

KUR-World

Appendix 8c

Indigenous Community Profile

Environmental Impact Statement



KUR-World Indigenous Community Profile

Prepared for Sustainable Solutions Global

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Executive summary

This report was produced in response to a request by the Co-ordinator General's Office for additional information on the social and cultural characteristics of the Indigenous community local to the KUR World development proposal. It brings together information from the KUR World cultural heritage study, KUR World social issues paper and published sources to provide a snapshot of the Aboriginal communities in the Kuranda area.

Local Aboriginal communities have been shaped by the history of the Mona Mona Mission. When the mission closed in 1963, Aboriginal people living on the mission moved to the banks of the Barron River and established the townships of Mantaka and Kowrowa. These are the closest settlements to the KUR World development proposal. Households in the Kuranda area are linked through kinship ties, which support each other economically and socially. Kinship ties is a key factor in determining where people live. Understanding the importance of kin and how history has shaped the communities and how people relate to each other is key to developing culturally relevant employment strategies for the Aboriginal communities.

Life in the households of Kuranda Aboriginal people is tough. Compared to non-Indigenous households in the same region, low employment with few full-time employees and very small numbers of people working for private industry. Household income is low, and many households are welfare dependent. Households typically hold multiple generations of kin relations, with high ratios of youth.

Native title claimants and other Aboriginal people in the Kuranda area retain close ties to the pre and post contact cultural heritage of the area. Native title claimants are recognised as having the highest stake in cultural heritage management, particularly pre-contact heritage. The removal of people from all over north Queensland to the Mona Mona Mission, and its subsequent closure, means that all Aboriginal people are stakeholders in the post-contact heritage of the area.

There is a cautious optimism among Aboriginal people engaged with the KUR World project about employment opportunities from the KUR World development proposal. However, barriers to long-term meaningful employment are significant. Standard pathways to employment may not be appropriate for Aboriginal people living in the Kuranda area. With appropriate resourcing and flexibility, there may be opportunities for the KUR World development to provide meaningful employment that allow individuals to retain their kinship ties, support the large youth (school age) population and become financially independent.

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1. Introduction

This report provides a community profile of the Indigenous residents in the broader Kuranda area, which includes Mantaka, Koah, Kowrowa and Mona Mona (hereafter referred to as Kuranda). This report brings together information from existing reports prepared for the proposed KUR-World development as well as published information and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data.

The aim of the report is to provide some context to the potential opportunities and risks presented to the local Indigenous population from the proposed development. In this context, 'Indigenous' refers to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia. The Indigenous people of Kuranda are overwhelmingly Aboriginal, not Torres Strait Islander, and so 'Aboriginal' is used rather than 'Indigenous' in this report.

It is impossible to describe the social and cultural characteristics of the Aboriginal communities of Kuranda without an understanding of the historical context. Thousands of Aboriginal people were forcibly removed from their own traditional estates into the Mona Mona Mission, established in 1913, where their lives were controlled by the *(Qld) Aboriginal Protection and Restrictions of the Sale of Opium Act 1897*. As a result, the local Aboriginal communities of Kuranda include people from all over north Queensland in addition to the Traditional Owners of the area. Mona Mona Mission shut down in 1962 and many of the older Aboriginal residents of the area lived in dormitories on the mission where their lives were strictly controlled.

This report begins with a cultural context of the *bama* (rainforest Aboriginal people). This is followed by a summary of the native title rights and interests in the project area, represented by the Cairns Regional (native title) Claim. In section 4, a brief history of the Mona Mona Mission and the historical events relating to Aboriginal people in the Kuranda area is presented, particularly to illustrate the history of the townships of Mantaka and Kowrowa, which are the closest settlements to the development area. Sections 5 and 6 describes social data collected by ABS and the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), particularly as it relates to Aboriginal household structures, domestic economies and levels of welfare dependence, workforce participation and educational attainment. Section 7 describes the cultural heritage values and aspirations that arose from previous cultural and social investigations for the KUR-World development. The report ends with a discussion of the implications for the KUR-World project.

2. Rainforest bama

Bama are the rainforest Aboriginal people that occupied the Wet Tropics from Cooktown to Cardwell (Bottoms 1999). *Bama* is the literal translation of ‘man’ in the Djabugay-Yidinji, Gunggandji and Yalanji languages (Pannell 2008:64) and is used the same way as ‘Murri’ or ‘Koori’ in other parts of eastern Australia. The project area lies within the ‘*Ganydji*’ speaking *bama* estate that incorporates the central Wet Tropics area, from around Port Douglas to Babinda. Within each of the *Ganydji* languages were clan groups, which could also have variations in language. The Djabugay, Yidinji and Gunggandji language groups share common story-law and patterns of social structure (Bottoms 1999:11; Dixon 2009). For example, Djabugay, Bulway, Yirrgayndji, Yidinji, Ngadjon-ji and Gunggandji all had a social structure made up of two moieties. Each person was classified into one of the moieties and could only marry an opposite moiety. These moieties were established and maintained through *Bulerru*, which translated means ‘the Story Waters’. This is the local equivalent of what in other Aboriginal societies is known as the dreamtime. *Bulerru* were the laws and protocols which governed the traditional societies which all members of the society were obligated to follow.

In the Cairns region, the moieties were represented by two brothers, Damarri and Guyula, who were responsible for creating the landscape and establishing law. Damarri represents the *Gurabana* moiety (*bana* means water) and Guyula the *Guramina* moiety, the dry season (*minya* means meat). According to *Bulerru*, Guyula wanted to make things easy for the people, providing meat for hunting and a comfortable climate while Damarri thought people should work hard and so made the rainforest seeds that were toxic, requiring extensive treatment before they could be eaten, and brought the summer rains and storms (Bottoms 2015). Through the stories, conflict between the brothers established a dual system of wet/dry seasons, plant/animal food and potential marriage partners.

The story of Damarri and Guyula is described by Bottoms (1999:6-7):

The brothers were always arguing about whether life should be difficult or easy, and, more often than not, *Damarri* got his way. Life was shaped by their arguments, so that, for instance, certain foods became toxic and required much more treatment. Fortunately, *Guyula* had his way over naming of places. *Damarri* wanted to name only a few places on a journey; but *Guyula* thought it would be easier for people to follow a route if many places were named.

In the past, *Bulerru* was integrated into every aspect of the lives of *Bama* in the Kuranda district and these stories continue to be a significant component of the living cultural landscape in the Cairns-Kuranda region.

3. Native title

The applicants to the Cairns Regional Claim (CRC) are the Aboriginal party for the KUR-World project. The CRC was entered on the Register of Native Title Claims on 12 October 2016 (QUD692/2016). The CRC represents five groups, Djabugay, Bulwai, Yirrganydji, Guluy and Nyakali people. The CRC area is roughly from north of Cairns (Freshwater Creek) to south of Port Douglas (Mowbray River) to Mareeba, including the Lamb Range, Emerald Creek and Clohesy River. It excludes the Mona Mona Reserve and the Barron Gorge National Park.

The CRC claim marks a significant achievement for the Djabugay, Bulwai, Yirrganydji, Guluy and Nyakali people, some whom have previously submitted conflicting claims of ownership in the Kuranda area.

The four applicants that represent the CRC claim group are Willie Brim, Mario Williams, Jeanette Singleton and Tyrone Canon. Each of the applicants represent one of the CRC groups, with one group unrepresented. Dealing with the KUR-World project is the first time that the CRC groups have worked together in response to a large development proposal.

The Djabugay Tribal Aboriginal Corporation (DTAC) is a Prescribed Body Corporate established in 2004 when the Djabugay people's native title rights were recognised over the Barron Gorge National Park (http://www.nntt.gov.au/News-and-Publications/latest-news/Pages/Native_title_recognised_over_Barron_Gorge.aspx). DTAC, and its affiliated corporations (Buda:Dji Aboriginal Development Association, Djabugay Native Title Aboriginal Corporation, Djabugay Tour Guiding Aboriginal Corporation and Nyawarri Estate Aboriginal Corporation) work towards improving the lives of Djabugay people through economic development, community development and cultural heritage protection.

4. Mona Mona Mission

The establishment of Mona Mona Mission has been the single biggest factor in shaping the cultural and social context for Aboriginal people in Kuranda. Prior to the mission, the Djabugay and Bulwandji people lived in the rainforest and ecotone environments of Barron River and surrounds. By the turn of the twentieth century, European settlers employed Kuranda *bama* in the expanding farming industry. In 1912, Chief Protector, R.B. Howard, noted 50-60 *bama* camped on the banks of the Barron River, 'in good health, and free from alcohol and opium addiction' (Bottoms 1999:47). Some European settlers and *bama* had developed good relations which continue to this day (Bottoms 1999:47). The Mona Mona Mission, run by Seventh Day Adventist missionaries, was established at Flaggy Creek, 20 kilometres west of Kuranda, in 1913. In 1916, the residents of Streets Creek camp (on the bank of the Barron River opposite Kuranda) were forcibly removed to Mona Mona Mission, joining 56 *bama* taken

from Mareeba the year before (Bottoms 1999:50). By the 1920s many *bama* had been removed from their traditional estates to the Mona Mona Mission along with people from other rainforest tribes, the Gulf savannah and Cape York Peninsula.

Some Djabugay and Bulwandji people continued to live outside the mission, but interacted regularly with mission residents, by providing bush foods such as native honey to their institutionalised kin (Bottoms 1999:53; W. Brim pers. comm). Mission children were separated from their families and lived in boys and girls dormitories. They were forbidden to use language. Farming was established and at least five individual farms operated on the Mission, growing pineapples, vegetables, cattle and pigs (Bottoms 1999:57). One of the main industries of Mona Mona Mission was a timber sawmill which was milling 32 000 super feet per year in 1938 (Bottoms 1999:59).

In 1962, the Mona Mona Mission closed. The area around Mona Mona had been slated for a dam and the Seventh Day Adventist Church was recompensed for the land, part of which was redesignated from Aboriginal Reserve to Electrical Works Reserve (Bottoms 1999:80). Many of the residents moved to the nearby townships of Mantaka, Kowrowa, Kuranda and Koah. They were given no financial or other assistance from the government or church to move to the new locations. Some Kuranda *bama* retain close ties to the Mona Mona mission site and a small number of people have moved back to Mona Mona in recent years.

The Mona Mona dam was never constructed, although the idea has been resurrected over the years and a dam proposal is currently being investigated at Flaggy Creek.

5. Households in the Kuranda communities

The Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) conducted a three-year study into the issues for service delivery of welfare payment in Kuranda area from 1999-2001. This investigation formed part of a study on Indigenous families and their interaction with the social security system. Using interviews and longitudinal data representing 29 households and 182 individuals, the CAEPR team made specific findings into the household structure, movement of people and their participation in the workforce. These were published in a series of CAEPR Discussion Papers (Henry and Daly 2001; Henry and Smith 2002; Finlayson et al. 1999) and relevant findings are summarised below.

The CAEPR results presents a different view of Kuranda households to the ABS census data. There are two key reasons for this. Firstly, the aim of the CAEPR project was to investigate households interacting with the welfare system and so households are not random but have been selected to include households with children and adults reliant on welfare. More relevant is the methods used to collect data. The CAEPR team conducted interviews with households over a three-year period while

ABS census data is collected through self-administered questionnaires. Considering the low rates of literacy and past experiences of Aboriginal people in Kuranda living under the state ‘protection’ acts, the ABS census data is unlikely to reflect an accurate portrayal of the Aboriginal households in the Kuranda area while the CAEPR study provides more reliable information on a small number of households that is probably fairly typical of the living conditions of Aboriginal people in the Kuranda area. A community profile produced from ABS census data of Kowrowa – Mantaka – Mona Mona, which are the closest settlements to the KUR-World project, does provide useful comparisons between the local Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents of the area.

Household characteristics

The CAEPR study found that houses in the Kuranda area were highly overcrowded and composed of multiple generations of people connected through kinship relationships. Every individual interviewed for the CAEPR study is linked historically to Mona Mona Mission (Finlayson et al. 1999:25-26)

Two thirds of households contained 3 or 4 generations, while the remaining third contained two generations (Table 1); none of the households were made up of single generations or unrelated individuals (Henry and Smith 2002:4-5). While the household structure described by Henry and Smith (2002) may have been a reflection on the way interviewees were chosen for the study, it does provide valuable insights into the patterns of Aboriginal households in the Kuranda area.

Table 1. Number of generations living in one household in the Kuranda area (Henry and Smith 2002).

No. of Generations	1	2	3	4
% of households (n=29)	0	35	52	13

The researchers noted that overcrowded houses with multiple generations living under one roof is result of the lack of housing and poverty in the area, rather than choice by the residents (Henry and Smith 2002:9). There was a preference for nuclear families to form the basic household, but the lack of housing makes this impossible (Henry and Daly 2001:11). ABS 2016 census data reports the average household size to be 4.1 people in Aboriginal households and 2.3 people in non-Indigenous households in the Kuranda area. This seems to be a misrepresentation and probably reflects the way ‘movers’ are identified by Aboriginal people completing the survey (see below). The ABS 2016 census data reports that 38.8% of Indigenous households expressed a need for ‘one or more bedroom’ compared to only 5.3% of the non-Indigenous population, which more realistically reflects the situation observed in the CAEPR study.

Another feature of the household character is the high mobility by residents. Only one third (37%) of respondents had stayed in the same house over the three-year study. Many people moved between

households in the Kuranda area, returning to households within their kinship network. People moved to larger urban areas such as Mareeba and Cairns, usually to access services such as education and shopping but also reported being reluctant to leave the local area, even for reliable employment opportunities (Henry and Smith 2002:7-9). This high level of mobility is one feature that is not reflected in the ABS data, which classifies this mobile group of individuals as 'visitors' rather than 'usual residents' (Henry and Smith 2002).

In 1999, Finlayson et al (1999:38) found that all of the households in their study had running water, toilets and showers but three were without electricity and half of all households had no phones due to the cost.

Kinship networks

The CAEPR study found that child care relies heavily on kinship networks. Extended family played an important role in child and youth care, when compared to other Australian households. Over half (56%) of all 'movers' in 2000 and 2001 were children and youths, reflecting the movement of young people within kinship networks. Child care was often the responsibility of senior women, the 'critical core of stability', who lived on reliable pensions but were given no additional resources for the costs of raising the children in their care (Henry and Smith 2002:11). To illustrate the importance of kinship networks in households, Henry and Daly (2001:6) give an example of one single household composed of four generations of kin relations, being made up of 10 adults and 10 children (20 residents in total).

Henry and Daly (2001) noted that particular family groups are associated with certain geographical areas. People were reluctant to move into a different geographical area if it meant they were away from their own relations. This has led to a number of distinct Aboriginal communities within the Kuranda area. It would be expected, for example, that people living in Upper Kowrowa, Lower Kowrowa and Mantaka consider themselves separate, but probably inter-related, communities based on kinship relations.

6. Welfare, work and study

Households were found to have an entrenched and high levels of welfare dependence and were considered to have primarily 'welfare-based domestic economies' (Henry and Smith 2002:12). Every single household in the CAEPR study had at least one adult receiving welfare payments, the main one being Commonwealth Development Employment Program (CDEP). In 2001, 31% of income for households was from CDEP. Other welfare included pensions and Abstudy.

Employment

Only two individuals in the CAEPR sample worked full-time, while the majority of employed people worked part-time. Wages formed only 4% of the total income for all respondents in 1999, 6% in 2000 and 12% in 2001 (Henry and Smith 2002:13). Comparing this to the ABS census data, which identifies a 9.1% unemployment rate for all Kuranda residents and a 50.1% full-time employment rate, illustrates a wide difference in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employment for the Kuranda area. Jobs held by adults in the households studied by CAEPR included cleaning, art and craft, railways, national parks and being a dancer and the Tjapukai Theatre.

The ABS 2016 census data compared categories of Indigenous and non-Indigenous in the Kowrowa – Mantaka – Mona Mona area (Table 2). The difference in employment rates is striking. Of particular note is the small ratio of full time employed Indigenous people compared to non-Indigenous people and also the lack of people employed for either private companies or self-employed. No Indigenous people reported to be self-employed. This may have implications for the KUR-World employment strategy, especially in relation to the capacity for local Aboriginal people to develop small scale businesses to complement the KUR-World development.

Table 2. Comparison of Indigenous and non-Indigenous categories of employment in the Kowrowa – Mantaka – Mona Mona area (ABS 2016 Census data).

	Employed	Unemployed	Not in labour force	Government employee	Private employee	Self employed
Indigenous (n. 139)	18	11	105	10	7	0
Non-Indigenous (n. 249)	132	10	96	27	111	15

Youth and workforce participation

The CAEPR study reported that in 2001 the household they studied had a high proportion of youth. ABS census data also recorded high ratios of young people, with 44.1% of people under 14 years and a further 27.6% of people were aged between 15 and 34 years old. This age distribution, particularly for under 14's, is a feature that defines the Aboriginal communities of the Kuranda area (Table 3). One of the key concerns Henry and Smith (2002) identified is that youth were potentially 'locked into a form of recycling welfare dependence'. The need for training and opportunities to join the workforce was identified as key to alleviate the impacts from inter-generational welfare dependency.

Table 3. Comparison of age groups between Indigenous (Kuranda area) and all of Australia (ABS 2016 Census data)

Years	Indigenous people living in Kowrowa – Mantaka – Mona Mona	Australia wide
0-14	44.1%	34%
15-34	27.6%	27.1%
35-54	15.4%	21.6%
55-64	9.1%	7%
65 plus	3.9%	4.8%
Total	100%	100%

Education

The ABS 2016 census data compares the education level attained (Table 4) and details on levels of current study (current in 2016) (Table 5). This data illustrates the relatively low level of school completion rates compared to non-Indigenous people. It also shows a high level of Certificate qualifications among the Aboriginal residents and very low rates of university completion. This could be factors that effects the ability of local Aboriginal people to obtain ‘mainstream’ employment.

Table 4. Comparison of educational level attained for Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents of the Kowrowa – Mantaka – Mona Mona area (ABS 2016 census data)

	Year 12	Year 10-11	Year 9 and below
Indigenous (n.125)	34	66	25
Non-Indigenous (n. 242)	135	90	17

Table 5. Comparison of post school qualifications by Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents of Kowrowa – Mantaka – Mona Mona area (ABS 2016 census data)

	Cert II-III	Diploma	Bachelor Degree	Post-graduate
Indigenous (n.35)	26	6	3	0
Non-Indigenous (n. 128)	53	27	42	6

7. Cultural heritage

Cultural heritage is embodied in the values, places and practices that are important for past, present or future generations (Australia ICOMOS 2013). Cultural heritage can be tangible (that is, it can contain physical elements) and intangible (e.g. story places or knowledge about bush foods and medicines).

All significant Aboriginal heritage is protected by state legislation, regardless of whether it contains physical elements.

The project proponents recognise that the project site contains places of potential cultural heritage significance to both native title claimants (the Traditional Owners of the area) and people with a historical connection through Mona Mona Mission ('bama neighbours'). Both groups were engaged for this project through different processes.

National Heritage Listing of Aboriginal cultural values of the Wet Tropics

On 9 November 2012, the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area's Indigenous heritage values were included as part of the existing Wet Tropics of Queensland National Heritage Listing. The listing identifies Rainforest Aboriginal heritage as unique to the Wet Tropics and as a remarkable and continuous Indigenous connection with a tropical rainforest environment. The National Heritage Listing is based on four key criteria: the use of toxic plants; technical achievements in material culture and use of fire; year-round occupation of rainforest; and traditions established by creation beings (see Buhrich and Ferrier 2017 for a detailed discussion of each criteria).

Aboriginal walking tracks are significant cultural heritage features in the Wet Tropics rainforest. Walking tracks are significant because they guided access through the dense impenetrable rainforest and linked campsites, bora grounds and resources as well as providing links between coastal and tableland resources and into neighbouring estates.

Cairns Regional Claim representatives

Male representatives of the native title claimants conducted cultural heritage surveys of the Barnwell Farm. Cultural heritage surveys identified pre-contact cultural heritage, mainly associated with the processing of rainforest seeds for eating (11 portable nut cracking rocks and two clusters of nut cracking holes in the creek beds, 5 quartz flakes, 1 axe blank and a grinding 'top stone' were recorded). These finds represent the bio-cultural values of rainforest Aboriginal people and their extensive knowledge of bush foods and seed processing techniques. The cultural and environmental health of the broad environment were both identified as highly significant to the Aboriginal party, and through our discussions several markers to identify cultural and environmental health were noted (see Buhrich and Ferrier 2017).

Site surveys and interviews with the CRC applicants and their representatives revealed strong links between people, land and stories, some of which relate to the KUR-World property (Buhrich and Ferrier 2017). Of overarching significance is the presence of *Budadji*, the rainbow serpent, in all the waterways. Also, of great significance is *Boondarah*, the cassowary, whose ancestral tracks guided

people across the land while showing them which foods to eat. The ancestral brothers, *Damarri* and *Guyala*, have significant links to the observance of cultural activity including details on the origin of toxic nut processing.

The broad environmental issues raised by the CRC representatives relate to the continued access and use of the Barron River and the quality and volume of groundwater aquifers being sufficient for cultural purposes. As one interviewee stated ‘if they embrace our existence it could be beneficial for us – for employment but number one for caring for country (A. Brim, pers. comm., 23 March 2017, in Buhrich and Ferrier 2017).

The Aboriginal party identified employment and training opportunities from the KUR-World development for local Aboriginal people as a top priority. One suggestion was for a skills audit in the local Aboriginal community as many individuals have existing skills that could be used in the construction, maintenance and management stages of the development. There was a suggestion that local Aboriginal people with existing skills could be placed ‘at the top of the pile’ for contracting jobs.

There was general agreement from the Aboriginal party that the development should bring benefits to the local Aboriginal community, including Aboriginal people who are not party to the CRC native title claim.

Bama neighbours

A separate process was held to engage the ‘*bama* neighbours’, Aboriginal people who live close to the proposed development but who may not be represented on the CRC native title claim. The Indigenous social impact study constitutes an important part of the overall cultural heritage assessment for KUR-World in that it ensures that the broader Aboriginal community in which the KUR-World development site sits is engaged in the process (Ferrier 2017:2). This process was facilitated by the Buda:Dji Aboriginal Corporation and involved nine group interviews with 17 individuals in households at Mantaka, Kuranda, Kowrowa and Koah (Ferrier 2017). Twelve of the 17 participants were women, this was deliberate decision by Buda:Dji Aboriginal Corporation to address the gender imbalance arising from the all-male representatives of the CRC claimant group. A Bama Neighbours Open Day was held specifically to provide an opportunity for local Aboriginal people to visit the property and discuss the project and their concerns with the developer.

Barnwell Farm is close to the settlements of Mantaka and Kowrowa, where Mona Mona Mission residents moved after mission closed in 1963. Ferrier (2017:6) described that

Most of the participants have vivid memories of the 1950s and 60s when they were allowed access to Barnwell Farm to go fishing, swimming and camping along the

creeks. The site has a known Bama camp site near Nyurrede Farm, with a flat area and camps on both sides of the creek. The old people used an old walking track on the property to traverse the rainforest to get to the Davies Creek area, located in sclerophyll forest. Along the Barron River and its tributaries, quandong, white and brown apple, Davidson plum and many other bush tucker items used to be collected, and pigs and wallaby were hunted. Increased restricted access to the Barron River, at places such as Big Sands, started in the late 60s with non-Indigenous people stopping them from accessing the river. The Barron River remains a culturally significant place to everyone interviewed.

Concerns from the *bama* neighbours included water security, employment and training for Aboriginal youth, the possibility of reviving the CDEP program and environmental management. Overall, despite feeling overwhelmingly disappointed by previous developments in the area, such as Skyrail, the *bama* neighbours had 'a strong sense of need for the Aboriginal community to be involved with the KUR-World development project as a positive way forward for their people, culture, community and, most significantly to all the participants, for their young people' (Ferrier 2017:8).

8. Implications for the KUR-World project

Understanding the Aboriginal communities in Kuranda

The Aboriginal community of the Kuranda area is highly complex as a result of the movement of Aboriginal people from across north Queensland into the Mona Mona Mission. There is no one single 'community', rather a series of inter-connected communities linked through kinship networks. These kinship networks determine where a person lives, who they live with and the sharing of child care and household economies. Individuals can have overlapping and intersecting identities. That is, an individual may primarily identify with a traditional estate that may be a long distance from Kuranda (i.e. their fathers estate), yet also be connected into other Aboriginal communities through marriage and descent (e.g. their mothers and wives traditional estates). Understanding these networks is key to building successful relations with the Traditional Owners and *bama* neighbours.

Past events influence how individuals perceive the development proposal and opportunities the development may present. Aboriginal people in the Kuranda area feel that the tourism boom in Kuranda has presented no significant employment opportunities for them and this is reflected in the low levels of employment levels and wage income measured by CAEPR and in ABS census data. The history of forcible removals, the most recent being the 1960s when people were forced to move off

the Mona Mona Mission for a dam that was never built, influences the way Aboriginal people engage with government and others.

Cultural heritage

Aboriginal people in the Kuranda area have a broad range of interests in cultural heritage through traditional and historical connections. There is a recognition by CRC claim applicants that the 'historical' Aboriginal people have an interest in the post-contact cultural heritage of the area, while the *bama* neighbours recognise the claim of Djabugay and Bulwandji people as being the most important stakeholders in managing pre-contact cultural heritage. The native title applicants and *bama* neighbours retain a strong sense of cultural heritage, which can be linked to the property as part of a much broader living cultural landscape. All Aboriginal people have used the walking tracks and bush foods of the area, including Barnwell Farm, since the 1960s, when ex-residents of Mona Mona Mission built their houses along the Barron River at Mantaka and Kowrowa.

'Cultural heritage' means different things to different individuals, based on their own histories and genealogies. Overall, there was a consensus among both CRC claimants and *bama* neighbours about water security and the need to protect waterways and tangible remains of the pre-contact Aboriginal history.

Barriers to employment

Overcrowding, poverty and inter-generational welfare dependency present major barriers to developing successful employment programs for the KUR World project. Domestic household economies in the Kuranda area are highly welfare dependent. Prior to 2009 the CDEP provided the major income for Aboriginal households in the Kuranda area and it is not clear what economy has replaced this program.

In the 2016 ABS census, zero Aboriginal people living in the Kowowra, Mantaka, Mona Mona area reported being self-employed and very few reported being employed in private industry. This could have important implications for any employment strategy designed for the KUR-World project as individuals may need significant resourcing and mentoring to establish the small business opportunities that may arise from the proposed development. While there has been discussion of Aboriginal individuals establishing small businesses as tour guides, dancers or other services, in reality individuals may need significant mentoring to achieve this.

The history of inter-generational unemployment means that young people may not follow a standard pathway to employment. They may not have a resume for example, or previous work experience. The CDEP program was shut down in 2009 and has not been replaced with any similar programs. Rather,

Aboriginal youth in Kuranda are expected to find work through mainstream job network agencies. In gaining and holding long term employment, individuals may require a higher level of assistance such as senior mentors to assist in getting prepared for work, organising transport, obtaining appropriate clothing, dealing with cultural matters that may influence their ability to be at work and even in ensuring what might be considered very basic needs like ensuring people have breakfast and lunch.

The Kuranda Aboriginal communities feature a high ratio of young people to adults and having culturally appropriate child care systems is an important factor for child rearing women to join the workforce.

9. Conclusion: Opportunities for change

Real and meaningful employment is key to changing people's lives and breaking the cycle of welfare dependency (Henry and Smith 2002). Aboriginal people in the Kuranda area are cautiously optimistic for the employment opportunities offered by the KUR World project, especially for their young people. However, any employment strategy would have to be carefully designed and implemented to account for the significant barriers to employment faced by the Aboriginal people of Kuranda. These barriers, influenced by the history of the Mona Mona Mission, include inter-generational welfare dependency, overcrowded housing leading to movement between households of related kin and poverty.

Standard pathways to employment may not be appropriate for Aboriginal people living in the Kuranda area and individuals may need assistance in becoming 'work ready'. The usual process of obtaining resumes and conducting interviews with potential employees may not lead to significant employment for local Aboriginal people because it favours people with previous work experience who are used to dealing with employers. The high ratio of young people to adults within Aboriginal households in the Kuranda area means child care is a significant factor for parents, especially women. Supporting the existing kin related child care networks could increase the capacity for young parents to join the workforce.

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