

# KIMBERLEY INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S RANGER STRATEGY 2024 -2034



**OUR PLAN TO GROW A STRONG NETWORK OF WOMEN  
RANGER TEAMS ACROSS THE KIMBERLEY**



**KIMBERLEY  
LAND COUNCIL**

# DEDICATION

Aboriginal women of the Kimberley have fought long and hard to gain native title rights, allowing younger generations to become Indigenous rangers and manage Country.

This document is dedicated to their resilience and passion for getting back Country.



Women's Meeting at KLC AGM Yirra, 1994

*"With Country as a source of strength, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have fought, and continue to fight, for our right to land and water and are increasingly playing key roles in native title claims. The native title fight is significant in not only reclaiming our land and recognition of our presence prior to colonisation, it is pivotal in reconnecting people to their land and providing them with healing".*

**Social Justice Commissioner, June Oscar AO, Wiyi Yani U Thangani Report 2021.**

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# FORWARD

“Wakalarrangu-jangka rangers from the Kimberley... jakurl-jangka muwarr yintanpaya warrkam-jangka “tukujanpaya-jangka” ngurra nganina-kura, mapu-jangka pa kulumarta-jangka purrpinka-ja.

Kimberley wakalarrang ranger groups, wurtu-jarrina, wupartu-jangka. kalinta-ku juru manpa-ku pa waranyarrangu wakalarrangu ranger program-ja.

Pikalymarta nganina jinanpa-ku wakalarrangu yulpurru-jangka pa janja-janga.”

“The women rangers from the Kimberley, our report is talking about our caring for Country work from what good we have achieved and the bad ones we have to face and go against.

Our Kimberley Women Ranger Network grew bigger from small. We are showing the way for the younger females behind us and others who are going to join in on the Women’s Ranger Program.

We are happy to be following in the footsteps of our female Elders from the past and present.

(from me) To all the female rangers, coordinators, KLC staff, and other agencies in the Kimberley region for their hard work, dedication, teamwork, support, encouragement and friendship throughout our journey together.”

**The late J Bangu, Karajarri Traditional Lands Association Senior Woman Ranger**



As Aboriginal women, we have a responsibility to our lands and seas and bring a unique, essential and powerful contribution to their protection and management.

Employment as a ranger can empower women and have transformative benefits for families, communities, Country and our women themselves. The KLC has always believed in the value of women rangers and continues to advocate strongly for increased opportunities for women working on Country.

The KLC has been dedicated to supporting the development of the Kimberley Indigenous Women's Ranger Strategy, and we look forward to supporting the implementation of the Strategy and to see our women rangers take ownership over how they work collectively to grow and strengthen, not only the land management outcomes but their contributions to the wellbeing of their communities, families and lives.



**Sarah Parriman**, Kimberley Land Council Deputy CEO



# KIMBERLEY INDIGENOUS WOMEN RANGERS

## Our Story

In the Kimberley, the ranger program movement has been led by dedicated women and men who prioritise cultural values in their work plans. Women rangers were first employed in 2010, and their numbers have steadily increased. The Kimberley Land Council (KLC) has appointed a Women's Ranger Development Coordinator to promote gender equity throughout the Kimberley Ranger Network. This role helps Indigenous women rangers to sustainably manage land and sea Country, develop their skills and confidence, expand their programs, and grow stronger together.

## The Story of our Strategy

The Kimberley Indigenous Women's Ranger Strategy was created between 2021 and 2023. The conversation about it was started by women at the second Kimberley Indigenous Women Ranger Forum in 2019 on Bunuba Country at Bandilngan. Since 2021, more than fifty women rangers have participated in online sessions and at the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) women's camp. During these sessions, the group identified what they value and want to protect, what threatens them, and how to form a strong network. The Strategy is the result of all the collective thinking and sharing.

Our Strategy is also guided and aligned with the Kimberley Land Council Strategic Plan, the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre's Kimberley Aboriginal Women Strategic Plan, the Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) Report and the Healthy Country Plans of the ranger teams.

**WOMEN'S UNIQUE HEALTHY COUNTRY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ARE THE STRONG FOUNDATION OF THE KIMBERLEY WOMEN'S RANGER NETWORK.**



# OUR VISION

**KIMBERLEY WOMEN RANGERS ARE CONFIDENT,  
RESPECTED AND EMPOWERED.**

**WE LEARN FROM EACH OTHER, INSPIRING CURRENT AND  
FUTURE GENERATIONS OF WOMEN TO BE LEADERS.**



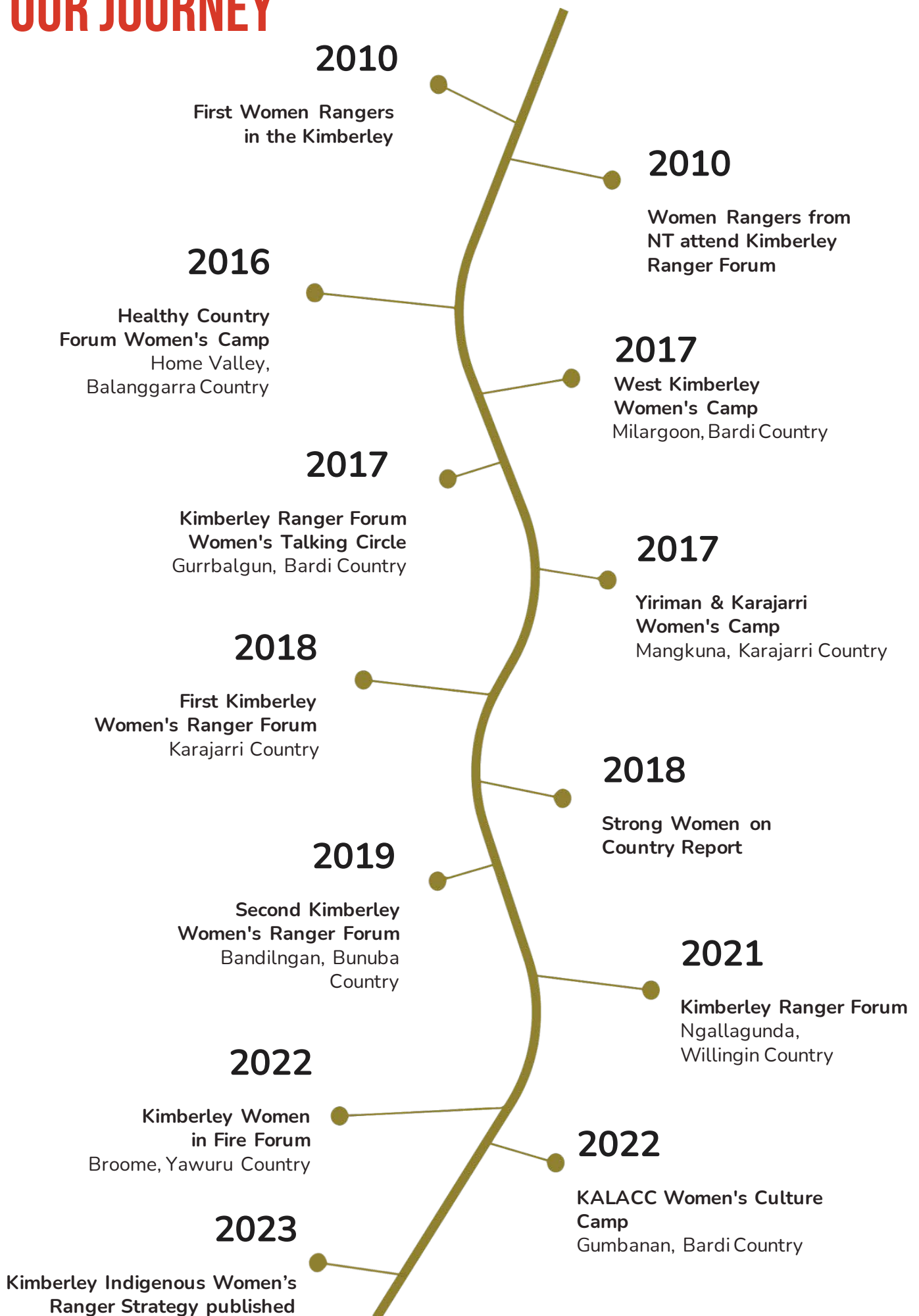


“Our women rangers are vital in actively using our knowledge, and learning innovative practices, to keep our Country, our people and all human and non-human relatives healthy and strong. Our men play an equally important role, but our women rangers have been undervalued and under-resourced. It is essential we invest in women working on Country to ensure our sacred women’s sites, lore, knowledge and songs are maintained and protected.”

Wiyi Yani U Thangani Report 2021.



# OUR JOURNEY



# KIMBERLEY RANGER NETWORK 2023



- 17** Ranger groups in the KRN
- 46** Women Rangers
- 11** Women working in leadership roles

# OUR APPROACH

We will use a collective impact approach to ensure the establishment of a strong Kimberley Women's Ranger Network and successful attainment of our growth goals. We need to ensure that we have the following key components in place:

## Common Agenda

We have a shared vision for change, including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed-upon actions.

## Shared Measurement System

Collecting data and measuring results consistently across the Kimberley ensures efforts remain aligned and we hold each other accountable.

## Continuous communication

Consistent and open communication is needed across the network to build trust, assure mutual objectives and appreciate common communication.

## Backbone Function

Creating and managing a collective impact approach requires a separate organisation(s) like the KLC with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as a backbone for the entire strategy and coordinate participation from all organisations and agencies.

## Mutually Reinforcing Activities

We will all carry out different activities while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan.





# OUR PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

We had many ideas about what we could do to reduce our threats and look after our targets. As a group, we have decided to focus our work on these priorities first.

## Support Women as Leaders

This objective focuses on helping women to take on leadership roles such as Ranger Coordinators and Head Rangers and to develop their confidence in working in higher-level roles.

## Exchanges, Sharing & Training

Regular exchanges for women to learn from each other and understand regional and national cultural and natural resource management perspectives.

## Engagement with Young People

Involving youth in ranger work is important to meet our target of future generations. We want all ranger teams to engage with youth for young women and girls from 8 to 20 years old.

## Coordination and Communication

The Kimberley Indigenous Women's Ranger Network needs coordination, including adapting this Strategy as we achieve our milestones. Communication with our communities about the work we do is important.

# SUPPORT WOMEN AS LEADERS

## Threats

### Lack of mentoring and professional support

Ranger coordinator roles are challenging and require various skill sets for effective delivery of work plans. There are few Indigenous women ranger coordinators due to the lack of succession and development of rangers to fulfil these roles. Within remote and regional settings, it is hard to access regular mentoring and professional support in person due to limited services offering this type of support.

#### Outcomes:

*By 2026, all women ranger teams have mentors available*

*By 2026, 80% of women ranger teams have succession plans in place for Indigenous women coordinators*

*By 2025, 80% of women rangers understand what the coordinator and senior ranger roles do*

### Lack of Elder involvement in ranger work

It is vital for cultural knowledge to be passed down to younger generations to foster strong connection and obligations to Country. Elders are critical for the right knowledge to be shared and to guide the cultural needs of the ranger team's work. Currently, there are some barriers to including Elders, such as lack of involvement, vehicles and budgets to take Elders out on ranger work.

#### Outcome:

*By 2026, Traditional Owners will be attending and assisting in language and cultural practices in ranger activities at least once per month.*



# Targets

## Kimberley Indigenous Women in Leadership roles

We want to see Kimberley Indigenous women in leadership roles such as ranger coordinators and head rangers. Developing leadership skills through ranger work will also help us take on community leadership roles.

### Goals:

By 2029, Kimberley Indigenous women will hold 40% of leadership roles in the Women's Ranger Network.

By 2034, all teams in the Kimberley ranger network will have a women's team and succession plans for Kimberley Indigenous women coordinators and head rangers.

### Indicators:

*Number of Kimberley Indigenous women in leadership roles*

*Number of ranger groups with women's teams*

## Healthy Women and Culture

Strong ranger teams need healthy women. Cultural guidance and transmission of knowledge are also important so that rangers feel confident that their work is culturally strong and safe. We want to see language and culture at the forefront of our ranger work.

### Goals:

By 2025, 90% of the women rangers will be satisfied in their jobs.

By 2034, all women's ranger teams have Elders involved in ranger activities.

### Indicators:

*% positive responses in satisfaction survey*

*Number of Elders involved in ranger activities*

*Number of culture-focused events*



# EXCHANGES, SHARING & TRAINING

## Threats

### Lack of place and time for women to get together

Learning and sharing from each other is important for women's development as rangers and to keep the network strong. The remoteness of the region makes it hard to come together. Meetings and events need to be well thought out to be a good use of ranger time.

#### Outcomes:

*By 2025, at least four ranger exchanges will happen across the Kimberley each year  
By 2025, at least one ranger exchange will happen outside of the Kimberley (nationally and internationally) each year*

### Lack of coordinated action to keep the network strong

For the network of rangers to stay strong, we need support for coordination through a network coordinator role and governance structure. We also want to see the network reach its goals in this strategy, and if we don't regularly get together to assess our progress, we won't know if the network is improving.

#### Outcome:

*By 2027, the ranger network meets annually to assess and update strategy progress and actions*

### Lack of appropriate training

Training is not always delivered appropriately for the Kimberley context. Sometimes women need to attend training with only other women. Training providers sometimes don't understand cultural norms. Training is very focused on whitefella skills; we want to see more training on our cultural way of doing things. There are also large distances to travel in the Kimberley region, and we need training to be delivered at times and locations that suit our ranger work plans.

#### Outcomes:

*By 2026, all training delivered in the Kimberley is done culturally appropriately  
By 2026, 80% of the women ranger network will feel supported in their development*





# Targets

## Learning and Sharing

Women of the Kimberley Ranger Network feel connected through exchange programs and regular opportunities to connect and learn from each other. Information from team exchanges is shared with the broader network.

### Goal:

By 2027, there is an ongoing ranger exchange program in place for all women ranger teams in the Kimberley, and women are learning different ways from each other.

### Indicators:

*Number of exchanges, regional events or other opportunities to share knowledge and skills*

*Number of women involved in exchanges*

*Number of coordinator exchanges*

## Skilled Kimberley Indigenous Women working on Country

Women rangers are highly skilled in their roles and have the qualifications and experience to confidently and safely fulfil their jobs.

### Goals:

By 2025, all women rangers will have a personal development plan.

By 2027, 80% of women rangers will be on track with their personal development plan goals.

### Indicators:

*% of women rangers with personal development plans*

*% of women on track with their personal development plan goals*



# ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

## Threats

### Lack of interest from youth

Many younger generations still don't understand or have an interest in their cultural ties or may have an identity or cultural loss. This has led to youth not being interested in ranger work due to not understanding their place cultural continuation. Younger generations are increasingly spending time on modern technologies (e.g. social media) and not engaging in learning language and cultural ways from their Elders. There are also many social pressures on youth that can prevent their involvement in ranger work.

### Outcomes:

*By 2028, 50% school children will be attending ranger-related activities regularly*

*By 2028, 50% of young women (8-20 years) will be attending ranger-related activities regularly*

### Lack of flexible work practices

Women often have many family responsibilities, so going to work as a ranger can be hard to balance everything. Many young women may aspire to be rangers but can't see how they can do it. Having flexible work practices such as job sharing, flexible hours and on-the-job caring for children may help more women work as rangers. This threat has a high impact on our network, but our ability to reduce the threat is low. Where we can, we will look for opportunities to design our ranger work in a flexible way to support women with family responsibilities to join in.



# Targets

## Future Generations

Kimberley youth is essential for the strength of the network in the future. We want to see girls and young women engaged and participating in youth ranger development programs.

### Goals:

By 2027, all women's ranger teams have active youth ranger development programs in their ranger workplans.

### Indicators:

*Number of children and youth (8-20 years old) participating in ranger activities*

*Number of new women rangers under 25 years old*



# COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION

## Threats

### Lack of communication and understanding within the community about ranger work

The support of the community is vital for women rangers to do their jobs effectively and help promote strong community values. This will increase the pride of women's ranger work and increase their empowerment. However, in some communities, there is not enough understanding or communication about what the women rangers do and how their work contributes to Healthy Country Plans. There is not always a one-size-fits-all all communication tool to inform everyone about what work the rangers are undertaking. Effort is needed to share ranger work with community to increase understanding and acknowledgement of ranger programs.

#### Outcome:

*By 2026, all women's ranger teams will have active communication mediums with their communities*

### Lack of support services for women

When women are strong, the community is strong. There can be many impacts on women that prevent them from working as rangers. No childcare services in remote communities throughout the Kimberley region limits the ability for young mothers to engage in full-time work as rangers. Support services such as mental health, violence and substance abuse are also essential to help women. This threat greatly impacts our network, but our ability to reduce the threat is low.

#### Outcome:

*By 2026, we will seek options to support flexible working arrangements for women who care for young children*



# Targets

## Respect and Recognition

Women rangers are respected and supported by their communities to be rangers. The community and partners recognise women rangers' value in looking after Country.

### Goal:

By 2034, 100% of community members and land management staff surveyed recognise women rangers are vital for caring for Country.

### Indicators:

*% positive survey responses*

*\$ investment into women ranger teams*

## Strong Women's Ranger Network

Coordination and communication are important to ensure the Women's Ranger Network is supported to meet, share and learn together.

### Goals:

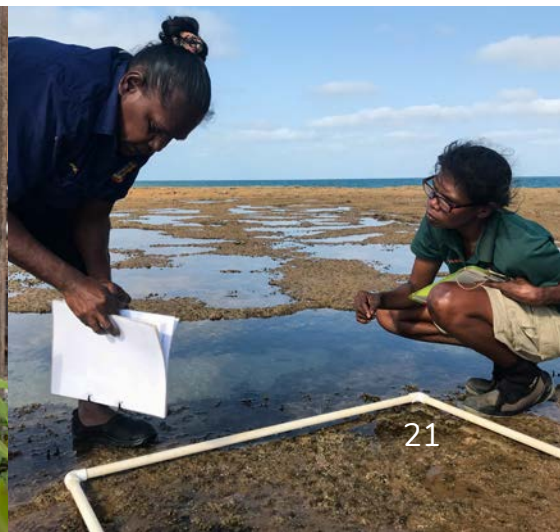
By 2034, all women's ranger teams will be supporting each other and talking together to keep culture alive.

By 2034, the network will meet at least annually and is adapting the Strategy.

### Indicators:

*Number of rangers being part of the network governance*

*Number of ranger teams participating in network meetings*





# IMPLEMENTATION

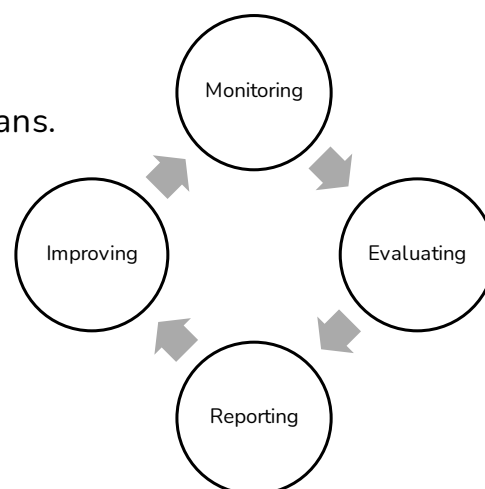
## Monitoring and Evaluation

To enhance the outcomes for Indigenous women rangers, it is vital to consistently collect, monitor, and evaluate data. As members of the Women’s Ranger Network, it is important to regularly assess our progress, measure the effectiveness of our actions, and make any necessary changes to ensure we are getting closer to achieving our objectives. By fostering a culture of review, we can work together to stay on course and keep our attention on our common vision.

The **MERI** process will be incorporated into our Action Plans.

There are four levels to consider:

- M**onitoring: What will we check/measure?
- E**valuation: What did that tell us?
- R**eporting: Whom will we tell?
- I**mprovement: What changes do we need to make?



## We will do three types of monitoring:

**Input and output monitoring:** Checking the plan’s implementation every year.

**Outcome monitoring:** Checking that the strategies are meeting the objectives every 2 to 5 years.

**Impact monitoring:** Checking if the targets’ health is improving and we are reaching our goals. It will 5 years or more to measure our impact.

## This is an example of how we will use a simple traffic light rating for our monitoring results.

Rating	Description
Completed	The work has been <b>completed</b> successfully
On Track	The work is <b>going ahead</b> according to plan
Planned	The work has <b>not started</b> but is planned to happen in the future
Minor Issues	The work is in progress but there are <b>small issues</b> which need some attention
Major Issues	There are <b>large issues</b> or delays which need attention
Not Specified	<b>Not assessed</b> as we don’t have enough information yet
Abandoned	We are <b>not doing</b> this work anymore

# DATA COLLECTION

To do our monitoring, evaluating, reporting and improving of the Strategy, we need to be clear on our process and responsibilities.

MERI step	Who will do it and how	When will we do it
Collecting data on our indicators	KLC Women's Ranger Development Coordinator (WRDC) to gather data annually through surveys. Ranger coordinators to help collect and provide data. WRDC to talk with each team about whether the data required is already collected or look at adjusting data collection forms. Line manager approval may be required to share some ranger team data with KLC.	Ongoing
Ongoing	Data is stored in annual reports on the KLC system.	Ongoing
Reporting	WRDC to do annual reports – back to the working group, all ranger teams, KLC staff, and Executive team. Funders such as State and Australian governments may also need reports.	Every 6 months, and just after IRP reporting periods (February and August)
Evaluating the data and progress against our strategies and changing our actions based on what we learn from our evaluations	Working Group to review annual reports, evaluate progress and update the road maps and Strategy activities as required. Meet online or as part of yearly ranger planning.	Annually in February/ March







## GOVERNANCE

To ensure efficient monitoring and planning of actions toward achieving desired outcomes, we will establish a Working Group to support the Women's Ranger Development Coordinator in alignment with our Strategy.

The primary aim of the Working Group is to offer direction and guidance and serve as a sounding board to facilitate the smooth implementation of our Strategy. The Working Group will oversee the execution of Action Plans, and meetings will be held throughout the year to ensure our outcomes are on track.

During the annual catch-up, the Working Group will assess the performance of the Women's Ranger Network regarding the activities conducted throughout the year and report back to the Kimberley Ranger Network.





# PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

We want to acknowledge the Kimberley Prescribed Body Corporates (PBCs) and Traditional Owners of the region who support the rangers in caring for Country.

The Commonwealth Indigenous Ranger Program primarily funds Kimberley Indigenous Women Ranger jobs, operations and infrastructure.

Some women's programs rely substantially on funding from the WA DBCA's Aboriginal Ranger Program, the 10 Deserts Project (BHP), WWF, Shell and Bush Heritage.

Key Kimberley Indigenous Women Rangers Network partners include KLC, KALACC, Country Needs People, Environs Kimberley and the Australian Human Rights Commission.





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