

YES, I CAN!

ABORIGINAL ADULT
LITERACY CAMPAIGN



Evaluation report

2018



First Nations Graphic Design:

Award-winning designer, Brooke Ottley, has family from across Australia: Gunggari from central Queensland, Wuthathi from far north Queensland, Cape York area, and Torres Strait Islander, from Thursday Island. She lives in Darwin.

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Yes, I Can!

Aboriginal Adult Literacy Campaign

Evaluation Report

2018

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACSF	Australian Core Skills Framework
ARC	Australian Research Council
CDP	Community Development Program
CPO	Campaign Project Officer
CWG	Campaign Working Group
EOI	Expression of Interest
IPLAC	Institute of Pedagogy for Latin America and the Caribbean (Cuba)
LFLF	Literacy for Life Foundation
LLN	Language, Literacy and Numeracy
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PM&C	Prime Minister and Cabinet
UNE	University of New England
UNSW	University of New South Wales
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WAMS	Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service
YIC	<i>Yes, I Can!</i>

INTRODUCTION

In 2018, the Literacy for Life Foundation (LFLF) continued its efforts to scale up the *Yes, I Can!* (YIC) Aboriginal adult literacy Campaign which began in 2012 in Wilcannia. At a community level, four new intakes were run, two each in the rural New South Wales (NSW) communities of Walgett and Boggabilla-Toomelah. By the end of the year, work had also begun to 'prepare the ground' in three new locations, Collarenebri in western NSW, Campbelltown in South West Sydney and Ltyentye Apurte in the Northern Territory (NT). The four intakes completed in 2018, which are the subject of this report, brought the total number of intakes completed since the Campaign began to 21. Table 1 below shows the 2018 Campaign timetable.

The year ended with well-attended community graduations in Walgett and Toomelah in December. Overall, there were 32 graduates, 16 men and 16 women. This represented a higher proportion of

males than in previous years, mainly as a result of the figures in Walgett, as set out in Table 2, below.

This brought the total number of graduates since the Campaign began in Wilcannia in 2012 to 206. As in previous intakes, local staff undertook household literacy surveys and other work to 'socialise' the Campaign in the community, then followed this up by the taking of Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from people wanting to join the classes. The participants who have attended more than 3 days over the first 3 weeks and completed a minimum of six lessons within this period are designated as starters for that intake, and this number becomes the baseline for measuring retention and completions.

Table 3 summarises the completion and retention data for 2018. The average number of graduates (8) was one less than the 2012–2017 Campaign average. The retention rate of 56% was also lower than the 2012–2017 average for the Campaign

Table 1. Campaigns by Community, 2018

Intake	Phase 2: YIC lessons start	Phase 2: YIC lessons end	Phase 3: Post-literacy end	Graduation
Walgett 3	06/02/18	16/05/18	08/08/18	13/12/18
Walgett 4	11/06/18	15/09/18	06/12/18	13/12/18
Boggabilla/Toomelah 2	06/02/18	21/05/18	09/07/18	14/12/18
Boggabilla/Toomelah 3	25/06/18	11/10/18	13/12/18	14/12/18

Table 2. 2018 Campaign Graduates by Sex by Intake

Intake	Male (M)	Female (F)	Total population (T)
Walgett 3	3	4	7
Walgett 4	6	2	8
Total Walgett	9	6	15
Boggabilla-Toomelah 2	2	5	7
Boggabilla-Toomelah 3	5	5	10
Total Boggabilla-Toomelah	7	10	17
Overall	16	16	32

Table 3. Participation and Retention 2018, by Intake

	Walgett 3	Walgett 4	Boggabilla Toomelah 2	Boggabilla Toomelah 3	Total	Average
EOIs	37	58	26	53	174	44
Starters	14	17	11	15	57	14
Graduates	7	8	7	10	32	8
Retention (%)	50	47	64	67	56	56

(64%)¹, but was still more than three times higher than the average national completion rate (18%) for Indigenous students in Certificate I and II level 'pre-vocational' courses in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system.

Meanwhile, as the Campaigns were progressing in Walgett and Toomelah, the Foundation's national leadership was also working on securing resources to upscale further. This required a program of active engagement with potential funding partners in government and the private sector, while slowly building the organisation's internal resources and capacity in preparation for the anticipated further expansion in 2019 and subsequent years. The Foundation's major corporate sponsor, Multiplex, continued to provide essential financial and in-kind support, including new office space for the national staff in Sydney, while Foundation staff took on a greater role in managing the accounts, which were migrated out of the Multiplex system to LFLF's own stand-alone accounting system. By the end of the year, the consistent lobbying of Commonwealth and State governments and corporate and philanthropic donors, allied with regular forays into local and national media, had resulted in significant growth in the number of funders and the size of their contributions, and funds had been secured to move into three new locations, including the first in an urban centre, and the first outside NSW, in a Central Australian community where English is not the home language.

The Foundation made several changes during 2018 to its staffing and structure, with new and continuing local and national staff receiving a more systematic program of training and ongoing professional development in the mass literacy campaign model. In the course of 2018, 25 people² worked for LFLF on the Campaign roll out, of whom 17 (68%) worked in local community teams and eight in the national team. The majority were employed by LFLF or, in the case of some community staff, by a local 'lead agency'. The community teams were predominantly female (82%), and predominantly Aboriginal (65%). The national team had only one Aboriginal staff member, the Executive Director, and 50% of the team were male. The median age for all staff was 45 years. The detailed staffing breakdown is provided in Appendix 1 on page 38.

Following successful negotiations with the Cuban government and their Ambassador in Australia to extend their missions, Cuba's two Technical Advisers were re-appointed in August for a further 12 months as Visiting Academics at the University of New England (UNE), to assist with the further development of the Campaign. Meanwhile the Foundation's three research partners, UNE, the Lowitja Institute and University of New South Wales (UNSW), continued their ongoing evaluation of the community Campaigns and the Australian Research Council (ARC)-funded longitudinal study of the Campaigns' longer-term impacts. The research program resulted in several publications

¹ The detailed statistics for 2012–2018 on which these comparisons are made are attached at Appendix 5 on page 45.

² This does not include people contracted on a short-term basis to provide a particular workshop or service (e.g., the ACSF consultant, Philippa McLean who worked on the assessments, and Stephanie Dale, the creative writing teacher in Phase 3: Post-literacy).

and Conference presentations, and it also led to further development of the purpose-built Communicare database, which generates data both for internal LFLF monitoring and planning in communities, and the evidence of the Campaign's outcomes and impact which is summarised in this report.

STRUCTURE OF REPORT

This report is a product of the ongoing evaluation research, led by the author, utilising the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method first adopted for the 2012 pilot in Wilcannia. The next two sections summarise the methods used to conduct the evaluation, then provide more detail on the conduct and outcomes of the two Campaigns in Walgett and Boggabilla Toomelah. The fourth section reviews the major achievements at a national level, in building sustainable funding partnerships and in developing the Foundation's capacity to manage a larger upscale of the Campaign in future years. Finally, there is a brief report on the larger research program of which this evaluation research is a part, and a discussion of the role of data and data management in the Campaign strategy. Throughout the report, recommendations are made for actions required to take account of the lessons that have been learned over the last 12 months. The Appendices attached to the end of the report provide more detailed data on the matters discussed.

EVALUATION

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation included a detailed study of the context of the individual communities, utilising previous academic research and government reports, data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and media stories. Original data was collected in fieldtrips by myself to both communities, and to Boggabilla-Toomelah by

colleagues from UNE who agreed to assist with this work. The field trips included meetings with Campaign staff and students, observation of classes and staff training sessions, and interviews with community leaders and representatives of local organisations and agencies. Fieldwork data was supplemented with data from phone interviews with local and national staff, from the written progress reports which staff provide to their LFLF managers, and a detailed analysis of the weekly and summary reports generated from the LFLF Communicare database. I also took part in a 2-day state-wide LFLF meeting in May, attended by local staff from both communities. Interim findings from the evaluation research were reported at this meeting, and on several other occasions to the management and Board of LFLF and their Technical Sub-Committee, as well as to local community staff and stakeholders. The last interviews with LFLF staff were completed in January 2019. The evaluation of Boggabilla-Toomelah was enhanced with findings from the ARC longitudinal study, discussed later in this report, and from a small study by a UNE colleague, Dr Rose Amazan for a submission from LFLF on behalf of women in the community to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. No additional research was possible in Walgett, because, despite extensive negotiations and meetings, the Dharriwaa Elders Group did not consent to the ARC longitudinal study proceeding in their community.

Students and staff at the Boggabilla & Toomelah Graduation. Across four intakes, two in 2017, and two in 2018, 72% of students graduated. This is a significantly higher rate than other adult literacy programs in Australia. Photo credit: Hugh Rutherford.



WALGETT CAMPAIGN 2018

OVERALL REACH AND OUTCOMES

By the time the final intake commenced in Walgett in June 2018, LFLF staff had contacted 139 Indigenous households, and identified 221 adults through the household literacy survey, Expressions of Interest and agency referrals. As illustrated in Table 4, below, this represented just over half of the Indigenous households identified in the 2016 census, and 41.9% of the total Indigenous adult population.

Table 4. Walgett Demographic Data

	2016 Census	LFLF household literacy surveys	Coverage (%)
Aboriginal Households	254	139	55
M (15+)	231	106	46
F (15+)	286	115	40
T(15+)	517	221	42

The basic data collected through the household literacy survey and EOIs is stored in the LFLF database, including sex, age cohort or date of birth, address, highest schooling level and post-school qualifications, employment status, self-assessed literacy and children in household. This then provides a baseline from which to measure change over time.

Of these 221 people, 206 provided a self-assessed literacy, as set out in Table 5.

Q: HOW WELL DO YOU THINK YOU CAN READ AND WRITE?

Table 5. Walgett Self-assessed Literacy

a. Very Well	28
b. Ok, but trouble filling out forms	109
c. Not very well	62
d. Not at all	7
e. Not specified	15
Total	221

By comparing the self-assessed literacy with the results of the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) pre-testing (see below), we can predict that at least all of those people who self-assess as level 'c', 'd' and half of those at level 'b' are at Level 1 or below on the ACSF. This produces an approximate estimate of the need for literacy instruction at 178 people, or 80% of those surveyed. This does not mean that 80% of Indigenous adults in Walgett have low literacy, because the local survey workers are encouraged during their training to focus on visiting households where they are likely to find people who most need the Campaign. In Walgett, this included the two historic 'reserve' communities of Gingie and Namoi on the edge of the town boundaries. It does, nevertheless, show that the prevalence of low literacy levels in Walgett is comparable with the other NSW rural communities in which the Campaign has run, and possibly as high as



Walgett survey workers.

50%. It is certainly several times higher than the national figure (14%) for the Australian population (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) as a whole.

Over the four intakes run in 2017 and 2018, the local staff took 187 Expressions of Interest from people who identified as experiencing difficulties as a result of low English literacy, some on more than one occasion. Of these, 68 people became starters across a total of four intakes, two in 2017, and two in 2018. The total number of graduates over four intakes was 31. This data is summarised in Table 6.

The benefits to these 31 graduates have been substantial, including not only some significant literacy improvements but also many other changes in their lives which they have attributed to participating in the Campaign. That said, the low numbers, relative to the estimated need, means that the Campaign in Walgett has not, so far, produced a significant change in the overall rate of adult literacy in the community. Considerably more work would be required to achieve the Campaign's stated objective, namely, to reduce by 50% the number of adults in the community who do not have adequate English language literacy. On current figures, a 50% reduction equates to approximately 90 graduates, or an additional 59 to the 31 already achieved.

In November 2018, the Dharriwaa Elders Group wrote to the Dubbo Office of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) expressing their concern that the Campaign was ending:

We were very concerned to hear that the Literacy for Life Foundation will no longer be funded to deliver its very important program to Walgett. From our observations, this program is THE ONLY literacy program that has produced literacy outcomes for adults in our community who have been let down by the education system.

However, the Foundation's capacity to return in future years to complete the task it has begun will depend on securing the necessary financial support to run at least another four intakes.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1 LFLF Management to include in future planning a return to Walgett to complete up to four more intakes if and when additional funding to do this can be secured.

PARTICIPATION AND RETENTION OUTCOMES, 2018 WALGETT INTAKES

We know from experience and from a range of studies, including two recent national Reviews³, that Indigenous adults with low levels of literacy rarely succeed in formal post-school courses provided through the VET system. One major

Table 6. Participation and Retention, Walgett Intakes 2017–2018

	Walgett 1	Walgett 2	Walgett 3	Walgett 4	Total	Average
EOIs	52	40	37	58	187	47
Starters	21	16	14	17	68	17
Graduates	8	8	7	8	31	8
Retention (%)	38	50	50	47	46	46

3 Strengthening Skills. Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System (2019): <https://www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/domestic-policy/vet-review/strengthening-skills-expert-review-australias-vocational-education-and-training-system>; The Community Development Programme: Evaluation of Participation and Employment Outcomes (2018): <https://www.niaa.gov.au/resource-centre/community-development-programme-evaluation-participation-and-employment-outcomes>. Both reviews are published by the Commonwealth Department of the PM&C.

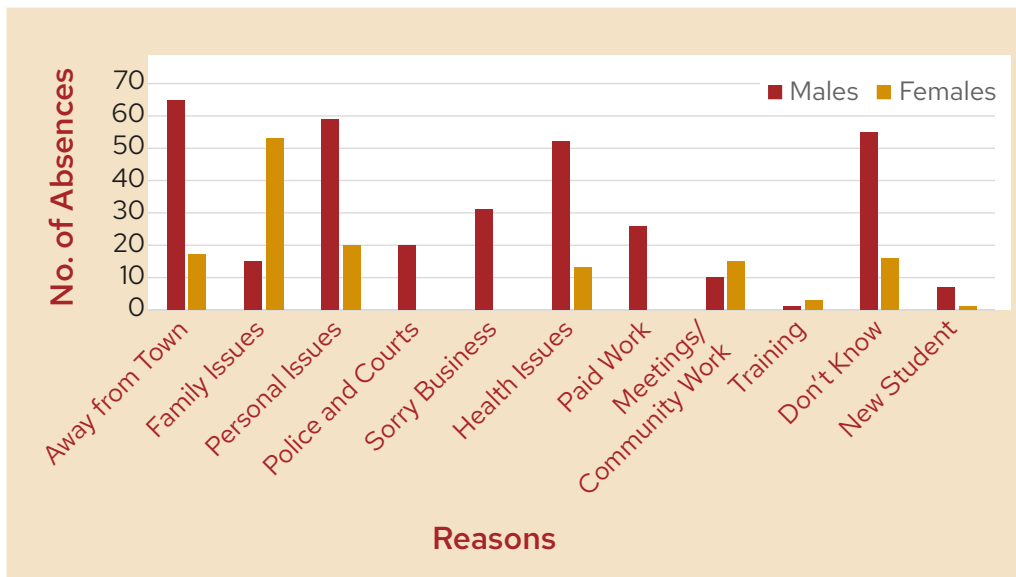
reason is the difficulties they have with the literacy expectations of the written components of those courses, even pre-vocational Certificate I and Certificate II courses. But this is only part of the reason. The experience of LFLF staff working with people who join the Campaign has demonstrated conclusively that low literacy is both a cause and consequence of many other issues and challenges, the combined effect of which is to make it almost impossible to sustain a commitment for formal study. The mass literacy campaign model, as it has been adapted and developed by LFLF, takes account of these challenges, helping students to address them or at least work around them. For example, most students lack their own transport, and since many live at considerable distance from the main part of town where classes were held, a daily pick-up service was provided. Second, even with a pick-up service, many students are not at home when it arrives, or are not ready, in some cases because other things have taken higher priority, and in other cases because they actually have no fixed address, and are moving between houses of relatives and friends. This means the pick-up service driver – an LFLF staff member – may need to go to several locations to find a student, requiring local knowledge and often another student to guide the search. People with low literacy are also very often required to attend other service providers or agencies when class is on, including the health service, for themselves or a child or family member; the courthouse, to face a charge, or as a victim, a witness or a support person for family; an appointment with their job network provider, to meet their mutual obligation requirements; the correctional services office, if they are under supervision; or at an important meeting of a family group at the land council. People also often need to travel to other centres to fulfil family and cultural obligations, including funerals.

When it is not possible to locate a participant for a particular day’s class, the staff then go back out on ‘catch-up’ days to bring them in so they can do the lessons they have missed. This in turn requires a system for keeping track, not just of daily attendance via the attendance record, but also what are the particular lessons completed and missed. Staff also have to record reasons why classes are missed, so adequate explanations can be given to funding bodies and LFLF management when participation drops. When a student is absent or withdraws, staff are asked to establish the main reason, and code the attendance records according to the following key:

Absence codes	Withdrawal codes
1. Away from town	1. Hospitalization
2. Family Issues (including childcare)	2. Illness
3. Personal issues (private business)	3. Cultural Issues
4. Police and Courts	4. Incarceration
5. Sorry Business	5. Community conflict
6. Health issues	6. Left Town
7. Paid Work	7. Work
8. Meetings or other community volunteer work	8. Unknown
9. Other courses/training	
10. Don't know (DK) (student to be followed up by Coordinator).	
11. New Student (only used within first 3 weeks of YIC)	

In each Walgett intake, there was a high number of absences, though the number recorded in Intake 4 was much higher than in Intake 3. Graph 1, showing the breakdown of absences by sex for the last intake, shows that personal, family and health issues figure largely, as do people being away from town on the day of class. The local staff and Technical Adviser from Cuba have to work hard to catch people up on lessons they have missed, to ensure that no one falls so far behind that they cannot finish. However, if they do, they are offered the chance to continue at the next intake. This also applies to people who withdraw.

Graph 1. Reasons for Absence YIC Classes



There are three requirements for graduation.⁴

- 1** First, a student must complete 70% of YIC lessons in Phase 2, including all 'core' lessons.
- 2** Second, they must satisfactorily complete a series of assessment tasks which are part of the work of the final eight YIC lessons.
- 3** Third, they must attend a minimum of 70 hours post-literacy activities in Phase 3.

This means that every graduating student has undertaken at least the minimum number of hours of instruction which literacy researchers have found to be necessary for sustainable literacy improvement.⁵

The number of graduates for the 2018 year was 15 (10M, 5F), and the per intake average was 8. While retention in the fourth intake was less than the third intake, the higher number of fourth intake starters resulted in a slightly higher number of graduates.

The overall performance was not as good as LFLF had achieved in most intakes in other communities, continuing a pattern from 2017. The number of graduates per intake (8) is 20% below the average per intake 2012–2017. The overall retention rate (47%) was slightly higher than the 2016–2017 intakes in Walgett (43%); but well below the overall average 2012–2017 for all communities (64%).

Table 7. Participation and Retention, Walgett 2018 Intakes

	Walgett 3			Walgett 4			Combined		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
EOIs	21	15	36	39	19	58	60	34	94
Starters	8	6	14	14	4	18	22	10	32
Withdrew	5	2	7	7	2	9	12	4	16
Graduates	4	3	7	6	2	8	10	5	15
Retention (%)	50	50	50	43	50	44	46	50	47

⁴ These criteria for completion and graduation were developed on advice from the YIC literacy experts at IPLAC in Havana, who are responsible for maintaining the model's integrity.

⁵ Stephen Reder, *The Impact of ABS Program Participation on Long-Term Literacy Growth* (Washington DC, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, 2014), https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/ABS_LiteracyGrowth.pdf.

LFLF staff and other informants suggested a number of possible reasons.

Four community-level factors were identified, as follows:

- » Walgett is the biggest community in which the Campaign has run, which meant it was 'competing' with a wider range of alternative activities provided by a larger number of other agencies;
- » As a larger town, Walgett has a stronger economy and more seasonal job opportunities, making it harder to keep people in the Campaign, especially young men; and
- » There was a higher proportion of males in the initial starters, particularly in Intake 4, and men have been shown to be more likely to withdraw than women. This is borne out in the figures for 2018, which show that males accounted for 75% of withdrawals;
- » The Campaign was more strongly supported by some sections of the community and by particular family groups, but less so by others, and this was reflected in the composition of the classes, and the support received from local organisations. Staff reported that there was outright opposition to the Campaign from a small group within the community.

A second set of factors related to LFLF's internal organisation and resourcing, namely:

- » The Campaign Project Officer (CPO), who was new to the Campaign in 2018, felt that she and the local staff needed more support from LFLF's national management team;
- » There was increased demand on the local team as a result of several factors:
 - LFLF increased the pace of the Campaign by running Intake 4 Phase 2: YIC lessons and Intake 3 Phase 3: Post-literacy simultaneously;
 - The on-site Technical Adviser from Cuba was absent for 4 months, because of a series of

delays with visa and travel arrangements after she returned to Cuba;

- One of the experienced Facilitators took leave after she had a baby and the new staff member had not completed the initial intensive training;
 - The local Campaign Coordinator took extended periods of absence in the second half of the year, due to a death in her family and her own ill health; and
 - The CPO and some local staff had to begin 'preparing the ground' in the final months of the year for a new Campaign in Collarenebri to begin in 2019.
- » The above took place against a background of uncertainty about whether there would be funding to continue in Walgett beyond 2018. This eventually led to her giving notice in the final months of the year.

PHASE 2: YES, I CAN! LESSONS, CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY

The YIC curriculum and pedagogy which was designed by Cuba's literacy experts is described in detail in previous evaluation reports, and in the publications listed in Appendix 2 on page 39. For the purpose of this annual evaluation report, however, it is necessary to recall that the work of contextualising this international model to the circumstances of a specific local Aboriginal community is a continuous process, and must begin anew in each new community and even with each new intake. This work on-site is led by the Technical Adviser from Cuba, who does not teach the class, but who works with the local Aboriginal staff, supported by the Workforce Development and Training consultant who has done this previously in other communities. Once the local staff have completed their initial training in the model, which takes place over at least 3 weeks, before the first class of Intake 1, they then spend 1.5 hours each teaching day debriefing the lessons taught that day, evaluating their own performance and that of their students, and

planning the delivery of the lessons scheduled for the next day. This ensures that the Aboriginal staff's local knowledge is incorporated into the teaching, including their detailed knowledge of the students, who are often family members. That said, there is also a strong element of direct instruction, in that the DVD lessons follow a fixed script, which the local class also follows, and there are pre-prepared lesson plans for each lesson. In 2018, the Workforce Development and Training Consultant worked with the Technical Advisers from Cuba to revise all the lesson plans, based on experience in previous communities.

The combination of scripted 'direct instruction' with local contextualisation and input has proven very popular with local staff, who have no formal qualifications or previous training as educators, and have never before been asked to take on such responsibility.

In Walgett, the Technical Adviser from Cuba was already experienced in this method, having worked previously on the Campaigns in Wilcannia and Bourke. Walgett also had the advantage in 2018 of having two out of three Facilitators who had worked in previous intakes.

A further complication arose when the Technical Adviser's visa expired, and she had to return to Cuba for several weeks, in which time the fourth intake had to begin.⁶ In the Technical Adviser's absence, the new CPO was unable to provide the local staff with support to teach YIC, because both Intake 3 Phase 3: Post-literacy and the Intake 4 Phase 2: YIC lessons were run simultaneously, and both the CPO and Coordinator needed to work full-time on post-literacy. While the local staff performed well under these circumstances, the combined effects of the Technical Adviser's absence, the local Campaign Coordinator's time off and the CPO's need to focus even more on post-literacy meant that the local team received

less professional support and ongoing training. This may account for the low retention in Intake 4, the smaller literacy gain, and the need for several Intake 4 students to continue working on YIC assessment tasks during the post literacy phase. This experience therefore highlights the need for continued professional support during YIC lessons, even with experienced facilitators, and the need to have some back-up arrangements in place to cover for unavoidable staff absences.

RECOMMENDATION:

2

Future Campaign planning to take more account of the need for ongoing professional support and trained back-up staff to cover for unavoidable absences.

PHASE 3: POST-LITERACY PROGRAM AND PARTICIPATION

In the face of these challenges, the local team managed to organise and deliver successful post-literacy programs, with the second proving to be one of the best that LFLF staff have designed and delivered since the Campaign began. This was the result of the sustained work over several years by the local Campaign Coordinator and CPOs to engage with other Aboriginal organisations and local service providers. In 2018, both also said that the program had benefited from a structured four day training session on post-literacy curriculum planning and development they attended. They identified eight local organisations in particular which contributed actively to the Walgett post-literacy program:

- » Walgett Local Aboriginal Land Council – work experience placements
- » Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service (WAMS) – health promotion workshops, exposure visits to their programs and work experience placement

⁶ The Technical Adviser returned to Cuba on April 16th 2018, a few weeks before Intake 3 finished, returning on August 30th, for the last weeks of intake 4, for which classes finished on Sept 15th. This means she was off site for most of Intake 4. After YIC had ended, she helped several Intake 4 students who had to complete their YIC assessments during the post-literacy phase.

- » Dharriwaa Elders Group – family history sessions ('Mapping our mob') and cultural guides for visits to sites of significance
- » Orana Haven Drug and Alcohol Counsellors – workshops on their service, and follow-up individual counselling for participants who requested it
- » National Parks – visit to local sites of significance
- » Walgett TAFE – exposure to further education opportunities, and delivery of 'taster' modules
- » Thyemali Domestic Violence Service – exposure to their service and follow-up assistance to particular students
- » Koolyongarra Preschool – work experience

Post literacy ran from June to August for Intake 3, and from mid-September to November for Intake 4. Each program ran for a total of 120 hours spread over 12 weeks. Attendance was recorded and entered in the database, and regular reports provided. In addition to sessions provided by local organisations, there was also a creative writing workshop with Stephanie Dale of The Write Road, an activity which has now been used in a number of communities and is very popular. For the purposes of the evaluation, it provides concrete evidence of the participant's development of their own confidence and voice, and a more intimate insight into their world and their values. Extracts from their writing are attached in Appendix 3 on page 41. The value of post-literacy was described in a staff report;

I think it is the phase of the Campaign where LFLF are really seen and heard within the community. It is where the community is really given a chance to take ownership of the Campaign. It is where the most amount of community development takes place, the community members (participants) are supported by different service providers to take collective action on issues that are important to them. It empowers the community and creates a stronger, more connected community.

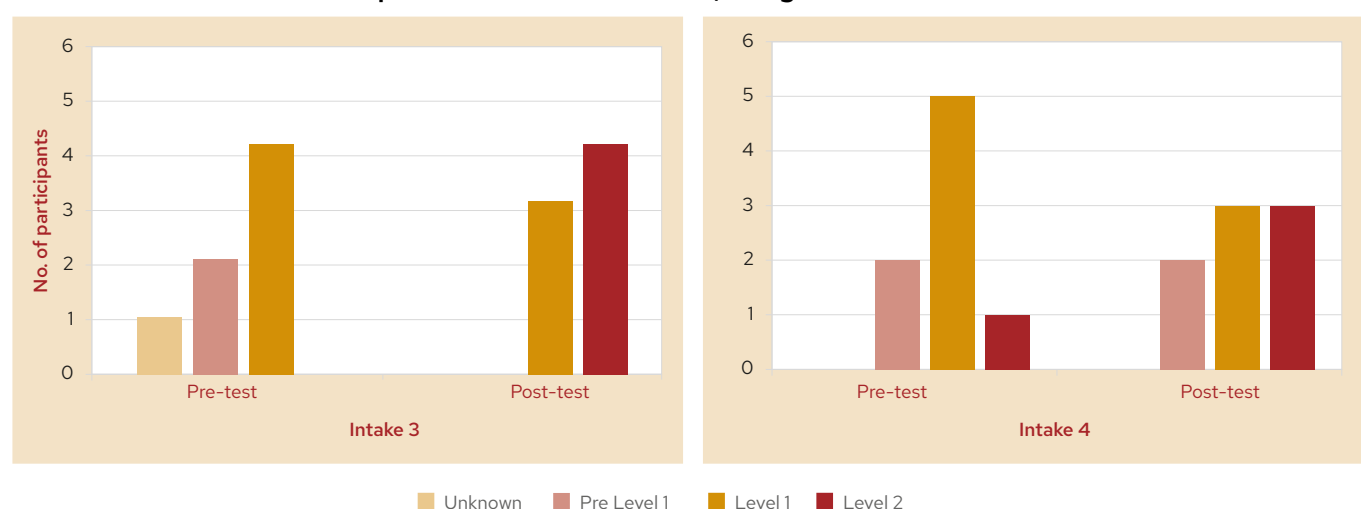
LITERACY IMPROVEMENTS

Every student who completed the Campaign reached the minimum level of literacy specified in the YIC model, and attended at least 70% of the YIC lessons, including all the lessons identified as 'core'. They also attended 3 months of post-literacy activities once the YIC lessons were completed, giving a total of 6 months regular attendance. The literacy gain for the graduates was verified through a pre and post-assessment process conducted by the local staff using the ACSF, under the supervision of a qualified ACSF consultant, Philippa McLean.

Eighteen participants took part in ACSF assessments in Walgett in 2018, 11 men and seven women (11M, 7F). Of the 18, 15 went on to graduate (9M, 6F). One female graduate was partially pre-tested, in the learning area only. Every one of the 15 graduates who was assessed improved on one or more indicators in one or more domains. Eight participants (3M, 5F) moved up one full level on the ACSF. Of these, two (2F) who were at Pre Level 1 moved to Level 1, and six (3F, 3M) moved from Level 1 to Level 2.⁷ The remaining seven (6M, 1F) all moved on some indicators in one or more areas. In terms of core skill areas, nine students demonstrated improved skills in learning, five in reading, and 10 in writing. Overall, there was improvement on 42 indicators, out of a possible 84, i.e., 50%. In Intake 4, there was less improvement among students who began at the lower level, and less improvement overall. The most likely reason, mentioned already, is that there was less professional supervision and support for the local staff in this intake, because the Technical Adviser from Cuba was off site for part of the intake, and the CPO was busy organising Phase 3: Post-literacy for the previous intake while Phase 2 classes for Intake 4 were running. Graph 2 summarises the graduates ACSF results across the two intakes.

⁷ Descriptors for each ACSF level can be found in the ACSF at <https://www.dewr.gov.au/skills-information-training-providers/resources/australian-core-skills-framework>

Graph 2. ACSF Assessments, Walgett 2018 Graduates



According to Commonwealth Guidelines for funding of literacy support via the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program, 100 hours of Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) support should result in a student progressing a minimum of one ACSF level to another, on one ACSF indicator only, which is consistent with the international research.

For LFLF Campaign participants, the minimum hours they complete to graduate is 122 (36 YIC lessons of 1 hour, and eight lessons of 2 hours, plus 70 hours of post-literacy activities). The maximum hours are 167 (67 hours of YIC lessons and 100 hours of post-literacy). This is set out in Table 8, below.

Table 8. LFLF Campaign Hours of Instruction

	Total hours	Minimum hours
Phase 2: YIC lessons	67	52
Phase 3: Post-literacy	100	70
Totals	167	122

Therefore, all but two of LFLF's Walgett Campaign participants in 2018 achieved literacy improvements on the ACSF which were above the Commonwealth's minimum benchmark. Nevertheless, while the Campaign has continued to achieve much better retention rates than formal

VET courses, and more literacy improvements than the SEE program, the analysis also shows that the work of building English language literacy with this cohort and from such a low base is very demanding. It requires close supervision and support of each student's learning at every stage of the process, by local Facilitators, trained and backed up by skilled educators. But this is only half the story. As already mentioned, people with low to very low literacy are constantly dealing with issues around their income security, their housing, their health, and their relationship with police, the justice system and with a range of other Commonwealth and State government agencies and programs, including the Community Development Program (CDP) and their Job Network providers. This undermines their capacity to participate in structured learning for sustained periods over 6 months, and this is both a cause and an effect of the lack of a developed culture of literacy among their peers.

When people do manage to maintain, often for the first time since they left school, to attend 6 months of regular structured successful learning activity, it is an extraordinary achievement, one which family and community members regularly acknowledge and applaud. But though this builds their skills, and even more importantly, the confidence and self-assurance which is necessary for learning, we can see from the findings

above that participants will still need ongoing opportunities to continue to practice and build their literacy beyond the end of Phase 3, and well after the Campaign ends in their town. Providing this support once the Campaign leaves requires the local organisations and agencies who have become supporters to understand and take on this role. The work to explain this needs to begin in Phase 1: Socialisation and Mobilisation, and continue into Phase 3: Post-literacy.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 3** Phase 1: Socialisation and Mobilisation work to include a more systematic program of discussion and explanation with local Aboriginal organisations and other agencies, e.g., TAFE, regarding their ongoing roles in consolidating the gains made by the Campaign.

The data also points to the need to continue to develop the capacity of the local staff to use the ACSF results to monitor progress and identify the specific skill areas in which individuals need most support, to ensure that the maximum benefit is gained from the Phase 2: YIC lessons and Phase 3: Post-literacy lessons and activities.

OTHER PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

Participants, staff and local agencies all reported substantial positive changes in the lives of participants as a major outcome of their participation in the Campaign. As one local Aboriginal leader interviewed for this evaluation told me, "It's great to see people building their skills to participate, making good life choices."

On a practical level, eight graduates (4M, 4F) attained their 'white card' OH&S certificate during post-literacy, enabling them to take part in work experience and apply for employment. Several others successfully completed the test to obtain their learner driver permit, and at least two have now gained a provisional (Ps) driver license. LFLF's registration as a Work Development Order (WDO)

sponsor allowed seven graduates (5M, 2F) to use their class participation to pay off accumulated fines, thereby reducing their risk of incarceration for non-payment, and making it possible for them to apply for driving permits.

Other students benefited through being linked up through their participation in the Campaign with other agencies who could assist them.

- » The local Land Council provided work experience opportunities for some participants, as did the WAMS.
- » Dharriwaa Elders helped students create family trees and link up with relatives.
- » National Parks staff took people onto Country, guided by Elders, so they could learn more about the local culture and natural history.
- » The family violence service involved Campaign participants in developing education materials for the local schools, and also took on some as clients of their service.
- » The counselling services provided through WAMS, Dharriwaa Elders and Orana Haven ran workshops and provided ongoing support to several students who wanted to reduce their use of alcohol and other drugs.

Overall, the participants themselves reported significant gains in their confidence and self-esteem, and their willingness to set further goals, including undertaking further education through the local TAFE. They also reported that the Campaign had helped them build a 'solidarity network' with the staff and fellow participants which they would continue to access in the future.

CASE STUDIES

Every student in every intake in every community has a story, which slowly comes to light over the 6 months and more that they spend in the Campaign, as they begin to speak and write more confidently about themselves and their lives, and as local staff and others who are struck by what is happening volunteer more information to add to the picture. This is part of the special 'magic' of the Campaign, that it gives voice to people who would otherwise rarely be heard, and in doing so, also helps others who are more literate to recognise and acknowledge them as important and valued members of the wider community. The following brief case studies are provided as just three examples of the many stories that could and should be told.

STUDENT A

Student A is a 42 year old women in Intake 3 who is dedicated to bettering her life, and now, as a result of YIC, feels incredibly proud and much more confident. She said that she did not think she could do it, but that now she knows she can. When the post-literacy class visited the local TAFE, she immediately volunteered to join up, so she could keep up the regular program of activity which she had found so helpful with the Campaign. She wanted to do her Higher School Certificate, but they suggested another course and even though her literacy is still not great, she went onto their computer and looked it up. Her literacy is now better, but she still struggles when she is under pressure. But if she is relaxed, as she is in the campaign, she can do it. She asked the Campaign staff to help her with getting to alcohol counselling, and she now receives support from a counsellor who is also

STUDENT A

working with the Campaign team on this issue. She wrote this as her future goal:

My dreams for my future is to be able to get a job anywhere so I can provide for myself and my family. Life would be a lot easier.

She topped off her achievements for the year by delivering a speech on behalf of the students at the graduation ceremony in December, written in her own words. It included this:

6 months before starting the program I could not read or write, I was walking up Fox Street when [the local Facilitators]... drove past me, they pulled in and asked me if I wanted to join the Literacy Course, I said I will be in that and I've been here to the very end. The Literacy for Life Program is for a lot of people in Walgett. We are learning things that we never thought we would get a chance to learn, so thank you to the Literacy for Life Foundation for giving us a chance to show our skills.

STUDENT B

Student B is a 47 year old man who told me he had been an alcoholic for a very long time. He joined Intake 2, but dropped out, then came back for Intake 3, where he attended 90% of the YIC classes and went on to post-literacy, which he completed in August 2018. According to local staff, he went from being a very angry person to being totally different, very quiet and gentle, which is how he was when I spoke with him. The first time was in April, in the Campaign office, where he was coming after class to practice doing his driver's license permit test questions on the computer. He told me then he was trying to cut back on his drinking, so he could help his children and grandchildren. In class, he wrote this as his future goals:

My dreams for my future and my family is to complete the YIC program so I can get my license and improve my chances of getting a job. I would also like to give my children and grandchildren the things I never had when I was a kid, like going on holidays and to see other parts of Australia.

Several months later, staff reported that he had secured a house for himself, his daughters and their young sons, and was now totally committed to turning his life around. He told staff that the Campaign gave him something to be committed to and feel proud of. He was getting alcohol counselling as a result of Campaign staff organising a post-literacy session with an AMS counsellor, and the local CPO was helping him apply for a part-time job, which he subsequently got.

STUDENT C

Student C is 42 years old. Two years ago, she lost her young daughter. When the household literacy survey team visited her, she was not going out at all, and was seriously depressed. She was convinced to join the Campaign, and since then has not looked back. The Campaign team helped her get drug and alcohol counselling from the AMS, and she says she is now getting off the grog. Like Student A, she also wants to go on now and do a TAFE course. She also convinced another family member, who like her left school early and has poor literacy, to join the next intake. She wrote:

I'm hoping to improve my life by finishing the Yes, I Can! course so it can give me a better chance of getting a job and to help me get my license. I want to better my life so I can see my babies grow into adults, also to see them finish school and to move on to bigger and better things in life. My children are the most important people in the world.

LOCAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The local LFLF team employed in the community is a vital component of the national literacy Campaign model. The Campaign team in Walgett in 2018 consisted of four local Aboriginal staff (3F, 1M), and two non-Aboriginal 'visiting' professional Advisers, both women.

The local Campaign Coordinator in Walgett joined the Campaign when it began in November 2016, and therefore already had considerable experience going into her third intake. As a local Gamilaroi woman she had strong family connections in the community, including with many of the students.

Her work was invaluable in building support for the community with Aboriginal organisations and other agencies across the community. The CPO's background with English as a Second language (ESL) students gave her a good background in English language literacy education, but she had never previously worked with adults, nor in an Aboriginal organisation or an Aboriginal community. To assist her to perform her role, she received intensive training in several workshops with some on-job support, while the local Campaign Coordinator helped to orient her to the Aboriginal community and how to work with them. Over time, the two women developed a good working relationship, learning to deal with the cross-cultural issues that inevitably arise

when a younger non-Aboriginal professional staff member is placed in a position of some authority in relation to older and more experienced Aboriginal staff. Unfortunately, in the second half of the year, the Campaign Coordinator faced a number of personal and family issues and had to take considerable time off, which added additional strain to the Campaign's limited staff resources. However, the Walgett team had two experienced local Facilitators who had been with the Campaign in 2017, and they were able to help maintain the Campaign momentum in the Campaign Coordinator's absence.

During the year, the Walgett team continued to receive on-job training from the Technical Adviser, and workshops and phone support from LFLF's Workforce Development Consultant. In January, local staff were part of a 3-day training workshop with the new CPOs and the two national office managers. The Campaign Coordinator and CPO attended a further workshop in Sydney in March. The Technical Adviser had to return to Cuba when her visa expired, and was off-site for 4 months, from 16 April until 30 August. LFLF's Workforce Development Consultant ran a third workshop, to prepare for post-literacy, in Walgett in June. In mid-year, the Operations Manager ran a workshop on recruitment to prepare for the next intake, and in February, the CPO and Coordinator travelled to Boggabilla to take part in a workshop on the ACSF assessment process. Throughout the year, the local team was also supported for varying periods by on-site workshops and training and visits from the Executive Director, the Campaign Manager and the Operations Manager.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND LEADERSHIP

The support that the Campaign received from the wider Walgett community was demonstrated in the post-literacy phase, in the Dharriwaa Elders letter quoted on page 7, and in speeches by other agencies at the graduation. It was further

evidenced in interviews conducted for the evaluation with the following people:

- » The CEO of Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service;
- » The elected NSW Land Councillor for the region, who is also Vice President of the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group;
- » Staff (2M, 1F) of the Remote School Attendance Strategy (RSAS) Program
- » The local representative of NSW Corrections;
- » Several community members working on projects with Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprises Corporation (MPREC since renamed Redi) on the same site;
- » The Practice manager at the Thiyama-Li Family Violence Service; and
- » The Police Inspector in charge of the Eastern Division of Central North Police Division.

Despite this extensive network of local support, the Campaign Coordinator and CPO were unsuccessful in getting regular meetings of a local Campaign Working Group (CWG), which LFLF believes is an essential feature of making the Campaign work in Aboriginal communities, making it a genuinely Aboriginal community-controlled process. In the absence of such a 'formal' mechanism in which community members can take decisions and provide advice to the local staff, community-control is restricted to the control exercised by the locally-recruited staff and the participants, supported by LFLF's national Aboriginal leadership. When asked about the lack of participation in a CWG, staff and local leaders gave similar reasons. The first was that people with the interest and capacity to provide such leadership were already fully committed with other programs and organisations, and, in the case of more senior leaders, were often absent from town, undertaking state-wide and national work. Second, people who worked in local organisations were likewise too busy to come to any more meetings; or else did not feel they could take that leadership without a mandate from their organisation. Third,

there were historical conflicts within the town between organisations and between family groups which made some people feel reluctant to sit down in a meeting to make decisions together, for fear of getting caught up in these disputes. Fourth, people were happy with the way the Campaign was being run, and did not feel the need to take any greater role in it.

One problem with accepting this is that now the Campaign has left Walgett, there is no longer any organised group which will continue to support and advocate for the interests of the participants. Moreover, if this does not happen, there is a much greater risk that the literacy gains that have been made will over time begin to fade, and people will return to their pre-Campaign habits and ways, losing their belief in the possibility of change. It may also mean that LFLF itself will lose some of the respect it gained, and be dismissed as yet another organisation which has not 'stayed the course' for long enough to make a real difference. This is also an issue in the other community which took part in the 2018 Campaign.

RECOMMENDATION:

4

That LFLF Management and Board discuss possible 'exit strategies' to be negotiated with local leaders and organisations prior to a Campaign ending, to provide local students and staff who have taken part in the Campaign with continued opportunities for support, training and employment.



National Parks staff took Walgett Campaign participants onto Country, guided by Elders, so they could learn more about the local culture and natural history. Photo by Gaye Launder. Used under CC BY 2.0 license. [flic.kr/p/y1RNnE](https://www.flickr.com/photos/y1RNnE/)



Boggabilla Toomelah Literacy for Life Foundation staff members, Lesley (left) and Mindy (right).
Photo credit: Hugh Rutherford

BOGGABILLA-TOOMELAH CAMPAIGN

OVERALL REACH AND OUTCOMES

The LFLF Campaign began in Boggabilla and Toomelah in early 2017, and finished with the graduation in December 2018. Over the whole period, LFLF staff contacted 99 households, via the household literacy survey and referrals. Of these, 92 were in the target communities of Boggabilla/Toomelah, and the rest in the town of Goondiwindi, just over the border into Queensland. This represented approximately two thirds of the combined Boggabilla-Toomelah Aboriginal households identified in the 2016 Census, and three quarters of the Aboriginal households in Toomelah. As a result of this work, 180 adults (64 M, 116 F) were identified, approximately 50% of the total Aboriginal adult population according to the 2016 ABS Census. This was a slightly better result in terms of coverage than was achieved in Walgett. See Table 9, below.

Table 9. Boggabilla Toomelah Demographic Data

	2016 Census	LFLF household literacy surveys	Coverage (%)
Aboriginal Households	139	92	66
M (15+)	165	64	39
F (15+)	201	116	58
T(15+)	366	180	49

Approximately 45% (82) of the adults contacted by LFLF provided a self-assessed literacy score which indicated a need for literacy support. This was a significantly lower proportion than in the Campaign communities further west.

Q: HOW WELL DO YOU THINK YOU CAN READ AND WRITE?

Table 10. Boggabilla Toomelah Self-Assessed Literacy

Self-assessed literacy	Number	Total (%)
a. Very Well	46	26
b. Ok, but trouble filling out forms	99	55
c. Not very well	30	17
d. Not at all	2	1
Not stated	3	2
Total	180	
Self-assessed low literacy ⁸	82	45

By the time the Campaign finished, 138 people had indicated interest in joining the Campaign, all from these lower levels. Of these, 58 had become starters and 42 people had graduated. This data is summarised at Table 11.



Above: A map of the campaign locations

⁸ Low literacy is understood in this context to be those who self-assess their reading and writing as either level 'b', 'c' or 'd'. This is based on benchmarking studies including: Lin, S., Williamson, F., Beetson, J. *et al.* Quantifying low English literacy in Australian Aboriginal communities: a correlational study. *Aust. Educ. Res.* 48, 267–280 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-020-00388-7>.

Table 11. Summary Participation and Retention, Boggabilla Toomelah 2017–2018

	Boggabilla 1	Toomelah 1	BT 2	BT 3	Total
EOIs	36	23	26	53	138
Starters	22	10	11	15	58
Graduates	18	7	7	10	42
Retention (%)	82	70	64	67	72

This number of graduates represents over half the number of people who had initially self-identified as having low literacy. However, because the socialisation work only reached half the adult population, it is likely there is still a significant number of people in these two communities who could benefit if the Campaign was able to continue. This was confirmed by the community leaders who contributed to the evaluation.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 5 LFLF Management to include in future planning a return to Boggabilla-Toomelah to complete three to four more Campaign intakes if and when additional funding to do this can be secured.

PARTICIPATION AND RETENTION OUTCOMES, 2018 BOGGABILLA-TOOMELAH INTAKES

Of the two intakes run in 2018, the first was in Boggabilla and the second in Toomelah. Out of 79 EOIs, there were 26 actual starters (10M, 16F) and 17 graduates (7M, 10F). See Table 12, below.

Some things should be noted. The very large number of EOIs (79) derived mainly from the second intake (BT3), and may have been because the target was set at 60. Unlike in Walgett and in most other communities, the men participants had a higher retention rate than the women. Similarly to Walgett, the average graduates per intake (9) was less than in previous years, but the retention rate was slightly better.

This was a good result, given the number of issues the local staff faced. First, the resignation of the experienced CPO just before classes began. Second, her replacement had very little pre-service training, before having to start on-site. Third, the departure of the Technical Adviser to Cuba before Intake 3 began, and his absence for a significant part of that intake's YIC classes, left the local staff with less support, especially given the CPO was still relatively untrained in the model, and was also running post-literacy. Her view was that she needed more support from LFLF until the Technical Adviser returned from Cuba. Fourth, the local Campaign Coordinator had personal issues which caused her to take significant time off. Fifth, several younger people who started in Intake 3 became very reluctant to engage as the lessons

Table 12. Participation and Retention, Boggabilla-Toomelah 2018

	BT 2			BT3			Overall (2018)		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
EOIs	13	13	26	20	33	53	33	46	79
Starters	4	7	11	6	9	15	10	16	26
Graduates	2	5	7	5	5	10	7	10	17
Retention (%)	50	71	64	83	56	67	70	63	65

progressed, and eventually withdrew without completing sufficient lessons. Finally, there was significant inter-family and intra-family conflict in Toomelah, which both affected local staff's ability to mobilise students, and also prevented the establishment of a representative CWG to provide a more coherent local leadership.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 6** LFLF to review the outcomes from this community in 2018, and discuss possible strategies to avoid these problems in future. This should include sequencing of intakes and phases; forward planning of travel and visa requirements for Technical Advisers from Cuba; more pre-service or on-job training and support for new CPOs in their first year; and systems to provide relief staff when necessary.

POST-LITERACY PROGRAM AND PARTICIPATION

Phase 3: Post-literacy for Intake 2 ran for 10 weeks. There were some problems, because of the staffing issues and the pressure of running post-literacy activities and Intake 3 YIC lessons simultaneously with a new CPO, and the total number of hours was significantly less than the normal standard. The problem was rectified in Intake 3, following the post-literacy training which occurred for staff from both communities in Walgett in June, and a longer program was offered. Nine out of the 10 students who completed the YIC classes reached or passed the minimum hours, with several students completing over 100 hours. The one student who didn't reach his 70 hours was away for several weeks in hospital, but was able to make up the time when he was released and so also graduated.

LITERACY GAINS ON AUSTRALIAN CORE SKILLS FRAMEWORK

Of the 17 students who graduated in 2018 in Boggabilla-Toomelah, 15 took part in the ACSF pre-assessment. All were at L1 or below, with four at PL1. Thirteen of those who were pre-assessed were also present for the post-assessment, and eight of these had moved up one full level. One student showed no improvement in any area, but the remainder had moved on two or more indicators in one or more core skill areas. One student did less well on the reading post-assessment than she had on the pre-assessment. Of the two graduates who had missed the pre-assessment, one finished at L2, and the other was still at PL1. The de-identified results are summarised in Graph 3.

Some caution is warranted in reading too much into these results, because the post-assessments were done without the supervision of a professional literacy educator. That said, the number of students who improved and the number of indicators in which improvement was demonstrated is good, and above the minimum benchmark for improvement in the Commonwealth SEE program. The main concern is that one student showed no improvement, two finished still at PL1, and one actually performed less well on reading in the post-assessment. This was followed up during fieldwork for the longitudinal study, and the student who had not pre-tested and finished on PL1 was found to have serious learning difficulties, due to age and health. In other communities, students who finish at this level have not graduated, but instead have received certificates of completion and an offer to continue in the next intake.

This is another reminder that a significant proportion of the people who join the Campaign, especially in a community's later intakes, have had very damaging life experiences, which reduces their ability to perform in tests, compared with

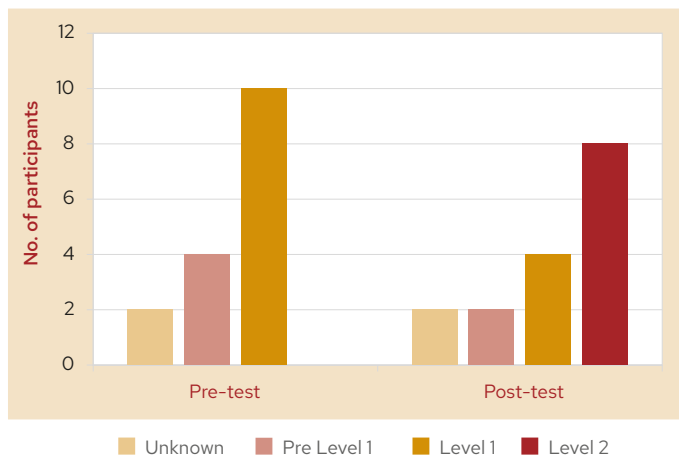
how they may perform in class when they have the support of the other students. For these students, the literacy gains will only become sustainable if they receive further ongoing support once the Campaign classes finish. This is one of the important roles of Phase 3: Post-literacy, to make sure that these students do come in contact with other agencies, and that those agencies learn about them and their needs.

That said, to maintain the integrity of the Campaign, LFLF needs to develop a protocol by which the on-site CPO and Technical Adviser confirm that all graduating students have completed all their YIC assessment tasks at the appropriate level, given the level at which they joined, before the graduation data is signed off in the Campaign database.

RECOMMENDATION:

7 LFLF to develop a protocol for validating all students' assessments before graduation.

Graph 3. Boggabilla-Toomelah ACSF Assessment, 2018



LOCAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Well, before I started working for Literacy, I'd get up and I'd get my kids ready for school, and I would go back to sleep waiting for them to come home. That was my life, before I started working [for the Campaign]. But, coming here really helped. Yeah,

like, more confidence, self-esteem, and being a role model for my kids. (Local staff member, as cited in LFLF Submission to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission)

The CPO on-site in 2017 resigned in February 2018, and was replaced by another applicant who had originally applied to work in Central Australia, but agreed to fill this gap. She joined the local Campaign Coordinator who had done this job in 2017. The local Facilitators, one from Boggabilla, and two from Toomelah, had also worked on the Campaign in 2017, and, like the local Campaign Coordinator, had been trained in the Campaign model. The Technical Adviser, who had arrived from Cuba in July 2017, continued his mission until his visa expired and he returned home when the Intake 2 Phase 2: YIC lessons finished in June 2018. He returned to help the final intake complete in September 2018. When on-site, the Technical Adviser provided training each day to the Facilitators, debriefing the day's lessons and helping them prepare for the next day. He also observed every lesson, to assist where needed, and to be able to give feedback in the training session. This work was essential to build the capacity of the Facilitators in how to work with the class, assisting them to learn from the lessons on the DVDs and the exercises they must do. Staff reported that this training was especially important for contextualising the material on the DVD, including the 'positive messages' that are part of each lesson.

The new CPO only had an initial introduction to Phase 1 and 2 before deployment, having attended initial pre-deployment training in Sydney in December 2017 and in Walgett in January 2018. She attended a further workshop in Sydney in March, and she and the local Campaign Coordinator also attended a workshop on post literacy planning and delivery held in Walgett in June. The CPO, the local Campaign Coordinator and one of the Facilitators, attended the community meeting and workshop for Campaign

staff held in Dubbo in May. The CPO and local Campaign Coordinator were trained to conduct ACSF assessments at a workshop in February 2018. All staff also took part in a domestic violence training workshop in Walgett which was organised by LFLF management in response to a specific need.

In interviews with local agencies and community leaders, the development of the capacity of the Campaign Coordinator and local staff was singled out for special attention. In particular, the three local Facilitators were said to have become effective leaders and spokespeople for their families and communities, where, prior to the Campaign, they had not done this. The three Facilitators confirmed this in their evaluation interviews. The local Campaign Coordinator was also very outspoken about how much she had learned from working in the Campaign.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Literacy for Life is a good program... It makes you feel so proud to see some of the young girls, you know? That they got there and then they speak to you and they haven't spoken to you before and yeah... [It] really brings a lot out of the people that do it. Brings a lot of I don't know, just brightens them up, brings them out of their shell.... Some of the people that've done that course, you know beforehand, and then seeing them after, just blows you away... They seem really happy when they do the course. (Local organisation leader, as cited in LFLF submission to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission)

During 2018, the Campaign received strong support from community leaders and from agencies working in the community. The evaluation research included interviews and feedback from 17 people, as follows:

- » Boggabilla School Principal
- » Toomelah Land Council (2)

- » Job Network Providers (2)
- » TAFE staff (2)
- » GTT (Private Training Provider) (1)
- » Health Centre staff (4)
- » DrugArm (1)
- » Community Elders (3)
- » Goondiwindi Library (1)

All these informants reported that the Campaign was having a good impact on the participants, and the local staff. Community support was further evidenced from the number of agencies who participated in Phase 3: Post-literacy workshops.

Despite strong community support, the local staff were unable to develop a local CWG to meet regularly to give advice and make decisions regarding the conduct of the Campaign. The main reason given for this was that there were too many family conflicts to be able to bring together a representative body. It was also said that people in the community who could take a leadership role were already too busy to form another committee. The CPO and Campaign Coordinator sought to address this problem by attending meetings held by other agencies, particularly Elders Circle run by DrugArm, to report on the Campaign and ask for advice; and by going to individuals, both agency staff and Elders, to discuss one-on-one with them how the Campaign was going, and to seek their support.

However, the lack of an effective CWG⁹ has longer term implications. In the Campaign model, the aim is to develop through the CWG a group of people who already have better literacy who will take on the role of advocating and supporting the people who join the Campaign, the students but also the staff, after the Campaign is complete or if and when funding is no longer available. Participating in the Campaign in this way is a learning experience for the members of the CWG, who most likely

⁹ This form of organisation is common to campaigns across the Global South. In Timor-Leste, the CWGs were called local Campaign Commissions. There were also sub-district and district-level commissions.

have not had the opportunity to consider the issue of low literacy and its ramifications for their community in any detail until the Campaign arrives and begins to work. Therefore, as discussed above when dealing with the same issue in relation to Walgett, there is a need in future Campaigns, and/or when the Campaign returns to these communities, to consider what else can be done to establish a functioning CWG, such as has been achieved in other communities.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 8 LFLF management to discuss ways to work in future communities to build and strengthen the CWG and its role in the Campaign and beyond, and to overcome the problems that the staff in Boggabilla-Toomelah and Walgett experienced in doing this.

CONCLUDING REFLECTION:

BOGGABILLA AND TOOMELAH

At the graduation in December 2018, attended by the local Mayor, community elders, the funding agency (NSW Family and Community Services), staff, students and their families, there was a great deal of pride expressed in the achievements of the staff and students. While some regret was expressed that the Campaign was not continuing in 2019, both local staff and senior community members in attendance were open in saying to the evaluation team that it was not possible to extend the Campaign to other families at present, because of the conflict within the community. Despite the efforts of LFLF and the local staff to involve the families who had chosen not to participate, it was felt that those families would not join a Campaign which they perceived as 'controlled' by their opponents. Therefore, if the Campaign returned, it would be necessary to recruit a new leadership group and a new team of Facilitators who would be more acceptable. This unfortunate situation is the result of inter and intra-family conflicts which are said to go back

over several decades. This problem has proved beyond the scope of LFLF to resolve at this stage, but perhaps warrants further discussions about whether to return, if and when funds do become available. In the meantime, several staff from UNE offered to apply for funding to work with the local staff and community leadership on another project, focused on further developing the capacity of the local staff who worked on the Campaign to assist preschool and school-age children and their parents to engage with learning. So far, they have been unable to secure the necessary funding, but some of the local staff have also continued to work on the ARC longitudinal study, helping to collect survey and interview data from the graduates from 2017–2018.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS 2018

This section of the report briefly summarises the development of the Foundation during 2018, including its internal governance structure and functioning, and its engagement with government, private donors, and the wider Indigenous and non-Indigenous community. As detailed in previous reports, LFLF is a national Indigenous organisation, established in 2013 and registered under the Commonwealth Corporations Act of 2001. The aims of the Foundation include:

- » *To significantly reduce the rate of illiteracy within the Aboriginal adult population and the gap in the English literacy rates of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians*
- » *To strengthen a culture of literacy whereby the Aboriginal adult community values learning and the various pathways it affords to individuals and the community as a whole*
- » *To develop the capacity of local Aboriginal community members to lead, own and coordinate a reduction in the rate of illiteracy within the Aboriginal adult population*

This is to be achieved through “a literacy campaign, implementing an adult literacy campaign model”, which is further defined thus:

*a co-ordinated and sustained effort to raise the level of literacy of the Aboriginal adult population by mobilising and training local resources, local organisers and local facilitators to support as many Aboriginal adults as possible to learn very basic literacy within a relatively short time-frame, using a simple, standardised method contextualised to the local circumstances of Aboriginal peoples, followed by a period of post-literacy, community-run consolidation activities.*¹⁰

The Foundation is governed by its Board of Directors, consisting of five members, of whom no less than three are Aboriginal. In 2018, the Board’s composition changed, when the Chairperson, Donna Ah Chee, resigned, and the Board appointed a new Director, Dr. Wendy Ludwig, a Kungarakana and Gurindji woman from Darwin, who is currently the Deputy CEO of Batchelor Institute.¹¹

Since the success of the initial pilot which was run through the Wilcannia Land Council in partnership with UNE in 2012, the goal of the Foundations’ leadership has been to reach as many communities as possible, so that this becomes a truly mass campaign, of the kind which has been seen elsewhere in the world, and in particular, the campaigns in over 30 countries which have utilised the *Yo, sí puedo* model developed by the Cuban literacy experts at the Enrique José Varona Pedagogical University in Havana. However, the process of extending the Campaign to multiple communities has been slow, mainly because of the difficulties the Foundation has experienced raising the necessary funds. This slow rate of progress over the last seven years (2012–2018) is apparent from the tables in Appendix 5 on page 45.

In the last two years, 2017/2018, the pace of expansion began to accelerate, thanks to the success of the Board and its Executive Chair, Jack Beetson, in convincing more government agencies and more private donors of the importance of literacy. This work has involved constant rounds of meetings with potential supporters and the maintenance of a regular presence in the media, both traditional media and, increasingly, on the social media platforms of Facebook and Twitter. The following list identifies some but not all the organisations with whom the Foundation met and held discussions during 2018 in an effort to secure sufficient funds for the 5-year planned scale-up:

COMMONWEALTH POLITICIANS AND DEPARTMENTS

- » Prime Minister’s Office
- » Office of the Minister for Indigenous Affairs
- » Minister for Health and Ageing
- » Minister for Education
- » Minister for Industry and Skills
- » Office of the Leader of the Opposition
- » Office of The Shadow Minister for Education
- » MPs: Linda Burney, Mike Freeland, Rowan Ramsey, Warren Snowdon, Matt Thistlethwaite, and Tim Wilson
- » Senators: Pat Dodson, Malarndirri McCarthy, and Jenny McAllister
- » Department of Education
- » Department of the PM&C
 - Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Affairs
 - Dubbo Indigenous Programs Network
 - Central Australian Indigenous Programs Network
- » Department of Health
 - Workforce Development Manager
 - Indigenous Programs Advisory Group (IPAG)

¹⁰ The complete statement of the Foundation’s objectives in its Constitution is attached at Appendix 4 on page 44.

¹¹ For full details of the LFLF Board, see <https://www.lflf.org.au/who-we-are/board/>.

STATE AND TERRITORY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

- » NSW Aboriginal Housing Office
- » NSW Department of Family and Community Services
- » NSW Department of Education and Communities
- » NSW Roads and Marine Authority
- » Office of the NSW Minister for Health
- » NT Minister of Education
- » NT MP Chansey Paech

PRIVATE AND NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS

- » Australian Constructors Association
- » Companies: Downer, Laing O'Rourke, UGL and Ferrovial Agroman



Celebrating the students at the Boggabilla and Toomelah graduation. Photo: Hugh Rutherford.

Community members supporting the Boggabilla and Toomelah Campaign. Credit: Hugh Rutherford.



In 2018, the main source of government support was the Commonwealth Department of PM&C's Indigenous Programs area, and from two NSW Government agencies, the Department of Family and Community Services National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) section, and the Aboriginal Housing Office of the NSW Department of Education and Communities. These two sources provided the bulk of the funds needed to deliver Campaigns on the ground, but they did not provide sufficient funding to develop the organisation's own capacity to manage anything but those current programs. This creates a 'funding trap', since the capacity to upscale and extend the Campaign is constantly being limited by the requirement of resources needed to fulfil current delivery commitments; and each additional site does not bring with it any more additional resources for the organisation itself than will be consumed in that delivery.¹² This funding 'gap' has so far been covered by private donors, especially the Foundation's main corporate sponsor Multiplex; and from pro-bono work undertaken by the Campaign's supporters, some but not all of whom have support from their current employers to do this. The provision of evaluation research by UNE is an example of this latter category.

The strategy which was pursued to overcome this challenge was a program of intense lobbying of national and state governments to provide a 5-year funding package of \$20 million, to roll out the Campaign to 33 communities who were to be selected from a much longer list of communities in every State and Territory who had approached the Foundation to run Campaigns in their communities. At the time of writing (April 2019), a Federal election is underway, and some informal commitments have been made by the Federal Labor Party to support this proposal if they are elected. The work to get to this point, uncertain as

it still is, has required a considerable commitment of time and resources from the organisation, and especially from the time of the Executive Chair and the Partnerships Manager.

Other smaller funding successes have made possible a small increase in the resources of the national body, including the appointment of a new position in October 2018, initially designated as an Administration Officer. This followed an earlier restructure, in which the National Campaign Manager and Contracts Manager positions were re-defined, and then collapsed into one following the resignation of the Campaign Manager in September 2018, at which point, the Operations Manager became the new National Campaign Manager. The restructure also included the creation of the position of Workforce Training and Development Consultant, a part-time position which was taken on by the 2017 Campaign Manager. The accounting and bookkeeping work was also outsourced to an external firm. At the end of 2018, the funding grant to launch the Campaign in Central Australia allowed for a further new part-time position, and someone was appointed to the role of Central Australian Regional Aboriginal Campaign Adviser. This implemented a recommendation from an earlier evaluation, that the scale-up would require each region to have its own Aboriginal Campaign Coordinator.¹³

The changes in the structure and staffing of the national organisation have significantly increased the resources available, but this brings its own challenges. Some are quite specific to the Foundation and its unique mission, while others are well-known dilemmas faced when any small organisation which has been built largely on personal networks and loyalties begins to out-grow its old form. The main challenges which the evaluation research has identified, from

¹² This, we can note in passing, is a very similar problem to the one which the Federation of Independent Aboriginal Education Providers faced in the 1990s, when the LFLF Executive Chair was its President.

¹³ This had been trialled in western NSW in 2017 with funding from the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, but the person appointed had been unable to continue in the role.

interviews and discussions with staff, and from my own on-site observations are:

- » The literacy campaign model as it has developed and been contextualised over the last 7-years to fit the specific situation in Australia is not easy to understand and work with, without a good deal of training and study, and some new staff have struggled to find time to do this work;
- » The new National Managers came to the organisation with very different knowledge, skills and experiences to those of the original team, which led to a number of internal tensions for which there was rarely enough time or suitable forums to discuss and resolve;
- » There is an underlying contradiction, between enrolling and graduating the maximum number of people in the shortest possible time, and maintaining the quality of the learning to ensure there is genuine literacy gain. This contradiction becomes sharper as more communities are brought into the process;
- » The problem of who is responsible for logistics at the local level, which was raised in previous evaluation reports, has not yet been fully solved, with local teams unable to exercise the purchasing power and authority to secure reliable efficient and cost-effective supply and service chains for housing, equipment, vehicles etc., while central office staff are often not able to be on-site or even on-call at the right times to make sure this happens;
- » It is difficult to build systems and procedures which are appropriate for upscaling when the upscale resources, including staff to manage them, have not yet been secured, a problem which has become evident with the Campaign data management system, but may also be true with other systems (e.g., donor management, HR systems, etc.).
- » The lack of predictability of funding has created major difficulties ensuring that the Technical Advisers from Cuba are identified, their immigration papers obtained, their travel

organised and their pre-deployment orientation done in a timely way to coincide with the on-site schedule of the Campaign;

- » The restrictive licensing agreement with the Cuban government has delayed solutions being found to the problem of the sound quality of the YIC DVDs, the originals of which cannot currently be copied;
- » The massive distances between the different sites and between each site and the Sydney headquarters puts strains both on financial resources when people travel, and on internal communication processes when they don't.

RECOMMENDATION:

9

The list of challenges above to be referred to the Technical Sub-Committee, to discuss and propose solutions and work-arounds

Students and staff at the Boggabilla & Toomelah Graduation. Photo credit: Hugh Rutherford.



COMMUNITY MEETING DUBBO MAY 2018

A highlight of the year was a 2-day meeting held in Dubbo which brought together staff and community leaders from all but one of the communities which had participated in the Campaign up to that point. The first day, which was funded from the ARC Longitudinal Study Grant, included presentations from the research team, followed by a series of small group discussions on the impact of the Campaign in their communities, and how the research team could obtain more evidence of this. The second day was given over to presentations and discussion led by the Executive Chair, Jack Beetson and his new management team about the current and future operation of the Campaign.

There was overwhelmingly positive feedback from staff and community leaders about the Campaign, and in particular about the extent to which LFLF had encouraged the leadership and ownership of the Campaign to come from people in the community. One ex-Campaign Coordinator summed up much of what people were saying in this way:

With the Literacy for Life, what I have seen – it is a grassroots model – it is being driven and delivered by the grassroots people. That is what is inspiring people, because they want to be these people.

Another recurring theme in discussion was how to build on the Campaign's achievements once it finished. There was some sense that this was not being planned properly and that people were concerned that the Campaign was finishing too soon, either without having reached everybody who needed it, and without ensuring that there were pathways and options established beyond the Campaign for the people who had graduated.

RESEARCH, DATA AND DATA MANAGEMENT

Since the Campaign began, it has been the subject of an ongoing action-research program, which has included several distinct projects, as follows:

- » evaluation research, which produces reports such as these, and has also led to some published articles;
- » specific research topics. A UNE PhD student I supervise, Ruth Ratcliffe is undertaking research of this kind, with LFLF's permission. Her topic is the impact of the Campaign on the community-school relationships in Wilcannia, Enngonia and Brewarrina. There was also a research project on the Campaigns in Bourke and Enngonia, funded by the Australian Institute of Criminology, which led to two publications in 2018;
- » longitudinal impact research. This aims to study the impact of the Campaign over time, once it has been completed. It is currently being studied under an ARC Grant in a partnership team of LFLF, UNE, the Lowitja Institute and UNSW. This project is due for completion in September 2019. A proposal to the National Health and Medical Research Council is currently being drafted by UNSW investigators on the above ARC project, who wish to continue this work for another 5 years including new communities which join the Campaign.

This research requires the regular collection of a significant amount of Campaign data and its storage in a secure purpose-built system. In the last 12 months, much more scrutiny has been applied to the evaluation of Indigenous projects funded by the Commonwealth, in part as a result of an unfavourable Productivity Commission report, but also because of strong concerns raised within communities and among Indigenous researchers on the issue of 'data sovereignty'. These two developments have now come together

in a requirement from the Commonwealth for much more rigorous evaluation research, especially longitudinal research; and for much more attention to be paid the ways in which data is collected in communities, how local researchers are trained, and how the data is made available to the communities themselves in order to inform their own decision making. This is a good thing for the Foundation, because its current ways of collecting, managing and communicating data on the Campaign match what is now considered 'best practice'. This is proving to be an important lobbying point in the search for upscaling funds.

In 2018, Ben Bartlett, Chair of the Technical Sub-Committee, made significant progress in developing the Communicare data management system, access to which he had successfully negotiated for a relatively low price from its owner, Telstra. This is the database that is used by the majority of Aboriginal Medical Services in Australia, the design of which Ben was originally involved with when he worked in this area. In mid 2018, the reporting system received further development, and a new draft of the protocols for data collection and entry was produced. These are now being implemented.

That said, there is some concern within the organisation about the amount of data being collected and the appropriateness of the Communicare system for managing it. This issue was raised several times in the course of the year in evaluation interviews with some staff, and has also been raised in staff reports, in training sessions, and during management and technical committee meetings. In March, for example, during staff training in Walgett, some of the new non-Aboriginal staff complained that the database was unnecessarily complex, and the process of collecting and submitting the data was too onerous. Some people have since said that a much simpler database would do the job adequately, and would reduce the workload associated with collecting Campaign data. Others have

questioned the value of the reporting interface, and the capacity to query the database to find the information they need. However, some of the concerns expressed to this point suggest there is insufficient understanding of the system, how it was designed, and why; including the purposes to which this data is put beyond the day to day management of specific Campaigns.

If a significant number of staff do not think the current system is fit-for-purpose, then it is unlikely to work as it is meant to. Data systems only work if people are trained in their use, and if the protocols that have been developed to make them work are followed by staff who have to interact with them. As the Campaign upscales, this will become more critical, because more people will be involved in working with the system. The solution is to undertake a review of the system in 2019, to clarify expectations and problems with the people who must enter, analyse and use the data, and decide if this system is appropriate, or whether there is an alternative cost-effective solution.

RECOMMENDATION:

10 LFLF to commission a review of its data management systems to ascertain if it is suitable for current and future purposes; and what changes need to be made, either to the current system, or in terms of an alternative.

Student Victor Whitton at the Boggabilla & Toomelah Graduation. Photo credit: Hugh Rutherford.



CONCLUSION

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This report has not included any review of the work done in Collarenebri, South West Sydney and Ltyentye Apurte in the final months of the year to 'prepare the ground' for the 2019 Campaign in these new locations. This will be covered in future reports on those Campaigns. It has also not been possible, because of space and time constraints, to include more than a very small sample of the documentary and qualitative data that has been provided to me over this year by staff, participants, donors and other stakeholders. However, a portion of this has been included in the Appendices, including some examples of student writing. The report also does not include any consideration of the financial management of the organisation or of specific Campaigns, as this is available in the Foundation's Annual Report and in its reports to donors on its funding agreements.

As this report is being finalised (April 2019), the Literacy for Life Foundation is hopefully on the verge of a major breakthrough, in terms of recognition by governments of the need for a national adult literacy Campaign and the commitment of resources to take the Campaign to the next level. This is exciting, but it will need to

be planned carefully, taking account of the many lessons learned since 2012, and of international experiences in mounting such campaigns. The most important task now facing the Board and its staff is to develop a detailed plan for the anticipated scale-up, so that it is ready if and when the funds begin to flow.

This is the last report I will produce on the overall participation and outcomes from the individual community Campaigns, as I am retiring at the end of this year. The current plan for 2019 is for different evaluators to research and report on the different communities and their Campaigns, and while I will be assisting the new evaluation team members, my main role will be confined to working on the Campaign in Ltyentye Apurte. I therefore conclude by thanking the Foundation Board and Management for entrusting me with this task over the last 7 years. I look forward to seeing many more successful adult literacy Campaigns across Aboriginal Australia in the years to come.

A luta continua!

Bob Boughton. PhD.

Associate Professor, School of Education
University of New England
29 April 2019

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. CAMPAIGN STAFFING 2018 BY SEX AND ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STATUS

All LFLF staff	M	F	T	
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	3	9	12	48%
Non-Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander	4	9	13	52%
Total staff	7	18	25	
Male/female proportion	28%	72%		

Community-based	M	F	T	
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	2	9	11	65%
Non-Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander	1	5	6	35%
Total staff	3	14	17	
Male/female proportion	18%	82%		

The National Team	M	F	T	
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	1	0	1	13%
Non-Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander	3	4	7	88%
Total staff	4	4	8	
Male/female proportion	50%	50%		

APPENDIX 2. SELECTED PAPERS, REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Boughton, B. (Submitted Feb 2019). Adult literacy, land rights and self-determination. In L. Rademaker & T. Rowse (Eds.), *Australian Indigenous self-determination: past practices, future options*. Retrieved from: <https://rune.une.edu.au/web/bitstream/1959.11/30137/3/openpublished/AdultBoughton2020BookChapter.pdf>
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- Boughton, B., Beetson, J., Waites, M., & Durnan, D. (2017). South-South Development Cooperation: Cuba's Yes, I Can! adult literacy campaign model in Timor-Leste and Aboriginal Australia. In R. Toumu'a & M. a. 'Otunuku (Eds.), *Education for what? Revisited. Proceedings of the Vaka Pasifiki Education Conference 2016* (pp. 105-113). Honiara, The Solomon Islands: Institute of Education, The University of the South Pacific. Retrieved from: https://www.academia.edu/32788252/South_South_Development_Cooperation_Cubas_Yes_I_Can_Adult_Literacy_odel_in_Timor_Leste_and_Aboriginal_Australia

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- Boughton, B. (2012). *South-South Cooperation: Can it work in Australia? (Keynote Address)*. Paper presented at the Australian Council of Adult Literacy Conference, Hobart, Tasmania September 2012, Hobart, Tasmania 2012.

APPENDIX 3. EXAMPLES OF STUDENT WRITING FROM BOGGABILLA TOOMELAH

LETTER WRITING, YES, I CAN!

I found the Yes, I Can program was good. It helped me learn how to read and write better, I liked it, some parts were a bit frustrating but, once you know what you're doing it gets easier. We should get more people involved in the course from the community, to improve and make it bigger and better. Thanks for your help with everything.

I find the Yes, I can program hard. The Yes, I can program is good, it helps me how to read and write better. Thank you for your support.

I find out the Yes, I Can program by my partner and she told me about it. It's not about how good and bad you can read and write, to take the class out more in the community. It will be good to see the people in community, it will be better if more people come along to the course, it will be more fun. So, come along. I would like to see more people to sign up, it makes you a better reader and writer.

My niece asked me, if I would like join a course at TAFE. It is called Literacy for Life. And the topic was Yes, I Can. Since I have been doing this course I notice that I can identify with words, I can now read better in general. All we need is more students to keep our class going on in the future classes for further education. Thanks for the time you have put in and helping me learn to be better reader.

I ... found the Yes, I can programme was very interesting and fun. I enjoyed the students company and the teacher was amazing. I really enjoyed the positive messages on the DVDs. ... [the Facilitators] explained everything to the students so that they could understand more clearly. I enjoyed myself doing the Yes, I can programme and, I wouldn't change a thing. But most of all I can thank ... [the Technical Adviser from Cuba] for bringing the Yes, I can programme to Australia from Cuba.

CREATIVE WRITING IN POST-LITERACY

I can hear a cockatoo and a bit of stream running.
I can also hear a galah too. I can also feel a bit of
breeze blowing. The trees making a noise with the
leaves when they blowing. The sun is a bit hot but not
much. I can also hear a crow making noises. The sand
is comfortable and soft for my feet, but the stones are
too rough and hard. It's got a lot of dead trees in the
river and a old burnt out car on the sand. The Sandy
Beach is a place where 2 rivers meet, the Macintyre
and Dumerique Rivers. This is a place where people
come to fish and catch yellabelly and cod.

APPENDIX 4. EXTRACT FROM CONSTITUTION OF LITERACY FOR LIFE FOUNDATION

OBJECTS OF THE COMPANY

The objects of the Company are:

- (a) to significantly reduce the rate of illiteracy within the Aboriginal adult population and the gap in the English literacy rates of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, which has stemmed from the poverty and socio-economic disadvantage of Aboriginal peoples;
 - (b) to strengthen a culture of literacy whereby the Aboriginal adult community values learning and the various pathways it affords to individuals and the community as a whole, as a means of alleviating poverty, helplessness, crime and substance abuse; and
 - (c) to develop the capacity of local Aboriginal community members to lead, own and coordinate a reduction in the rate of illiteracy within the Aboriginal adult population and to further opportunities for participating community members as a way of conquering poverty, to be effected by delivering a literacy campaign, implementing an adult literacy campaign model. A literacy campaign involves a co-ordinated and sustained effort to raise the level of literacy of the Aboriginal adult population by mobilising and training local resources, local organisers and local Facilitators to support as many Aboriginal adults as possible to learn very basic literacy within a relatively short time-frame, using a simple, standardised method contextualised to the local circumstances of Aboriginal peoples, followed by a period of post-literacy, community-run consolidation activities.
- This will involve undertaking activities that will include:
- (d) building local leadership and commitment to the delivery by the Company of a campaign to the local community to significantly reduce the rate of illiteracy within the Aboriginal adult population, through working in partnership with local organisations;
 - (e) engaging and training personnel such as staff and consultants to identify and engage potential participants and to provide literacy classes to illiterate adult Aboriginals, including through the provision of 65 basic reading and writing lessons using a simple audio-visual method known as YES I CAN, developed by IPLAC in Cuba, or using another similar proven method for combating adult illiteracy; and
 - (f) encouraging and supporting sustainable post literacy pathways for participants at local, regional and national levels, and will be effected by:
 - (g) planning, leading, managing, advising on, and resourcing the delivery of literacy campaigns for Aboriginal adults, including engaging local personnel and producing resources and materials to support all phases of a literacy campaign and securing and disbursing funds to effect the objects of the Company;
 - (h) undertaking the development and training of staff and local leaders in the delivery of literacy campaigns to Aboriginal adults;
 - (i) engaging national and international universities and/or other research institutions, to evaluate the quality of any literacy campaign or adult literacy campaign model, and to undertake innovative research to enhance the effectiveness of any literacy campaign; and
 - (j) assisting local literacy campaign leaders with mapping pathways for extending the employment and social enterprise opportunities of literacy campaign participants and local literacy campaign leaders.

APPENDIX 5. SUMMARY PARTICIPATION AND RETENTION DATA, 2012–2017 AND 2012–2018

The table below shows the individual year data, cumulative totals and rolling averages for the period until the end of 2017, and the result at the end of 2018.

Table 13. Year by Year Participation and Retention 2012–2017 and 2012–2018

Year	Communities	Intakes	Starters	Graduates	Retention (%)	Average Graduates per Intake
2012	1	2	22	16	73	8
2013	3	3	53	33	62	11
2014	1	2	41	31	76	16
2015	2	2	32	22	69	11
2016	2	2	25	14	56	7
2017	3	6	101	58	57	10
2012–2017	8	17	274	174	64	10
2018	3	4	58	32	55	8
2012–2018	8	21	332	206	62	10

This helps to see that a pattern is beginning to emerge as the campaign upscales, namely that the number of graduates per intake and the retention rate is slowly trending downwards.

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