

2024

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

forum

HIGHLIGHTS REPORT

22ND + 23RD OCTOBER 2024
MPARNTWE, ALICE SPRINGS



NINTI • STRONGER
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FOR CHILDREN

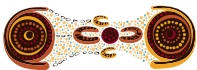
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Ninti One acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Custodians of Country and recognises their continuing connection to land, sea, culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Proudly supported by the Australian Government



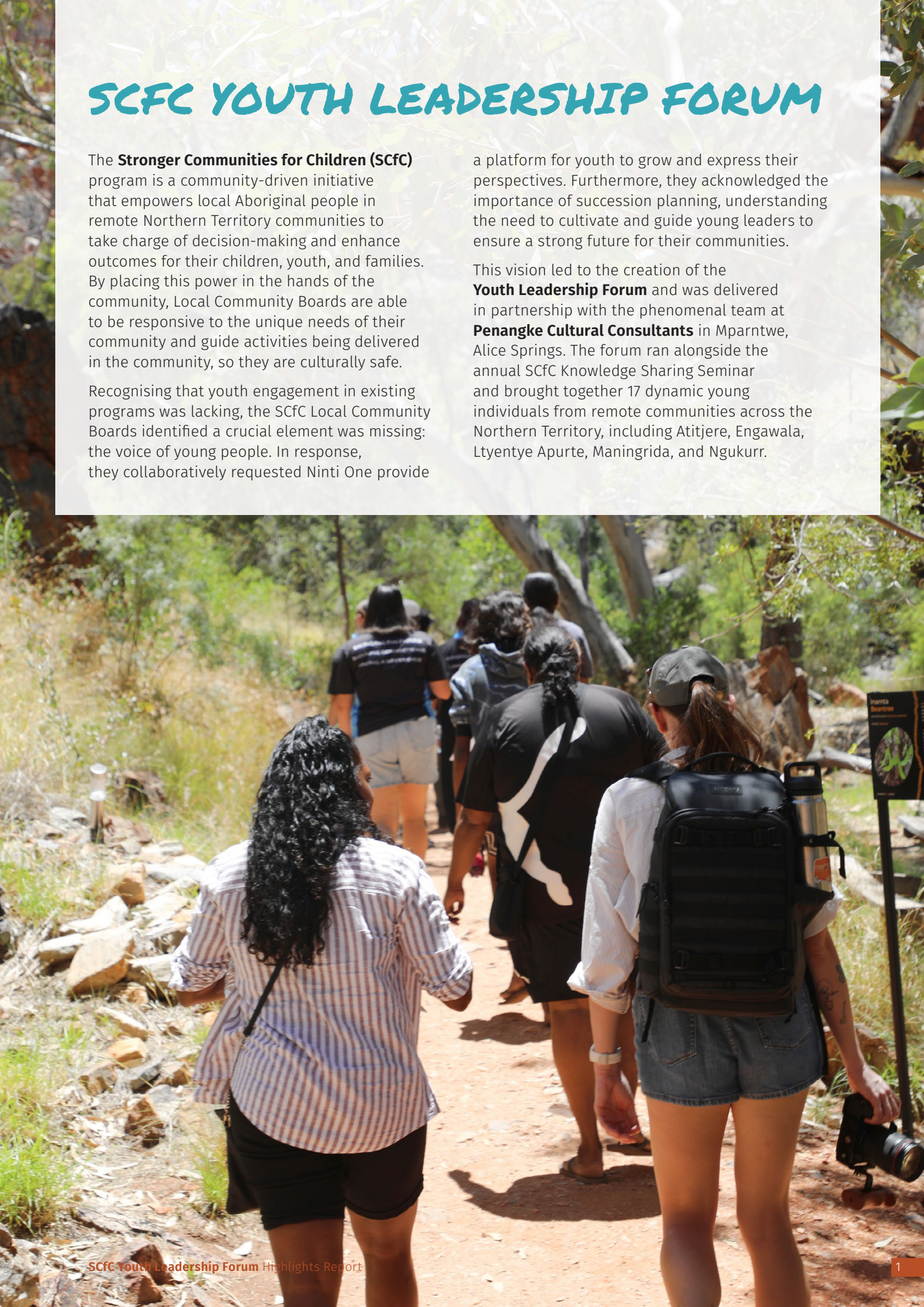
SCFC YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

The **Stronger Communities for Children (SCfC)** program is a community-driven initiative that empowers local Aboriginal people in remote Northern Territory communities to take charge of decision-making and enhance outcomes for their children, youth, and families. By placing this power in the hands of the community, Local Community Boards are able to be responsive to the unique needs of their community and guide activities being delivered in the community, so they are culturally safe.

Recognising that youth engagement in existing programs was lacking, the SCfC Local Community Boards identified a crucial element was missing: the voice of young people. In response, they collaboratively requested Ninti One provide

a platform for youth to grow and express their perspectives. Furthermore, they acknowledged the importance of succession planning, understanding the need to cultivate and guide young leaders to ensure a strong future for their communities.

This vision led to the creation of the **Youth Leadership Forum** and was delivered in partnership with the phenomenal team at **Penangke Cultural Consultants** in Mparntwe, Alice Springs. The forum ran alongside the annual SCfC Knowledge Sharing Seminar and brought together 17 dynamic young individuals from remote communities across the Northern Territory, including Atitjere, Engawala, Ltyentye Apurte, Maningrida, and Ngukurr.



DAY 1

Welcome and Journey to Angkerle Atwatye (Standley Chasm)

The welcome to country was presented by Kumalie Kngwarraye, an Arrernte woman from Alice Springs. Kumalie has affiliations to the land and spiritual connections with the Arrernte country inherited through her grandmother. She is passionate about teaching her language and culture to all who are interested in learning.

Q&A Panel

Upon arrival at Angkerle Atwatye, participants engaged in an enlightening discussion with Aboriginal tour guides **William** and **Brodie**. They shared their journey from feeling shy to confident, addressing large groups of tourists eager to learn about Aboriginal culture. Their experiences emphasised the power of practice, courage in overcoming challenges and leaning on Elders to grow knowledge. The group then enjoyed a scenic walk to the Chasm, appreciating the rich bush medicine along the path and connecting with the sacredness of the site and its creation story.

Leadership Talk

After lunch, **Johnson**, another young Aboriginal tour guide, inspired participants by discussing the potential for tourism in their communities. He highlighted that tourists are eager to learn about Aboriginal culture and that there are abundant opportunities for youth in this field. Johnson's key messages resonated strongly:

- Follow your dreams
- Work hard and persevere
- Seize every opportunity
- Surround yourself with positive influences
- Stay true to yourself and your values

Leadership Workshops

Participants divided into two groups to explore leadership themes. The young men, guided by **Raymond**, discussed community opportunities and challenges and learning how to navigate their obligations while prioritizing health and wellbeing.

Peta-Lee supported the young women to engage in conversations about what leadership means to them and envisioned their community's future 20 years from now, identifying qualities of strong leaders, such as:

- Strength
- Guidance
- Self-belief

Empowerment emerged as a key theme: "Empowerment is everyone coming together to help each other."



"EMPOWERMENT IS EVERYONE COMING TOGETHER TO HELP EACH OTHER."

DAY 2

Reflections

Day two began with a reflective discussion about the previous day's experiences at Angkerle Atwatye. Participants shared insights and favourite moments, with a strong interest in the kinship system. The fifteen-minute walk to the Chasm left a lasting impression, and many enjoyed the camaraderie of discussing shared interests, including leadership challenges and personal hobbies.

The group also explored the concept of confidence, recognizing that confidence is about standing up for oneself and supporting one another.

Who am I?

Participants engaged in a heartfelt activity, reflecting on their personal qualities and identities. Responses highlighted their collective strengths:

- Happiness
- Kindness and respect
- Leadership
- Caring nature
- Loyalty
- Bravery
- Courage
- Patience

Two Way Yarning

During this session participants from the Youth Leadership Forum joined the Local Community Boards members from the Knowledge Sharing Seminar and engaged in a two-way yarning conversation. The young people had the opportunity to have their perspective heard and together they explored ways to integrate their voices into community decision-making.

What is your advice to other young people to help them get into leadership positions?

"TRY NOT BE SHAME. WE WON'T GET ANYWHERE IN LIFE BEING SHAME. IF YOU GET RID OF THAT SHAME YOU CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE. FIND THE PASSION AND STAND STRONG FOR YOUR COMMUNITY."

The Youth Perspective

Young leaders Toni Sagiba-Gebadi from Maningrida and Leroy Petrick from Atitjere shared some of their insights on behalf of the Youth Leadership Forum participants.

- A good leader is someone who is healthy and a good role model for the young ones. They lead by example and practice what they preach.
- Good role models and mentors are important. We look to our elders and families to model the right path for us to follow.
- Mentors help us balance out the white way of doing things, as well as the cultural way of doing things, and how to merge them together
- We look to our mentors and elders to support us to employment and participate in cultural activities that keep our connection to culture strong.
- Sometimes we feel like we don't have a voice. When we try to have our say and give our input, it's important to hear us out and listen. We are told that we're too young to have an input, but this certainly isn't the case.
- We need to keep our young people active and motivated, they're our future leaders. We need our older people to get along with the young ones through compassion and empathy, come together and plan to be leaders in the community
- We want to see change. We want to help make programs more inclusive for us as we want our young people to come back to community and stay.
- We struggle with cultural barriers blocking equality between men and women. Men are still seen as more respected in the community
- More emerging leadership programs are needed for young people while they are still in school.



Whole Forum Discussion

What are the strengths and potential of the young people today to build and grow a better future for your community?

- They relate to one another
- They are good at sports, music and art
- They have the ability to walk in different worlds and lean two ways.
- They are committed and can work together
- They are resilient
- Their challenges and experiences are unique
- Young people have potential to learn right from wrong, they understand the consequences of misbehaviour

What could you do better to include young people in planning and decision-making?

- Give them the opportunity to make changes within themselves.
- Put younger people on boards and committees. People between the ages of 25-30 can relate to the younger generation best, have trusted relationships with them, and have the maturity to be respected board members.
- Involve young people in Local Decision Making and Local Area meetings
- Turn their personal interests and strengths into real jobs for them through workforce development
- Give them the opportunity to step up and be strong and be good role models in their communities

- Show young people trust and respect
- Motivate our young people to be the best versions of themselves
- Encourage young people to stay in their respective communities and maintain strong connection to culture, traditional dances, hunting practices and engage in ceremonies
- Walk together on the land, sea and air
- Establish a youth network and/or emerging leaders program to hear young people’s voices
- Have more activities and forums for youth to get together from different communities
- Support children to engage and desire to become community leaders
- Give young people direct access to Elders for knowledge-sharing
- Succession plans for young people to be on boards and committees
- Be united as a community to help our young people have a good future
- A youth or leadership group is essential in all communities. There is no point spending unnecessary money on items the youth don’t want. They need to have input into funding opportunities and help guide those decisions.
- Alternative educational pathways. Traditional education and trade courses in community.
- LISTEN to the youth

Confidence Building Games

After lunch, the group participated in fun, confidence-building games split into teams (yellow and red). They engaged in a scavenger hunt and a Q&A session, earning points for their answers, which fostered a spirit of teamwork and camaraderie. Laughter filled the air as they played a whisper game that encouraged everyone to come out of their shells.

The scavenger hunt challenged teams to solve clues, culminating in friendly competition. The session concluded with a cup-stacking game that promoted collaboration and strategy, followed by a ball game that brought everyone together in a joyful atmosphere.

This Youth Leadership Forum not only provided a platform for young leaders to express themselves but also cultivated a sense of community, empowerment, and vision for the future. Participants left inspired, equipped with valuable insights and the confidence to lead.

NTIBN Business Development Workshop

Some business minded young people chose to participate in the SCfC Knowledge Sharing Seminars Business Development Workshop that was delivered by NTIBN. In the workshop, participants stepped into an entrepreneurial mindset, developing business concepts and building mock business canvases to visualize and map out their ideas.

The session sparked enthusiasm, with several young attendees approaching NTIBN afterward to discuss business ideas they’ve been nurturing. NTIBN is committed to supporting these aspiring entrepreneurs, working alongside them to transform their ideas into reality and foster sustainable growth in their communities.

Quotes/Feedback

What are you highlights from the forum?

- “Playing the scavenger hunt game and getting along with others.”
- “Getting along with new people.”

“Having fun with other youth leaders!”

“Sitting in listening to NTIBN was an eye opener for me, gave me a lot of useful information and ideas and confidence with opening my own business.”

Why is it important for young people to come together for forums like this?

“I think it’s important because the older people can get a proper idea and insights of our point of view and we younger ones can also get theirs at first hand.”

- “To learn how to become leaders.”
- “To get better and learn something new.”
- “Learn to how to not be shame.”

Feedback from Local Community Board member.

“It was good to see our young ones up on the stage telling us how they feel and what they want. It’s really important that we listen to them and support them to learn and grow. They are our future leaders”



SCfC Youth Leadership Forum Highlights Report



SCfC Youth Leadership Forum Highlights Report

THANK YOU

Ninti One extends heartfelt thanks to all the vendors and stakeholders whose invaluable support made the 2024 Youth Leadership Forum an unforgettable success. This inspiring event simply wouldn't have been possible without their contributions.

A special recognition goes to the outstanding Aboriginal businesses that provided exceptional services. Ninti One remains deeply committed to supporting First Nations businesses and driving economic empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through a dedicated commitment to buying Blak.

Tingkabee

Akmans Prints & Designs

Tilly's Photography 5

Penangke Cultural Consultants

Angkerle Atwatye – Standley Chasm

NTIBN

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