

Evaluation Framework and Program Theory For The Cape York Welfare Reform Trial

**Department of Families, Housing, Community
Services and Indigenous Affairs**

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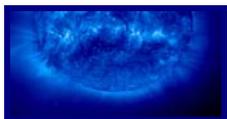




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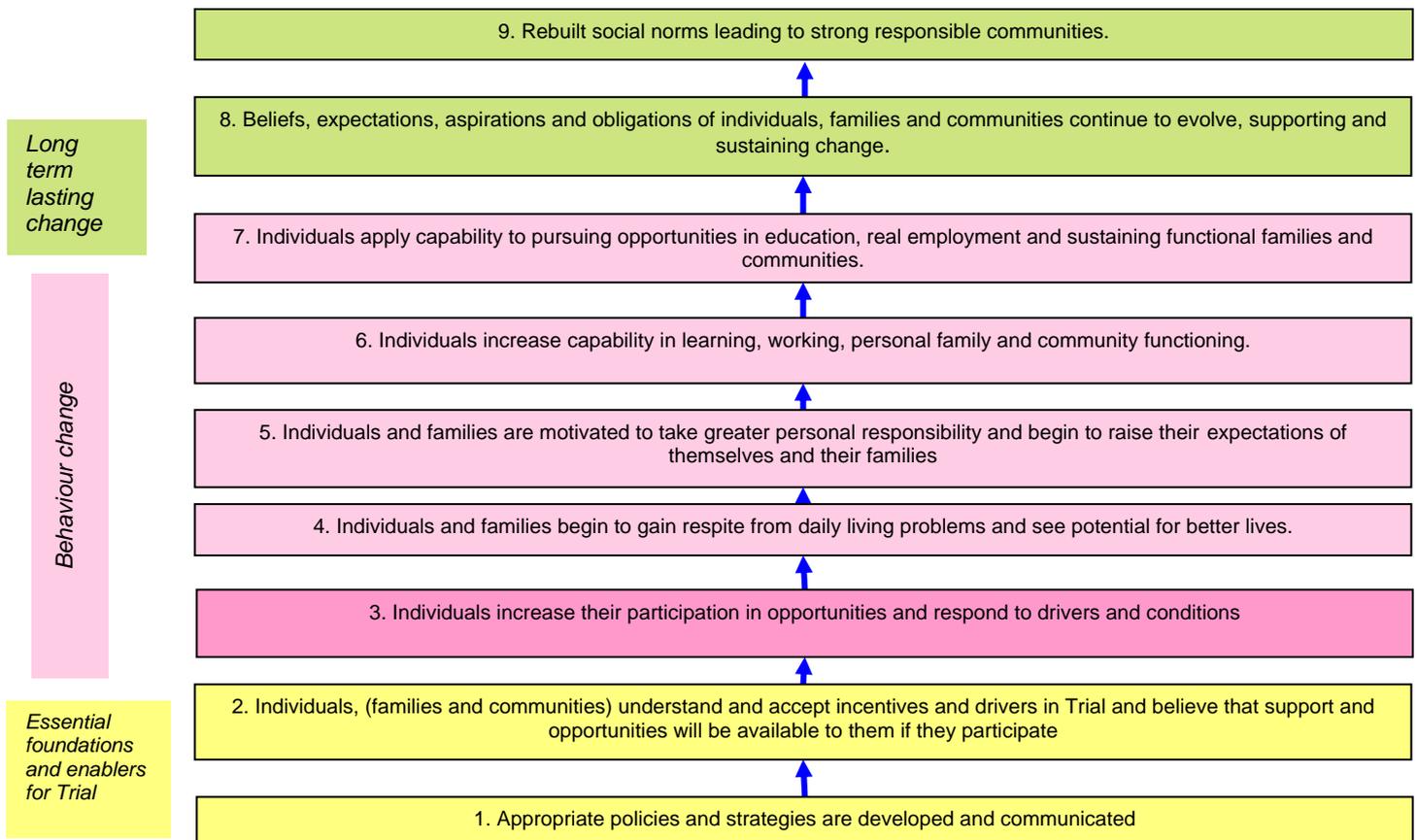
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cape York Welfare Reforms are a complex set of strategies which aim to lead four communities in Cape York to adopt more pro-social norms and behaviours and in particular to lessen the dependence of individuals on welfare.

The Cape York Welfare Reforms program theory set out in this report details the reform outcomes hierarchy. These outcomes should be achieved if the *From Hand Out to Hand Up* theory of change underpinning the Reforms is correct. This program theory helps to identify short and medium term outcome indicators and the pathway to longer term outcomes. These outcomes will form the basis of measurement and data collection through which the evaluation can assess progress towards the longer term reform outcomes in the life of the Welfare Reform Trial, which runs to 2011. The summary of the program theory is illustrated below.



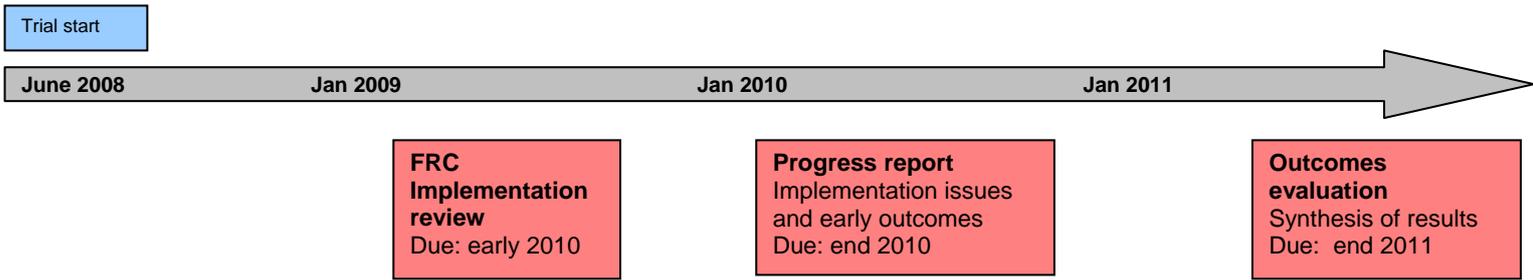
The long term outcomes in this program theory may take years or decades to be achieved and sustained. The behaviour change outcomes could occur in the medium term towards the end of the Trial in 2011. The short term outcomes at the lower end of the hierarchy are foundations and enablers for the Trial and should be evident within the life of the Trial.

The evaluation framework and strategy set out in this report includes:

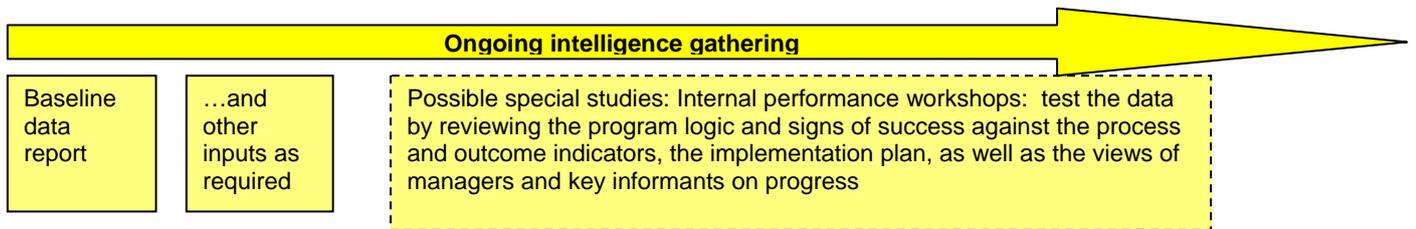
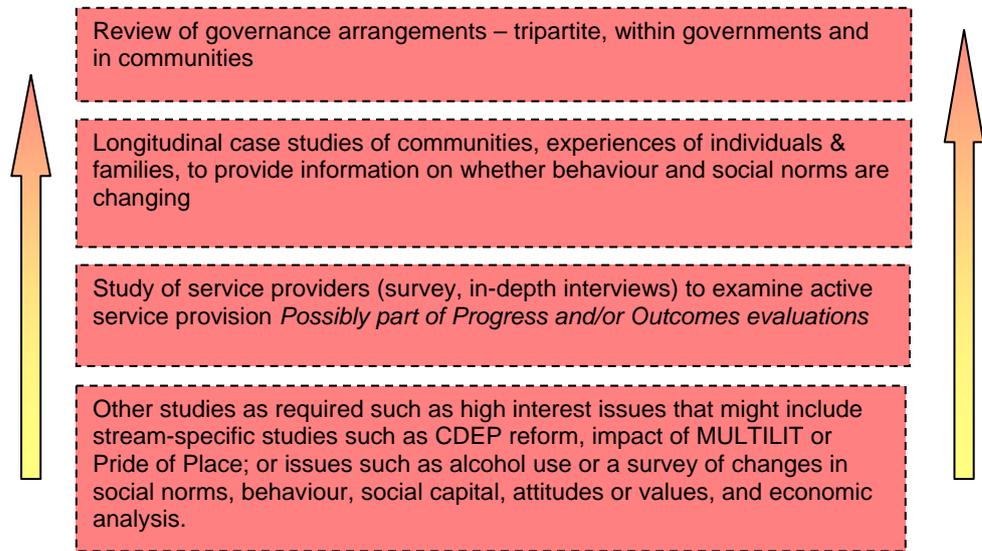
- A set of principles that can be used to guide the conduct of the evaluation;
- Four key strategic evaluation questions:
 - Was the Cape York Welfare Reform Trial implemented as agreed by the three parties?
 - Are social norms and behaviours changing?
 - Has service provision changed in a way that supports the change of social norms and behaviours?
 - Have governance arrangements supported changes in service provision and social norms and behaviours?
- Five key evaluation strategy components encompassing in the priority needs identified by the Trial partners:
 - Intelligence gathering which will help to improve the Trial's implementation processes;
 - An implementation review of the Family Relationships Commission (FRC);
 - A progress evaluation which will provide a strategic picture of the Trial implementation and clarify areas where amendment is warranted;
 - An outcome evaluation which will assess the Trial's progress against the long term outcomes and which will provide advice for policy makers on the design of future strategies; and
 - Special studies which will provide more depth in areas where more detailed research is needed to respond to the evaluation questions. These studies could include a review of services or longitudinal studies such as case studies, economic analysis, analysis of change in social norms and a review of Trial governance processes.

Final decisions on the structure and process of the evaluation will emerge as the Trial evolves and more is understood about the opportunities and constraints for data collection and analysis. Strategically, the Trial evaluation is likely to remain largely as presented in the diagram overleaf.

Evaluation Strategy for the Cape York Welfare Reform Trial



Possible special studies informing the Progress Report and Outcomes Evaluation might include:



1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) commissioned Courage Partners to develop a program theory and evaluation framework for the Cape York Welfare Reform Trial.

The terms of reference were to:

- A. Develop a program theory of the welfare reform projects.
- B. Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework, outlining key projects that need to be undertaken within this framework.

A. Program Theory

This task involves setting out the links in the chain of assumptions about how the measure is supposed to work.

The program theory covers the four streams of activity in the Trial and summarises (including a graphical/pictorial component) the assumptions and the links in the chain of events, their relationship to each other, and the intended outcomes.

B. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

On developing the project logic, the consultant will work with the parties to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for consideration by the Project Board (the tripartite governance body of the reforms). The framework should address:

- the scope of the evaluation, the terms of reference
- key evaluation questions
- key components of the evaluation, including specific projects
- comparisons, communities and counterfactual outcomes
- the implementation and management of the evaluation overall, as well as specific research tasks
- roles and responsibilities
- ethics
- time table, and

- other material agreed between the parties.

In advising Courage Partners on the conduct of the project, FaHCSIA instructed that the development of the framework should be based on and confined to the following source documents:

- *From Hand Out to Hand Up* Volume I & II
- Cape York Welfare Reform Trial *Project Board Agreement* (July 2008), and
- Cape York Welfare Reform *overall project plan* (in draft).

This Document

This document presents the work undertaken by Courage Partners between July and December 2008 to deliver:

- a program theory of the welfare reforms Trial, and
- an evaluation framework, including outlining key projects that need to be undertaken within this framework.

To achieve this we have:

- Drawn upon the Trial documentation *From Hand Out to Hand Up* Volumes I & II, the Project Board Agreement of 21 July 2008, and the overall project plan for phase 1 July 08 - June 09.
- Conducted workshops to explore the underlying issues and internal and external factors that will impact on the success of the Trial. In the course of the project, FaHCSIA organised two consultation workshops which were attended by staff from the Welfare Reform Program Office, the Queensland State government departments involved in the Trial and FaHCSIA staff from both the national office and the Queensland state office. The first workshop, held in Brisbane in August 2008, discussed the evaluation in general and an early draft of the program theory and outcomes hierarchy. The second workshop, held in Cairns in November 2008, discussed a revised theory of change, evaluation questions and signs of success for the Trial as a whole. Participants also discussed signs of success and evaluation questions for each of the four streams of activity making up the Trial.
- Had ongoing discussions with the Trial partners to take stock of the background issues leading to the establishment and implementation of the Trial.

- Developed a single theory of change, which encompasses all of the streams of effort in the Trial.
- Consulted with key stakeholders within the Australian and Queensland Governments and the Cape York Institute to test the thinking behind the Trial's evaluation framework.

The complex nature of the four streams of Trial activities, the broader policy and implementation context in which these activities are taking place, the history of the communities and the interrelated nature of the issues they are trying to address together generate an especially challenging program to assess. The Trial takes a holistic approach to a multidimensional set of policy problems. This document highlights the major challenges in evaluating the Trial as a complex system, proposes some overarching principles and the key design features and methods to adopt for the comprehensive evaluation strategy proposed.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE CAPE YORK WELFARE REFORM TRIAL

The *From Hand Out to Hand Up* Volumes I & II report (the design report) identified a number of major issues facing Aboriginal communities living in Cape York.

The underlying causes of the deep seated social and economic circumstances of Aboriginal people living in Cape York have their roots in historical, cultural and policy factors.

The design report sees the current deterioration of social norms in Cape York communities as corresponding to a period of passive welfare, with a range of associated behaviours, such as the abuse and neglect of children, alcohol and drug abuse, and other dysfunctional behaviours in families, being considered as socially acceptable (*Hand Out to Hand Up*, Vol 1, p. 7).

The design report identified the four key reform areas that need to be addressed to get to the heart of these dysfunctional behaviours, namely to:

- restore positive social norms
- re-establish local Indigenous authority
- support community and individual engagement in the 'real economy', and
- move individuals and families from welfare housing to home ownership.

Attachment A sets out in further detail:

- the scope of the Trial
- the aim and approach of the Trial
- the rationale for the Trial
- what the Trial is trying to achieve
- the desired outcomes for the Trial
- the four streams and 15 projects, and
- synergies between projects and streams.

3. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

Evaluations are designed to provide information for policy and management to inform ongoing program improvement and/or to inform new interventions. The approach proposed is a practical and learning-oriented approach to evaluation which must inform both activities. Since the Trial is ambitious and innovative, the evaluation strategy must provide sound evaluative feedback *during* the process of implementation as well as providing a conclusive assessment of signs of success at the conclusion of the Trial.

We propose a range of activities to provide information for policy and management based around the framework of developing four approaches and three key reports:

- An **implementation review** of the Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC) proposed for completion in late 2009.
- A substantial **progress report** covering implementation issues and early progress in achieving outcomes, by the end of 2010.
- An **outcome report** synthesising results by the end of 2011.
- Ongoing data collection.
- Special studies.

Ongoing intelligence gathering will provide information for timely management responses. Studies may be commissioned to investigate specific aspects of the Trial in more depth and these will contribute information to the larger reviews, but that evaluation must:

- ensure the communities are not overloaded by evaluation consultation pressures, as well as the pressures of change
- maintain the interest and commitment of the parties throughout the four year period
- provide timely and useful information to the Trial partners to enable the most effective implementation of the Trial over time, and
- analyse the key success factors of the Trial that help achieve help of the ultimate outcome of rebuilding social norms.

Evaluation Principles

The following principles should underpin the design and conduct of the evaluation:

- The **emphasis of the evaluation is on learning** from the Trial in a timely way. This includes understanding:
 - what strategies in the Trial have worked, why they have worked, or not and at what stages in implementation
 - how sequence and timing of strategies affected their implementation
 - the experience of being involved in the Trial for individuals, for communities and the partners
 - change at a system and policy level – why or why not change has occurred, key influences, such as contextual factors and key constraints, and the management of the change processes. (This information will incorporate key learning from the above two points and distil the factors, patterns and principles of the system which can inform other interventions and future work in Cape York).
- The evaluation should **focus on problem solving** and demonstrate how to improve outcomes for individuals and communities involved in the Trial.
- The evaluation should align with what is known about **good practice** in evaluation of Indigenous programs and evaluating complex social interventions based on changing behaviour.
- The design of the evaluation should be able to **explore the conditions and context**, and the opportunities and constraints.
- The methods will need to **capture the degree and nature of change**, any collective effects, (and including, at an individual level, any perceived relationships of individuals to groups that are important to them), especially through capturing people's experience of the Trial.
- The methods employed in the evaluation must be appropriate, apply best practice, but be respectful in that they **limit intrusion** into people's lives and living circumstances.
- **Local resources** should be used as far as possible, but with outside guidance and under an agreed approach. Involvement by the local community and service providers in the data collection aspects of evaluation should aim to develop their skills. Using local resources can also introduce efficiency and improve the integrity

of information collected for the evaluation process by integrating some evaluation activities into normal work programs.

- The design of the evaluation must recognise the need to **build trust** between the local community members, service providers, program staff and the evaluation team.

Application of the above principles will focus the methodology, evaluation protocols and the composition and briefing of evaluation teams on the essential issues of concern to the evaluation.

4. CHALLENGES FOR THE EVALUATION: DESIGN ISSUES AND PRINCIPLES

Complex System Challenges

The Trial involves four separate “streams”, involving 15 separate projects which have their own sub-elements, working in a broader contextual environment where other policies (such as alcohol restriction measures) and other developments (such as the Chalco Mine or Australia’s economy) will have an impact on Trial outcomes.

Clearly the strategies and potential impacts of the major elements of the Trial are inter-related and interdependent, so that an outcome in one area may lead to an outcome in another. For example, improvements in education are likely to impact on employment and economic outcomes, which in turn open opportunities for Aboriginal families to purchase homes in the private market.

The interdependencies and possible causal pathways need to be considered as part of the evaluation at a strategic level. While causal attribution will be difficult to establish empirically, the causal chains can guide other inquiry based on the program theory proposed in this report. This approach allows the mechanism of change of be tested to establish an understanding of likely cause and effect, even if this cannot be isolated statistically.

Causal attribution of Trial outcomes will be difficult, if not impossible, to determine. Measuring the ultimate outcome of the Trial, namely rebuilding positive social norms, may be limited during the life of the Trial (up to December 2011) as their sustainability may not be clear while the Trial is in place. It is possible that behavioural change engendered by the Trial may not be sustainable without continuation of the strategies and services established under the Trial. Norms are also inherently difficult to measure and many other aspects of social psychology – such as values, attitudes and aspirations – and of social capital – such as participation, trust and volunteerism – may also warrant examination to understand what has changed, why and how.

Audience for the Evaluation

The audience for the evaluation is primarily the Welfare Reform Trial partners: the Australian and Queensland Governments, the Cape York Institute of Leadership and Policy. The primary partners are the Cape York communities in which the Trial is being piloted.

To be useful, the evaluation will need to be able to influence the actions of the parties that will make a difference for the Aboriginal communities involved in the roll out of the Trial.

Beyond the primary partners and four Cape York communities, the audience for the evaluation report will include the Ministers and senior bureaucrats in the Australian and Queensland Governments, Aboriginal peak body organisations and other involved parties who may have an interest in the effectiveness of the Trial overall.

Scope of the Evaluation

Writing recently in the British Medical Journal researchers noted that “systems can be understood as being simple, complicated, complex, or chaotic. Simple and complicated systems or processes are related to separate entities or discrete activities. In contrast, complex systems are based on relationships and their properties of self-organisation, interconnectedness and evolution. Research into complex systems demonstrates that they cannot be understood solely by simple or complicated approaches to evidence, policy, planning and management. Complicated problems are not simply [reducible] to an assembly of simple components. Complex knowledge is based on understanding dynamic system patterns in which the whole is greater than the sum of the known and knowable parts.”¹

Unless well designed and conducted, there is some risk in this kind of intervention that the scope of the evaluation becomes unwieldy, and hard to manage. This could become burdensome, costly and less effective in informing the parties about the effectiveness of the Trial and its outcomes.

¹ Martin, C M and Sturmberg J P (11 July 2007) “Confusing the concepts of complicated and complex” in Rapid Responses to: Campbell NC et al *Designing and evaluating complex interventions to improve health care* BMJ 2007: 334: 455-459

To contain the scope of the evaluation to a manageable format we propose an overall strategic assessment design supported by more discrete studies that focus on agreed elements.

Priorities for the Evaluation

To achieve an evaluation that can meet the expectation of the parties, we suggest the priorities for the evaluation be agreed by the Welfare Reform Project Board based on some, or all, of the following criteria:

- **Issues posing highest risk** as presented in the risk assessment in the overall project plan.
- The most **critical areas for successful implementation** of the Trial and for delivering real outcomes for the communities, informed by the program logic.
- The areas that reflect a **diversity of interests or focus interest** of the parties (which may or may not meet the criteria mentioned above).

Contextual factors for the evaluation

Contextual factors are likely to have a substantial influence, either positive or negative, on the success of every aspect of the Trial. These contextual factors are important at all levels; systems, services and individual. Therefore these factors should be examined and taken into account in all phases of the evaluation strategy.

While a whole of government approach has been developed to take a comprehensive approach to the Trial, the policy environment for the Trial is dynamic and complex. Not all important services and strategies are encompassed by these initiatives, such as health services. Unless strong formal and informal policy and operational links are built with other key agencies and initiatives to support the Trial effort, the coherence and effectiveness of the Trial may be compromised.

The four communities will be affected by numerous other strategies and initiatives, for example, national initiatives under COAG, reorganisation of councils in Queensland, and the development of other state initiatives which do not come under the auspices of the Trial such as Wellbeing Centres. These are examples of factors that affect the success of Trial's implementation, especially as their varied and perhaps conflicting priorities may add a level of complexity which the evaluation will need to recognise and capture.

At a service level, other cross-cutting issues include the availability of the workforce to implement strategies and the stability of that workforce. These contextual factors represent both risks and opportunities. Risks include possible duplication of services, or services which do not support an active service orientation, confusion caused by changes in the modes of service delivery, such as through changes in local council administrative structures and conflicts in styles of service delivery. The overall service structure not being comprehensive enough, and the lack of a cooperative mindset also pose risks.

Opportunities arise from the range of these other national and state programs. For example, the Indigenous Leadership Program may have produced graduates whose expertise can be garnered to develop community structures. Similarly prosocial programs or antenatal and playgroup programs could support understanding of the role of parenting and a healthy lifestyle. These programs are likely to be a source of expertise and resources which could be marshalled to strengthen effort in the four Trial communities.

Opportunities posed by these initiatives include an increase in the resourcing and development of capacity for essential service delivery. If these opportunities are treated in a manner consistent with the Trial philosophy, then the complementary and synergistic effects will support this complex social change. Other opportunities lie in the capacity of services to break new ground in the style of service delivery to rural and remote communities.

At the individual level, assessment of the experience of change should take into account the complexities arising from the possible existence of co morbidities, such as mental health problems, the starting point for development of community capacity in terms of skills available, the leadership capacity of the community and the service supports available.

Ensuring Evaluation Methods Produce Robust Evidence

The complex nature of the Trial and the underlying issues the Trial is trying to address raises a number of challenges for its evaluation. Notwithstanding these challenges, a strategic assessment of the multiple influences impacting on outcomes should be pursued across the suite of evaluations using mixed evaluation methods and techniques.

The evaluation approach will overcome problems arising from relying too heavily on one type of evaluation methodology over another. The qualitative components of the evaluation will enable deep insights to be gained into the conduct of the Trial and experiences of individuals and communities. Quantitative techniques can help to measure some key trends over the Trial period. Triangulation of information gathered through a variety of evaluation techniques and from analysis can validate the perspectives of different stakeholders will produce robust information and insights from findings of the evaluation overall.

The evaluation methods proposed in the evaluation framework are designed to build upon on activities that have already been progressed to established baseline data for the Trial. Work is underway on core indicators using administrative data sets, through the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). Scoping studies are being undertaken on surveying behaviour change, social norms, values and aspirations and approaches to longitudinal qualitative case studies.

There may also be potential for comparison with other approaches or sources of data. Analysis could be aided by other work occurring in Cape York by a variety of institutions, including the social impact study of Aurukun for the Chalco mining environmental impact assessment. The monitoring and evaluation activities in other states associated with income management strategies, child protection and the Northern Territory Emergency Response, may also inform the specific approaches to interpretation of any analysis under this evaluation framework.

Level of Involvement of the communities in the evaluation

Gaining community involvement in the evaluation is important but a balance must be found between gathering primary data and using secondary data in this circumstance.

The study communities are under pressure from a number of sources and it is important that evaluation processes limit intrusion and be respectful of a number of pressures and stresses community members are likely to be experiencing. The evaluation design must balance and be sensitive to:

- The risk of traumatising people who are already undergoing massive change especially when the issues being targeted under the intervention are difficult and personal.
- The already high level of scrutiny of the community and individuals associated with the suite of changes and associated media interest.
- The pressure of concurrent research activities, for example, a study funded under the NHMRC on drug and alcohol issues will also place consultation pressures on community members. Key community spokespeople should not be overloaded. It is recommended that planners should investigate what other studies are occurring underway in the four communities and communities concurrently and ensure the as evaluation design may need to takes into account of the total community information collection demands and may be informed by evidence already produced.
- Expected consultation occurring with the roll out of other government initiatives for example, through COAG.

While a balance must be struck between primary data and secondary data, input from individuals and community members were seen as highly important so that the experience of the Trial can be accurately captured. Data collection should also reflect a range of community perspectives, for example, from services, local councils, and senior community members. The value of capturing the experience of children through the trial period was also emphasised and innovative ways of achieving that were discussed with strategies such as using on-line input, photographs, and children's drawings being raised as examples. There was no discussion on how such data collection strategies might be implemented but there are some existing examples to draw from, particularly from the mental health field.

5. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

We suggest a suite of approaches to the evaluation will be needed to inform assessment of performance and decision making in a timely way. The Trial program theory informs the selection of evaluation questions and data collection approaches, and guides the research over time to answer the high level evaluation questions in the outcome evaluation at the end of the Trial. More detailed questions can be developed by drawing out the theory of change, through a process of discussion with tripartite members with who know the policy intent, and analysis of documentation, principally the design reports “*Hand Out to Hand Up I & II*”. Examples have been provided to FaHCSIA in working papers.

The four key strategic questions proposed are:

- Was the CWYR Trial implemented as agreed by the three parties?
- Are social norms and behaviours changing?
- Has service provision changed in a way that supports norm and behaviour change?
- Have governance arrangements supported changes in service provision and social norms and behaviours?

The questions suggested are based on the Trial's goals of catalysing and sustaining significant change to, with the intention of altering patterns of social interaction, and developing more pro-social values, and developing services in ways that will significantly improve the quality of life for individuals and families in the reform communities. These goals reflect the key principles of the reforms that the measures operate by promoting active self-responsibility, offering individuals and families reasons to change their behaviour and that the ultimate success of the reforms will depend on how community members respond to the choices on offer.

6. EVALUATION STRATEGY

The following recommendations for an evaluation strategy for the Cape York welfare reform Trial constitute both a strategic and practical approach to the evaluation. In particular the strategy suggests selective approaches in order to provide the key information required within the timeframe and resources available.

The long term outcomes sought from the Welfare Reforms are for changed and rebuilt social norms. Such outcomes cannot be expected to be evident within the life of the Trial which runs to the end of 2011. Rather, they are likely to take many years, or even decades, to be evident and sustained. This evaluation strategy is focused on the Trial period only. It is therefore focused on the immediate outcomes of changing drivers of behaviour through the actions of the FRC and through the nature of services provided to the communities, and on progress towards the more medium term outcomes of individual and family behaviour change. Nevertheless, it is important to consider how trends and long term outcomes can be measured beyond the life of the trial, for example, the AIHW has established indicators that can be used for evaluation of longer term outcomes of changes in social norms

The strategy has taken into account the challenges outlined in Chapter 4; such as the early stage of program implementation, the innovative and complex nature of the Trial, the scope and depth of the interventions, and the pressure of change on participating communities. However the evaluation strategy does not attempt to address all the complex relationships among activities, outcomes. This is not possible within the resource and time constraints, nor would the investment in evaluation resources be warranted.

The strategy aims to capture information throughout the Trial process to inform improvements and to provide an accurate and comprehensive picture of what has or has not occurred. It is also designed to provide ongoing intelligence on how implementation processes can be improved continuously, and how they can occur in parallel with the key evaluation activities. The strategy will also capture how participants have responded to the changes introduced through the Trial and the cumulative effects of interventions in influencing behaviour and rebuilding social norms. This information and insight will inform future change interventions in Indigenous communities.

Elements of the strategy

We suggest that the evaluation strategy includes five evaluation elements to support ongoing strategy implementation and to provide insights into what has been achieved. These include:

- ongoing intelligence gathering including the use of monitoring data
- an implementation review of the Family Responsibilities Commission by late 2009 to inform an assessment of the different approaches to conditional income management
- a substantial progress report by the end of 2010 reporting on results achieved in the first two years of the Trial (timed to inform the 2011- 2012 budget), and
- an outcomes evaluation by the end 2011 (coinciding with the end of the Trial).

The final evaluation will incorporate information gathered through all other evaluative processes, including:

- case studies which will provide an accurate and rich source of information for the outcomes review to explain some of the outcomes
- in depth studies of areas of particular interest. (An economic analysis to indicate the relative value for investment, and a study of social norms and behaviour are possible options for such studies.)

Each evaluation element is outlined below.

Ongoing intelligence gathering

Objective

To support the implementation of the CYWR Trial by providing timely and robust intelligence to inform improvement or adaptation to the Trial processes if required, and to understand how the Trial is developing.

Design features of ongoing intelligence gathering

Ongoing intelligence gathering for the Trial should:

- be undertaken at reasonable intervals, depending on the strategies employed, to give a reliable indication of progress and early warning of problems

- be strategically focused in that it tests progress against the theory of change
- be efficient so that administrative burden is minimised
- incorporate a mixed methods approach using selected existing monitoring data (quantitative, administrative) and qualitative information from key respondents. Internal progress workshops could be used to analyse the data against other information sources. For example, a brief survey, incorporating open questions would enable key staff to capture information and insights, from both formal and informal sources such as routine meetings, anecdotes from community members
- involve local staff or Cairns based staff in information collection, documentation and analysis as they are in the best situation to interpret information accurately. (Refer to governance structure diagram on p. 49), and
- either feature a data collection process designed by external or internal staff evaluators and involve training local staff in the implementation of this review process.

Typical questions for intelligence gathering

- How is the Trial affecting people as individuals and as a community?
- Are the Trial strategies reaching implementation benchmarks?
- Are the strategies reaching the target populations?
- How can the implementation be fine-tuned to improve its efficiency and effectiveness?
- Are there differences between sites which are of concern?
- How are individuals and communities responding to the system of change?

Implications for implementation

- A system for data collection, analysis and storage must be designed.
- Staff will require training in the approach and in the application of basic evaluation principles such as objectivity and what constitutes robust information. This training should be ongoing and include ongoing mentorship.
- Additional resources might be required as this process will require some additional staff time to perform this evaluation.

Benefits of such an approach

- It serves an agreed objective to gain timely and robust information.
- The information will be more robust as local staff will have developed relationships with the local community and are more likely to have access to information which illuminates issues.
- Use of local or Cairns based staff will reduce costs.
- Local staff will develop an evaluation mindset and selected evaluation skills.
- Use of routine data sources will reduce data collection costs.

Risks of the approach

- Too broad a scope and too much data collection could overburden staff and compliance with the process may be jeopardised.
- Individual bias or the nature of the relationship between participants in the program and interviewers may affect the quality and objectivity of the information collected.
- Participating agencies may not supply data in a timely way.

Implementation Review of the FRC

Objective

To provide timely information to the Board and support learning about the successes and challenges experienced by FRC in implementing its charter and to contribute to a broader review of the Australian Government's different approaches to conditional income management.

Design features

Small studies designed to answer the Project Board's agreed questions could include:

- analysis of key indicators of FRC performance
- in-depth analysis of FRC data and unit records – this could include tracking the patterns of peoples' interaction with the FRC over the first full year and could examine, for example, the extent of people receiving repeat notices, the nature of personal responsibility actions/commitments, and use of referral services

- qualitative research, including interviews with commissioners and service providers and other stakeholders
- selected interviews with people who have appeared before the commission ensuring issues such as privacy, safety and ethics were addressed.

To enable learning and access to insights about operations it would be best if this review is conducted by working closely with the FRC itself.

The review should be conducted in time to inform the partners about the effectiveness of the FRC relatively early in the Trial (end of 2009) so that there remains time to make adjustments to policies and processes for the rest of the Trial.

The review's focus should be around effectiveness and so it might examine achievement against the legislated objectives of the Commission.

Ideally, the review might be conducted by people external to the FRC and the Trial Partners and done in close co-operation with the FRC staff and commissioners.

Possible questions

- How is the FRC progressing towards achievement of its legislated objectives? (This question might also be looked at as part of the Outcomes evaluation)
- What is the experience of participants who are both receiving orders and referrals and of those who agree to other assistance and support?
- What is the experience of the Commissioners in undertaking influencing and leadership roles in the communities?
- What is the experience of the Commissioners over time of balancing their administrative responsibilities with their community leadership and influencing roles?
- What are the community perceptions of the FRC?

Implications

In evaluation planning, resource allocation and respondent burden issues need to be considered in selecting research techniques which might inform this Review and later reports. Choices need to be made about the duration and sequencing of studies. In some cases, time series studies which take quick snapshots over time to pick up changes of significance may be appropriate. In others, longitudinal studies will give a rich information base for analysis of the dynamics of change and development of

personal capacity amongst commissioners and the community. Other mechanisms might be used to collect data such as log books, most significant change techniques or performance story technique. All have different implications for resource use.

Progress Review (Formative Evaluation)

Objective

A formative evaluation provides a strategic assessment of the early progress in achieving reform outcomes. It also assesses the effective implementation and acceptance of the Trial by the communities, and provides insight into what can be improved or changed.

Characteristics

The formative evaluation should:

- be strategic and review the Trial from a systems as well as a component (stream) perspective
- have a diagnostic and improvement focus
- incorporate analysis of information collected through the ongoing intelligence gathering on the Trial implementation.

Typical questions:

- Is the Trial being implemented as planned?
- How is it affecting individuals, families and the Trial communities?
- What progress has been made towards the stated outcomes?
- What are the unintended effects of the Trial?
- Are the needs of the different communities being served?
- What have been the barriers to implementation?
- Who is being best served by the Trial?
- What are the contextual factors which are influencing the Trial outcomes?
- How well is service provision being re-oriented?

Recommendations and Implications

An independent evaluator should be involved but staff that have been involved in the ongoing intelligence gathering could have some involvement in facilitating robust and objective information gathering with the community.

Resources will need to be allocated for staff to manage and participate in the evaluation. A protocol for responding to evaluation issues in a timely way must be established.

Outcomes Evaluation

Objective

The outcomes or summative evaluation assesses the whether the Trial has set the foundations for and made progress towards changing social norms and rebuilding the four participating communities.

Characteristics of outcome or summative evaluations

An outcomes evaluation allows us to:

- cover all of the evaluation questions
- determine the range and extent of outcomes of the program against objectives and program logic
- determine whether a program has been implemented as planned and how implementation has affected or contributed to outcomes
- provide evidence to support accountability reporting
- use evaluation and other information from the history of the initiative, and
- inform decisions about the continuation of a program and replication of program elements in other contexts.

Typical questions

- Has the Trial been implemented as planned?
- To what extent have the intended outcomes been achieved and what were the factors influencing success?
- What are the unintended effects of the Trial?
- To what extent might the observed impacts be attributed to the Trial?
- How well have the needs of the different communities been served?

- What have been the barriers to implementation?
- Who is being best served by the Trial?
- What are the contextual factors which are influencing the Trial outcomes?

Recommendations and implications

We recommended that this evaluation be independently conducted towards the end of the Trial period. It should incorporate reports and administrative information produced as a result of prior evaluations.

The outcome evaluation could encompass sub-studies, such as a study of service providers to examine active service provision and a review of governance arrangements – tripartite, within governments and in communities. Alternatively, these could be conducted as separate studies prior to the outcomes evaluation.

The independent evaluator would benefit considerably from working with some of the evaluation staff in agencies who have knowledge of data and issues arising over the life of the Trial, and/or local staff to ensure that any community based information is reliable. However if the underpinning evaluation projects are undertaken, such as case studies, there may be less need for community level consultation at this stage as it will already be covered elsewhere.

Possible areas for reporting

It is likely that the deliverables from the outcomes evaluation report will cover:

- outcomes to date, community by community
- outcomes to date relevant to each of the four streams of the Trial
- the effectiveness of the governance of the Trial
- the experience and results for the service providers from the Trial
- emerging trends in indicators, and
- the experience of change from multiple perspectives, for example individuals, families, the FRC Commissioners, service providers, Program Office staff, the three Trial partners.

Possible Studies Informing the Three Major Evaluations (FRC Implementation, Progress Evaluation and Outcome Evaluation)

Case studies

Case studies form part of the evaluation of the CYWR Trial to explore issues in depth and over time arising from the effect of multiple concurrent interventions on individuals, communities and services.

Characteristics of case studies

Case studies:

- may be prospective and longitudinal, or a clarifying in-depth analysis of a situation or organisation, or an in-depth retrospective analysis of an aspect or a theme of the Trial
- area designed to suit the circumstance or questions being explored such as clarification of service pathways, patterns of influence and critical change factors
- can be used to explore the experience of change for individuals, communities and services
- are a robust sources of information as multiple sources and methods of data collection are used. Validity and reliability of information is usually obtained by corroboration from at least one other source and method of data collection
- can be used to study individual experiences, service operations, cover multiple sites so are responsive to many streams of enquiry
- are a valuable where broad complex questions have to be addressed in complex contextual circumstances
- capture experience cumulatively over time, usually prospectively but also retrospectively
- can be resource intensive depending on the approach selected, for example ethnographic approaches require long term contact.

Recommendations and Implications

Case studies are resource intensive and should be limited to interventions which are high risk, or topics of high interest. The evolution of the role of the Commissioners for the FRC and how they manage the tension between a regulatory and community development role, is an example where a case study might be warranted.

The nature and extent of case studies should be decided within six months to one year of Trial implementation so experience can be captured in a prospective way. If studies are retrospective, much valuable information to inform future interventions could be lost as recall can be incomplete and recall bias can contaminate information. Independent advice should be sought in the planning and implementation of case studies.

Examples of Case Studies

Longitudinal case studies

The FRC lends itself to a thorough analysis as it is so innovative that there are likely to be a number of unforeseen challenges. As well, the tensions inherent in its policing and capacity building role will place challenges on commissioners as they more fully develop and fine tune their role as commissioners, and balance that with their roles and responsibilities as community members. A prospective and longitudinal case study of the FRC, the challenges and processes of implementation of its charter and the change experience of individual commissioners is well worth documenting. This will achieve many purposes: it will provide insight into the change processes for individuals and the institution; it will provide information on systemic change to those considering replicating the model in other states and communities, and if designed to do so will provide feedback to the Program Office and the commissioners throughout the process.

Aligned with this case study, there are opportunities to follow and interview some community participants who are brought before the FRC and assess whether the commission is fulfilling its role in restoring social norms and authority and influencing behavioural change.

Time series case study snapshots

These may be organised as time series studies so that the design and study process is established early but the actual data collection and analysis occurs periodically. For example, 'yarning groups' of children or families could be established and the stories captured at various points during the Trial process. These groups could be used to capture the experience of change over time and ascertain issues which should be addressed immediately.

These are just two examples of how case studies are established and used. More detailed examples would be derived from discussions with the Project Board, the

executive management team, the FRC project office, stream managers and local project implementation teams.

Possible in-depth studies

We also recommend retaining the capacity and flexibility to incorporate in-depth studies to answer important questions arising during the Trial.

Economic evaluation

In *Hand Out to Hand Up* an economic evaluation was suggested.

The overriding purpose of an economic evaluation in the CYWR Trial context is to guide government policy and investment decisions for the future. In designing such an evaluation there are a number of complex issues and choices to be considered which will affect the scope and design of the economic analysis. Such choices may include whether to evaluate components of high interest such as the FRC, to select particular benefits such as trends in health, educational attainment, employment and reduction of crime where established and valid measures of benefit exist or whether to take a more comprehensive approach to the Trial. The existence of appropriate data will influence this choice as will policy priorities.

Recommendations on the form and scope of an economic evaluation were outside the scope of this project. Given the specialized nature of this work, FaHCSIA (or the Project Board) would benefit from obtaining advice from social and health economists on the types of economic analysis which are relevant to this project. This will assist in the refinement of the economic evaluation objective, choice of methods, possible scope, and the data required to support such analysis. Early advice from economic evaluators on feasible and appropriate objectives and approaches would be beneficial in case additional data collection is required.

Study of behaviour change, social norms, values and aspirations

The Trial is aimed at changing social norms in the participating communities with consequent benefits both to those communities and to the individuals who belong to them.

The benefits to be gained from more positive social norms are mutually reinforcing: the stronger the communities become, the more opportunities there will be for

individuals; likewise improvements in individual well being will enhance the communities.

As previously outlined, achieving these changes in social norms will involve complex measures targeted at both improvements in the lot of individuals, such as employment and health, and factors affecting the community directly, such as social behaviour, safety and participation in the communities' affairs. It is important to capture the *synergistic* effects on social norms of building personal capacity, changes to service approaches and infrastructure and the building of social capital through community initiatives.

Some research² & ³ has already been undertaken by FaHCSIA to explore possible methods and approaches and consideration of the options and this complex area warrants careful analysis before any firm plans can be made. The two reports commissioned to provide advice on the nature of development of social norms and social behaviour provide further insight into the complexities of achieving change and in assessing outcomes. These reports provide a basis for measurement of change using tested survey instruments and community consultation processes. These instruments and approaches will provide guidance on how the measurement of changes in social norms can be undertaken reliably and objectively.

The initial focus of the strategy is to ensure all the Trial projects are underway. We will focus on funding, establishing the new structures aimed at bringing about change and gaining community acceptance. Once the Trial's establishment has been consolidated it will be appropriate to measure both progress (i.e. wellbeing milestones for implementation) and outcomes (i.e. is the Trial achieving the intended outcomes, or progressing towards those?).

Such measurement is crucial, not only to progressively measuring the effects on social norms of a combination of new approaches in the four participating communities, but also to inform decisions about extending the Trial approach more broadly.

² Reynolds, Kate, Thomas, Emma (October 2008) *Understanding social norm change and social norm measurement: a social psychological perspective*. Department of Psychology, ANU. October 2008

³ Berry, Helen L (November 2008) *Social capital and wellbeing in evaluating the Cape York Welfare Reform Trials*. National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health.

A critical factor is to determine the most suitable timing to begin this process of measurement. Before embarking on formal measurement and evaluation of social norms, there would need to be some level of community acceptance of the Trial and some demonstrable progress on implementation of the new arrangements. Nonetheless, the issues to be measured can be identified early in the process with a view to provide insights on qualitative evaluation approaches as the Trial proceeds, especially to guide discussion and documentation of experience, such as through case studies.

Possible special study - Review of governance arrangements

The governance arrangements for the Trial are innovative in form and approach. On top of involvement by involvement by the Australian and Queensland Governments and a range of participating government agencies, the inclusion of the Cape York Research Institute, an agency independent of government, poses new issues.

Whole of government (usually) denotes public service agencies working across portfolio boundaries to achieve a shared goal and an integrated government response to particular issues. Approaches can be formal and informal. They can focus on policy development, program management and service delivery.⁴

One of the key evaluation questions is how the governance arrangements established for the CYWR Trial have contributed to the success of outcomes. There is not enough evidence on what whole of government arrangements contribute to complex social interventions. There is even less evidence about the additional complexity involved in the CYWR Trial with the addition of state government agencies and an independent non-government body. Greater understanding of contribution of this arrangement to addressing multidimensional, interrelated and intransigent social problems is a high priority to inform future governance policy and operational design of governance arrangements.

Whole of government work is partnership work. The intent is to bring together the relevant agencies so that resources can be arranged creatively and cooperatively to address the problems at hand, which by definition will not be able to be resolved

⁴Management Advisory Committee 2004, *Connecting Government: Whole of Government Responses to Australia's Priority Challenges* Commonwealth of Australia.

effectively through the normal agency by agency approaches. The effectiveness of the partnership is likely to be a key factor influencing Trial outcomes and consideration of its contribution to the impact of the strategy should be undertaken as part of the evaluation of the CYWR Trial. Given this, at the evaluation will need to consider:

- a) The effectiveness of the partnership approach to the CYWR Trial.
- b) The impact of the leadership of the partnership on the impact of the Trial on the Cape York Communities.

A critical success factor in the CYWR Trial will be how the governance arrangements facilitate the trust and support of the local communities whose engagement and support is essential.

The effectiveness of the governance arrangements will ultimately be measured by the overall achievements of the Trial in bringing about the desired behavioural changes in the four communities.

In evaluating the effectiveness of governance structures it is difficult to track the trial outcomes directly to particular governance arrangements. It is more useful to assess the extent to which the governance structures assist in:

- a) identifying the key policy and administrative issues that will both impede the Trial's success if not addressed and that might facilitate their smooth implementation
- b) overcoming the structural, social and other barriers to the Trial's progress
- c) facilitating the implementation and performance of the Trial, both through formal arrangements and through informal cooperation built on improved understanding and trust of the respective stakeholders
- d) providing desired levels of community and stakeholder support for and confidence in the Trial, and
- e) leadership towards a common objective of the multiple agencies involved in the implementation.

In consideration of the above, some of the issues to be considered include:

- How the role of leadership of the Trial process has been conceived, implemented and redefined through the process of the Trial.
- How the Partnership has supported the development of trust, consultation processes and open communication with the community, participating Trial participants and community members.
- The effectiveness of Trial management, including processes to clarify priorities, plan implementation including collaboration on timing and communication of implementation processes.
- The effectiveness of processes support integrated planning, monitoring, evaluating and reporting and Trial implementation adjustment.
- The effectiveness of relationship management and crisis management processes
- How funds management has supported timely and responsive Trial management decision making and implementation.
- The impact of Trial governance arrangements on the effectiveness of implementation accountability, and risk management.
- Identification and removal of barriers to cooperation (a key function), including legal barriers, financial and accountability issues and harmonisation of agencies' competing priorities.
- The lessons learned from the Trial about the potential for more flexibility generally in program administration beyond the particular issues addressed by the Trial.

A whole of government approach suggests not only that the components should work together but that governments (Australian and State Government agencies at different levels, different jurisdictions and so on) should work together in a planned and integrated way.

A coherent and integrated approach is needed across all levels of government and non-government bodies to provide a more evidence based, organised and effective approach that will stimulate and integrate cross-portfolio initiatives.

Possible special study - Study of service effectiveness

Reorientation of government services is a key objective of the Trial to empower individuals and communities to move from a service dependence model and to take on more responsibility for solving their problems and actively using services for support. This reorientation involves a fundamental and corresponding shift in mindset by both Indigenous community members and service providers from the traditional approaches to service. Each group must develop different expectations of the role of services and how Indigenous people actually use them. It is important that approaches across services are mutually reinforcing and empowering. These new paradigms of service will need to be understood by all service providers and Indigenous people alike so that changes can be consistently explained and applied.

Service effectiveness also relies on administrative simplicity, continuity, and seamlessness between services. This is another important element of service provision which has not been highlighted in *Hand Out to Hand Up* but which is important where problems are multi-causal, interrelated and therefore need recruitment of a number of services for effective take up. One-stop-shop and effective referral approaches, and use of similar assessment protocols are examples of approaches that will increase service efficiency and increase compliance. Such approaches can also ensure identification of essential service gaps and make provision for temporary approaches if there are service interruptions due to issues such as inadequate workforce supply.

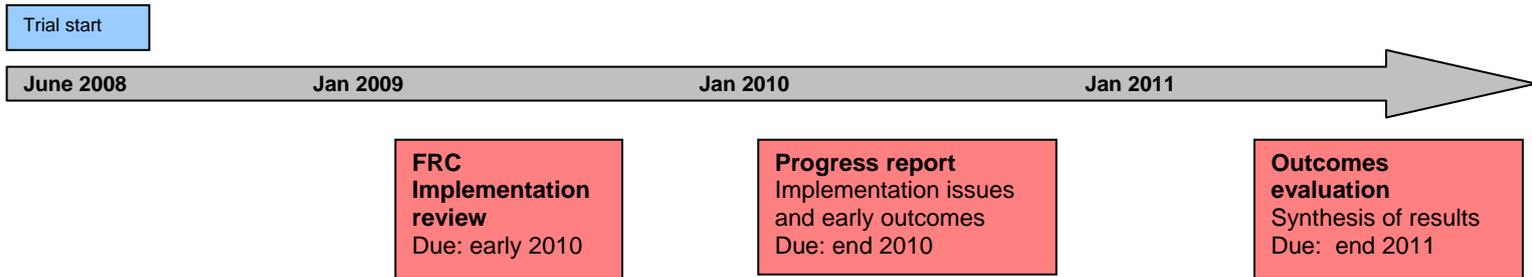
The reorientation to government services objective should be considered in all phases of the evaluation strategy, and especially in the monitoring evaluation. The evaluation should identify what has been done, how effective it has been and the pathway to change.

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches should be used to understand what has happened, the key catalysts for change and barriers to change. An understanding of these factors would be valuable for planning future initiatives across Australia. Time series surveys of services would be an effective mechanism to capture the extent and types of changes that have occurred or not. Ongoing intelligence gathering would be useful as a means of capturing issues as they occur, and focus groups with service providers and service recipients would provide a deep understanding of the

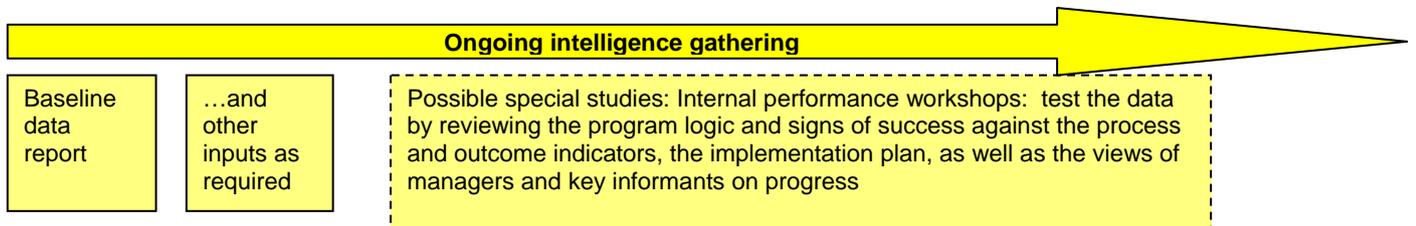
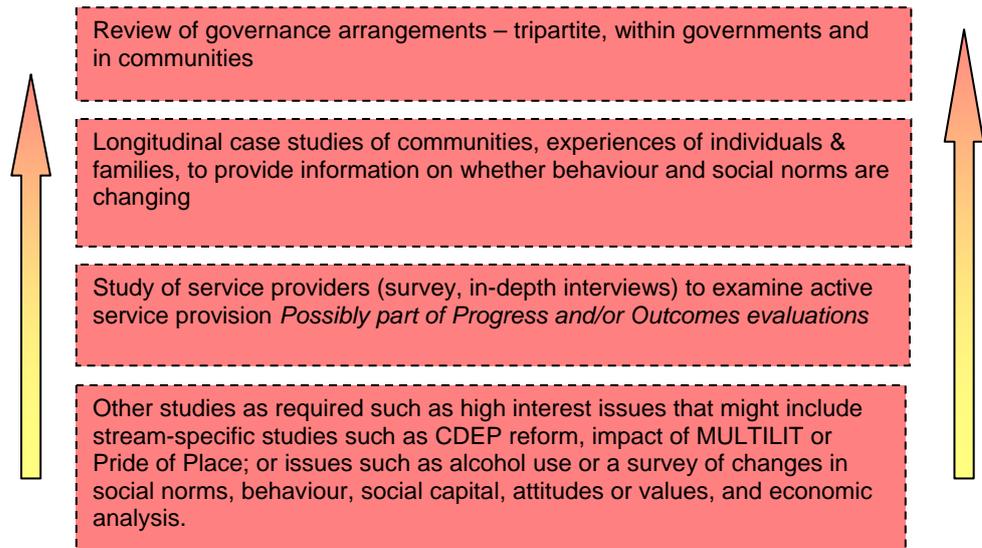
issues faced and whether and how developmental challenges and problems were resolved.

These methods could be administered separately or as part of the progress and outcome evaluations.

Evaluation Elements and Reporting Timetable



Possible special studies informing the Progress Report and Outcomes Evaluation might include:



7. EVALUATION METHODS

The following are some initial consideration of methods which could be appropriate for different parts of the Trial, many of which have been mentioned. Other options, such as IT based information could also be explored, depending on the facilities and capacity of each of the communities. In essence, more than most evaluations, the Trial environments require consideration of methods which are not only fit for purpose but fit for what is effective in each community.

Methods for the Progress or Formative Evaluation

Early evaluation of outcomes as they affect individuals and families

The methods for the collection of **quantitative** data for this part of the evaluation are the same as those for ongoing intelligence gathering used for monitoring the Trial. In other words, the formative evaluation would use monitoring data but would subject it to different analysis from the ongoing intelligence gathering. The data used might include analysis (at end 2009) of monitoring data from service providers, local implementation project office and Program office on, for example:

- services uptake, participation, completions
- results data for individuals such as school attendance, educational measures including literacy, health indicators, drug and alcohol indicators, training programs, job seeking, domestic violence reports, housing damage reports and the like.

Below are some methods for gaining **qualitative** data on attitudes, behaviour change and drivers of change:

- Focus groups of individuals and/or service providers, including teachers, perhaps using most significant change technique to structure information gathering and analysis. Small focus groups could be used with the people in each community who are engaging with particular activities or groups of activities, for example the MULTILIT Tutorial Centres, or parents helping in class, or bringing their children to school. The focus groups could be discursive and explore people's experience every six months or so. The use of regular periodic focus groups with the same people would have a benefit additional to data gathering, namely of letting the participants see how far they had come. The focus groups would need very skilled facilitation, ideally from Aboriginal people already trusted by the Trial participants.

- Case studies, which allow focus groups and interviews to be undertaken for matched cases of individuals and providers of services to those individuals.
- Diaries kept by volunteer individuals or log books kept by community project office workers (or evaluation team member located in community) in conjunction with individuals in the community who are engaged with Trial activities. The latter would require a relationship between the individual participant and a very trusted person who could chat with them and make a record of what they say they are experiencing.
- Photographs which may be especially relevant for Pride of Place.
- Surveys of service providers.

The above methods would involve some sampling and segmentation of the communities and an obvious way to cut the segmentation would be by involvement in particular services within streams.

Early evaluation of outcomes relating to repositioning service delivery

Methods for both **quantitative** and **qualitative** data might include:

- analysis of FRC data on cases going to the FRC
- analysis of service data looking at inputs as well as outcomes as above
- milestone and progress reports against overall plans and the local project plans
- reports against risks identified in the overall plans relating to the governance partnership and agencies sustained commitment to the Trial. In addition, minutes of Executive Management Team and Project Board meetings about corrective action could be analysed to assess what action has been taken and whether emerging risks have been, or remain to be addressed.
- surveys of service provider staff about services delivered, perceptions of changes occurring, and barriers to change
- focus groups of service provider staff and Project office (Cairns and local) about what is working and what is not and why, and
- FRC case review of a sample of individuals or families interactions with the FRC over the first 12- 18 months of operation.

Methods for Outcomes Evaluation

Methods for the outcomes or summative evaluation do not need to be determined at this stage, but would benefit from longitudinal case studies commencing early in the Trial, especially on the FRC. They could include:

- Analysis of ongoing intelligence gathered from service providers, local implementation project office and Program office for trends over time on, for example:
 - services uptake, participation, completions,, and
 - results data for individuals such as school attendance, educational measures including literacy, health indicators, drug and alcohol indicators, training programs, job seeking, domestic violence reports and housing damage reports.
- Individual case studies, looking at the experience of the Trial holistically or in relation to specific issues such as drug or alcohol dependence and effect on work capacity. Case studies could include techniques such as interviews, storytelling, case file review, log books/diaries, service provider observations, or service provider reporting on individuals compiled as events occurred (case notes).
- Family case studies, looking at the collective experience and the interaction of impacts from one stream or strategy on other aspects of each others' lives. Case studies could include techniques such as interviews, storytelling, case file review, log books/diaries, service provider observations, or service provider reporting on families compiled as events occurred (case notes).
- Reviews of particular projects or topics such as FRC effectiveness, CDEP reforms, or a selection of the 15 projects such as business precincts, wellbeing centres, attendance case management.
- Information from in-depth studies such as changes in social norms, behaviour, social capital, attitudes or values, and economic analysis.

Evaluating the counterfactual

A number of parties have been interested in exploring the counterfactual i.e. what might have happened with the four communities if the Trial had not been implemented.

In order to understand clearly the effect of the trial compared with communities which did not receive the intervention it would be necessary to use comparison groups. This is impractical as variations across the communities make full comparisons difficult and it is well beyond the resources of this project.

One approach in assessing the level of impact of the Trial would be to compare the actual outcomes with expected trajectories of illness or harm if the trial had not occurred. The design reports describe the catalytic dysfunction overwhelming the Trial communities. It could be argued that, if communities are in a state of ongoing dysfunction that the counterfactual state is that Year four outcomes would be deteriorating and therefore would be worse than Year one outcomes if the Trial had not occurred.

This information could be created through modeling expected outcomes based on trends from existing data, for example, on health, educational participation, violence and harm related to drug and alcohol use. This might be done more effectively if data from a range of agencies such as FaHCSIA, DEWR and Centrelink could be linked. The ability to link data would also enable some key 'social indicators' to be developed, (e.g. an index of family violence, alcohol abuse and unemployment) which could be projected forward based on past trends. These projections could then be compared with actual outcomes at the conclusion of the Trial. They might also provide a basis for comparison with other similar communities. It has also been suggested that recent research conducted on mental health might provide relevant models for this Trial.

8. INDEPENDANCE AND RIGOUR OF EVALUATIONS FOR THE CYWR TRIAL

Evaluations must develop robust evidence so that advice is reliable. It is a widely held belief that external evaluators who have the prerequisite skills are the only assured means of having a sound, robust and objective review and that such a condition eliminates the bias from personal perspectives or undue stakeholder influence – a major risk seen in internal evaluations.

This perspective does not consider the particular requirements for effective evaluation of strategies in Indigenous communities where reliable information is gained only after the development of trust which follows from the development of relationships over time.

Building trust between the evaluator and community respondents takes time (and resources) to build. The constraints of time and resources and remote locations as well as the considerable pressure already on the Cape York Trial communities are serious considerations, which in themselves will affect the objectivity and comprehensiveness of data collection.

Therefore building in the capacity to develop and collect robust information over time is inherent in the design of an evaluation in this context. It should be recognised that both stakeholder groups - communities and governments - have a valid interest in the conduct and outcomes of the evaluation. Their perspectives can be somewhat different: community's interests are in benefits and improvements at the local level; governments are often concerned about value for money and broader application of what is learned. Both perspectives are important and must be embraced in the evaluation. On some issues triangulation of these different sources of information can support robust conclusions.

We have developed the following criteria which, if applied, will balance the abovementioned risks, incorporate needs and achieve the necessary requirements of accurate information, adherence to good practice in seeking input from community members in the evaluation and achieve robust, defensible and independent advice. The criteria include:

- Use of multiple methods, including qualitative and quantitative, enabling triangulation of information, (cross validation).

- Seeking multiple perspectives from all stakeholders.
- Involvement of staff who have frequent and valued contact with the community, especially those based in Cairns or in the communities themselves who could be involved in data collection.
- Training and mentoring of staff who have detailed local knowledge and have built relationships with the Trial communities over time, and who may assist with data collection and validation information gathered.
- Involvement of skilled external evaluators in the design of evaluation methods.
- Independent analysis of information, with validation by the community where appropriate.
- Peer review where necessary, for example of methodologies and the interpretation of information.

We believe that high staff involvement is warranted in the ongoing intelligence gathering but involvement would lessen in the strategic evaluations. Significant information will then be available to the evaluator for the final outcomes evaluation.

9. GOVERNANCE OF THE EVALUATION

The governance of an evaluation can measurably influence the effectiveness of evaluation processes and because of the complexity of the governance and operations of the Trial itself, careful attention will need to be given to the nature of the governance for the evaluation.

Key attributes of the governance of the evaluation should include:

- ownership of the evaluation objectives and processes by the key stakeholders (Australian Government, Queensland Government and the Cape York Institute)
- acceptance by all stakeholders that the evaluation is an integral part of the Trial and requires their full engagement
- a governance structure that will not impede the Trial's implementation or impose an undue administrative burden
- a degree of operational independence for the evaluation so that its outcomes are respected not only among the key stakeholders but among the broader Australian community.

The governance structure for the evaluation derives its authority from the Board, which will need to engage fully with the evaluation at a strategic level and assist in ensuring stakeholder 'buy in' from the outset.

Evaluation Management

A single evaluation group reporting to the Board through a senior officer should be established. This group would most appropriately be within FaHCSIA, which has a lead role in whole-of-government evaluation for the Australian Government, the relevant expertise in leading, managing and conducting evaluations and appropriate processes for contracting, financial control and reporting. This group would perform a secretariat role in commissioning and managing external evaluations and reporting on evaluation activity to the Project Board and key stakeholders. It could also have direct involvement in the design and management (and perhaps) conduct of specific evaluation activities.

Development of Evaluation Role of Secretariat

There is an option for the traditional secretariat role in FaHCSIA to be expanded for the period of the Trial to include involvement in the evaluation, particularly for

development of the monitoring review strategy and review methodology, such as data interpretation workshops. The role could also include facilitation of training of Cairns and community based staff in supporting and/or participating in evaluation processes at the community level.

Caveats apply to the involvement of internal/operational Trial staff in an evaluation. There are clear benefits in that local staff members have the opportunity for frequent contact with the community and the development of trust. There are implicit risks such as lack of evaluation skill, information bias and vested interests which would need to be managed, and difficulties arising from role confusion i.e. combining a data gathering role with a community membership role. Therefore, the involvement of staff that have a community evaluation role must be defined as carefully as one would in selection of external evaluators. Clear protocols, training, the development of mixed methods and external design and supervision of evaluation staff activity will reduce the risks and enhance the benefits.

If the secretariat were involved in leading the development and implementation of the ongoing intelligence gathering there are implications for resourcing of staff in the implementation teams and the location of some secretariat staff in Cairns. In terms of management, finding suitable personnel from the Cairns region may be a challenge but there are a range of options which may be pursued, for example:

- Secondments from FaHCSIA or the Queensland Government.
- Secondments from consultancy firms that have evaluation experience and who want to contribute to building Indigenous capacity, perhaps under the 50,000 jobs scheme.
- Having evaluation experts with Indigenous expertise who could be involved for substantial periods, such as three to four week visits or in a mentorship role and who could build up a relationship with the community and the local partners.

No option is immune to problems of staff turnover, but over time the evaluation capacity of the local managers and staff would be increased through their participation.

Building Indigenous capacity in evaluation, and general capacity in evaluation of Indigenous initiatives, would also support a range of Australian and State government objectives. In light of this the Trial Partners could explore other options

for using funds for innovation, education and employment to build evaluation capacity of new graduates or others. This would potentially improve Indigenous evaluation workforce capacity for all sectors.

Group of Reference People and Subject Experts

In order to facilitate the evaluation team's engagement with the communities and those responsible for implementing the Trial, a group of reference people should be established. The diversity of subjects covered by the Trial also suggests that it would be beneficial to engage a range of experts. This group would comprise a number of people from each of the four communities interested in supporting the evaluation, officials from the Australian and Queensland governments and the Cape York Institute, and evaluation experts and subject matter experts as required. Such a group could include Australian or overseas expertise including: welfare reform evaluation, social epidemiologists, Indigenous researchers/ evaluators, anthropologists, economists, social scientists and policy and governance experts. Some experts could be engaged for the duration of the evaluation process, and others included when the type of study required it. The group's task would be to:

- advise and support the evaluation team on strategic, planning and operational aspects of the evaluation
- work within communities to promote understanding and acceptance of the evaluation, and
- be a point of reference for coordination and problem-solving through the evaluation.

Evaluation network

Another major challenge for evaluation governance is to facilitate liaison and coordination of evaluation activities across all partners and their line agencies involved in the delivery of services during the Trial. Alongside whole of strategy evaluation processes, some line agencies are involved in or auspicing their own evaluation activities. To facilitate communication across the Trial partners, an internal mechanism - an evaluation network - will be established.

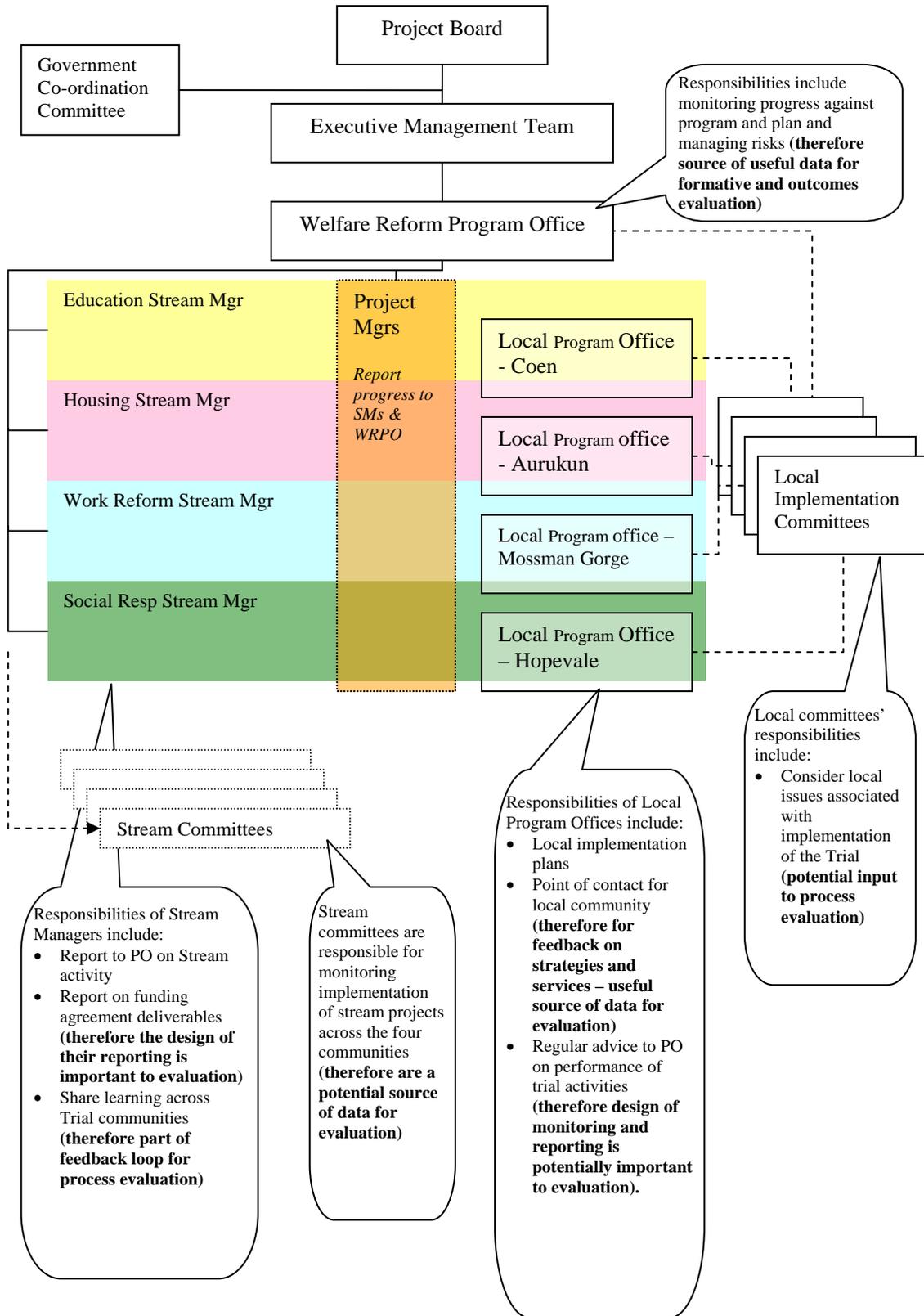
At the very least, the evaluation network should ensure that individual research, evaluation and monitoring activities are informed by what is happening overall,

connected if appropriate, are not duplicated and are mutually supportive for each of the major strategic evaluation components. In establishing the network, establishing protocols for sharing data, monitoring service delivery and liaison between agencies are important. The network should operate largely as a virtual network that meets occasionally to plan and resolve particular issues as they arise in implementing the Cape York Evaluation Strategy.

Challenges for Governance of the Evaluation

The diagram below depicts the governance arrangements for the Trial as described in the project board agreement and the overall project plan. We have identified those responsibilities or functions that appear to be particularly relevant. The diagram shows that the design of data collection for monitoring purposes is crucial to design of the evaluation and that monitoring will occur at both the local community level as well as at the program office level. It also highlights that the data collected for monitoring will form much of the data that is reviewed and analysed in the process evaluation. All of these parties should be involved in evaluation processes.

Governance Arrangements for the Trial



Potential Evaluation Roles Associated with the Existing Trial Governance Structure

Welfare Reform Program Office

- A useful source of aggregated data for ongoing intelligence gathering, progress (formative) and outcomes evaluations because the office monitors progress against the implementation plan.
- Can comment on progress evaluation findings based on their in-depth understanding of the Trial.
- Identifies any modifications to the Trial which evaluators suggest might be implemented.
- Revise plans in light of any modifications suggested.

Stream Managers

- Provide data on progress against funding agreement deliverables for ongoing intelligence gathering and progress/formative and outcome evaluations.
- Transmit learning from ongoing intelligence gathering, progress evaluation and outcome evaluations back to communities.

Local Program Offices

- Provide data to the monitoring review, progress and outcome evaluations on services and strategies being implemented in their community.

Local implementation committees

- Consider evaluation findings and implications for local action.
- Involvement in the ethical clearance process.

10. ETHICS: PRINCIPLES, GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS

The research field has guidelines⁵⁶ for the conduct of research in Indigenous communities which is ethical and respects the privacy of individuals, and the ownership of the intellectual property of respondents. There are no such guidelines for the conduct of evaluations, but many of the same issues arise in working sensitively with Indigenous communities and in observing obligations to reduce any risk to the individual's loss of privacy. We recommend that the Trial Partners, through its evaluation reference group, develop some protocols based on the NH&MRC guidelines, to guide practical implementation of methods for the evaluation of the Trial which can be applied consistently across all evaluation activity. Such protocols should observe the spirit and intent of the research guidelines but have a practical orientation so that the complexity and frequency of consultations and interrelated approaches can be dealt with in a strategic manner and that evaluations can proceed in a timely fashion.

Community representatives should be involved in developing these guidelines, taking into consideration that they will be based on the research guidelines which have already had very thorough community involvement.

The evaluation steering committee should ensure that ethics, clearance and management processes are built into evaluation management.

⁵ Eidos, 2007. Ethical principles and guidelines for Indigenous research, . www.eidos.org.au

⁶ *Values and Ethics: Guidelines for ethical conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research, NHMRC 2003*

11. THE PROGRAM THEORY

The Theory of Change

This program theory of change provides the theoretical and conceptual framework for understanding how the Trial is intended to work by identifying the assumptions underpinning the intervention and how the planned strategies are linked to the expected impacts and outcomes.

Development of theory of change, commonly called 'program logic', has been used to develop and evaluate programs and initiatives since the early 1970s but has only been routinely used in Australia in recent years. It improves the quality and focus of evaluation advice to government.

This process is used to 'surface the implicit theory of action inherent in the proposed intervention in order to delineate what should happen if the theory is correct and to identify short medium and long term indicators of changes which can provide evidence on which to base evaluations'⁷. It is also used to make explicit the assumptions underpinning this theory of action. The emphasis on outcomes and the pathway to achieving them is argued to facilitate measurement and data collection by clearly indicating which elements are important for the evaluation.

The theory of change approach makes planners and evaluators focus on how the programs and measures that are being implemented will give individuals and families the capabilities needed to adopt new values, identities and behaviours. While it is informed by the activities which make up the intervention, it requires planners and evaluators to think through what they are trying to achieve individually or collectively.

A theory of change and associated signs of success are not set in stone, they should be revisited on a regular basis.

While we have anchored the change process in the outcomes the CYWR Trial is to achieve, we have followed common practice in linking the activities, outcomes and contexts of an initiative.

The development of the theory of change for an initiative is usually informed by research into the type of change being expected and the influence of the conditions

⁷ London, Scott (1996) Understanding Change: the Dynamics of Social Transformation.

(opportunities and constraints of an initiative) and the social and environmental context in achieving that.

The Cape York Welfare Reform Trial is a particularly complex initiative and a number of theories of change apply to varied features of the Trial. This situation is not unusual and Courage Partners have used an approach which is consistent with common practice in evaluation, which is to use the evidence base for the initiative to reflect back on the evaluation and theory of change research and validate the theory of change with stakeholders.

We have not found authoritative theoretical sources to inform how change will evolve in Australian Indigenous individuals and their communities and particularly in such a complex initiative where a number of change theories may apply concurrently, particularly with such a complex initiative. Our research has been informed by a number of sources such as London⁸ who surveys a number of change theories across a number of fields, the Aspen Institute's roundtable on evaluating comprehensive community change⁹, Funnell,¹⁰ who has developed an approach which is aligned with the needs of the Australian Government, and evaluation sources such as Owen¹¹, Pawson¹². Australian Government research on policy initiated change¹³ and Strengthening Indigenous Families and Communities^{14, 15}. Studies undertaken on formation and measurement of social norms for FaHCSIA concurrently with this work have also informed our work.^{16, 17}

In line with the terms of Reference for this project the theory of change on which this evaluation framework is based, draws upon the policy and conceptual framework

⁸ London, Scott 1996 Understanding Change: the Dynamics of Social Transformation.
<http://www.scottlondon.com/reports/change.html>

⁹ Aspen Institute at
http://www.aspeninstitute.org/site/c.huLWJeMRKpH/b.613735/k.B48D/Research_on_Community_Change.htm

¹⁰ Funnell, Sue (1997) Program Logic: an Adaptable Tool for Designing and Evaluating Government Programs in Evaluation News and Comment V6 no 1, 1997.

¹¹ Owen, John M (2006) Program Evaluation; Forms and approaches 3rd edition,

¹² Pawson, Ray (2006) Evidence Based Policy: a Realist Perspective

¹³ Australian Public Service Commission 2007 Changing Behaviour: a Public Policy Perspective.

¹⁴ Scougall, John Lessons learnt about strengthening Indigenous families and communities, Occasional Paper 19, Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2000- 2004, Commonwealth of Australia, 2008.

¹⁵ Scougall, John A Roadmap through the Spinifex: Constructing an Outcome Hierarchy of Indigenous Sustainability. A presentation at the AES Conference Darwin, 2006.

¹⁶ Berry, Helen L. Social capital and wellbeing in evaluating the Cape York Welfare Reform Trials. NCEPH, ANU, 2008

¹⁷ Reynolds, Kate. Understanding social norm change and social norm measurement: a social psychology perspective. Department of Psychology, ANU. 2008

articulated in *From Hand Out to Hand Up* Vol 1 & 11, the July 2008 Project Board Agreement, the implementation plan, and other administrative documentation and related evidence developed to support the Trial. Further insights and testing of our assumptions were gleaned from workshops in August and November with key stakeholders with staff from the Cape York Institute and the Australian and Queensland Governments.

A theory of change is also useful as:

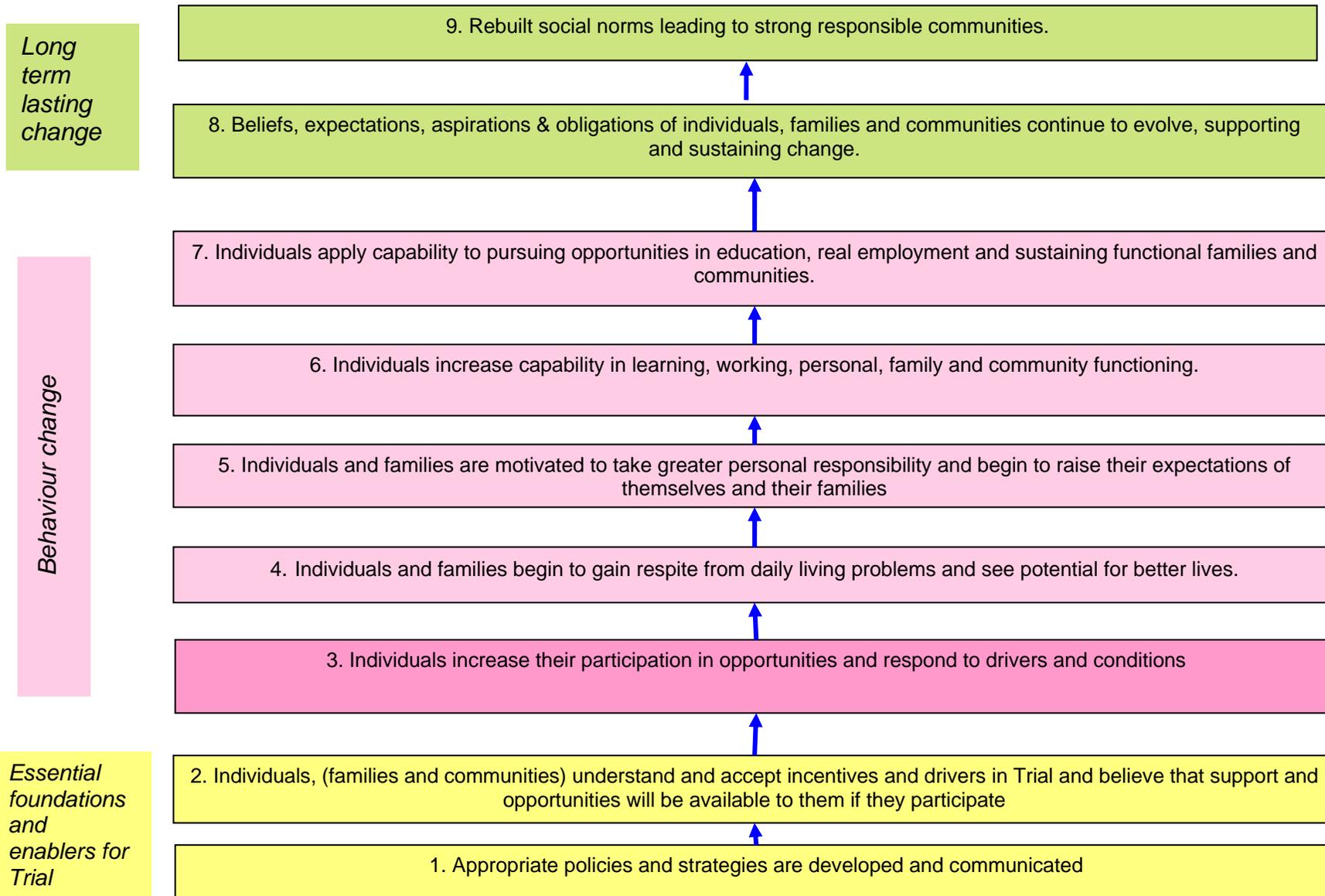
- a tool for communicating what the Strategy is all about, including its theory of change
- a framework for co-ordinated and integrated planning, monitoring, evaluating, reporting and reflection at all levels
- an explanation for what the strategy under that component is doing to address those factors, such as the establishment of the FRC
- a framework for reporting on the collective results across the strategies;
- a source of evaluation questions,, and
- 'parent logic' for a series of more detailed nested 'offspring' logics for the contributing strategies, such as education and employment. This would help to ensure that the design, monitoring, evaluation and reporting for each of the components were clearly linked to the overall 'parent logic'. The nested logics would be a key source of evaluation questions concerning the impact of each of the components.

The following diagram depicts the theory of change at a strategic level across the four elements of the Trial. It is necessarily broad to encompass the range of outcomes sought.

We would like to emphasise that this theory of change has been largely developed from a document review and while the overarching theory has been tested, we need to research further aspects such as signs of success to improve the depth and coverage of all streams and projects. As well, we need to research the methods of data collection and analysis that are possible in the Cape York environment. For example, the use of technology to gain input from young people is one possible avenue to explore.

Following this paper we suggest all parties begin a refinement process considering the implementation objectives and approaches by all projects and streams and the synergistic effects of those strategies.

Figure 1: Program theory



The Program Theory Explained

In the program theory we have sought to give due emphasis to the scale of the change that is contemplated in the CYWR Trial and to what is likely to be involved in individuals and families making the changes envisaged as outcomes from the Trial.

The scale of the change contemplated in the Trial is great and entails:

- people making changes in their personal behaviours, for example giving up something, such as drugs or alcohol
- taking on new paradigms and learning new behaviours, attitudes and skills
- people making changes in their inter-relationships or interactions with other people
- significant change on the part of service providers and government policy makers, which in turn involves behaviour change at a personal level for staff working in those services or in policy roles.

The benefits offered such as better health, better employment, greater skills and capacities are well into the future, while the immediate future holds the prospect of huge effort and pain in changing behaviour in the hope of the long term gains. It is well established in change theory that loss tends to be more keenly felt than gain, and that people tend to discount future costs or benefits compared to more immediate costs or benefits. So the loss of a CDEP income and the certainty of that known activity may be more keenly felt and valued as negative compared with the future gain of a better paid, but so far unknown and not yet experienced new job and work conditions.

These common reactions to loss and valuing of immediate rather than future gains tends to mean that people are reluctant to change unless the pain of staying where they are, that is of not changing, is perceived to be greater than the pain of making the changes.

Each of the outcomes in the program theory is discussed below.

Outcome 1: Appropriate policies and strategies are developed and communicated

The Trial policies and strategies must address the causes of individual and community problems outlined in *Hand Out to Hand Up* in a way that contributes to sustainable change of social norms.

The timetables for policy change or establishment and alteration of services must be set down, adhered to and made known to people in the communities so that they know what is happening and when. People need to know what is happening and when so they don't become disconnected and confused about what is going on in their community. Changes should be made soon after they are announced otherwise people will become sceptical or disillusioned about whether change will actually occur. Similarly, the amount of change that is tackled at any time needs to be confined as people can often make one change quite successfully, but struggle more as additional changes are introduced.

The Trial's policies and strategies will need to be communicated effectively by all the key partners to ensure everyone involved understands and commits to them. This is an ongoing requirement of the Trial, not just for the establishment phase.

This outcome will have been met when:

- Government communicates and operates in a coherent way for the whole of the Trial, including using and building on existing services.
- Members of the communities are involved in the formulation of strategies for the Trial and understand that they are designed to address causes of their problems for them as individuals and for the community.
- Policies support personal responsibility and self help behaviour.
- Consistent clear messages are communicated about the priorities for change, especially the wellbeing of children.

Possible areas for investigation

This outcome will need to be assessed in the establishment phase, throughout and at the completion of the Trial. Questions should be directed at how the parties have communicated and understood their role in the Trial and the level of on-going commitment to the policies and strategies agreed. The nature of what is communicated in the policies and strategies should have an emphasis on personal

behavioural change to protect and improve children's welfare reflecting a key emphasis in the Trial.

Outcome 2: Individuals, (families and communities) understand and accept incentives and drivers in Trial

As with Outcome 1, this outcome is also a foundation and enabling outcome for the outcomes that relate to behavioural change.

For individuals, families and the communities to understand and accept the incentives and drivers in the Trial, the policies and strategies under Outcome 1 will need to have been communicated clearly. The first reaction to proposals for change is often "what about me" so part of communicating is having thought before making announcements about how changes might impact on people, not collectively and in the abstract, but about how it might affect each individual, in their own eyes and in their particular circumstances.

This is the time and resource intensive part of building the case for change and it requires imagination to see through the eyes of others.

The Trial involves a delicate balancing of compelled and voluntary acceptance of change as a counter for this natural conservatism about embracing change. The main strategy in the Trial for compelled change is the FRC.

"Most people will readily comply with authority they consider to be legitimate"¹⁸ The forms of authority which the FRC will use include being able to direct individuals behaviour through making orders and the fact that the FRC has a legislative basis means that it has legitimacy in terms of the law. A major factor in whether the FRC is effective as a lever for compelling changed behaviour is whether it will have legitimacy in the eyes of the people of the four Cape communities.

In addition to information provision, there will need to be opportunities for discussion to develop consensus around new or changed values and open the way for norms to change in the longer term.

Understanding and accepting the incentives and drivers across all of the four elements of the Trial is a precursor to behavioural change. In understanding and

¹⁸ Australian Public Service Commission. *Changing behaviour: a public policy perspective*. 2007 p 13.

accepting the incentives they will be demonstrating acceptance of the Trial and the opportunities the Trial offer to people in the communities.

This outcome will have been met when:

- People “get the whole picture” - that is they understand the obligations and incentives of the Trial.
- People believe that the support and opportunities will be available to them if they participate in the Trial.
- People trust that these obligations and opportunities will be applied fairly to all.
- People have discussed the strategies and some consensus is beginning to form around the need for, and nature of, changes needed.

Possible areas for investigation

This outcome will also need to be assessed in the establishment phase, throughout the duration, and at the completion of the Trial. Questions should be directed to establish whether people understand the incentives and obligations under the Trial and the degree to which they believe the Trial will benefit them and their families.

Outcome 3: Individuals increase their participation in opportunities and respond to drivers (and conditions)

Outcome 3 is the first outcome that involves individual behavioural change.

The strategies for more voluntary acceptance of change involve notions of reciprocity and conditionality. That is, if individuals are willing to engage with certain kinds of intended behaviours such as income management or using Job Network, they will get certain benefits in return such as relief from financial stress, or from daily living problems, or access to job readiness programs and job opportunities.

A vital part of achieving change through the Trial is in successfully communicating messages about what changes are sought and why they are worth making. Communities will need to see a picture of the changed state post Trial of which few will have any personal experience. Then, as some make tentative changes, we will need to reinforce the positives that they experience as a result of altering their behaviour. The giving and receiving and believing of messages form one aspect of the first several outcomes in the program theory.

Behaviour may begin to change as a result of compulsion, such as through orders made by the FRC, or it may change as result of a positive experience as part of some compelled or voluntary change. As people begin to make change, their experience leads to greater confidence and reduced discomfort in tackling change.

To support the making of changes at a personal level the services provided under the Trial will need to be readily available and well administered by the parties responsible for them. Similarly, the Family Responsibilities Commission must be able to act on its authority and monitor how people respond to their directions.

As people's confidence in the Trial and its strategies increases, there would be growing evidence of changes in behaviour being made voluntarily, rather than as a result of FRC orders.

Increasing levels of individual and community participation in the education, employment, housing and other community activities provided under the Trial will be seen over time.

Disincentives for dysfunctional behaviours will also be applied through the Family Responsibilities Commission.

This outcome will have been met when:

- Family Responsibilities Commission is operating effectively and its directions/orders are respected and abided by, and it is generating a capacity to influence compliance with the Trial requirements.
- People show increased desire to participate voluntarily in Trial activities such as sending children to school and attending parenting classes.
- Children actively engage with education processes.
- Increased participation in other supportive activities such as antenatal programs.

Possible areas for investigation

Various social indicators will change as people take up the opportunities and choices offered to them under the Trial. The work and operation of the FRC and the uptake of the opportunities can be monitored on an ongoing basis throughout the Trial. School attendance records, housing leases, employment statistics and welfare payment data can be monitored to assess trends in these outcomes over time.

Outcome 4: Individuals and families begin to gain respite from daily living problems and see potential for better lives.

This outcome is the stage in a change process when the pain of making the change has reduced to be less than the benefit gained from having undergone the challenge of making that change. If violence reduces, if people feel safer, if their children are going to school and enjoying it, if they have enough money to buy good food for everyone in the family, then they will begin to say that the change was worth making. For some a benefit may come quickly but for others it may take a long time to be evident to them.

It is only when people are relieved from the extraordinary burdens of poverty and low self esteem that they are likely to be able to see problems affecting them as a problem, not as a normal condition of living. Only then can they perceive that opportunities may exist for them and can be taken by them.

An assumption is that antisocial behaviours that work against the full engagement of people in the community, and that also undermine children reaching their full potential, are beginning to diminish under the Trial.

In this phase, discussion amongst the communities and groups within the communities about strategies and the values they embody would continue, with consensus continuing to build around reshaped values.

In this phase, Individuals and families are responding to the incentives by changing or ceasing to engage in a range of dysfunctional behaviours. They will be encouraged to change their behaviour through access to appropriate support services and the benefits of behaviour change are beginning to be realised.

For this outcome to be achieved, appropriate support services will have to be in place and sustained.

This outcome will have been met when:

- Abuse and alcohol dependence and associated negative behaviours are reducing.
- People are feeling safer and more confident in their own capacity to make changes in their daily lives.

- Individuals increasingly understand where to find and seek help and support.
- Individuals begin to develop aspirations for a better life.
- Individuals and families express more confidence in the future.
- Consensus is building around goals and aspirations especially for younger people.
- Discussion about goals and aspirations is frequent and widely participated in.

Possible areas for investigation

Various social indicators will change as people change their behaviours and access the support services required.

Investigation could be around the number and level of services accessed; social indicators such as reduced levels of violent and illegal incidents associated with alcohol and drug abuse; and assessing the impact on individuals' social and emotional wellbeing in individual case studies within the communities.

Outcome 5: Individuals and families are motivated to take greater personal responsibility and begin to raise their expectations of themselves and their families

Having begun to gain respite from some of the problems that undermine family and community daily living under Outcome 4, individuals and families will be likely to be more motivated to assume personal responsibility for maintaining the improvements in their lives.

People will begin to see some possibilities that they did not see before and they will make choices to take steps towards things that will be beneficial them and their families in the longer term. For example, some individuals may begin to see mobility as a possibility, or even as desirable, and their families may begin to share that view, in turn making it easier for the individual to make a move to pursue work or education.

Talking about possibilities would be becoming more common and through the discussion there could be expected to be some shifts in the way people are talking about who they are, what they value and what they want their children to be. This discussion and building of consensus about slightly altered values will be an essential precursor to changing social norms.

With increased positive experience of benefits that come from changing behaviours, people will begin to regard things such as safety and security as normal rights. In turn this will raise or reset their expectations of themselves, their families and their

community. With increased confidence, people may be more hopeful about the future, and expect that they might have some opportunities. With confidence increasing may come increase in self-esteem and the stronger this esteem, the more there is to lose by not fulfilling one's expectations of oneself. As esteem becomes strengthened, the likelihood of letting changes slip backwards is reduced.

This outcome will have been met when:

- Individuals have taken steps to move off welfare (CDEP, housing, not working) and are using supported self-help services and displaying self starting behaviours such as caring for their house and family, retaining jobs, taking children to and keeping them at school and moving to take jobs.
- Government and community sector service providers have taken steps to foster increase of personal responsibility and reduce welfare dependence.
- Parents believe that education and employment are worthy goals for their children to pursue, even if it means they have to move away from their family to pursue them.
- There is consensus among young people that education is worthwhile and will lead to better life opportunities.
- Parents are engaging with strategies such as sending their children to school.
- The incidence of FRC compelled "orders" is reducing.

Possible areas for investigation

Various social indicators will change as people take up the opportunities and choice offered to them under the Trial. The work and operation of the FRC and the uptake of the opportunities can be monitored on an ongoing basis throughout the Trial. School attendance records, housing leases, employment statistics and welfare payment data can be monitored to assess trends in these outcomes over time.

The uptake of new services to people will also demonstrate that people are changing their behaviours. Evaluation questions about the level of government services provided and the degree to which these services can foster personal responsibility and increase economic and social participation should also be measured to answer key evaluation questions.

Outcome 6: Individuals increase capability in learning, working, personal, family and community functioning.

Building upon the previous three outcomes of behavioural change, this outcome will begin to show signs of sustained and substantial behavioural change on a number of levels.

The changes will be fragile for some time and people will remain vulnerable to being destabilised on their preferred path or change. Sustained and sensitive service delivery and some attention to celebrating achievement of the individuals in their personal journeys may help to consolidate change and increase resilience for change. The pacing of changes for any individual is also important to consolidating the capacity for managing change.

Individuals by this stage should be showing greater self-confidence and personal capacity in relation to family functioning, pursuing education and learning opportunities, gaining employment and building new skills. They may be beginning to articulate aspirations for themselves and their families. They may also be demonstrating a different use of services, for example seeking advice to support decision-making, rather than asking for direct help. It might also be evident that people are seeking assistance or services in a more timely way, reflecting their greater awareness of their own capacity. There may also be some evidence of new or changing groups within the communities, revolving around reshaping values for individuals and their families.

This outcome will have been met when:

- individuals and families are moving off income management
- individuals and families are reducing their use of support services
- individuals and families are increasing participation in later years of education, training and employment.
- the community environment (both public and private buildings and infrastructure) is better cared for
- there is some level of private ownership of housing, and
- individuals are acting on aspirations for a better life.

Possible areas for investigation

Various social indicators will change as people increasingly take up the opportunities and choice offered to them under the Trial. The work and operation of the FRC and the uptake of the opportunities can be monitored on an ongoing basis throughout the Trial. School attendance records, housing leases, employment statistics and welfare payment data can be monitored to assess trends in these outcomes over time.

As people change and increase their capability, there is likely to be evidence of a different use of services by people. Evaluation questions about the level of government services provided and the degree to which these services have helped to increase capability should also be measured.

Outcome 7: Individuals apply capability to pursuing opportunities in education, real employment and sustaining functional families and communities

This outcome builds upon the previous behavioural change outcomes by demonstrating that the capabilities people have developed are being applied to their lives for the benefit of their families and children.

This outcome will take some time to be reached, and it will see some of the most far-reaching strategies of the Trial coming to fruition. For example, when individuals have developed the capacity for learning and succeeding at formal education in school and post secondary institutions, then they may take the opportunity for mobility to pursue education or work outside their community and perhaps outside the Cape region. To a large extent, the take up of mobility will be a substantial test of the achievement of this outcome, as it may not be possible for the capabilities developed through the Trial to actually be applied in the four communities. The opportunities for real jobs, for example, may remain limited through no fault of the Trial or the people in the communities, but simply as a function of location and isolation.

When the capacity for earning real wages has been achieved and there is more discretionary income available for families to use, then there will be some capacity in a community to support new and viable businesses. The inter-relatedness of outcomes will become more evident as this outcome is beginning to be achieved.

This outcome will have been met when:

- educational outcomes improve and family income is increasingly derived from real work
- income is applied responsibly to support productive and nurturing behaviour
- necessary public goods (education, policing, health care, infrastructure) are operating effectively in the four locations, and
- incidence of violence, alcohol abuse and drug use have markedly reduced.

Possible areas for investigation

The building of family income from jobs in the real economy, the use of income in ways that build family wealth and wellbeing will be an important aspect of this outcome to measure in the evaluation. At the same time, evaluation questions relating to the effective delivery of various services to the communities should also be asked in relation to this outcome. These will provide insights into the extent to which the Trial has supported the communities through both extra services and the most appropriate services.

Measures of violence, alcohol and drug abuse should be monitored throughout the Trial, but success in achieving Outcome 7, should ideally show a marked decrease in these dysfunctional behaviours by this stage.

Outcome 8: Beliefs, expectations, aspirations and obligations of individuals, families and communities continue to evolve, supporting and sustaining change

If sustained experience of successful changes under the previous outcomes, is coupled with real benefits accruing to the individuals who achieve those outcomes, then attitudes of the affected individuals should solidify around taking personal responsibility, pursuing real jobs and incomes, and pursuing education.

It is assumed that beliefs, expectations aspirations and obligations take time to evolve and bed down, but the foundations laid in the previous outcomes will enable the communities to realise the benefits of the Trial at a personal level.

If individuals, families and communities are moving out of the cycle of welfare dependency and engaging in the real economy, the benefits of these lifestyle

changes will reinforce positive beliefs, expectations, aspirations and obligations under the Trial

It should not be assumed that evidence of this outcome will be extant in the life of the Trial. (i.e. by 2011). This outcome will have been met when:

- younger people are taking advantage of opportunities, such as improving educational outcomes, that have become available for participating in the real economy
- services use is appropriate
- people in communities take active responsibility for their families, community wellbeing and take pride in their homes and environment
- people believe that they and their communities are stronger and capable of determining their future,, and
- consensus and groups are forming/have formed around values of success and independence from welfare.

Possible areas for investigation

These outcomes are best measured as part of the summative evaluation component of the Trial, although changes in welfare dependency, uptake of real jobs, engagement in the real economy, may take longer than the Trial period to be evident and will need to be monitored for the duration of the reform process.

Other evaluation questions directed at understanding how beliefs, expectations, aspirations and obligations have changed and how well they are bedded down in each community – particularly for young people – could be undertaken as part of the case studies within the communities.

Outcome 9: Rebuilt social norms leading to strong responsible communities

Outcome 9 is the ultimate outcome of the Trial. The achievement of this outcome depends on the achievement of all of the preceding outcomes. Such changes are long term by their nature. The full achievement of this outcome is realised when change is self-sustaining and while some individuals may progress to the point that they can participate fully in Australian society, these outcomes are highly unlikely to be achieved by the Trial communities in the Trial timeframe. Some of the signs of

success for the preceding outcomes however should flag that change is heading in the right direction.

This outcome will have been met when:

- Cape York communities are viable and strong, and have comparable health and social outcomes to the general Australian community
- young people and their parents believe education is worthwhile to pursue
- young people and their parents believe that working is better than being on welfare
- young people believe that they can remain close to their families while moving for education and work
- older people accept that young people will leave to pursue education and work, and
- parents believe it is their responsibility to educate their children.

Possible areas for investigation

Within the life of the Trial it is likely that only very early indications of trends towards this outcome might be evident in any of the Trial communities. Within the Trial period however it would be desirable to set up some means of measuring the long term outcomes of changes in social norms and the guidance provided in other studies commissioned by FaHCSIA provide some guidance for such studies. The evaluation questions in relation to the previous outcomes can help to answer the direction of change in rebuilding social norms.

Signs of success for the four streams of activity.

The following tables set out the signs of success for each outcome in the program theory, or how we might see or know that an outcome is being achieved for individuals and families. We have outlined above what the indications of outcomes being achieved would be. These are the “signs of success” for the Trial and the ongoing reform. In the tables below we have outlined signs of success for each of the four streams of activity related to the outcome detailed in the program theory described above. They align with and complement performance indicators developed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare for the Trial.

Signs of success

The signs of success are shown in the first column for the outcome overall and then for each of the four streams, and the additional topic of repositioning government services.

Outcome 1: Appropriate policies and strategies are developed and communicated					
Overall signs of success	Education	Economic Opportunity	Social responsibility	Housing	Repositioning government services
<p>Government communicates and operates in a coherent way for the whole of the Trial, including using and building on existing services.</p> <p>Policies will support personal responsibility and self help behaviour.</p> <p>Consistent clear messages about the need to improve the wellbeing of children.</p> <p>Members of the communities are involved in the formulation of strategies for the Trial</p>	<p>ABSTUDY guidelines altered and opportunities are promoted.</p> <p>MULTILIT tutorial centres assist sustained quality teaching.</p> <p>MULTILIT practices are embedded in classroom practices.</p> <p>Reading Clubs and parent assistance in classroom established in each school.</p> <p>SETs available for every child.</p>	<p>Business precincts are established to provide business support services and business operating spaces.</p> <p>Business assistance scheme is available in all four communities.</p> <p>Job shops are established in all four communities and are occupied by CDEP, Centrelink, and employment related service providers.</p> <p>Mentoring and Up-skilling programs in place.</p> <p>STEP ERS services in work</p>	<p>Establishment of FRC</p> <p>Arrangements for enforced and voluntary income management are in place.</p> <p>Wellbeing Centres are established in each community in line with commencement of FRC.</p> <p>Critical support services established.</p> <p>FIM established and/or expanded to meet demand.</p> <p>Volunteer activities are</p>	<p>Residential tenancy agreements signed.</p> <p>Government invests in public housing and private housing market.</p> <p>Pride of Place (POP) scheme introduced.</p> <p>One tenancy management approach in each community.</p> <p>Landlords enforce tenancy requirements.</p> <p>Council planning regulations aligned to aims of communities for</p>	<p>Guidelines for repositioning government services are clearly articulated and communicated to service providers and the community.</p> <p>Governments reorient service delivery to active service delivery – encouraging a change to service approaches that support increased agency and responsibility by individuals and families</p> <p>All changes/strategies to programs and service delivery in Project Board Agreement are implemented accurately and in a timely way.</p> <p>Local issues are dealt with</p>

Outcome 1: Appropriate policies and strategies are developed and communicated

Overall signs of success	Education	Economic Opportunity	Social responsibility	Housing	Repositioning government services
	<p>Stable accommodation for students away from home is available.</p> <p>School leadership supports proposed changes.</p> <p>QE School Improvement Strategies and Bound for Success for Cape School initiatives.</p>	<p>readiness training, targeted pre-employment assistance, work placement and mentoring.</p> <p>Transition of Aust Govt and Qld Govt CDEP positions to "real jobs" is completed.</p> <p>General mobility assistance is available.</p>	<p>facilitated and supported.</p>	<p>housing.</p>	<p>at local level and decisions are made at lowest level possible.</p> <p>Incentives in programs support employment and education rather than welfare dependence.</p>

Outcomes 2: Individuals, families and communities understand and accept incentives and drivers in Trial

Overall signs of success	Education	Economic Opportunity	Social responsibility	Housing	Repositioning government services
<p>People “get the whole picture” that is they understand the obligations and incentives.</p> <p>People believe that support and opportunities will be available to them if they participate.</p> <p>People have discussed the strategies and some consensus is beginning to form around the need for change, and the nature of changes needed.</p>	<p>Consultation on Trial to date indicates majority support for reforms.</p> <p>Individuals believe that support and opportunities will be available to them if they participate in education initiatives.</p> <p>School attendance case management framework is implemented in each community.</p> <p>FRC deals with reported school attendance related problems.</p> <p>Every child has uninterrupted school day.</p>	<p>Consultations on Trial to date indicate majority support for reforms.</p> <p>Individuals believe that support and opportunities will be available to them if they participate in employment initiatives.</p> <p>Council and Government employers’ process for filling converted CDEP jobs is widely known.</p> <p>Individuals express intent to register with the employment service providers, including CDEP.</p>	<p>Legislation sets out powers and roles of FRC.</p> <p>Individuals believe that support and opportunities will be available to them if they participate in drug and alcohol, wellbeing and parenting initiatives.</p> <p>Communities are satisfied with information provided about the FRC.</p> <p>FRC is set up and functioning effectively against its objectives.</p> <p>Individuals are able to articulate triggers for referral to FRC.</p>	<p>Communication strategy in place for each community.</p> <p>Individuals believe that support and opportunities will be available to them if they participate in housing initiatives.</p> <p>Pride of Place (PoP) private and public improvement schemes have embedded some (implied) standards.</p>	<p>Training workshops on welfare Reform principles and implications for program design and delivery.</p> <p>Government Trial officers and service providers work to ensure that projects are completed to plan.</p> <p>Project plan and deadline for all aspects of work – tightly managed and monitored through both PS channels and CY communities and Local teams in communities.</p>

Outcome 3. Individuals increase their participation in opportunities and respond to drivers (and conditions)

Overall signs of success	Education	Economic Opportunity	Social responsibility	Housing	Repositioning government services
<p>Family Responsibilities Commission is operating effectively and its directions/orders are respected and abided by.</p> <p>People show increased desire to participate and actual voluntary participation in Trial activities such as sending children to school, parenting classes.</p> <p>Children actively engage with education processes.</p> <p>Increased participation in other supportive activities such as antenatal programs</p>	<p>School attendance improves.</p> <p>Parents take responsibility for getting children to school.</p> <p>Take up of ABSTUDY for living away from home increases.</p> <p>Parents abide by FRC orders re school attendance.</p> <p>Parents attend MultiLit Reading Clubs.</p> <p>Growing number of children with SET sponsors/accounts.</p> <p>Contributions to SETs are made.</p> <p>Education costs are starting to be met from SET accounts.</p>	<p>Participation in work readiness schemes increases.</p> <p>Individuals increase participation in education, training, small business, employment.</p> <p>Individuals and families take up work inside and outside community.</p>	<p>Increased take up of drug and alcohol programs.</p> <p>People are willing to contend with issues such as family violence, parenting responsibilities, financial management.</p> <p>Individuals abide by FRC directions.</p> <p>Community members support others in dealing with issues such as school absence, gambling and addictive behaviours.</p> <p>Increased take up of well-being services, including income management and self help programs such as parenting skills.</p>	<p>People comply with tenancy agreements</p> <p>People participate in Pride of Place activities</p>	<p>People in communities develop confidence to take personal responsibility and to insist that service delivery responds accordingly.</p> <p>Services (eg schools, employment services) are able to respond to increased demand.</p>

Outcome 4. Individuals and families begin to gain respite from daily living problems and see potential for better lives.

Overall signs of success	Education	Economic Opportunity	Social responsibility	Housing	Repositioning government services
<p>Abuse and alcohol dependence and associated negative behaviours are reducing.</p> <p>Individuals increasingly understand where to find and seek help and support.</p> <p>Individuals and families express more confidence about the future.</p> <p>Consensus is building around goals and aspirations especially for younger people.</p> <p>Discussion about goals and aspirations is frequent and widely participated in.</p>	<p>Parents are more confident in helping children with homework.</p> <p>Families feel strongly about the positive benefits of sending kids to school.</p> <p>Families are supported financially and emotionally for children to attend schooling away from home.</p>	<p>People stay in CDEP converted jobs, gain accredited qualifications, increase in employment.</p> <p>Employment opportunities arising from Lighthouse Projects and house builds.</p> <p>Greater stability of income and daily life.</p> <p>Individuals are spending their income on more constructive and longer term goals.</p> <p>Individuals' and family debt is better managed and shifts from "bad debt" to "good debt".</p> <p>Individuals are saving.</p>	<p>Reduced violence, and drug and alcohol use.</p> <p>Reduced school absenteeism.</p> <p>Reduced child abuse.</p> <p>Perception of confidence in community safety.</p> <p>Increased participation in community hubs.</p>	<p>Improved living conditions.</p> <p>Houses in better state of repair.</p> <p>Houses meet Qld Public Housing Standards.</p> <p>Reduced overcrowding.</p> <p>Better utilisation of housing stock.</p>	<p>Individuals have increasing acceptance of responsibility, and are taking constructive action to solve problems.</p> <p>Community leaders encourage timely and appropriate use of services.</p>

Outcome 5. Individuals are motivated to take greater personal responsibility.

Overall signs of success	Education	Economic Opportunity	Social responsibility	Housing	Repositioning government services
<p>Individuals have taken steps to move off welfare and are using supported self-help services and displaying self starting behaviours.</p> <p>Government and community service providers have taken steps to foster increase of personal responsibility and reduced welfare dependence.</p> <p>Parents believe that education and employment are worthy goals for their children to pursue, even if it means they have to move away from their family to pursue them.</p> <p>There is consensus among young people that education is worthwhile and will lead to better life opportunities.</p> <p>Parents are engaging with strategies for sending their children to school.</p> <p>The incidence of FRC compelled "orders" is reducing.</p>	<p>Fewer reports about absenteeism to FRC.</p> <p>More children stay at school past compulsory age (16).</p>	<p>Reduced rate of breaching for non-compliance with Job Network obligations.</p> <p>Increased proportion of people learning, earning or in small business.</p> <p>Individuals are seeking work within and outside the community.</p>	<p>Reduced action from FRC on all matters.</p>	<p>Individuals make repairs to houses and environment.</p> <p>Individuals make enquiries about home ownership.</p> <p>Increased demand from young people for "own" rental property.</p> <p>Increase in reporting of breakages to landlords/agents.</p>	<p>Housing stock is well managed.</p> <p>Mix of preconditions (Land laws, home loan subsidy etc) are in place to enable home ownership.</p>

Outcome 6. Individuals develop capability in learning, working, personal, family and community functioning.

Overall signs of success	Education	Economic Opportunity	Social responsibility	Housing	Repositioning government services
<p>Individuals and families are moving off income management.</p> <p>Individuals and families are reducing use of support services.</p> <p>Individuals and families are increasing participation in later years of education, training and employment.</p> <p>The community environment (both public and private buildings and infrastructure) is better cared for.</p> <p>There is the some level of private ownership of housing.</p> <p>Individuals are acting on aspirations for a better life.</p>	<p>Individuals remain in education to Year 10 and 12.</p> <p>Individuals pursue post secondary education.</p> <p>Improved literacy skills.</p>	<p>Young people obtain work ready skills.</p> <p>People begin to build track record (CV) in work.</p> <p>Individuals use mobility options and support services to pursue work.</p> <p>Business skills are developed through mentoring and up-skilling programs.</p>	<p>Individuals and families move off income management to manage own finances.</p> <p>Increased volunteerism.</p> <p>Decrease in welfare recipients.</p> <p>Increase in parental involvement in education.</p> <p>Increase in community activities.</p> <p>Increase in interaction outside community.</p>	<p>Skills for home maintenance are developed.</p> <p>Home upgrade scheme is widely taken up.</p> <p>Choice of housing is available.</p>	<p>Public servants and service providers develop skills in effective government administration.</p> <p>Effective processes for whole of government service delivery in Cape are developed.</p>

Outcome 7. Individuals apply capability to pursuing opportunities in education, real employment and sustaining functional families and communities.

Overall signs of success	Education	Economic Opportunity	Social responsibility	Housing	Repositioning government services
<p>Educational outcomes improve and family income is increasingly derived from real work.</p> <p>Income is applied responsibly to support productive and nurturing behaviour.</p> <p>Necessary public goods (education, policing, health care, infrastructure) are operating effectively in the four locations.</p> <p>Incidence of violence, alcohol abuse, drug use has markedly reduced.</p>	<p>Increased school attendance at every school year level.</p> <p>Children are school ready every day (well fed, well rested, equipped)</p> <p>Less disruptive classroom environments.</p> <p>Individuals experience improved educational outcomes.</p>	<p>Young people take jobs in communities.</p> <p>People take and stay in jobs outside community in the region.</p> <p>Self-employment is seen as a real opportunity.</p> <p>New businesses are established in the communities, and are viable.</p> <p>Individual and family incomes and savings increase, leading to opportunity to improve housing and support children's education.</p>	<p>Functional family behaviour without need for FRC.</p> <p>Individuals and families allocate income to family well-being, including rent/mortgages.</p> <p>Families express view that life is better.</p>	<p>Individuals repay loans and maintain good rental payment history.</p> <p>Houses and gardens are well maintained.</p> <p>People contribute to maintenance of community areas.</p> <p>Home ownership increases.</p>	<p>Services are responsive rather than interventionist.</p> <p>Cape York people use services in a responsible and timely way</p>

Outcome 8. Beliefs, expectations, aspirations and obligations of individuals, families and communities continue to evolve, supporting and sustaining change.

Broad Signs of success

Younger people are taking advantage of opportunities, such as improving educational outcomes that have become available for participating in the real economy.

Service use is appropriate, comparable to general Australian usage patterns.

People in communities take active responsibility for their families, community wellbeing and take pride in their homes and environment.

People believe that they and their communities are stronger and capable of determining their future.

Community consensus is forming/has formed around values of success and independence from welfare.

Outcome 9. Rebuilt social norms leading to strong responsible communities.

Broad Signs of success

Cape York communities are viable and strong.

Young people and their parents believe education is worthwhile to pursue.

Young people and their parents believe that working is better than being on welfare.

Young people believe that they can remain close to their families while moving for education and work.

Older people accept that young people will leave to pursue education and work.

Parents believe it is their responsibility to educate their children.

12. CONCLUSION

If the Cape York Welfare Reform Trial has been successful, firm foundations for a virtual cycle of improvement will have been laid. Communities can expect improved social and economic outcomes, with evidence of strengthening Indigenous authority stronger community identity and higher social and economic participation. The development of individual aspirations as a result of improved and extended educational participation, and confidence of their ability to take up opportunities for education and work outside communities will be evident.

Dysfunction in the community will have been reduced. There will be less substance abuse, reduced violence, higher social, educational and economic participation particularly of young men and reduced levels of unemployment due to stronger economic activity. Health outcomes will have improved.

The Cape York Welfare Reform Evaluation Strategy is designed to achieve a number of outcomes for the Trial Partners and their Project Board and the participating agencies. The strategy is built on a program theory largely based on the work reported in Hand Out to Hand Up Vols 1 and 2. The strategy pays heed to principles of evaluation which, if applied to evaluation design and processes, should support robust data collection and development of evaluation products. These principles must inform improvement of implementation, reorientation of the Trial strategy if required and advice for future interventions both in the four participant communities and for other communities.

To respond to the expressed management need for ongoing learning and responsiveness, formative and summative evaluation processes will be undertaken over two to three years of the trial period. Strategic progress and summative evaluations will be able to use information produced cumulatively. This approach, we believe will produce insights into how change was experienced and what efforts were most effective in enabling change. As the implementation processes are in the developmental stages, flexibility in approach has been built into this design.

We expect that by the end of the Trial period the Partners should have developed understanding of:

- The most significant catalysts for change
- The challenges faced by all Trial participants – individuals, families, communities and government services in responding to the scale and range of change
- How management of Trial initiatives, both individually and collectively, have influenced the trajectory of change
- Whether changes in service philosophy have resulted in commensurate changes in expectations in approaches to service delivery and in expectations of service use.
- Whether the synergies developed between strategies have been useful in underpinning and reinforcing change
- How effectively the policies and approaches for income management have worked and whether insights for policy and strategy development can be determined
- Whether mobility between communities and regional centres has had significant effects on both participant and Trial outcomes.
- The factors within each community, such as history, resources and governance which have affected the trajectory of change and the outcomes experienced by each,
- Were the outcome indicators better than would have been achieved in the absence of intervention, and most importantly –
- Whether social norms, or at least behaviours and aspirations of community members are changing as hoped.

The conclusions from the evaluation of the Trial should also enable key learning about what measures might consolidate and extend the gains from the Trial to ensure the future wellbeing of each of the four Trial communities. The evaluation outcomes should also assist in developing principles and approaches that could be applied in assisting other communities in the Cape and elsewhere in Australia.

Attachment A

Background to the Cape York Welfare Reform Trial

Scope of the Trial

The Cape York Welfare Reform Trial is an innovative and far-reaching, intervention in the Cape York region of Queensland encompassing social responsibility, education, employment, and housing strategies.

The Trial commenced in July 2008 in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge and will continue until December 2011.

Aim and approach of the Trial

Pilots are being implemented with the purpose of delivering culturally appropriate strategies that give people in the Trial communities the 'ability to choose lives they value for themselves' (Project Board Agreement, July 2008, p 4). The ultimate aim of the Trial is to rebuild positive social norms in remote Aboriginal communities in the region.

The Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership, the Australian Government and the Queensland Government are the signatories of a landmark agreement to implement the welfare reforms as a Trial.

The Project Board Agreement of 21 July 2008 provides a framework for how the partners will work together to implement the Trial. The principle partners of the welfare reform Trial are the individuals and families for whom the reforms are intended to deliver positive change. The overall project plan for phase 1 from July 08 - June 09 provides further detail about how the Trial will be implemented in the first of three phases for the Trial.

Rationale for the Trial

Overall, the rationale for the Trial is to deliver a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that can help to address the deep seated social and economic circumstances of people in the Trial communities.

Rebuilding social norms is central to the Trial and hence underpins the intervention, and the individual strategies overall. A concerted effort by all partners, within the

context of good governance and sound implementation as outlined in the Project Board Agreement, will help to ensure the Trial is successful in delivering real change in the four Cape York communities who have agreed to take part in the Trial.

What is the Trial trying to achieve?

The Trial is directed at changing behaviour at an individual, community and government level across a number of key domains. Change is required across these levels, at the individual, community leadership and government levels.

The Trial will test new approaches that:

- fundamentally reform the way regional organisations and all levels of government operate in remote Aboriginal communities
- deliver services in an integrated way that removes disincentives which cause high dependency cycles
- increase individual responsibility and active participation within the community,, and
- provide a holistic approach to community services and development.

These four statements highlight two significant propositions:

- The extent of reform to the nature and role of service delivery is significant, particularly its links to development, proposing that services can support or hinder development.
- The identification of interdependences related to individual agency and choice, i.e. the interrelated disincentives which prop up a cycle of passive welfare reliance and the proposition that the solution to the community's deficit of social capital lies with the individual and their active or self- initiated drive to participate.

In rebuilding positive social norms the Trial is adopting arrangements covering strategy, governance and funding including:

- the establishment of the Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC), the role of which is to restore Indigenous authority and rebuild norms by attaching reciprocity to welfare payments
- creating opportunities for individuals to exercise responsibility and individual agency about choices for their lives, their children's lives and the futures of their families and communities, and

- changing incentives inherent in the welfare system, service system, housing system and the incentives for people to benefit from work and education.

(Cape York Welfare Reform Trial Project Board Agreement, 21 July 2008)

The four Trial elements of social responsibility, employment and economic development, education and housing are described briefly below.

The desired outcomes for the Trial

The overall project plan for phase 1 from July 08 - June 09 states that the desired outcome of the Trial is strong Indigenous communities demonstrating the following attributes:

- Strong representation of individuals and families in the three domains of community life:
 - Public – characterised by strong public leadership that is appropriate, objective and within the norms of any society where public service is provided.
 - Private – characterised by strong self interest by and for family members to prosper and succeed.
 - Volunteer - participation of the individual in activities that are voluntary and provide benefit to the community such as through church or public spaces.
- Behaviours of individuals and families will accord with the values expressed in Indigenous and Australian way of life including:
 - celebrating success – community and individual
 - strong and vibrant public and business sectors in the community
 - investing in our youth
 - education and advancement
 - diversity and celebration of culture
 - good health and an active lifestyle, and
 - lawful and safe communities.
- A celebration and sense of pride for:
 - country

- community
- culture
- family and the home.

In addition to the above characteristics, effective implementation of welfare reform will result in:

- active participation in services and volunteer activities by community members
- access to services by individuals and families in the community occurring due to a request by the client rather than proactive provision by government
- a retraction of government service delivery to a normalised level consistent with urban settings
- development of a private business sector that capitalises on commercial (e.g. tourism) opportunities in communities,, and
- increasing capacity and capability in communities to self-regulate service delivery and community outcomes based on personal responsibility.

The Four streams and the 15 projects

The Trial is a complex, multi-component set of reforms in four distinct Cape York communities. While acknowledging differences between these communities and how the Trial will be implemented at an individual community level, the Trial comprises four broad elements:

- Social responsibility (including the establishment of the Family Responsibilities Commission and new services).
- Employment and economic development.
- Education, and
- Housing.

The reforms will work across these four streams on the assumption that change in one stream will impact on other streams, or may be a necessary condition for change in another. Underpinning each of these streams is the assumption that the Trial will offer the necessary incentives to change behaviours based on individuals in communities responding to the choices offered.

The Trial is supported by 15 projects which are listed in the Project Board Agreement are separated into the following four streams.

Social Responsibility

- The **Family Responsibilities Commission** is a new statutory authority which determines whether individuals have breached a number of obligations that are attached to welfare payments. The four obligations are:
 - making sure your kids attend school
 - being a responsible parent
 - not committing drug, alcohol or family violence offences, and
 - abiding by your tenancy agreement.
- **Support Services and supported self help** will assist community members to meet their welfare obligations. Drug, alcohol, parenting and gambling support services will be available to all community members. Village hubs will be a way for norm change to occur through supported self-help.
- **Conditional Income Management** occurs when the Family Responsibilities Commission places a 'conditional income management order' upon the welfare payments of individuals who breach their payment obligations.
- **Family Income Management** is a money management system especially designed to meet the particular needs of Indigenous families seeking to manage their incomes to achieve their goals.

Economic Opportunity

- A **Business Precinct** will be established in Aurukun and Hopevale to make it more attractive for businesses to establish and operate. Related 'lighthouse projects' will be undertaken in this areas for example - the 'Mossman Gorge Visitor Centre' Project.
- **Mentoring and up skilling** will provide mentoring and business support services to local individuals. This includes encouragement of entrepreneurship, testing of business ideas and business models.
- **Real full-time jobs** will see some CDEP positions become real jobs creating opportunities for local community members to work in properly paid jobs. In addition, each community will have enhanced employment services with complementary services provided by employment service providers and CDEP in

Job Shops including intensive work preparation, job placement, host positions and mentoring services.

- **Mobility** initiatives will support Indigenous people from the Trial sites to seek employment outside their community.

Education

- **MULTILIT** is a literacy program which helps children improve their reading and spelling capabilities.
- **Attendance Case Management Framework** will support families to ensure their kids attend school every day, are on time and have an uninterrupted school day.
- **Student Education Trusts (SETs)** enable parents to support their child's education and development needs from 'birth to graduation'. Family members can make regular contributions to their child's trust which will be used to meet education-related expenses.
- **ABSTUDY** is available to all eligible Indigenous secondary students. Students are eligible to receive the away from home entitlements to attend a secondary school outside their community. The parental means test will still apply.

Housing

- **Mainstream tenancy** - social housing tenancies will be managed in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1994 (Qld), with each household asked to sign a tenancy agreement which outlines the standard obligations and rights of households.
- **Pride of Place** encourages families to take pride in and responsibility for the condition of their homes and backyards. Home improvement funds will be available to eligible households.
- **Home ownership** initiatives assist individuals/families to purchase their own home.

Synergies between projects and streams in each of the four streams of the Welfare Reform Trial

The outcomes of each stream feed into the outcomes of the other streams, having a synergistic impact where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

Social Responsibility

The rebuilding of social norms is an overarching outcome of all the streams, but this particular stream is pivotal with respect to the establishment and effective operation of the Family Relationships Commission (FRC) within the Trial communities.

Family wellbeing services, village hubs, FIM, POP and SET will support the rebuilding of social norms through supported self-help.

This overarching stream for the Trial will work towards changing behaviour with respect to all the areas for change supported under the Trial, namely school attendance, engagement in the real economy, taking care of houses and the environment, improved parenting and reducing levels of drug and alcohol abuse, child neglect and abuse, gambling and other dysfunctional behaviours.

It is assumed a range of social indicators will improve through the adoption of the functions of the FRC under this stream. The legislation to establish the FRC has been passed. The governance and effective operation of the FRC will be essential to ensure the successful implementation of this important overarching stream of the Trial.

Employment and economic development

This stream has a particular focus on reform of the current welfare dependency through adjusting the incentives for employment or entrepreneurship. The incentives for employment and education from these changes will be greater than the incentives for welfare dependency leading to young people taking up real jobs in, or outside, of the community in the region. Alternatively, they will pursue education opportunities aligned to the real economy. Involvement in work or education leading to greater self confidence and a reduction in the level of involvement in drugs and other dysfunctional behaviours are anticipated outcomes for communities under this stream.

The impacts of people having stable employment and steady incomes and from the operation of family income management (FIM) will lead to increased individual and family savings and in turn, a steady increase in the demand and capacity to purchase houses, pay for services from new businesses in the region and increased investment by community members in these businesses. A successful outcome of this stream is that community members will see education, employment and self-employment as the path of their adult lives.

Education

The social responsibility stream feeds into the education stream through parents taking responsibility for students going to school each day.

Governments at all levels will need to take the necessary actions to modify policy, programs and systems to align incentives to defined standards and behaviours in the communities. SET will increase the capacity of parents to take financial responsibility to support their children's education to graduation. MULTILIT will support students having good literacy skills. Reading clubs and parent assistance will be established in all schools to enable families to participate in literacy activities in the school. Attendance case management frameworks will be implemented in each community to ensure every child arrives at school on time and has an uninterrupted school day. If the community embraces 100 per cent school attendance, individual school attendance will improve. With the adoption of MULTILIT practices and improved school attendance, literacy levels will improve leading to increased capability and retention of students to Year 12. This in turn will improve the capability of students to attend post-secondary education and/or employment and raising expectations of attendance and achievement in education.

These aspects of the education stream will feed into changes in the beliefs, expectations of individuals, families and communities, sustaining changed motivation.

Housing

Persons breaching their tenancy agreements can be referred to the FRC.

Improved tenancy management, tenancy agreements and Pride of Place will create a more normal set of expectations about how people are expected to practically and financial contribute to the ongoing care of the household, as well as to improve the standard of public housing.

Communities should move away from the exclusive provision of public housing to a system with private home ownership, with housing embedding a strong sense of responsibility and ownership, leading to further behaviour change. A move from public ownership of housing to home ownership will trigger individual and family self-interest in maintaining their asset and an accumulating further assets to pass on to future generations.