Working from Our Strengths: partnerships in learning

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Abstract

Over the past four years a team of Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners in learning research across Northern Australia have identified many of the issues that underpin the implementation of training and investment through enterprise development to improve economic and community outcomes of Indigenous partners. This paper provides an overview of a series of recent projects developed around enterprise development and training. The issues that the project teams have explored include developing industry, community and training institutional partnerships in the recognition of diverse knowledge systems within the recognition of prior learning process, the role of digital literacies in sharing knowledge, the co-production of knowledge and work-based learning. The paper then foreshadows the future directions of this work; addressing a range of issues such as infrastructure, funding, technology and identifying relevant skills sets. Approaches to sustainable enterprise learning and production, professional development and support of successful Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers are also discussed. Essentially the paper focuses on the ways partnerships and relationships, rather than systems, can effect change in the implementation of Vocational Education and Training (VET) system in ways that accord with the aims and realities of Indigenous people for their futures.

Introduction

Learning cannot be designed: it can only be designed for – that is, facilitated or frustrated. (Wenger 1998: 229)

Enterprise development training is an approach to VET policy, design and delivery and workforce development for Indigenous communities that can incorporate the key features of best practice in designing and implementing learning and business partnerships. The training approaches involved are as

diverse as the Indigenous communities and participants involved. Importantly, effective approaches were connected to Indigenous enterprise contexts and steeped in reality through actual projects or enterprises. The role that VET can play in developing enterprise and providing employment outcomes, particularly in remote areas, has been recently explored through several projects. This paper is an opportunity to consider the key learnings realised through the projects and develop a vision for the future of enterprise development and training with Indigenous enterprise owners and community members, industry partners and registered training organisations. The projects all began with a vision – a vision that included the opportunity for personal / family gain and improvement, but also often the desire to follow a dream and destiny and to build opportunities for their community and other Indigenous people. This analysis has demonstrated the power of partnerships to deliver outcomes for Indigenous people and the lessons that can be learnt from these

The analysis of a series of Indigenous enterprise development training projects, focusing on enterprise establishment, e-learning, recognition of prior learning across diverse knowledge systems, literacy and numeracy development, has identified a series of key issues for stakeholders. These issues are discussed in terms of training policy, the role of learning partnerships, professional practice and pedagogy, coproduction of knowledge, training frameworks and diverse knowledge systems. The authors acknowledge all of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners throughout these projects who have generously shared their ideas, learning and experience, who challenge us to expect more and persist in making positive Indigenous workforce outcomes, happen.

Significance

Young, Guenther and Boyle (2007:7) have found there is a *significant misalignment between the content and delivery models of VET and the prior skills, educational demands and aspirations of desert Indigenous people. VET programs struggle to adapt to and address the types of learning needs that arise as a result of language and cultural differences and the different ways work is constructed.* Training providers and Indigenous people are challenged with negotiating a new way of working that is focussed on meeting the aspirations of Indigenous people and contribute to Indigenous workforce development that are linked to cultural, social and economic sustainability, the national training frameworks and regionally based funding structures.

The National Strategy for VET 2004-2010, *Shaping Our Future,* identified four national objectives and 12 strategies to meet the needs of the VET sector in Australia over 6 years. The projects analysed in this paper particularly target National Strategy Objectives 2 and 4 by aiming to ensure Indigenous Australians have the skills for viable jobs, a shared learning culture, increased business development and employment opportunities that lead to greater

economic independence with employers and individual are at the core of VET. Indigenous people have identified the essential role of sustainable economic development in community independence, cultural maintenance, self-esteem and economic independence and the importance of engaging Indigenous people in productive economic activity. The *Northern Territory Indigenous Economic Development Strategy* recognises the strength, resilience, diversity and cultural integrity of Indigenous people, and the high levels of disadvantage which impact the capacity of people, families and communities to engage in economic and social development activities.

Addressing industry and workforce development needs and gaps in national skills levels has been identified by the Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Julia Gillard, as an issue for training systems. *The* (Commonwealth) *Government will align skills development policies and training delivery with industry priorities, and position the training system to better meet the needs of individuals and industry…. Training organisations must be encouraged to play their part and respond flexibly to increasingly diverse industry and individual needs. Training providers must deliver customised, relevant training that is integrated with, and supported by, workplace learning opportunities, at a time and place that suit business needs*. (Gillard 2008).

There is enormous potential for development of Indigenous enterprises to contribute to community and economic development, particularly where there are existing strengths, such as cultural tourism and land management. VET has an important role to play in this development that has not been fully realised for a number of reasons. Over many years, high numbers of Indigenous Australians have participated in VET training, however a much lower percentage of participants utilise this training as a pathway for higher level qualifications or employment. This outcome questions whether the efficacy of VET implemented models utilised. Boughton and Durnan (2003) ask if Indigenous people are being 'parked' in the VET system and point to the need to investigate the potential of VET pathways to contribute to sustainable and rewarding work and improved health and wellbeing outcomes. Training programmes for remote Indigenous people can work from deficit models that repeat the same training over many years. This training does not recognise the considerable knowledge and skill of Indigenous people that can be demonstrated in their own languages and contexts.

Literature review

Often the jobs or occupations that are identified for training in Aboriginal communities are those that do not incorporate or relate to traditional knowledge, languages or skills. They target the weaker skill levels of participants rather than capitalising and building on their strongest skills such as performance, cultural work and Indigenous traditional and contemporary knowledge (Mark Grose, Skinny Fish Music, interview 19/04/

2005).

Guenther, Young, Boyle, Schaber, and Richardson, (2005) identified the importance of training systems responding to client demand rather than driven by the suppliers' interests. In regional areas, a supplier driven programme may be typified by choosing courses based on the available teachers, using generic assessment from an alien environment or being driven by funding models rather than positive learning models. The importance of developing approaches to VET in Indigenous contexts, that develop employment opportunities and positive relationships with organizations that have the capacity and capability to support community and family goals are well recognised (O'Callaghan 2005). Of value then is to identify training approaches that reflect these priorities. Enterprise training is an approach to VET for Indigenous communities that has the potential to recognise Indigenous people's strengths to build financial and culturally sustainable livelihoods in remote, regional and urban contexts. Effective approaches to VET need to be identified and developed that incorporate best practice in designing and implementing learning partnerships with Indigenous communities.

Conducting a review of research Miller (2005) found the key factors in implementing training that meets the aspirations of Indigenous Australians noted they include self development skills, completion of educational subjects and courses at all levels, employment, self determination and community development. These aspirations are the key starting point for developing and implementing a training plan with Indigenous people , training organisations and industry partners. Miller (2005) found seven key factors are associated with positive and improved outcomes from vocational education and training for Indigenous people that must be considered regardless of the location, time or context;

- *community ownership and involvement*

- *the incorporation of Indigenous identities, cultures, knowledge and values*

- *the establishment of 'true' partnerships*

- *flexibility in course design, content and delivery*

- *quality staff and committed advocacy*

- *extensive student support services*

- *appropriate funding that allows for sustainability'* (Miller 2005:5)

In exploring partnerships and effective practices in delivering VET with rural and

remote Indigenous communities, the *Djama in VET* (Langton et al: 1998) study found six interconnected issues in VET delivery with Indigenous communities that contribute to best practice. These resonate with Miller's considerations and develop our understanding of key concepts at risk of tokenisation through a lack of deep engagement in their implications, for example, ensuring VET delivery is culturally appropriate by ensuring Indigenous community culture and knowledge are completely integrated and the relevant community has control over all aspects of VET delivery. The authors note training needs to be matched with current and developing work, embedded into community and community business and preferably taught by Indigenous trainers. The training must be based on meaningful partnerships between VET providers and community based enterprises where roles, practices and contexts related to training are justly negotiated.

The learning relationships respect, and are sensitive to Indigenous cultures and community development interests. Indigenous authority is of central importance in all aspects of the programme implementation. This is evident through the use of curriculum materials developed and tested for Indigenous communities, full participation of Indigenous Elders, employers and trainers, transparent processes and procedures to conduct the training and formal agreements that outline these principles and mutual responsibilities for all parties. Underlying these issues is the shared ownership of learning and relationships that underpin learning partnerships. An important element of these learning partnerships is the growing critical consumerism of the learning system.

Young, Guenther and Boyle (2007) found effective training linked to improving livelihood opportunities for Indigenous people was reliant on a commitment to sustaining and nurturing partnerships between stakeholders in training and employment and the facilitation of communication between non-government organizations, government and other agencies and local Indigenous communities. They found formal training needed to include non-formal elements, flexible and innovative delivery methods, support arrangements and mentoring by Indigenous elders. Partnerships generated innovative and flexible to training and employment. Effective training that develops work-based learning approaches can be an important part of developing VET approaches that are developed and implemented within stakeholder partnerships.

The development of community generated programs is preferable to initiate effective partnerships, government-initiated programs, on the other hand, risk being imposed and minimal engagement by Indigenous community members. The development of an effective approach to training and regional economic development includes strong partnerships that create individual and community confidence, sustainable career pathways and effective regional strategic development (Allison, Gorringe and Lacey 2006). Lifelong, or lifewide, learning frameworks can be used to describe an integrated and workbased

approach to VET. Lifelong frameworks relate to the *many different areas of life in which people continue to acquire and create new skills and knowledge throughout their lifespan* (Field 2005:1).

Indigenous enterprise training and development has operated in many cases to meet the aims of Indigenous people and communities. Altman (2001) in a study of sustainable development options on Aboriginal land, suggested that there is a need for a hybrid approach that includes scientific, biological social, commercial viability and *Indigenous expert assessment of cultural practice* (p8). For enterprise development and training this means we need a new way to understand and incorporate all of the social, human and capital and physical capital in any model. Training programmes need to relate to a new nomenclature related to regional financial backing, that targets *previously unrecognised productive activity* (that) *has spin-off benefits to industries and regions beyond the Indigenous estate (Altman 2001:8).*

Flamsteed and Golding (2005) have identified the issues for Indigenous enterprises, that are different to the majority of non-Indigenous enterprises. They are more likely to be linked to subsidised or non-commercial community based activity and have a history of non-indigenous management or financial control. Being community rather than owner operated, enterprises emphasise usefulness and employment for community members rather than profit. Indigenous community enterprise members, while having a marketable product, have far less capacity to access the capital to develop their business than non-Indigenous business owners. This includes access to business services, commercial labour markets, business models and sites and learning through involvement in other Indigenous businesses. Flamsteed and Golding (2005) emphasised the importance of learning through business and incorporating learning opportunities that are linked to earning, context specific, developed in parallel to actual work and applied through practice in commercial business activities. They also noted the importance of incorporating resources that developed in terms of Indigenous entrepreneurs and enterprises and potential students and communities needs.

The challenge for enterprise training and development partnerships, then, is to make the enterprise and participants the centre of the programme, rather than the partnered associations, trainers or industry owners. These were effectively summarised by Harrison (2004), and point to the need for partners need to institute consultation processes for developing content and training delivery and establish equal relationships between all stakeholders based on long term mutual trust. The RTOs must provide high quality training with trainers who have high level content skills, technological and cross cultural knowledge. Training outcomes and products used, with industry support need to generate income and employment and be linked to actual industry practice. The partners need to demonstrate their commitment to long term economic and

industry outcomes; this includes relevant government support programmes such as Community Development Employment Programme employment and management. The partnership must have a commitment to income generation and independence for Indigenous participants, community development and social outcomes at its core.

The projects

Enterprise development and training is defined in this context as training constructed that focuses on supporting enterprise development that draws on local knowledge and is connected to local governance structures. Customised training is tailored to the enterprise owners' development and mapped to nationally accredited training. In Indigenous contexts, customised training is sensitive to local situations and explicitly makes links to the relevant national agendas. As Indigenous enterprises are community, rather than owner, operated, enterprises emphasise usefulness and employment for community members rather than profit. Indigenous community enterprise members, while having a marketable product, have far less capacity to access the capital to develop their business than non-Indigenous business owners (Flamsteed and Golding 2005). This includes access to business services, commercial labour markets, business models and sites and learning through involvement in other Indigenous businesses.

The number of enterprises or cottage industries that can be developed in remote areas are limitless, including accommodation, tours, transport, construction, fishing, bushtucker, agriculture, horticulture, catering, arts and craft. The projects listed below have been involved in analysing various aspects of enterprise development and training over the past four years. Together they provide an insight into a range of issues that impact across the development and implementation of Indigenous enterprise development and training. This is not an exhaustive list of projects but represent a group where common methodologies were used to undertake the various studies.

Top End Groove – Indigenous Tourism E-Learning

A national Indigenous Engagement project, funded by ANTA, was conducted in 2006 with Indigenous Tourism Operators from the Top End of Australia through which Indigenous enterprise operators trialled and developed e-learning and e-business tools and information for the establishment phase of an enterprise. Through the workshops, key issues in using digital technologies were identified by successful enterprises and training partners. Key in this process was an exploration and negotiation of ways e-tools can be used to support enterprise development training. The outcomes were analysed and presented as a website www.topendgroove.com.au. This website is a work in progress, Indigenous

tourism operators now being trained as administrators of the website so they can manage their own material and web content, create blogs and gain online feedback from visitors to their business.

Our ART, Our PLACE, Our WAY – Sharing Art Centre Knowledge

In 2004 the project team, funded by WELL, developed resource tools that interpreted the work undertaken by Indigenous artists in remote art centres to the relevant competences and qualifications. This project sought to make the training system more applicable to Indigenous art centres and artists. Central to the project, was representing Indigenous artists' expertise, workplace learning, competence and contexts in a teaching and assessment tool mapped to the relevant national qualifications. The project focused particularly on building capacity in English Language and Literacy through the project rather than a barrier to participation and demonstration of competence. The resources and learning tools were stored on a CD-ROM format and copies distributed to art centres and training providers. As a result of considerable interest by Indigenous artists and art centre management, the resource will be extended to Indigenous art centre management and operations.

Make It Real – Training For Enterprise

From 2004-2006, a national DEST project on successful Indigenous enterprise and training partnerships. Developed to explore policy and practices that would support enterprise training models with Indigenous people in the long term and to achieve high level outcomes for Indigenous people and communities. Five in-depth case studies of Indigenous enterprises were conducted across Australia and another sixty case studies analysed for issues related to good practice and strategies for developing businesses. This project brought together a unique knowledge source of VET professionals and Indigenous Community leaders who have been involved in establishing innovative and collaborative training partnerships in communities. The focus was to gain an insight into why these training enterprise partnerships were successful and to share the information and guiding principles for other enterprises and training providers. It is also significant that the project sought to ensure a strong Indigenous voice through active participation from design to implementation. These findings and tools were presented in multimedia format on CD-ROM.

Working from Our Strengths: Using e-learning to recognise knowledge and competence in Indigenous enterprise training and development

This Australian Flexible Learning Framework, project enhances practitioners' ability to work in flexible ways with diverse client groups and developing

innovative and flexible approaches to assessment and skills recognition. This project identifies the VET industry-specific English based literacy inherent in the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, and recognises a range of cultural, workforce, digital, visual and other literacies. These literacies are necessary to engage in workforce learning and development or to establish and sustain a viable enterprise that offers ongoing and valued employment in regional and remote Indigenous communities. Participants have identified the literacies evident in their learning and workplaces and the ways these were identified or developed over their studies. Each participant has identified the need to develop expertise and qualifications as a trainer, supervisor or assessor in their industry area to build their enterprise opportunities and capacity within their homeland/ outstation/ community. The final product outlines a series of guidelines for recognising and assessing competence in a range of literacies and provides examples of approaches and tools to recognise and assess the identified literacies.

Working from Our Strengths – Recognising and building literacy through the Training and Assessment competencies

This project built on the work of Indigenous enterprise operators across northern Australia to develop effective strategies to ensure relevant, quality training and qualifications are implemented that support economic independence and knowledge management at a local and national level. Funded by DEST, the project used e-learning tools and technologies to support Indigenous enterprise operators' needed to map the development of training plan with their current and potential staff. Participants undertook recognition of prior learning (RPL) and current competence (RCC) processes that reflect the work undertaken in locally based enterprises and Aboriginal businesses using digital photographs, videos and stories, e-portfolios and web-based conferencing. The qualifications delivered related to the work in participating remote Indigenous enterprises; tourism, business and frontline management. The final product, a CD-ROM/ DVD resource outlined the process for developing a training plan with an Indigenous enterprise team, ways to use e-tools to collect evidence to apply for undertake RPL and RCC and examples of successful e-applications for RPL and training plans.

Approach

Over the past 4 years a series of projects were undertaken by a partnership of Indigenous enterprise owners, Registered Training Organisations and Industry representatives to explore the role of accredited training and effective pedagogies. Key partners in these projects were Indigenous enterprise owners across northern and central Australia, Kimberley College of TAFE[1], CHARTTES[2] Training Advisory Council, and Charles Darwin University. The team

undertook a thematic analysis of the projects' output. The thematic analysis was undertaken utilising a critical ethnographical approach to research. Critical ethnography intends to use knowledge "to speak to an audience on behalf of the subjects as a means of empowering them" rather than speaking for the subjects (Thomas, 1993, p.4).

The thematic analysis examined in detail the findings and final reports of each project and coded to provide a set of key issues. These were collated to identify common themes informed by the patterns found across the projects' results (Taylor and Bogden 1984, Aaronson 1994). The thematic analysis of the projects' data and reports was coded by hand and grouped into 8 major common or overlapping themes. The detailed patterns and units of analysis identified under these themes was grouped and analysed to identify the key analysis points .

Findings and Discussion

The important features of training and enterprise development have been outlined previously. The challenge is to translate these principles into deep and meaningful action rather than being tokenised without changing any tangible activities and behaviours. These are analysed through key themes across the projects. These projects' outcomes challenges VET providers to move to a model that works from Indigenous participants' strengths and is based on strong, sustainable social partnerships in learning.

Working from strengths: Training agreements and their implementation were developed on the basis that Indigenous people had strong and complex knowledge and skills on which the learning partnership would build. These students' knowledge and skills were linked to the learners' local context and provided a reference point to start to develop other relevant and related skills to build an enterprise. The relationships that are built over the learning partnership develop a shared awareness of the knowledge of participants and facilitators and the best ways to recognise and develop that knowledge. Students were involved in experiential learning activities that built onto existing skills; the relationship between these sets of knowledge and skills were explicitly discussed and analysed as part of the training sessions. Learning experiences were highly personalised and customised to ensure learners are developing in the areas they have identified as important and avoid training in areas of existing strength. The corollary of accepting the strengths of students was that facilitators accept their strengths and weaknesses, that there are times when facilitators can share specific knowledge that is useful and times when students are the experts and can take a leadership role in learning partnerships.

Training policy: Indigenous enterprise owners demonstrated their competence

within their chosen industry area through study to Certificate III and IV level, in areas such as music, arts, cultural tourism, business and aquaculture. Training policy that started by negotiating a strong learning partnership focused on employment outcomes was seen to support successful programmes. VET has and continues to play an important role in regional development partnerships (Allison, Gorringe and Lacey 2006), that could be enhanced by regional strategic planning and connections of enterprise groups to that plan and resources and better links with the regional landscapes in which they are located. Through these projects it was clear that training funding policy and evaluation needed to take a longer view of success, rather than being isolated from its industry and regional context. This is compliant with the Australian Quality Training Framework requirement that training is client focused and industry relevant.

Workbased Learning: Workplace based learning and assessment was a key component of VET delivery where work, learning and assessment were well integrated. In the enterprise development workplaces, learning was based on the requirements of working in the Indigenous community context and cultural domains. Training was implemented according to students' individual needs and their involvement in work and cultural responsibilities and obligations. Through workbased learning, assessment was conducted by assessors strongly connected to the relevant enterprise's work context. In this way, training was customized to reflect the needs of the Indigenous client group. Trainers, trainees and employers negotiated the learning projects to match appropriate workplace activities. Training activities and resources were developed over time and become part of the learning culture and resources in the community. In this environment, student support was characterised by initially integrating the principles described Langton et al (1998), not an additional activity.

Learning Partnerships: All case studies highlighted the importance of community ownership of learning partnerships. This challenged training providers and other stakeholders to take a holistic approach to engagement in the partnership and continually ensured enterprise owners maintained responsibility for the learning contract. It was not the role of training providers to generate the enterprise ideas, rather they can played an important role in sharing what is possible and how the VET system can help. Seeing what other people do was a great way to stimulate the imagination, as projects develop through sharing. Some of the learning was undertaken with other Indigenous enterprise peers through a community of practice. This reduced the emphasis on the trainer as the only expert.

Developing innovative and successful approaches to training in remote and regional contexts with Indigenous people necessitates effective partnership and the recognition of diverse knowledge systems as they relate to the worlds of work, community engagement and learning. Social partnerships catalyse and enable change in human or social policy (EU Guideline Principles 2004)

Social partnerships *in learning,* then, are the interagency and interdisciplinary relationships that enable effective learning in different disciplines, workplaces and training sites. Social partnerships in learning frameworks are used to; examine diverse knowledge systems, develop capacity building processes and understand the underlying relationships that facilitate connections, engagement and decision making between government, non-government, enterprise, community, stakeholders and individuals (Wallace 2008:7). These frameworks operate at and across all levels i.e. involving individuals, organizations and learning systems.

In successful partnerships, facilitators, mentors and partners walked together with Indigenous enterprises, this is achieved in a number of ways. Trainers developed training experiences and materials in response to the area of need or interest identified with the enterprise and student. Training providers had a role to make people aware of a range of options but the vision had to come from the community. This changed the way a training team in a learning partnership was constructed, including trainers, community leaders, Aboriginal development officers and industry partners. Partners varied between the enterprises, however the members of each enterprise viewed them as being essential to their enterprises success. Industry support and business partners, where possible, were essential to enterprise development and sustainability. There are many ways this can happen, but all emphasized the importance of the Indigenous family, clan or tribal group leading the direction and processes of the enterprise and training. Learning partnerships consciously addressed the often inequitable power relationships in training and ensured Indigenous people had significant roles in informing and participating in all aspects of learning experiences.

Learning partnerships included industry representatives who treated Indigenous people as having significant strengths in niche markets and that industry partners recognised the value of that knowledge to build an enterprise. On this basis the learning and business partnership was not predicated solely on a social development programme but rather employed business principles to access support and services. Enterprise owners reported the different basis of these relationships to those with government funded community development programmes. This did not mean that these programmes were not effective at times but rather that enterprise owners needed to assess the expectation and appropriateness of the support offered and the impact on their business before deciding to work with an external group.

Coproduction of knowledge: Learning partnerships developed approaches to learning, representing and creating knowledge, sharing ideas and assessing competence with Indigenous participants to better represent and reflect Indigenous people's existing and growing strengths and knowledge. An example of this included the use of elearning through video, audio, digital stories, websites and eportfolios. The potential use of the elearning tools

were not always expected and developed with participants as teams grew in confidence and knowledge about what was possible. The ownership of the final outcomes was shared which was reflected in the accurate representations of Indigenous people, the appropriate representation of sensitive differently about their learning and use of elearning generating a series of work across projects that was unexpected. This was most effective when Indigenous people were involved at every stage. Trust is the cornerstone of coproduction and was the focus for developing strong relationships across people, groups and institutions. The critical mass of knowledge and resources was key in gaining external and agency support for project teams and their ideas.

Professional practice and delivery: Quality training programmes facilitated by expert trainers/learning facilitators over a long term partnership made a significant difference to enterprise success. Effective training programmes developed though shared knowledge and trust, assumed Indigenous people had considerable knowledge and competence to bring to the training relationship and focused on positive elements and outcomes. Trainers with high skill levels in relevant areas and appropriate cross-cultural knowledge were identified and supported to develop sound learning relationships. It was important to link delivery of training (and assessment) to actual industry practice, relating both directly to work on the ground.

Working with Indigenous enterprises is based on long term interactions based on trust and commitment. Partnerships with Elders and local experts were significant in recognising students' knowledge, competence in a range of contexts and supporting the integration of learning into the everyday work environment. It is only after having a clear idea about participants' aims for their enterprise that the trainer could negotiate the training plan, even when the trainer disagrees with that assessment. The most successful enterprise training programmes started with what the individuals wanted to achieve and then worked back to the training system, deciding which units would be appropriate, which should be delivered together, when, who else might need to get involved and how it could it lead to a full qualification. This tailor-made approach to developing a training plan took considerably longer than a standard qualification, was progressive over the life of the partnership and achieved better outcomes for all stakeholders. This was evident in workforce outcomes, completed studies, continued studies and extension of the programme to other enterprise partners.

Enterprise owners and trainers involved in training had expressed frustration in the previous lack of recognition of their knowledge and competence and the overriding emphasis on Standard English Literacy in assessment resources. The analysis found the existing resources were inappropriate for Indigenous people who had worked at a high level of competence within their community, had established and sustained successful enterprises. Many people wanted to

take up competencies in the Certificate IV Training and Assessment to extend their enterprise's viability and offer remote appropriate training, supervision and assessment services to RTOs and industry.

Training frameworks: Qualifications were not the final aim of training; employment and personal outcomes needed to be the focus of any training framework. Training outcomes and assessment were more relevant and successful where delivered on the job, particularly in remote areas, where industry 'context' is very different from anywhere else. There was a need for training providers to be creative in exploring a range of training packages combinations that are customized to clients' needs. That is, programs that consider clients' long term needs first, and secondly the other issues such as who will fund it, what will be delivered, who will deliver it. Training frameworks developed understood the flexibility of National Training System and ways to adapt the relevant training package to meet enterprises' requirements. The framework reflected the enterprise's goals rather than a single qualification or unit of competence.

Diverse knowledge systems: Enterprise training recognises the importance of working with local community knowledge about governance, cultural knowledge, land ownership, and enterprise owners' priorities for the business and their lives. Digital knowledge systems and resources offered considerable opportunities to work in new ways. Technology has become increasingly intuitive and accessible in remote areas, making the use of ICT more viable. Digitally based resources supported people to learn and demonstrate competence across language and knowledge systems. Key to this is the role of Indigenous people in the development of the resources, using software and hardware resources within the enterprise and collecting evidence through an e-portfolio. The e-portfolio needed to be controlled by the students; its appearance, construction, the inclusion of a range of multimedia. The optimal use of multimedia is used in the normal operation of the enterprise and any training built the capacity and resources for that enterprise. Visual and audio means were used to demonstrate competence that has hitherto unrecognised by assessors and ensure students are assessed fairly and accurately.

Conclusion

The research described suggests some new directions to explore in partnership with RTOs, trainers, Indigenous enterprise owners and industry partners. Any training enterprise development training is framed by social learning partnerships that work across diverse knowledge systems and unequal power structures. Effective training is first and foremost about good partnerships, investing in the development of strong partnerships before, during and after training periods will improve the training and its outcomes, in the long term. Being able to accurately understand, describe and support frameworks for social

partnerships in learning will make a significant difference in moving from a check list for effective training to being able to actualise the concepts described. Indigenous enterprise development training is part of core business and can be effectively developed with mainstream and Indigenous specific programmes that focus on building successful enterprise. Training is discussed, negotiated in the context and with the people who will participate in the training. Training is linked to diverse knowledge sets and experiences, this requires partnership with the people who recognise, understand and own this knowledge. These partnerships need to be developed so that the professional decisions are valued and recognised, this may be through investigating the developments in the Training and Assessment qualifications and associated payments.

Training can be negotiated within a framework that incorporates employment outcomes, teaching, assessment and learning strategies, units and resources. The framework can include a number of approaches that can build better approaches to training with Indigenous people and enterprises. Skills sets may be a better starting point for designing training plans and qualifications that fit Indigenous enterprise owners' priorities. By analysing the work in context and as it develops over time, skills sets can be established that are then matched to competencies. Digital resources offer the opportunity for people to demonstrate their competence in audio, visual and written forms, that can be flexible, mapped by Indigenous people to their knowledge systems and expectations and to more accurately represent Indigenous people's knowledge. As effective resources are developed and used by businesses they will form the examples for future training and development, and their developers becomes the future trainers. What is important then is ensuring people involved in training have digital literacies and the confidence to work across a range of emerging technologies.

Policy and funding structures need to be developed that focus on the outcomes of the training first, rather than the training itself. Enterprise partners need to work with government to develop participatory evaluation models to identify the impact of enterprise training programmes including economic, education and social determinants of health. This paper describes a positive future, the challenges for policy and RTOs are opportunities to explore best practice and be partners in sustainable and inclusive training and enterprise development with Indigenous people.

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