

ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Two case studies of adult education needs, existing adult education provision and strategies to get more training

**A NATIONAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP SCHEME
RESEARCH PROJECT**

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1 INTRODUCTION

The following notes were made after a three day visit by Rick Flowers in February this year to the communities of Pilliga, Lightning Ridge, Walgett Namoi, and Gingie. The aim of the visit was to carry out some preliminary work for the soon-to-be-appointed Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer.

The Community Liaison Officer will be employed by Barwon Aboriginal Community Ltd. but supported and guided by an advisory committee consisting of representatives from Aboriginal organisations in Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge, Pilliga, Gingie, Namoi and Walgett. Major duties of the liaison officer include:

- "• Meet with individuals and committees to discuss training needs to improve Aboriginal organisation's management ability.
- After identifying needs of individuals and organisations to liaise with training bodies to deliver actual programmes to the community - either at central or "home" locations.
- Liaise with community and appropriate training organisations such as TAFE or the provision of such other activities at the Education Centre as Homework Adult Literacy and General Skills courses" (duty statement).

Rick was initially asked to provide some initial on-the-job training and support for the new Community Liaison Officer. But because of the delays in appointing the Liaison Officer, Rick was not able to do this. Instead, he has written a report based on his visits to two communities: Lightning Ridge and Gingie. He could have written reports on the other communities he visited (Walgett, Namoi and Pilliga). But we decided it was better to look at some training needs and issues in two communities and to make some recommendations about decisions that need to be made if training programmes are going to be set up in these and other communities. We took this decision because we feel strongly that there are plenty of reports on communities and not enough action. By the time you have finished reading this report we hope you will be clearer about some of the issues that will need to be looked at if effective training programmes are going to be developed in your community.

2 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING AND ADULT EDUCATION

A training needs analysis of Aboriginal organisations should start with the following sorts of questions. What is the historical, social, political and economic context of these organisations? One should closely examine what the directors and staff of these organisations are doing. What are their philosophies, aims and objectives? What are the needs in their communities which they are trying to meet? What strategies are they employing to try and meet needs? What problems do they face and what are their existing skill levels?

Most people who read these notes will be familiar with the major needs of Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal unemployment is extremely high. There is an acute shortage of adequate housing for Aboriginals. Aboriginal culture is only in

very recent years beginning to receive any respect and support from the wider community. Alcohol and drug abuse are widespread. Most Aboriginal adults have poor reading and writing skills and are not aware of many important available social services. For a more detailed description of needs in Aboriginal communities in North West New South Wales, refer to the references in the bibliography.

Directors and staff of Aboriginal organisations are very clear about the tasks expected of them. The community expects that they help provide new employment opportunities, more and better housing, health, legal, information, referral and advocacy services. To do the above, directors and staff require a wide range and high degree of skills. But most directors and staff of Aboriginal organisations have had very little formal training to help them acquire the necessary skills. In this respect, it is remarkable how much progress some Aboriginal organisations have made.

There is a growing recognition that Aboriginal organisations require support in the form of management skills training for their directors and staff. Evidence for this is provided by the rapidly growing funds available to DAA's Aboriginal Organisation Training Programme (A.O.T.). ADC & DEET have also been devoting in recent years increasing funds to managerial skills training for staff and directors of Aboriginal organisations. A number of training consultants have been developing curriculum and training materials in the area of management skills. Consultants have included Tranby Aboriginal College, Riverina College of Advanced Education, North Coast Institute of Aboriginal Community Education and Peat Marwick Hungerford Management Consultants. There is also currently a national curriculum development project being conducted by the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development which is producing many materials for Aboriginal community management.

But there is a danger that the thrust for management skills training is being acted on by Aboriginal organisations and training providers in an uncritical manner. There is a strong focus on helping Aboriginal organisations improve their bookkeeping, office management and general administration. There is also a focus on training for small business administration and enterprise development. Training in these areas is certainly needed but **current provision by no means covers the full scope of training that is required.** The following sections of this report will outline the other areas of training which Aboriginal directors and staff are expressing need for.

More importantly, **there is a danger that government departments in their enthusiasm to be seen to be active in the area of training will foist unsuitable training programmes upon Aboriginal communities.** There are many examples of education programmes which have not been effective for Aboriginal people because they have failed to take into account the distinct learning needs and learning styles of Aboriginal people. Because there are very few available trainers experienced in the area of Aboriginal community development and management, there will inevitably be cases where training is provided that is more suited to white, middle class organisations and people with tertiary qualifications.

The following case studies intend to show some of the issues which need to be dealt with if effective training programmes are to be designed and delivered. Further investigation of these issues will be a task for the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer/cum Adult Educator.

One of the fundamental tasks for the liaison officer/adult educator will be to ensure that local Aboriginal people have a significant input into the design and delivery of training programmes. This is a far more desirable model than having faceless bureaucrats in a distant city office making decisions about the type of training programmes to be delivered.

3 LIGHTNING RIDGE

3.1 Areas of Aboriginal Community Need

According to local estimates there are approximately 400-500 Aboriginal people in the Lightning Ridge area. This includes those who live in town and those who live on the outlying mining fields.

Unemployment and under-employment for the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community is high. Many are engaged in mining. But it is only a small number of people who can earn an adequate income from mining. Mining does not offer a reliable and steady source of income. Moreover, it is difficult for the small operator to afford the necessary machinery.

A small number of Aboriginal people are employed in town. It is perhaps significant to note that in comparison to other towns in the North-West, a greater number of Aboriginal people are employed in the town's businesses. There are also two local self-employed Aboriginal businessmen. One is a joint partner in a butchery. The other runs a septic tank cleaning service.

22 Aboriginal families and six single persons are currently on the waiting list of the Barrickneale Housing Company. These families currently suffer poorly constructed, improvised, shed-like accommodation, mostly in the mining fields.

Lightning Ridge does not have adequate community services. The nearest high school is in Walgett, which is a one hour bus drive away. Wide sections of the black and white community are campaigning for a local high school, tech. college, medical service and public swimming pool. Members of the Aboriginal community expressed frustration at having to travel to Walgett in order to be able to use the Aboriginal medical service. The Barrickneale Housing Company has plans to try and obtain funds for the construction of a community hall and sports facilities. A need was expressed for an Aboriginal health worker and family support service.

3.2 Barrickneale Housing Company

The major Aboriginal community organisation in Lightning Ridge is Barrickneale Housing Company. Barrickneale was established in 1979 for the purpose of obtaining and constructing housing for members of the Aboriginal community. In addition, the company set itself broader tasks of community development.

Barrickneale currently has 28 houses and 6 flats which are being leased to Aboriginal families and individuals. The company also owns a truck which is leased to an Aboriginal businessman who carries out a septic tank cleaning service. 16 of Barrickneale's houses were built by two Aboriginal apprentices of the company. In March, 1989, they will be completing their four year apprenticeships.

Barrickneale has drawn up a five year plan which is to begin in 1990. The plan includes:

- i) the purchase of land and capital with ADC funding to enable the construction of four new houses each year;
- ii) the erection of a storage shed;
- iii) the construction of a multi-purpose complex which will include office space, a meeting hall, and sporting and recreation facilities;
- iv) the continued employment of builder apprentices.

In comparison to other Aboriginal housing companies in New South Wales, Barrickneale is impressively managed. The Board of Directors and part-time administrator have established successful procedures for the allocation of houses, collection of rent and carrying out of repairs and maintenance. In contrast to the situation in many other Aboriginal communities in New South Wales, the properties which belong to Barrickneale are in good condition and tenants pay their rent.

Nonetheless, the chairperson of Barrickneale expressed the view that the company had enjoyed only limited success because it had not brought about significant improvements in community services. The chairperson commented, "But we've only got houses".

3.3 Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC)

Lightning Ridge LALC is currently not receiving funds. For the past four years it has not been functioning. Recently there have been concerted attempts by some Aboriginal community members to set the LALC up in order to attract funding. With the recent re-establishment of the North West RALC the opportunity for renewed LALC funding in Lightning Ridge is good.

An issue related to the LALC which should be addressed by the Lightning Ridge Aboriginal community is whether the LALC and Barrickneale Housing Company will be able to establish a constructive working relationship. In many other towns, Aboriginal housing companies and LALC's are often engaged in bitter conflict and duplicate rather than complement each other. What role will the LALC in Lightning Ridge seek to play? Barrickneale provides Aboriginal housing and is also seeking to establish commercial enterprises and community services. Members of the LALC are also exploring the possibilities of enterprise development.

3.4 Enterprise Development

There are four major enterprise projects being discussed by members of the Aboriginal community. They are the purchase of a motel and a concrete manufacturer, plus the establishment of a mining company and the construction of a multi-purpose complex with both commercial space and sporting and recreation facilities to lease out.

All enterprise projects are still only on the drawing boards but are to varying degrees being considered seriously by government funding bodies. There is a strong possibility that the mining company project will begin in June, 1989. There are plans to start a Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) in June which would provide the initial labour and some capital for the mining project. CDEP is a scheme administered by DAA which pools unemployment benefits plus a 20% subsidy. It is planned to use the pooled funds to employ previously unemployed Aboriginal people to build an office, amenities block and machinery workshop for the mining company.

3.5 Training needs of Aboriginal directors and staff in Lightning Ridge

The following notes on training needs are tentative. They are based on only a small number of interviews.

The interviewees expressed the need for training in three main areas:

- i) basic political education;
- ii) community management;
- iii) enterprise development (see Chart 1)

Despite the fact that Barrickneale Housing Company is currently well managed and capable of forward planning, the chairperson and administrator expressed the view that if Barrickneale is to successfully expand, directors and staff will need more training in the three above-mentioned areas.

Chart 1

Community Management

* Financial management

- knowledge of funding guidelines
- knowledge of accountability requirements
- planning and budgeting
- understanding financial statements

* Office Administration

- record keeping
- filing
- wages, taxes and insurance
- bookkeeping
- computing

* Obtaining resources

- submission and report writing
- liaison and consultation
- lobbying and negotiating
- publicity and public speaking

Enterprise development

* identify appropriate enterprises

* market research (feasibility study)

* obtaining funding

* legal matters and insurance

* banking

* determining costs

* purchasing

* selling

* publicity and advertising

**Training needs
of
Aboriginal
directors and staff
in
Lightning Ridge**

Basic political education

* knowledge and understanding of government policies

* knowledge of funding sources

* knowledge and understanding of NSW Land Rights Act

* networking/coalition building with other groups

* knowledge and understanding of political economy

It is important to bear in mind that the directors and staff of Barrickneale want training in order to expand. This is in comparison to training needs of members of, for example, Gingie Aboriginal Corporation. Members of Gingie Corporation want training in order to start and develop their organisation. For the training provider, this means that it should be taken into account that directors and staff of Barrickneale do already have a reasonably advanced level of knowledge and skills.

It is also important to make a distinction between the training needs of directors and staff. The distinction is usefully explained by stating that directors should **know about certain things but not necessarily do them**. For example, directors should know about the components of financial management. This includes having a knowledge of funding guidelines, accountability requirements, planning and budgeting plus an ability to read and understand financial statements. But they should not be required to carry out the day to day office management tasks such as keeping records, filing, managing wages, taxes, insurance and bookkeeping. Office management skills are required by paid staff, not voluntary directors.

As previously mentioned there are concerted moves to obtain funding for the LALC in Lightning Ridge. Members of the LALC will therefore require a knowledge and understanding of the New South Wales Land Rights Act. They will require knowledge, skills and commitment to not only promote community involvement in the LALC but also to convince the New South Wales State Aboriginal Land Council and the New South Wales government of their ability to properly manage funds.

Arising from the attempts to set up an LALC a further training need emerges. Directors and staff of the various organisations and enterprise ventures should be seeking to co-ordinate their respective efforts to meet community needs. If such co-ordination is to be promoted at the local community level, training should be offered which examines the aims and objectives of the different organisations or ventures in the context of community development planning.

3.6 The existing state of adult education and training provision

The Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer will have a bewildering range of training providers and government bodies to liaise and negotiate with in order to facilitate the delivery of training programmes. It is instructive to describe some of the plans for training programmes in Lightning Ridge which are either being considered or being implemented.

The local TAFE Regional Aboriginal Co-ordinator (RAC) who is based in Bourke has made one brief visit to Lightning Ridge. A few members of the Aboriginal community expressed to the RAC the need for training in computer and business management. The RAC is considering ways to organise training in these areas. But the RAC's plans are not known to local members of the Aboriginal community. Her visit to Lightning Ridge was very brief. There has been no follow-up to her visit. No critical judgement, however, should be made of the incumbent RAC. She is limited by her lack of resources (she has not been provided with a car) and the size of the region she must cover (Cobar, Bourke to Lightning Ridge) which simply does not make it possible to carry out adequate community consultations, let alone follow them through.

The Aboriginal Employment and Training Branch (AETB) of DEET has been exploring somewhat more systematically than the TAFE RAC ways to organise training for Lightning Ridge. AETB has been involved in lengthy negotiations with

members of the community regarding training for planned enterprises. The planned enterprises include a concrete manufacturing company, a mining company and a multi-purpose complex.

The AETB administers the Enterprise Management Training Scheme (EMTS). EMTS is designed to assist the staff of Aboriginal organisations who are engaged in enterprise development to obtain relevant training. This assistance might take the form of supporting individual staff and management members to undertake formal training in an accredited course. But EMTS funds can also be used to bring training to communities. Senior Aboriginal Vocational Officers in the NSW western region have in fact been actively exploring the possibility of setting up a range of Aboriginal enterprise management courses in the western region, which would include Lightning Ridge. For example, the AETB approached a business management and personnel training consultancy firm based in Brisbane with a view to setting up a small business management course for staff and directors of Aboriginal organisations to be delivered in regional centres across the western region. Details about the content and structure of the programme could not be obtained. The AETB has also approached the Orana Community College and asked it to set up a special small business management course for Aboriginal staff and directors. Such a course has recently been developed and delivered in the Riverina region by Albury College of TAFE. It was 6 weeks in length and included subjects such as: establishing a small business; preparing a business plan; recordkeeping; business communication; supervising people; computing concepts, and business mathematics and statistics. It is unlikely that the abovementioned course could be delivered in a small centre like Lightning Ridge. If members of the Aboriginal community in Lightning Ridge are to have the opportunity to participate in any such courses which will most likely be conducted in a large regional centre such as Dubbo, it will depend on whether the courses can be delivered part-time and suitable travel arrangements can be made.

The AETB has also been considering funding a series of short workshops which could be delivered in Lightning Ridge. There are two difficulties involved in this. Firstly, there is a shortage of available training packages and trainers. For example, Tranby Aboriginal College based in Sydney has considerable experience in delivering and designing management skills workshops in Aboriginal communities. But they simply do not have enough resources to conduct workshops on a regular basis in Lightning Ridge. The second difficulty involves the possible response from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) to DEET involvement in providing community organisation training. DAA administers the Aboriginal Organisations Training Programme (AOT) which provides funds for director's training. It is likely that there will be dispute with DAA if EMTS funds are used for director's training. Such disputes are likely to detrimentally affect effective planning and co-ordination of any training that the community ends up getting.

In addition, mention should also be made of the AETB's involvement in technical skills training. AETB funds supported two men who recently completed a 4 year building apprenticeship with Barrickneale Housing Company. The AETB is currently investigating the possibility of delivering components in Lightning Ridge of an opal cutting course conducted at Wollongong TAFE.

The above paragraphs have described how within just one branch (AETB) of a single government department (DEET) it can be a formidable task to keep track of all the various efforts being undertaken to develop appropriate training programmes. How much more formidable it is then for Aboriginal community organisations to negotiate training provision with various government departments.

Another major provider of funds for training is DAA. As previously mentioned DAA administers the AOT programme. In the case of Lightning Ridge AOT money is currently available. A regional committee consisting of representatives from Aboriginal organisations in Lightning Ridge, Collarenebri, Pilliga and Walgett has obtained AOT funds through the auspices of Barwon Aboriginal Community Ltd. The regional committee has allocated part of this AOT money initially for the purpose of appointing a part-time Community Liaison Officer/Adult Educator and a consultant to carry out a training needs analysis. This analysis will enable the communities to have a significant input into the design and implementation of any training programmes.

One of the potential strengths of the AOT programme is that it can enable communities to have more influence over the programme development process. Instead of the usual process of programme planning and implementation (see Chart 2) where the community never has control of the way programmes are developed, AOT funds can, in theory at least, be granted to communities and they can decide on and determine the nature of the programmes which will be implemented. In the case of Lightning Ridge, Walgett, Collarenebri and Pilliga, there is therefore a real opportunity for a community controlled programme development process.

In the meanwhile, developments at a national level within DAA have overtaken this specific local development. National policy makers have determined, in the wake of the much publicised criticism of Aboriginal affairs administration, that Aboriginal organisations must learn about financial accountability. In NSW, DAA has approached three training providers to carry out this task. They are Tranby College, the North Coast Institute of Aboriginal Community Education and the TAFE Aboriginal Education Unit. Tranby has been given the responsibility to teach Aboriginal organisations about accountability in the North-western region. This includes Lightning Ridge. They will conduct a single two day workshop in Lightning Ridge in April. It is very unlikely that a single workshop will achieve any significant training outcome.

There is a more fundamental problem with the DAA approach to programme development. The national DAA training initiative overrides all local efforts to develop community control of the programme development process. Decisions were made about the training in Canberra and Sydney. **No consultation occurred with the local community.** The likely consequence of this programme development process is that the community becomes a mere passive recipient of training. Passive recipients are unlikely to have as much interest and concern in the quality and outcomes of training programmes as active participants would have (see Chart 3).

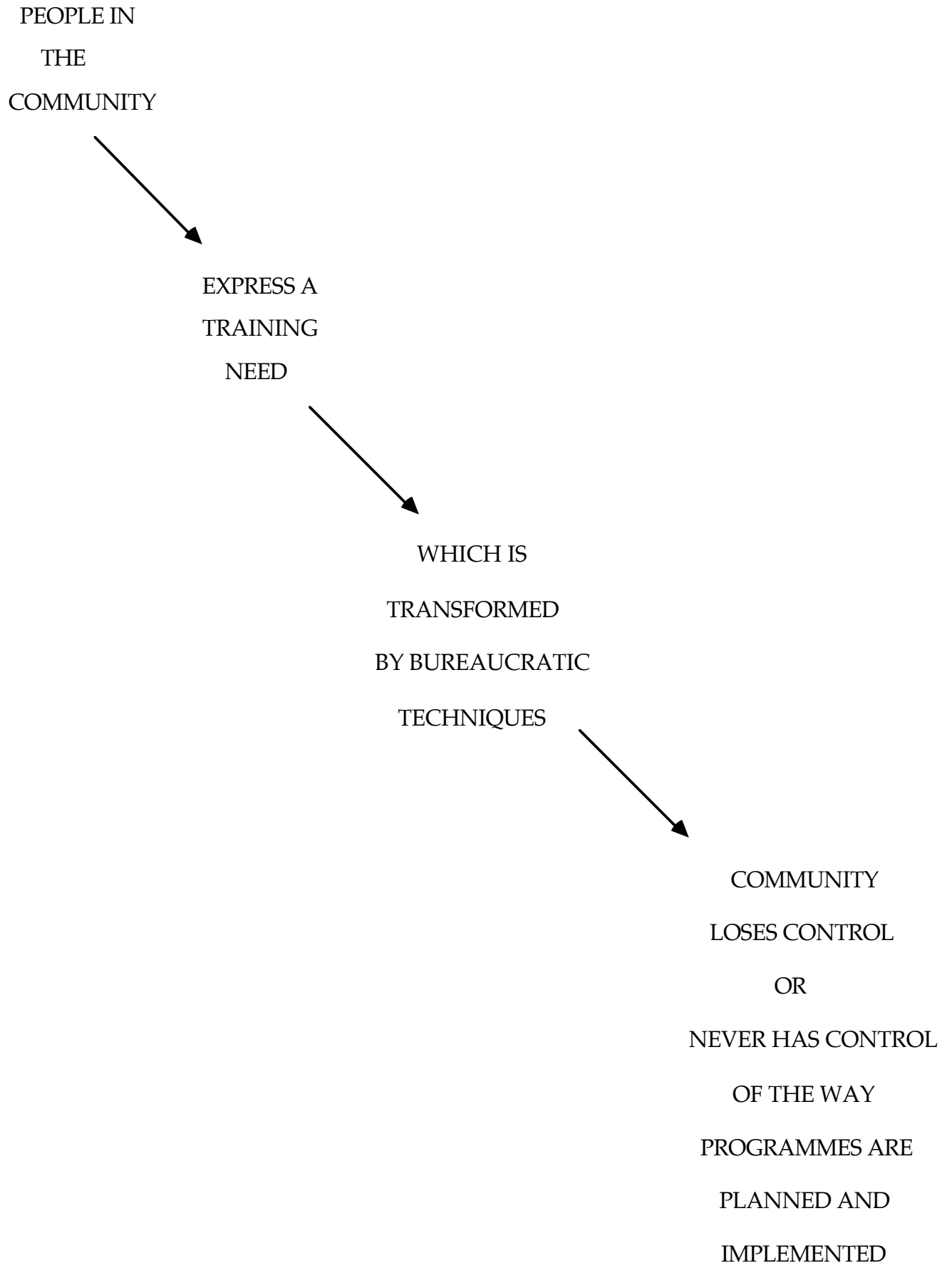
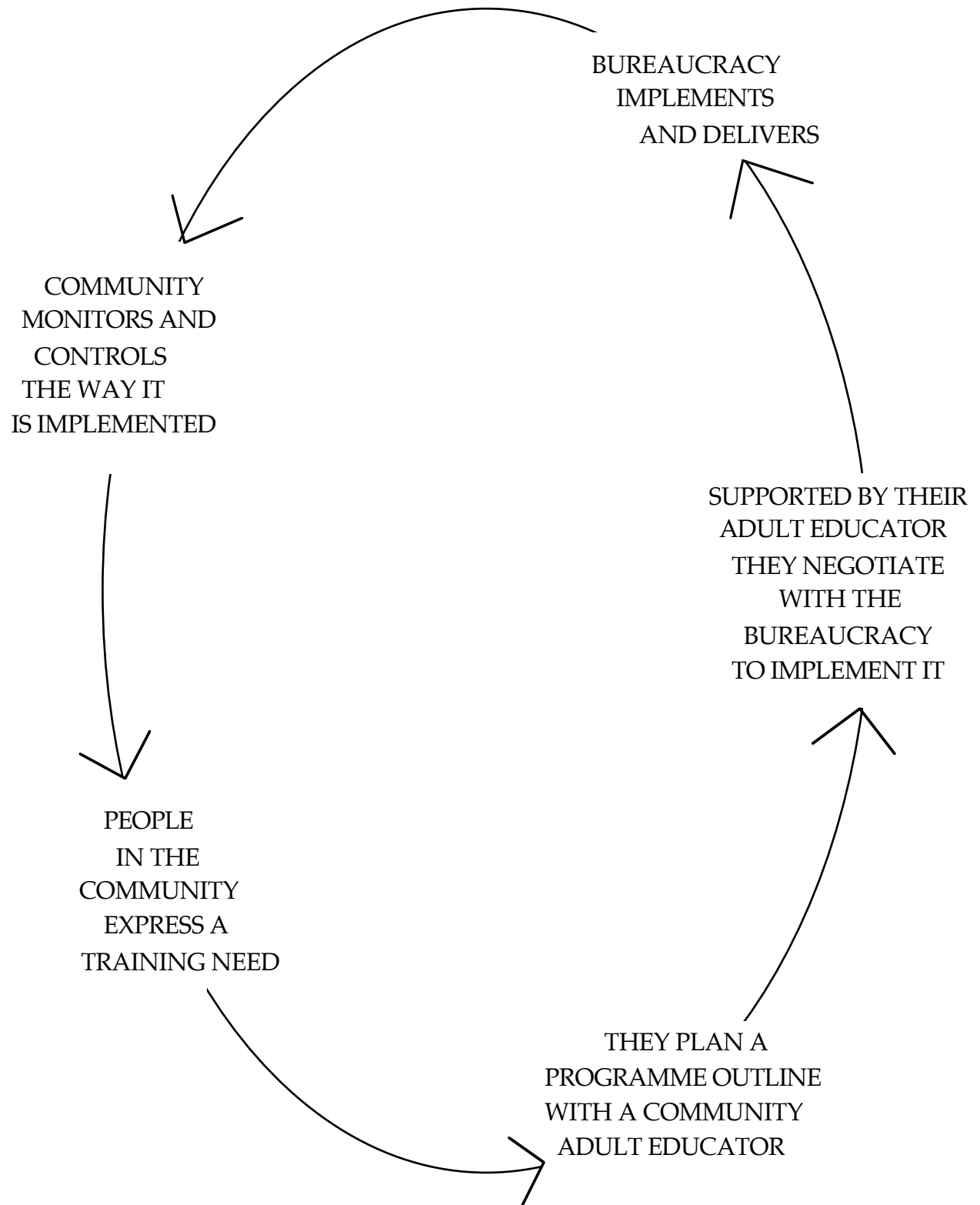
Chart 2**The Usual Process of Programme Planning and Implementation**

Chart 3**A community controlled process of programme planning and implementation**

4 GINGIE

4.1 Areas of community need

According to a survey carried out by Barwon Aboriginal Community Ltd. (BAC) in 1987, Gingie community had a population of 148. The same survey stated that 79% of the population was under the age of 25.

Gingie is a former reserve and is situated 10 kms away from the Walgett township. It is well off any major through roads and remains an all-Aboriginal community. A strong sense of isolation prevails.

The community of Gingie have basic needs for employment, adequate housing, health, education and transport. Very few people have jobs. A survey conducted in 1987 by Barwon Aboriginal Community Ltd. (BAC) revealed that out of a total of 55 people who agreed to talk about work, 51 persons had no jobs. This creates an unemployment statistic of 93%. Through my interviews it was established that only 5 people in Gingie had jobs. One woman was employed as an Aboriginal Education Assistant at the local high school and the other four, who were men, had manual labouring jobs (shearer, Telecom linesmen, bricklayer, and truckdriver).

There are thirteen houses in Gingie. It is usual to have more than 10 people living in one house. Moreover, the houses are in an advanced state of disrepair. Gingie has a poor level of basic physical infrastructure. There are no kerbing and guttering, no footpaths and no streetlighting. Adequate garbage removal facilities do not exist. The danger to basic health and hygiene is readily apparent from this lack of basic services. A further basic need is transport. Apart from the school bus there is no bus service to and from Gingie. For a community with few cars and few licensed drivers the lack of public transport severely compounds the isolation.

There are no sporting and recreation facilities at Gingie. The community places a high priority on building such facilities.

4.2 Community development plans

Prominent members of Gingie have ambitious plans for development of their community. They are seeking funds from the federal government to have basic facilities built and upgraded and to develop local employment and training programmes. In January, 1989, the following list of community development projects needed by Gingie was presented to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) by Barwon Aboriginal Community Ltd. (BAC) (an organisation based in Walgett) on behalf "of two senior members" of the Gingie community.

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Development Activity</u>
1.	Repairs to the water filtration and sewage system.
2.	Construction of a multi-purpose community centre with office and storage shed.
3.	Purchase of garbage removal equipment- tip truck and tractor.
4.	Employment of a manager (community development worker) plus administration costs.
5.	Repairs to all housing.

6. Construction of kerbing, guttering and footpaths.
7. Upgrading and streetlighting.
8. Establishment of a market garden and orchard.
9. Construction of a sporting and recreation oval with amenities.
10. Construction of a basketball court.
11. Purchase of a boat and trailer (for use in the event of flooding).

4.3 Training needs

The key question for a community worker is "How can I work with the community to help achieve the above plans?" One important way would be to help the community develop the relevant skills. There are five broad areas of skill required. They are:

- i) planning programmes;
- ii) managing programmes;
- iii) marketing and small business administration;
- iv) building repairs and maintenance;
- v) market gardening.

These skill areas are summarised in Chart 4. These areas of need, and implementation issues related to each one, are discussed in detail in the following sections.

4.3.1 Planning programmes

It will be necessary for members of Gingie Community Aboriginal Corporation to develop planning skills to translate needs into objectives and strategies. Currently, members of Gingie Corporation do not have these skills. This is illustrated by the fact that Gingie Corporation does not function and is dependent on the services of Barwon Aboriginal Community Ltd. to prepare its reports and submissions. The relationship of Gingie community to outside agencies, be they government departments or Aboriginal organisations is one of dependency. Until this relationship of dependency is overcome, little will change at Gingie. Gingie's needs will not be met by DAA or other government programmes. **It is less a matter of government department field officers being able to address Gingie's needs than a matter of Gingie community members developing their own resources, skills and strategies to meet the needs.** Gingie community has since 1969, when the last reserve manager left, been the subject of many reports and workshops which have documented the community's needs and made recommendations about how to meet them. There have just in the last year been a number of community meetings in Gingie which have been organised by field officers of government departments. A series of these meetings have dealt specifically with the DAA proposal to set up a "Community Development Employment Programme" (CDEP). CDEP would involve pooling the unemployment benefits of Gingie community members and using the pooled funds plus a 20% DAA subsidy to fund employment development projects. There have also been a number of recent visits to Gingie by high ranking government delegations. On one such visit one senior DAA bureaucrat suggested that his department was now committed to "fixing

Chart 4Basic Education

- * Aboriginal Studies
- * confidence skills
- * literacy
- * numeracy
- * study skills
- * job seeking skills
- * individual and family budgeting

Community development planning

- * researching community needs
- * knowledge of funding sources
- * liaison and consultation skills
- * submission and report writing
- * knowledge and understanding of government policies
- * knowledge and understanding of available community services
- * publicity and marketing skills
- * programme planning skills

SKILLS
FOR
ABORIGINAL
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
IN GINGIE

Community and small business administration

- * Forward planning:
 - stating aims and objectives
 - preparing a constitution or business plan
 - conducting AGM
- * Organising meetings:
 - planning an agenda
 - decision making
 - office bearer's roles
 - minute taking
 - publicity
- * Financial management:
 - knowledge of funding guidelines
 - knowledge of accountability requirements
 - planning and budgeting
 - understanding financial statements
- * Office Administration
 - record keeping
 - filing
 - wages, taxes and insurance
 - bookkeeping

Employment and enterprise development

- * identifying appropriate enterprises
- * basic market research
- * obtaining capital and funding
- * covering legal matters
- * organising banking
- * determining costs
- * purchasing
- * employing people
- * securing insurance
- * advertising

Trades and technical skills

- * building
- * repair and maintenance
- * motor mechanic
- * market gardening
- * electrical
- * plumbing

Gingie's problems up" and that \$250,000 could be allocated for that purpose. Until this date nothing has happened as a result of the meetings. But even if the CDEP project was set up and DAA was to allocate \$250,000 to Gingie this would be only one small step towards meeting the community's needs. **More important will be whether members of Gingie community will have the necessary skills to plan, implement and sustain the programmes.**

Meeting Aboriginal community needs requires more than a technical approach which simply allocates money and quick "fix-it" solutions. It requires a political approach which recognizes Aboriginal poverty as a symptom of economic and political dependency. In practical terms this means supporting the people of Gingie to obtain a larger, more profitable and sustainable land and economic base.

To conclude, planning skills are required by leading members of Gingie community on two levels. On one level, practical planning skills are required in order to translate discussion into action. On another level, political planning skills are required in order to mobilize the people and resources of Gingie to develop their own independent political voice which can lobby, negotiate and struggle to obtain the economic base which is fundamental for the community's advancement.

Practical planning skills include:

- needs analysis and consultation;
- report and submission writing;
- organising meetings;
- developing strategies;
- liaison and negotiation;
- knowledge and understanding of relevant government policies and government structure;
- knowledge of funding sources;
- setting up community programmes and services.

With the above skills Gingie community members would be less dependent on the good will of government officials and other outsiders who can only make brief visits to the community. Members of Gingie community, as of other Aboriginal communities throughout Australia, are intensely frustrated at the lack of action which comes out of the visits by government officials and researchers. One leading Gingie member said, "I've been to so many workshops where they've written on the blackboard what we want but they never give us money. I want action!" According to Gingie residents numerous proposals for funds and services have been knocked back over the years. The same pattern is occurring with the proposal to establish a CDEP project in Gingie. The same Gingie member commented, "we've had meeting after meeting about this CDEP, we're meant to go on some 'Work Information Tour', but they haven't come up yet with the money".

4.3.2 Managing programmes

Few government departments are prepared to commit substantial funds to an organisation without an assurance that those funds can be managed effectively. Community management skills include:

- **establishing an organisation,**
 - constitution,
 - incorporation,
 - AGM;
- **understanding community organisation structures,**
 - roles of directors (chairperson, secretary and treasurer etc.) and workers,
 - community participation;
- **financial management** (what all directors should know),
 - knowledge of funding guidelines and understanding of financial accountability,
 - planning and budgeting,
 - understanding financial statements;
- **Office administration** (ideally what staff should do)
 - keeping records and filing,
 - wages, taxes and insurance,
 - bookkeeping.

High on Gingie's priority list is the construction of an office and the appointment of an administrator/co-ordinator. These are viewed as necessary first steps to begin developing effective management practise.

4.3.3. Marketing and small business administration

Members of Gingie's community have plans to develop a market garden and establish a sporting oval with facilities as small commercial enterprises. In order to realise these plans those community members will require skills in:

- selling,
- purchasing,
- appointing suppliers,
- costing,
- banking,
- securing insurance,
- employing people,
- staff development,
- advertising,
- office administration.

4.3.4 Building, repairs and maintenance

A good deal of building, repairs and maintenance work is needed in Gingie.

Instead of simply hiring outside building contractors, it would be desirable to give the unemployed members of Gingie the opportunity to do the work. This opportunity can only be created by providing training for community members. Skills required include:

- building design,
- carpentry,
- bricklaying,
- plumbing,
- electrical,
- oval construction and groundsman,
- equipment and small motor maintenance,
- painting and decorating.

The provision of such training is clearly a matter for the NSW Department of TAFE.

4.3.5 Market gardening

Members of Gingie Corporation believe that a viable small enterprise for Gingie would be a market garden. In addition to marketing and small business administration skills, some specialist horticultural skills will be required. They include:

- knowing what grows where and when;
- soil maintenance;
- weed and pest control;
- greenhouse propagation.

4.4 Existing Adult Education Provision

An important reason why very little training provision exists in Gingie is that **local people lack the skills and knowledge to go about getting training**. Local people do not know **where** they can get training. This involves having a knowledge of the TAFE system, DEET, DAA and ADC, Tranby and other providers. They do not know **how** to get training. This involves submission and report writing, liaison, negotiation and perseverance. Government officers cannot be relied upon to see that training is provided. They cover large regions and cannot exercise responsibility for a single community. For instance, there have been ongoing negotiations regarding the possibility of setting up a Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) in Gingie. If successfully implemented, the CDEP project would provide major employment and training opportunities. But these negotiations have been drawn out and results and decisions have been very slow in forthcoming. Community members are frustrated and disillusioned by the lack of action. This is how the program development process typically occurs in Aboriginal communities. **As long as Aboriginal communities remain dependent on government field officers, little will change**. The most fundamental change will come about when Aboriginal communities are no longer dependent on government funding to develop programmes. The next best change will take place **when Aboriginal communities are supported and mobilised to exert more responsibility and develop more skills themselves to develop programmes**.

The sort of problems that arise with adult education programme development in Aboriginal communities is illustrated by attempts to set up a TAFE General Skills class in Walgett. The TAFE RAC in conjunction with members of Barwon Aboriginal Community Ltd. held two community meetings. The aim of the meetings was to consult with Aboriginal community members in Walgett, Gingie and Namoi about their educational needs and to inform them about the possibility of setting up a General Skills course. The two community meetings were not successful. Very few community members attended them. The RAC herself attributed the lack of success to people being tired of going to meetings. The RAC also pointed out that the low attendance highlighted how ineffective meetings can be as a means of consulting with the community. First, there is a lack of transport to get people to the meetings. Second, meetings often intimidate rather than encourage people to express their needs and opinions. Furthermore, **meetings only lead to decisions not to implementation.** Who will carry out the necessary tasks after the meeting? The RAC does not have time to provide practical ongoing support to a single community group. But **government field officers have little opportunity to work with the community in any other way. Because they cover regions, they cannot spend a lot of time in one community.** In this case, if the Aboriginal community wants a General Skills class, they will have to organise it themselves. This will involve expressing to the TAFE RAC that there is a widespread need for it. It will also probably involve negotiating with the RAC about details such as course location, teachers, numbers of students, specific course content and course times.

The above examples show that if adult education, or any programmes, are to be set up in Aboriginal communities, it will not be a case of field officers being more effective **but of the community exerting more influence and responsibility.** **The new Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer could help mobilise and train the community to do this.**

What we are talking about here is a radically different programme development process. As we pointed out in this and other papers (Foley et al 1987, Flowers and Foley 1988, Flowers and Foley forthcoming) the usual approach to programme development in NSW is undemocratic and ineffective. When we say this we are not questioning the goodwill of the people involved. Over the past six years we have spoken to more than a thousand people involved in Aboriginal adult education and community development in NSW. A large majority of these people work hard and are committed to Aboriginal self-determination. But what these people lack is an effective way of getting programmes up and running.

We are concerned that it is possible to develop an effective and participatory programme development process in Aboriginal adult education and community development. The key element of such a process is community control and responsibility. Control and responsibility cannot be legislated or taught. They have to be learned, and they are best learned through a combination of action and reflection.

We will say more in a subsequent paper about this centrally important issue of developing an effective programme development process. In concluding this paper we wish to emphasize that some Aboriginal people are already doing effective programme development. While doing the field work for this report, Rick encountered an example of women's education initiated by community people. With short-term special course funding from DEET, a small group of women, supported by a local high school teacher, have learned a range of skills: report and submission writing, basic bookkeeping and typing. In the course of doing this learning, the participants learned something far more significant than the technical

skills they acquired. They discovered that they could make things happen. Furthermore, what characterises the program development process initiated by the women is that it is participatory and culturally appropriate. As the teacher put it: "We're sick of all the big men's talk, we decided we would simply do things quietly".

RECOMMENDATIONS

It follows from the above analysis that effective training for the directors and staff of Aboriginal organisations in Lightning Ridge and Gingie communities will:

- be initiated and controlled by the communities, through their representatives;
- be skills oriented;
- focus on specific local tasks and issues;
- take into account the local social and historical contexts;
- be on-site, regular and long-term;
- be supported by distance education materials and local tutorials;
- monitored and supported by consultants with experience in designing and delivering adult education programmes.

To initiate such a training process **it is recommended that** the Barwon Community Liaison Officer and the consultants, supported by local Aboriginal organisations and training providers:

- prioritise training needs;
- draw up a programme of training workshops for the financial year 1989-1990.
- establish an effective workshop planning process;
- select suitable staff to conduct the workshops and provide on-going tutorial support;
- identify appropriate training resources (teaching spaces, teaching and learning materials);
- develop a proposal for funding the training to be submitted to the relevant government department(s).

These recommendations seek to support the communities concerned to obtain:

- i) skills to get more training;
- ii) more control of the way training programmes are planned and implemented.

This paper has argued that Aboriginal communities will have to develop these skills in order to get the adult education and training that they want. If our recommendations are accepted the next steps are:

- for the communities concerned to decide if they wish to try and develop the skills and resources necessary to set up a coherent training programme;
- for the consultants to visit each community for a day to begin to plan the training programme with community representatives;
- for the newly appointed Community Liaison Officer to provide ongoing support to the communities.

In conclusion, the consultants want to get a few things clear about their role. The proposed training programme would be the responsibility of the communities concerned. The programme will only happen if there is enough local interest and there are enough resources to make it work. The consultants will not have the time to plan or run the programme for the community. The consultants will only be able to visit the community every now and then. What we can offer you are some ideas about how to get training programmes up and running.

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