program to grow (diversionary program and expansion of Wama Wangka are expected to commence in 2021).
- *Work beyond ranger work and training in communities* – Martu want more job opportunities beyond ranger work. They want to take increasingly responsible roles in KJ programs and to see the range of employment opportunities substantially expanded while remaining congruent with Martu values, preferences, social and cultural priorities and societal constraints. Martu also want more training opportunities delivered in communities rather than in town.
- *Increase efforts to help Martu be healthy* – Martu feel more needs to be done to improve health outcomes. Martu want more health education for young and old people. Martu also re-emphasised the need to strengthen communities so more people come back to country, stop drinking alcohol and eat healthier.

What KJ has already started

It is important to note that KJ have plans to implement a suite of programs to address some of these aspirations. These programs include:

- *Martu Diversionary Program*: the diversionary program is already in development and due to commence later in 2021. It is a program to reduce Martu incarceration by facilitating and supporting the diversion of people from the criminal justice system (from court, on parole, after release) into life, employment, learning and mentoring in alcohol-free remote communities.
- *Getting Back Home*: a transport program to help Martu who live in remote communities to get back to those communities from towns, rather than being stuck in town.
- *Staying at Home*: a program to help Martu in remote communities conduct a vast array of government and other transactions (court, licensing, police, Centrelink, banking, etc.) from those communities through the provision of supported, high-quality digital capability.
- *Kids on Country*: a program to divert young people at risk of getting into trouble in town or communities, focussed on the development of cultural learning and identity through trips and camps on country with older Martu.

Other important observations

Consistent themes and other important observations emerged throughout this project. These relate to Martu outcomes and how they compare to a Western perspective, major enablers of Martu outcomes and KJ’s standing with Martu. This section discusses each in turn.

Martu outcomes and how they compare to a Western perspective

At the outset, it is useful to acknowledge that there is some broad thematic alignment between what Martu want and Western-based targets. For instance, Martu have articulated a desire for better health among their people, more work and training opportunities and less people in ‘lock-up’. This is consistent with Western aspirations and mainstream targets. For example, Close the Gap aspires to

see everyone enjoying long and healthy lives, strong economic participation and less representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system.⁵³

While there is alignment at a broader level, there are also key differences between Martu outcomes and Western perspectives. These differences include:

- *Prominence of traditional outcomes* – the maintenance of cultural identity is central and prominent for Martu. Of the 11 Martu outcomes, five relate to the traditional Martu identity. Furthermore, traditional outcomes are foundational and are a wellspring from which other outcomes flow. This is in contrast to Western based targets where there is less focus on culture, language and connection to country as compared to other targets. For example, only two out of 17 Close the Gap targets relate to culture, languages and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's relationship with land and waters.
- *Outcomes are interconnected, inextricably linked and enable one another* – the Western perspective commonly considers outcomes as individual and distinct from one another. Indeed, for clarity, this report also discusses each outcome separately. Martu, however, do not conceptualise their outcomes in this way. Rather, Martu think of their outcomes as interconnected, inextricably linked and dependent on one another. For example, language (*wangka*), country (*ngurra*), family (*walyja*) and learning from elders (*ninti*) are concepts that are interconnected and cannot be separated. Each outcome enables and is dependent on the others. In consultations, Martu frequently referred to all four concepts together. Martu also repeatedly explained that certain outcomes cannot succeed without others equally thriving. For example, Martu feel that many outcomes cannot be addressed without communities first being stronger with higher standards of living. In this way, Martu also conceptualise outcomes in a holistic and interconnected way.
- *Interpretation of outcomes are more expansive* – while some Martu outcomes are thematically similar to Western aspirations, Martu interpretations of those outcomes are more expansive. For example, the sixth Close the Gap target aims to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students reach their full potential through further education pathways. The target focusses solely on achievement of tertiary qualifications. For Martu, however, education pathways for their young people is far more expansive than schooling alone and must include *learning from and respecting old people and building confidence through two-way learning*.

Differences between Martu outcomes and Western perspectives emphasise the importance of designing programs that align to a Martu worldview. As cultural identity is central and Martu see outcomes in an interconnected, holistic and expansive way, it then follows that the methods of achieving those outcomes must be appropriately tailored to that worldview. For instance, a program cannot target *wama* [alcohol] in town without also addressing the relationship of that behaviour to loss of connection to country, family and poor standard of living in communities.

The MLP is a good example of a program tailored to Martu outcomes and perspectives. The program acknowledges the interconnected nature of issues and the need for efforts to build upon each other for long term change. It puts in place many conditions that are critical pre-requisites for long-term, community-led social and economic development. The MLP focusses on re-establishing traditional social structures, building confidence and resilience while simultaneously increasing Martu understanding of how mainstream Australia works.⁵⁴

Martu articulation of what matters and the disparity between their vision and Western perspectives also underlines the importance of giving Indigenous groups the opportunity to define their priorities

⁵³ Australian Government, *Closing the Gap Targets and Outcomes*, Available at <https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/closing-gap-targets-and-outcomes>.

⁵⁴ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, 'The Martu Leadership Program – Evaluation of a Pilot Program Using the Social Return on Investment Methodology', April 2017, Page 56.

from the outset. This has now been codified in the Productivity Commission Indigenous Evaluation Strategy released in October 2020. The Strategy emphasises that what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people value, their knowledges and lived experiences need to be reflected in what is evaluated, how evaluation is undertaken and the objectives of policies and programs.

Major enablers of Martu outcomes

Three major enablers of Martu outcomes were consistently referenced by Martu in this project – the centrality of community as opposed to destructive forces in town, housing in community and the effectiveness of on-country and MLP programs.

- *Centrality of community versus destructive forces in town* – Martu living in town face unique challenges presented by the prevalence of alcohol and drugs which fuels violence and destructive cycles. It is where Martu run into trouble and are exposed to toxic influences. Communities on the other hand, are where Martu are removed from those influences and where they are closer to culture, family and country.

Martu cited the importance of getting people out of town and back home to communities across multiple outcomes in the evaluation. Martu see communities as a powerful circuit breaker to cycles of destructive behaviours experienced by many Martu today, particularly in town. Communities are a platform for progress where they can build a strong society on Martu terms with increasing engagement with mainstream Australia. This observation has also been confirmed in previous reports including a cost benefit analysis⁵⁵ from 2018 which supported the case for investment in very remote Aboriginal communities.

- *Housing in community* – To create stronger communities for Martu, there must be improved housing stock. The state of housing is a critical concern for Martu, a bottleneck to further progress and a major barrier to people coming back to communities and moving away from toxic influences in town. Without improved housing, communities will not become stronger and other outcomes will become difficult to achieve. For example, without stronger communities and better housing, it will be difficult to get more Martu out of town and out of 'lock-up'.
- *On-country Programs and Martu Leadership Program* – The on-country programs and the MLP are two of the most frequently cited contributors to positive outcomes by Martu. In fact, on-country programs were cited across all outcomes and are therefore responsible for achieving a diverse range of outcomes that are important to Martu. Similarly, the MLP was cited as contributing to five Martu outcomes including learning from and respecting old people, unity and harmony, building confidence through two-way learning, getting people out of town and 'lock-up', and better respect and relationship with 'whitefellas'.

Interestingly, both on-country programs and the MLP are cross-generational programs where old and young are brought together to learn alongside one another. Learnings are also brought back and shared with family and communities. Both programs are also framed by a Martu worldview. They acknowledge the interconnected nature of issues and outcomes and the need for efforts to build on each other for long term change and engagement. For example, on-country programs and the MLP focus on re-establishing traditional structures while also creating economic opportunities and engagement with mainstream Australia.

Martu and KJ

It was evident through the evaluation that Martu trust KJ and look to them to address most matters. For example, they look to KJ to improve education, support them in preserving their culture, increase diverse work opportunities, reduce incarceration, resolve poor housing in communities and bridge the

⁵⁵ Social Ventures Australia Consulting, 'Investment in Very Remote Communities, A Cost Benefit Analysis', October 2018.

relationship between Martu and mainstream Australia. A number of reasons for this emerged through the evaluation. Martu trust KJ to address most matters as:

- *KJ is a Martu organisation* – KJ was created by Martu 15 years ago by elder, Muuki Taylor. KJ was created to look after Martu culture and heritage and to ensure that Martu ongoing connection with country remained strong. KJ's decision making authority and power lies with Martu and is representative of all five Martu communities. KJ's governing body is referred to as the KJ Board and consists of 12 Martu directors and three non-voting advisory directors (advisory directors provide expertise in financial management, regulatory compliance, law and prudent management advice but cannot vote, ensuring Martu have genuine control of major decisions). The 12 Martu directors include two each from five Martu communities and two from the Martu diaspora.
- *KJ work with Martu in the right way* – As part of this evaluation, Martu articulated eight values to describe how they want organisations, including KJ, to work with them. Values include working in partnership as equals, building a future that Martu want and creating a culture of participation (among others). Martu across all communities reported that they felt KJ has embodied all eight values over the past 10 years. The second report accompanying this document discusses KJ and the eight values in detail.
- *KJ has been responsive to Martu priorities and aligns to a Martu worldview* – Over the past 10 years, KJ has grown through being responsive to Martu aspirations and priorities. Programs and activities have been framed by what Martu value and align to a Martu worldview. The effectiveness of on-country programs and the MLP in addressing Martu priorities is an example of KJ's responsiveness to Martu and has been discussed above.

While it was evident in the evaluation that Martu trust KJ to address their priorities, an emerging theme was the growing frustration with the lack of progress in housing, which Martu see as central to enabling many other outcomes. As with many other matters, Martu look to KJ to fix this issue but as a non-government community organisation, KJ does not have the remit or the funds to solve the problem without government investment.

Annexure 1: KJ and Martu outcomes voting exercise

At each community consultation session in Newman, Parnngurr, Punmu, Jigalong and Kunawarrtji, Martu were asked to vote on whether in the past 10 years, they believed KJ had contributed positively to each of the 11 outcomes.

Green indicated that they believed KJ was helping a lot and contributing positively to that outcome, blue indicated that they believed KJ was helping a little but more work is needed and red indicated that they did not believe KJ was helping and making a positive impact.

The data collected is summarised as follows:

Martu outcome	Red	Blue	Green	Total
Looking after and caring for country	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	47 (96%)	49
Keeping language strong	2 (4%)	7 (14%)	42 (82%)	51
Learning from and respecting old people	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	48 (98%)	49
Looking after kids and family	4 (6%)	11 (17%)	48 (76%)	63
Unity and harmony between Martu	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	46
Making community strong for a higher standard of living	25 (37%)	17 (25%)	25 (37%)	67
Building confidence through two-way learning	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	48 (97%)	49
Getting people out of town, out of 'lock-up' and back home	20 (37%)	16 (30%)	18 (33%)	54
Better respect and relationship with whitefellas	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	36 (97%)	37
Work and training	3 (6%)	0 (0%)	46 (94%)	49
Being healthy	0 (0%)	14 (30%)	32 (70%)	46

It should be noted that in undertaking this exercise:

- Response numbers against each outcome are not consistent as some outcomes were consolidated in later workshops after thematic considerations or others were not voted on in some communities as they were not relevant to those present (for example, Martu living in Newman did not vote on 'making community strong' as they lived in town).
- The exercise was not anonymous and took place in a single room where participants were able to see other people's votes. This was done in the interests of maintaining community engagement as the consultations ran for over two hours per session and a secret ballot approach would have required more time. Martu are also more comfortable in larger groups. It is acknowledged that the group voting nature may have introduced an element of bias in some cases (although noting that the evaluation team did not observe any such bias taking place during the exercise). Any potential bias was mitigated by holding follow up one-on-one interviews to capture more independent perspectives.
- The evaluation team also trialled a black colour to indicate where Martu may have felt KJ was making things worse. The black colour was trialled in one of the first consultation sessions with the Newman community. During the trial, it was apparent that four colour options (including black) caused some confusion during voting. Black was also very rarely used by participants (only two black stickers were used in total when voting across all outcomes). To avoid confusion and in the interests of simplicity and clarity for remaining community consultations, black was removed from the exercise. It is worth noting, however, that in the

absence of a black voting option, there were opportunities for community to share any feelings they had on whether KJ was making any outcomes worse, during one-on-one interviews.

Annexure 2: Reference list

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Addendum: Safety

A note about this Addendum: This Addendum was prepared by a KJ advisory director and not by SVA Consulting. After this evaluation report was completed, it was presented to KJ board of directors in early August 2021. At that board meeting, Martu members identified *safety* as an additional twelfth outcome. As safety was not raised during the evaluation itself, the additional outcome has not been included in the body of the report but rather captured as an addendum. Its inclusion was important to ensure Martu's evolving voice and articulation of what is important to them continues to be captured.

At the KJ board meeting in August 2021, the completed evaluation report was presented for the first time to the directors. Directors had previously participated in consultation sessions for the report including some as members of the Martu Leadership Program, in a specific board consultation and some as community members.

During the board meeting, directors decided that they wished to identify an additional, twelfth outcome important to all Martu – Safety. While there has been no broader consultation with communities on this outcome and therefore no means of broadly assessing KJ's performance on it, the board felt that it was important both to articulate the significance and breadth of the criterion and their initial assessment of KJ's performance against it.

Safety

The board stated that this outcome covers a range of focus areas, some of which may not be immediately apparent to a Western audience:

1. **Workplace Safety** – this is a conventional concern, which the board regularly addresses, examining both the content and implementation of KJ's workplace safety system
2. **Women's Safety** – naturally this is a major concern in an environment where alcohol-fuelled violence in towns is a significant problem. This is a key focus of the Martu Leadership Program and of Wama Wangka
3. **Children's Safety** – this includes physical safety, emotional safety, safety from neglect and cultural safety (see below). This is a key focus of KJ programs either run or assisted by KJ, including the Families Program, the Kids on Country program, the Martu Patrol and Wama Wangka
4. **Support for Martu** – this focuses on support of Martu by Martu, creating safety from jealousy, in-fighting, arguments and humbug
5. **Support for Western staff** – this focuses on effective emotional and organisational support for all non-Martu KJ staff
6. **Cultural safety** – this relates to keeping people safe from the potentially dangerous power of *ngurlu* (secret sacred) locations and objects and from malign forces that arise in the supernatural realm which Martu inhabit. Ensuring that people don't go to the wrong places and are not exposed to these forms of danger is a major concern for Martu

KJ's performance

The board assessed KJ's performance as high in relation to workplace safety.

For all other aspects of this outcome, the overall consensus by the board was that KJ significantly assists but significant improvements are still required.