

# Community researcher evaluation of On Track Watch

As part of OTW researchers used a variety of methods to review the project at the end of the first year

# Evaluating (Review) On Track Watch – the last step in the research cycle

Sources of information (data) for review  
(evaluation) of OTW

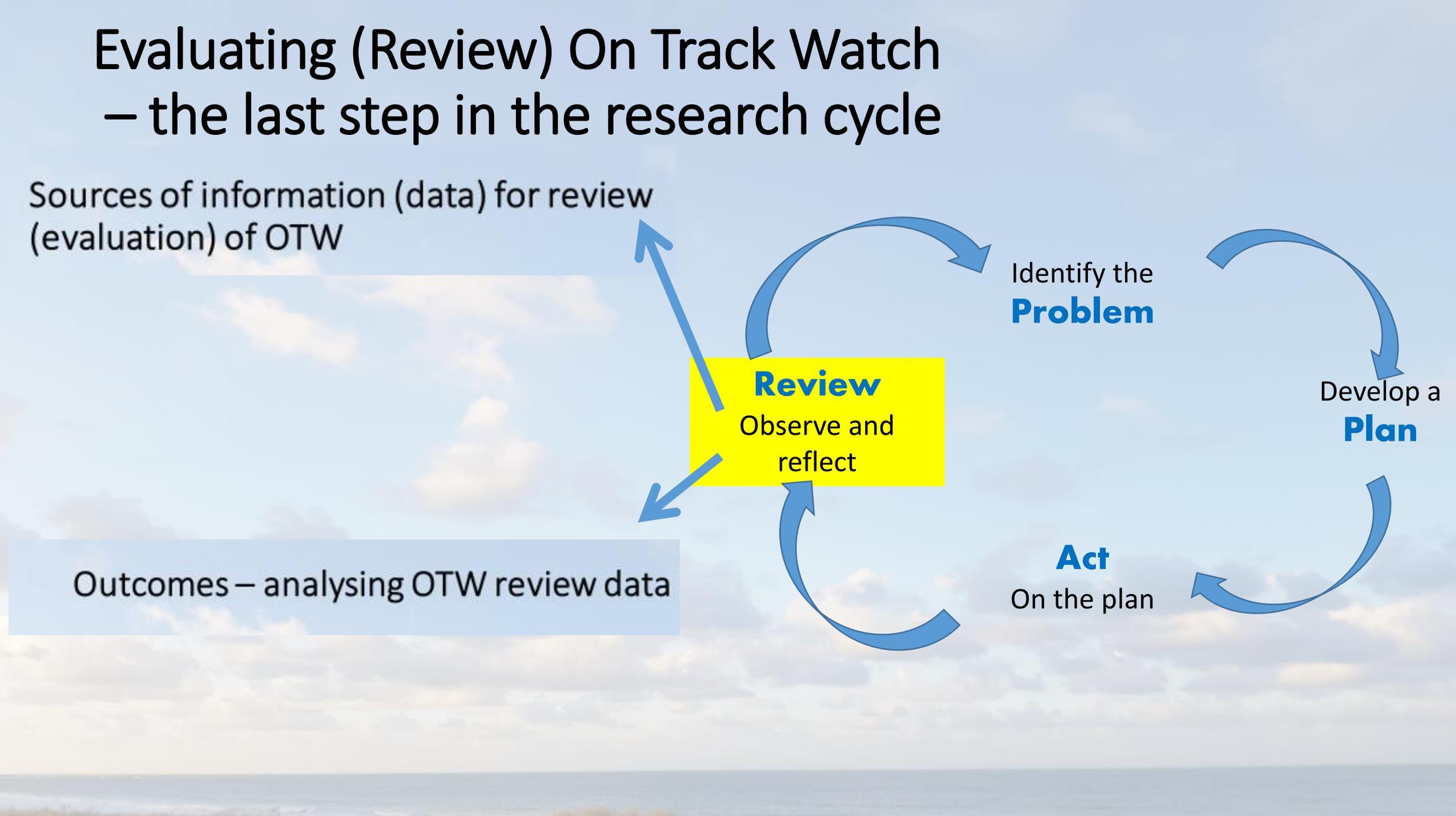
**Review**  
Observe and  
reflect

Outcomes – analysing OTW review data

Identify the  
**Problem**

Develop a  
**Plan**

**Act**  
On the plan



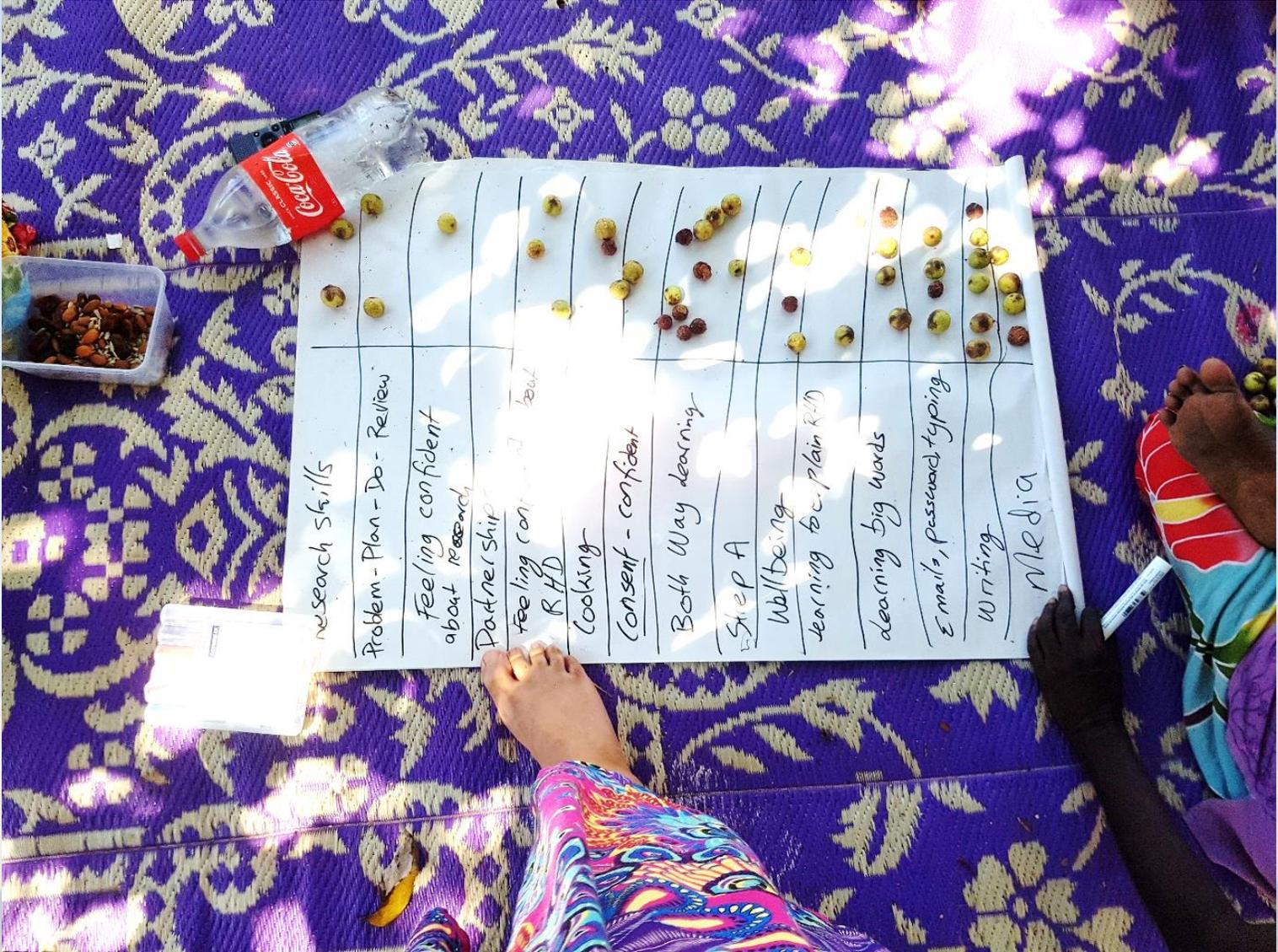
# Sources of information (data) for review (evaluation) of OTW

- i. Certificate II records
- ii. Trainees evaluation of OTW – surveys, focus groups
  - Most significant learnings Matrix
  - Process evaluation
- iii. Trainers' journals/observations

## **i) OTW Certificate II records – enrolments, retention, attendance**

- Greater than expected enrolment (15 out of a community of approximately 60 adults)
- Attendance by community leaders – indicating support
- High retention
- Requests for further training

# ii) Trainee developed tool - Most important learnings matrix



# Most important learnings matrix - analysis of quantitative data

|   | Votes |                          | Votes |
|---|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| Research skills                           | 2     | Strep A                  | 6     |
| Problem-plan-do-review cycle              | 3     | Wellbeing                | 7     |
| Feeling confident about research          | 2     | Learning to explain RHD  | 3     |
| Partnerships                              | 1     | Learning big words       | 6     |
| Feeling confident about understanding RHD | 3     | Emails, internet, typing | 7     |
| Cooking                                   | 6     | Writing                  | 6     |
| Feeling confident about consent           | 3     | Media                    | 5     |
| Both way learning                         | 5     |                          |       |

\* 10 participants – 6 votes each

# Focus group analysis of Learnings matrix results

- Participants most valued **practical skills** - literacy and using computers
- **Wellbeing** (7 votes) – learning about a new idea, the things we did changed feelings, learnt how to look after each other, bringing everyone together (eg BBQ) is good for young people, we have more purpose life
- *“If we get rid of Strep infections we don’t need to worry (about understanding) RHD”* (comparing votes for Strep (6) vs RHD (3) knowledge)
- **Strep A** (6) – a new idea, interesting, it is everywhere (germs, hygiene); understanding gives a picture for the community about looking after children
- **Consent** (3) – for some there is understanding but lack of confidence in asking for consent, “it can be hard to get agreement”, hard because it has to be done individually; some just don’t understand consent
- **Partnerships** (1) – people feel more comfortable working together, working in a group can build up partnerships, also it is good to get extra help from outside people. Maybe they didn’t understand the word partnership – but a practical example like the cooking program was valued highly (6)
- **Research confidence** (2) - maybe the message (that research could be something everyone did together) was not clear for the group, as above, it can be (is usually) done in a partnership

# Learnings matrix - focus group analysis continued

- ***Both way learning*** (5)
  - much more than just Yolngu and Balanda learning from each other – can be Adult-Teenager / Women-Men / Yilpara-other Homelands / Young-Old (in cultural knowledge). For example Yilpara and other Homelands can compare local bush medicine knowledge
  - “We need to involve other outside people (homelands, Balanda, research groups) to come in and share knowledge.
  - *“Start from our community and work our way outside to help other Homeland communities”* because RHD is new for us (all) we have to understand how to stop it.
  - *“Balanda have to listen to the Yolngu voice instead of telling us what to do”*

# ii) Trainee developed tool - Process evaluation survey based on values defined by NHMRC 'Guidelines for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research'

Reciprocity; Respect;  
Equality; Responsibility;  
Survival & Protection;  
Spirit & Integrity

Questions written by a  
sub-group of 5 trainees  
in two languages

Completed by 8 trainees

**On Track Watch Evaluation**  
What we thought about OTW

1. How much did you learn from On Track Watch? (How much fish did you catch?)  
Njähä nali marrngithina gurruyuya OTW projectju? (Nhämunha guya nali märrama?)

What was manyak?

What was märr-ganga manyak?

2. Did we do the work the right way, with respect?  
Nhaltjan nali buku-wekama ga djäma nunhi manyak-kuma djämamalanya?

Give an example of how we showed respect  
Nhä nuli nhe manyaktja malngamay nula wejtan djämawu?

How could we be more respectful?  
Nhaltjana nali yurru buluya wirrikiya buku-wekama?

3. Did everyone feel they could join the group?  
Nhaltjana nali yolju yurru gunga'yun mi bala'lii?

How did you find working in a group?  
Nhaltjan nhe nuli guyanj nuni nhe nuli djäma bukma'kaya?

If you were uncomfortable working in the group, why?  
Nhaku nali nuli galja-djawarmiya marrtji djämayi, nhaku warray?

4. Were we responsible? Did we behave as expected?  
Wanhakumi nali yurru gunga'yunmiya?

How could we be more responsible?  
Nhaltjana nali yurru yuwalktja gunga'yunmi?

5. Did we keep a good balance between Yolngu and Balanda knowledge and culture?  
Näpaki rom ga Yolngu rom nali yurru waggany-manapan märr nali yurru dharajan nhäma?

Give an example of good balance  
Nhä nali latjuya malngamaya dhukarr dhunupaya.

How could we do a better job of keeping balance?  
Nhaltjana nali yurru buluya djäma latjukuma ga dhunupakuma?

6. Did we keep Yolngu culture strong?  
Nhä nanyi yolngu romdja badak däl nalikurra mulka?

When we are doing training how do we keep Yolngu culture strong?  
Balanya nhakun nunhi nali yukurra marrgithi OTWku, nhaltjana nali yurru gurrunhan nalikuway rom yolngu dälkuma?

# Survey analysis - Emoticon (quantitative) data

|                                  |  |  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| <b>Reciprocity</b>               | -  | -   | 8   |
| <b>Respect</b>                   | -  | 2   | 6   |
| <b>Equality</b>                  | -  | 3   | 4   |
| <b>Responsibility</b>            | -  | 5   | 2   |
| <b>Survival &amp; Protection</b> | -  | 3   | 5   |
| <b>Spirit &amp; Integrity</b>    | -  | 3   | 4   |

\* 9 participants – one gave only written responses

# Survey analysis - Qualitative data

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Reciprocity</b><br/>How did you benefit?</p>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Community members expressed their desire to know more about, and to find actions to prevent, RHD: “We don’t want our kids to have heart surgery” (CR)</li> <li>“we want to keep the kids healthy, community healthy, look after our land” (CR)</li> <li>-Originally proposed research action areas were modified by community. Areas deemed as priorities for research and action were broadened to areas such as nutrition.</li> <li>-Immediate benefit was achieved with opportunities for CRs to learn new practical skills as well as grow in critical thinking. Participants reported benefit of learning skills and knowledge.</li> <li>-Further opportunities for trainees to benefit beyond the project have included addressing national RHD workshops, connecting to other Aboriginal researchers, developing their own resources and taking OTW to nearby communities, and employment on a new separate project (5 CRs)</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Respect</b><br/>How did we show respect?</p>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Accepting a greater number of Cert-II CRs than initially anticipated. The number reflected the diversity of reasons why people came to training, including that some joined to provide leadership for the research group and some were ‘sent’ by elders to make the most of an opportunity for leadership development</li> <li>-Cert-II group analysis of the Principles survey - “Show respect in how we work together “the right way”</li> <li>- Use of metaphors (in themselves metaphors are the basis of Yolŋu knowledge) as the essential component of the both-way learning process.</li> <li>-Metaphors drawn from cultural knowledge, eg the baru (crocodile), the lipalipa provided by participants and acknowledged in all presentations/writings as such and CRs included as co-authors and co-presenters</li> <li>-Researchers fitted in with day to day community processes that impacted classes, for instance needing to attend a ‘hearing ceremony’ (announcement of a person’s passing) and behave respectfully on hearing of a person’s death</li> <li>- Confidentiality extensively discussed during OTW research training, for example during focus groups and Throat Swabbing Day</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Equality</b><br/>Was everyone able to join?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Both-way learning was valued especially with use of local metaphors to increasing local and Institutional understandings. “Yolŋu and Balanda combine, sharing knowledge together, talking together, sharing ideas...learning about Balanda law, culture, modern world” (CR)</li> <li>-CRs developed their own tools for evaluating the project as a whole- see table x below and throughout the project they analysed and reported on the data</li> <li>-The research ideas came from the community rather than from institutional researchers, the selected three action areas were significant as the basis of the project and were readily accepted because of their relevance to the community</li> <li>- CR’s responses to a specific question about equality - 7 people said “good”; for 4 people this was about working in a group – helping, encouraging each other, “gave me understanding about how to work in a group”. “It was interesting work”, “good training”, “learning about planning was good”(CRs)</li> </ul>  |

Continued ...

# Survey analysis - Qualitative data

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Responsibility</b><br/>Did we behave responsibly?</p>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “At the school we talked to the whole group of parents and children and they felt comfortable and interested when they heard the story. People were very interested, they listened quietly” (CR)</li> <li>-“We told them about the numbers of people with RF and RHD in the community; we explained about the Strep germ” CR explaining the process of learning about informed consent.</li> <li>- Community leader’s statement that if he didn’t do something there would be no one left to look after the land in the future is evidence of the purpose of the research originating from the community.</li> <li>- Aboriginal participants acted appropriately according to their cultural mores</li> <li>- Lipalipa (canoe) action research metaphor creates transparency and includes idea of ongoing feedback</li> <li>- Facilitators endeavoured to negotiate release time with other organisations who employed the CRs as well as remuneration for lost wages while participating in the Cert-II workshops. Workshops were fitted around other commitments of CRs</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Survival &amp; Protection</b><br/>Did we balance Yolngu and Balanda knowledge?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-16 people from community were accepted to be enrolled despite the original project plan for only four CRs; no one was excluded. Everyone had either their own RHD experience or close family members meaning there was high interest</li> <li>-Facilitators supported stated desire to “Start from our community and work our way outside to help other Homeland communities” (CR)</li> <li>-Facilitators respect for working collectively meant accepting that CRs formed small working groups according to natural cultural constructs. But in the Cert-II assessments they were recorded individually D: Extensive time was spent on translation into the local language to develop clear conceptual understandings of RHD. This included asking elders for language terms to describe research concepts such as ‘respect’ strengthening intergenerational knowledge of traditional language. This ensures survival, protection and value of Aboriginal languages which safeguards identities and culture.</li> <li>-CR’s cultural metaphors were valued and they were given opportunity to present to the ‘institution’ using those metaphors</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Spirit &amp; Integrity</b><br/>Did we keep Yolngu culture strong?</p>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The trainees newly knew enough about RHD to be confident to explain to their own community members/own cultural group “People felt good about signing the consent form” (after being given good information about Strep as a whole of community group) [CI-X].</li> <li>-“The swabbing was done in a good way – in a quiet room” [CI-X]</li> <li>-“Good sharing our own knowledge, skills and feelings about ethics and putting Yolngu (gurrutu) and balanda Rom (law-institutional ethics) together” (CR-X) [ as a metaphor for the ‘institutional’ ethics] C: An example of personal integrity was demonstrated in facilitators being prepared to participate in, (as invited), and learn from, traditional ceremonies, where their knowledge on how to act was very limited and therefore they were placed in a situation of vulnerability. D: culturally appropriate learning methods for example, working in a group where younger less experienced CR were encouraged to watch and, even copy, older CR.</li> <li>- meanings of abstract western research terms such as ‘consent’ were not readily available to CR and this required much effort and discussion to analyse. This was solved by use of cultural metaphors, time, patience and a spirit of openness and integrity in enquiring minds</li> <li>-CR reported that they felt increasingly comfortable working together in partnership with outside people such as from the outstation/Homeland resource centre. For example the cooking program was valued highly as people appreciated help in areas that they don’t have in their community circle to support what they had decided to do (rather than being told).</li> </ul> |

# Outcomes – analysing OTW review data

1. RHD understanding
2. Sharing RHD learnings
3. Understanding about research
4. Sharing Research understanding
5. Practical skills
6. Process learnings – enablers and barriers (what helps, what gets in the way)

## Rheumatic heart disease

- Strep A
- Infection
- Immune system
- Rheumatic fever
- Prevention

## Research

- Problem-Plan-Act-Review research cycle
- Research tools
  - focus groups
  - Interviews
  - Swabbing
  - surveys
- Consent
- Ethics

# Outcomes – 1. Understanding RHD

- ***“It is a new thing that Yolngu are learning to know about germs”***, “about Strep A and the disease it causes”
- At the school we talked to the whole group of parents and children and they felt comfortable and interested when they heard the story
- We told them about the numbers of people with RF and RHD in the community; we explained about the Strep germ
- People were very interested, they listened quietly and asked lots of questions about where Strep came from, where did the disease come from and how do we stop it, how the germs got in the body (we told them about being clean, hygiene, awareness of germs)
- ***We learnt that people didn’t realise the germs are just there***, they thought they came from a long way, but they are living here
- ***I feel very strong now about taking care of djamarkuli***

# Outcomes – 2. RHD Knowledge sharing

## *Sharing new knowledge with others*

- ***“Start from our community and work our way outside to help other Homeland communities”*** because RHD is new for us (all) we have to understand how to stop it.
- ***Strep A*** – it is everywhere (germs, hygiene); understanding gives a picture for the community about looking after children
- Opportunities for trainees have included addressing a national RHD workshop, connecting to other Yolngu researchers, developing their own resources and taking OTW to nearby communities.

## *Asking for more knowledge*

- ***“we would like scientists to come and tell us about the different types of germs – the names of different germs”***
- People would like to know what effect germs have in people’s bodies -this is like knowing that different bait live in different places and catch different fish eg small bait at Dhuruputjpi catches cat fish
- It will give Yolngu knowledge to see and understand how the germs live in peoples’ bodies

# Outcomes – 3. Research understanding

- “Looking through our own thoughts about how to run the project gives us more understanding about how to run projects in the future”
- Doing this project made me feel good, it is very clear about research
- “It changed my life, on that day I was amazed, I felt really happy” (Wesley, Aboriginal Health worker)
- ***“What I got out of it personally was learning about the Problem-Plan-Do-Review cycle and using it in other areas of my life”*** (Makungun Marika)

## Ethics

- People felt good about signing the consent form (after being given good information about Strep)
- The swabbing was done in a good way – in a quiet room
- Good sharing our own knowledge, skills and feelings about ethics and putting Yolngu (gurrutu) and balanda Rom (law) together

# Outcomes – 4. Sharing the research understanding

As a result of learning about research the trainees would like to:

- Do any other research in the community (not just health)
- Have more training
- Meeting other Yolngu researchers
- One day working for CDU
- Teach young ones to do the training with CDU, or do some research
- Have Yolngu from other Homelands to join us, and to start their own projects

# Outcome – 5. practical skills

- Overall participants most valued OTW for the ***practical skills*** - literacy and using computers
- Literacy – learning big, complex and scientific words
- ***Wellbeing***– a new idea, the things we did changed feelings, learnt how to look after each other, bringing everyone together (eg community BBQ) is good for young people, we have more purpose life
- Cooking program – similar

# Outcome - 6. Process learnings

## *Enablers*

- **Both ways learning** - Yolngu and Balanda combine, sharing knowledge together, talking together, sharing ideas; learning about Balanda law, culture, modern world
- Showing **respect**, working together “the right way” – talking, listening, learning, sharing, making time to come to class, showing interest
- **Working in a group** – helping, encouraging each other, “gave me understanding about how to work in a group”.
- interesting work, good training
- **Partnerships**– people feel more comfortable working together, working in a group can build up partnerships, also it is good to get extra help from outside people. A good example was the cooking program was valued highly

## **Barriers**

- sometimes it is **hard to communicate**
- having other work to do, being tired or busy
- *too much time spent talking and not enough time doing*
- sometimes the work was hard - “**big words**” make people feel uncomfortable
- Yolngu to Yolngu – there is a **risk**, some see the reason for the research others don’t –this can get between people – need to remind ourselves why we are doing the research

## **Cultural demands**

- Cultural work is more important than other work, for example during the training there was funeral that went for 3 weeks and it was not possible to do much other work

# Conclusions

There are important connections between:

## **1. Both-way learning and wellbeing**

Not understanding the mainstream world is stressful

## **2. Action research and community development**

Increased knowledge → capacity building → community building

## **3. Research skills and critical thinking**

Valued by community leaders making decisions about a new Corporation  
(*unfamiliar mainstream governance rules etc*)

## **4. Understanding and knowledge sharing (translation)**

Understanding empowers community to take action to share knowledge

- What we are doing is showing young ones, showing others, they are watching us to understand the ways of doing research. Learning about deeper meanings and understanding
- Dhuwaya balanya mayali nhakun milkuma rom yuṭawu yolṅuwu marṅgithinyarawu ga nhäma ṅiṅ-thun ga maladjarr'yun nhä ṅayi dhukarr dhunupa ga mayali ṅali yurru malṅ'thun mama balakuwitjan djämagu research

*“The project was a new experience for Yilpara, and we will go to other places and teach them, keep on going!” (Community researcher)*

# Thank you to:

- Local community leaders
- The other OTW trainees
- Yilpara community for being part of the research
- Dr Anna Ralph, Alice Mitchell, Jeff Cook (co-authors)
- The Menzies trainers – Jodi Phillips, Clarissa Carter
- Laynha Health, especially Yilpara clinic
- Baniyala (Yilpara) School
- Miwatj Employment Participation
- Children in Schools Program (Laynha)
- Laynha Rangers
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