



24-25

Good nutrition is the foundation of good health.

At EON, we work to improve health and food security in remote Aboriginal communities through long-term partnerships growing fresh fruit and vegetables in schools and community, coupled with hands-on nutrition education, empowering children, families and communities to thrive.

A message from the Chair

It all began in Djarindjin Lombadina in the Kimberley 20 years ago. That humble pilot has grown into the Thriving Communities Program, now in over 45 remote schools and communities, teaching thousands of children and families the vital link between nutrition and health.

Poor nutrition has devastating – but preventable – impacts on remote Aboriginal communities.

From a single pilot garden to a network of thriving, community-led programs across Western Australia and the Northern Territory, I could never have imagined that the need for this work would be as vital today as it was two decades ago.

At its core, the program remains community-led and continues to grow. The results are real. This is generational change. Side by side with communities, we are building healthier children, stronger families, and futures full of possibility.

Thanks to our Board members for their ongoing commitment and wisdom and to our wonderful management and staff who ensure the food continues to be grown, harvested, and eaten – improving health while employing ever-increasing numbers of local Aboriginal community members. Their leadership on the ground is essential to our ongoing success.

Caroline de Mori AM
Chair and Founder

Impact



500+

days spent on
country

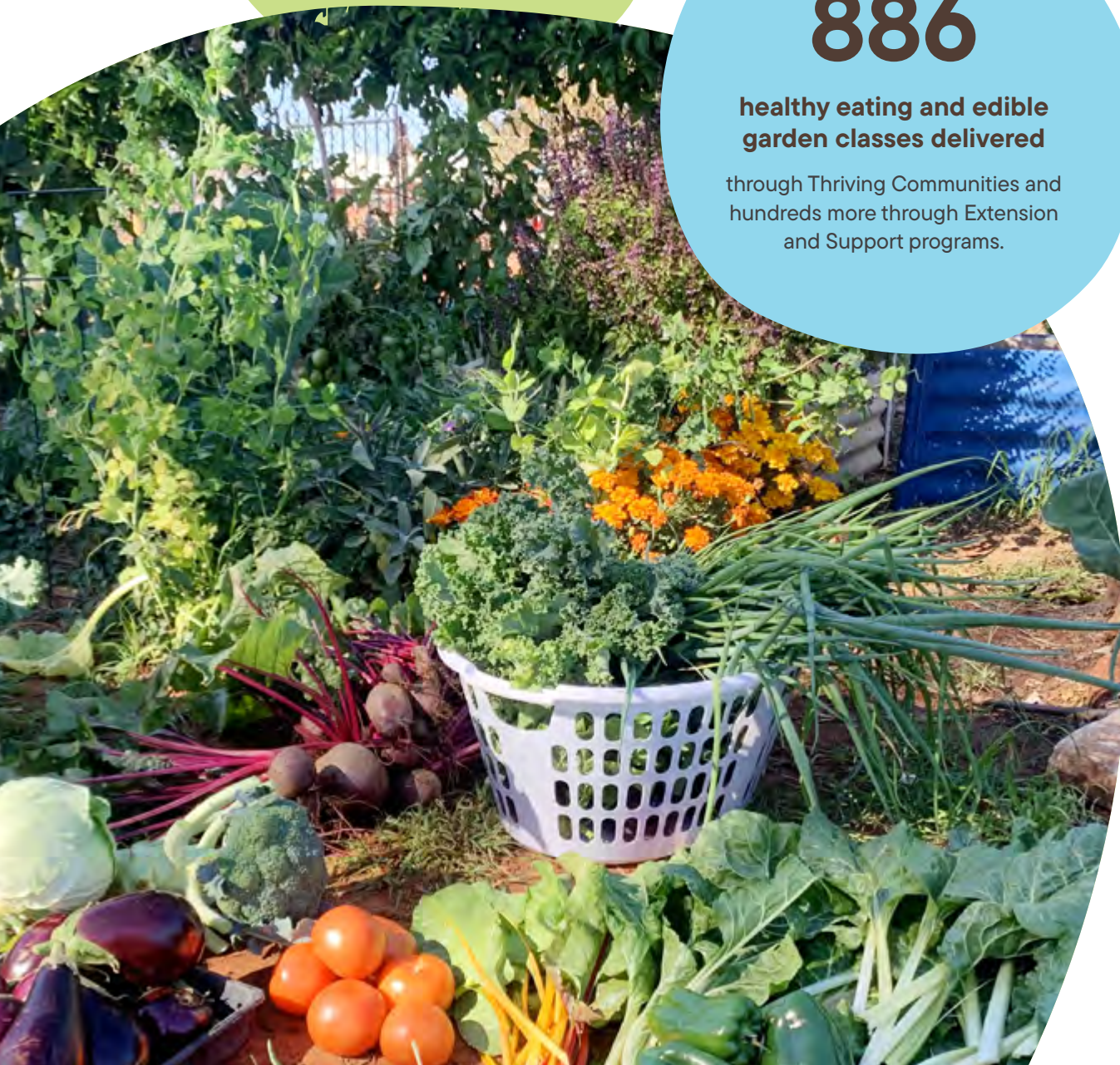
10k+

nutritious meals
prepared

886

healthy eating and edible
garden classes delivered

through Thriving Communities and
hundreds more through Extension
and Support programs.





Over
220
days

spent supporting Extension and
Support communities

Reached

41%

Aboriginal
employment

156

community visits

for Thriving Communities
Program delivery

26

current school and
community program
partnerships

We use nutrition to tackle preventable disease at its roots

Our practical, hands-on nutrition programs provide children and families with the knowledge and tools to grow, prepare and eat healthy food, building food security and improving health and wellbeing through everyday learning.

We build healthier futures through education

Starting in schools, the effect of our program ripples out into homes and communities, creating lasting habits that support better health and wellbeing across generations.

We commit for the long term, ensuring change is sustained, not just started.

Our program is built for sustained impact, giving communities the time and support needed to embed knowledge and build capacity to carry the work forward.

We are community-led

We listen first, build trust and co-create a program that communities own. We only go where we're invited and collaborate with local leaders, schools and families to ensure our approach is relevant and impactful.

Our programs are culturally grounded

As an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation, our work is guided by local cultural knowledge. We work side by side with communities that want to take control of their health and futures, helping them turn their goals into lasting change.

Our work connects culture, country and community

Our edible gardens are more than food – they are spaces of healing, learning and belonging. They reconnect people to their land and culture, strengthening community.

Highlights



The beginning of establishing Ampilatwatja's edible garden.

1.

Expanding Reach and Impact – 2025 and beyond

This year, we extended our reach – bringing the EON program to more communities that had been waiting to take part.

Excitingly commenced program rollout in new partner communities:

- Ampilatwatja, Central Australia
- Alice Springs (Yipirinya School), Central Australia
- Frog Hollow, East Kimberley
- Mullewa, Mid West
- Warmun (re-engagement), East Kimberley
- Wyndham, East Kimberley



CASE STUDY

Planting the Seeds at Ampilatwatja

For many years, the community of Ampilatwatja – four hours north-east of Alice Springs – patiently waited for their turn on EON’s priority list. Thanks to a generous private philanthropist, followed by support from the National Indigenous Australians Agency, we were finally able to begin.

When EON arrived, the whole community came together. Over several days, with help from the local shire and CDP participants, we fenced and planted a new orchard on the edge of the school – easy for kids and families to access, but tricky for curious, plant-trampling donkeys. Then the kids planted their garden within the school, designing the layout and telling our Project Manager what they wanted to grow.

Just one year on, the impact has been extraordinary. The circular garden has become more than a food source – it’s a gathering place. Students sit and chat, learn about nutrition, and cook together. The amount of fresh fruit and vegetables coming from the garden is remarkable, and its ripple effect can be felt throughout the community.

Ampilatwatja is proof of what happens when self-determination meets partnership and perseverance – a thriving space that will nourish generations to come.



JAMIE OLIVER
FOOD HERO
AWARDS

CASE STUDY

Award-winning nutrition education

Internationally acclaimed chef Jamie Oliver launched his Food Hero Awards in Australia, and one of EON Aboriginal Foundation’s remote community edible garden educators won the inaugural Educator of the Year Award 2024.

Karen Dack, Project Manager at Kalkaringi School in the NT won for her deep passion about teaching the community to grow, harvest, and cook fresh produce. Karen worked closely with students, families, and local communities. Through building capacity and food literacy, families are empowered to supplement store-bought foods with fresh produce from their gardens – creating a generational impact on health. The award highlights the dedication, skill, and community impact of EON’s educators, and the ripple effect of nutrition education in remote communities like Kalkaringi.

“Students are eating vegetables they grew themselves. That’s powerful learning.”

TEACHER

**“It’s not just about food
– it’s about pride and
skills for life.”**

ELDER

2.

Extension and Support Programs

This year, our focus shifted to mentoring and technical support for communities ready to deliver more independently.

Teachers, school staff, and Community Assistants took the lead – equipped with lesson materials, nutrition modules, and the confidence to keep the program thriving.

In some locations, Community Assistants are now employed by the school, continuing to grow healthy food, harvesting and cooking.

3.

Growing Local Capacity

Community Assistants across participating communities are building hands-on skills in horticulture, cooking, and community engagement, becoming local champions of nutrition and food education.

At the same time, pathways for young people are opening up, giving them job-ready skills that align with school curriculum priorities and support a future of stronger, healthier communities.



CASE STUDY

High School-Led Parents’ Day at Looma

In August 2024, Looma High School students took the lead in designing and running a Parents’ Day that celebrated the community garden and healthy cooking. The event featured a huge harvest and cook-up, with students and their families working side by side.

Students planned the menu based on what was growing in the garden and what they had learned cooking with EON previously. The kitchen buzzed with activity as students and parents learned together how to use fresh, local produce to create a massive, shared meal.

The event demonstrated the strong sense of community that EON’s programs grow. It was a resounding success, demonstrating how hands-on learning and family involvement can empower communities and strengthen connections around healthy food.



“I’ve learned so much, and now I get to pass that knowledge on and support another community to grow healthy food.”

RANGEWAY COMMUNITY ASSISTANT

CASE STUDY

Building Capacity in Mullewa

Mullewa is a small rural community in the Mid West of WA, 99 kilometres east of Geraldton and 450 kilometres north of Perth. For many years, Mullewa has struggled with poor food security and high rates of nutrition-related health issues.

Following a long and collaborative due diligence process, which involved engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, the community was ready to start. Project Manager Sally said she had “never seen such high community engagement prior to commencement” – a powerful sign that Mullewa was prepared to embrace the program.

Thanks to RJED funding, we’ve been able to resource this program strongly from the outset. We employ local Aboriginal people as Community Assistants to support delivery. Our existing Rangeway Community Assistant played a key role in the early design and delivery of the program, using the opportunity to build his skills and knowledge. He shared:

“Being part of starting the program in Mullewa was a proud moment for me. I’ve learned so much, and now I get to pass that knowledge on and support another community to grow healthy food.”

This reflects EON’s commitment to building local capacity and creating meaningful employment pathways. We are now actively recruiting Community Assistants in Mullewa, ensuring that this program will be community-led and sustainable.

Collaborations have also been established with MEEDAC (Midwest Aboriginal Employment and Economic Development), who have multiple programs running in Mullewa, creating opportunities for future partnerships and alignment.

Disease Prevention

In Northern Australia, First Nations children face some of the highest rates of type 2 diabetes in the world.

14% of children under the age of 5 in the NT experience chronic malnutrition

Up to 60% are affected by anaemia, contributing to developmental delays and other serious conditions.

More than 2 in 5 First Nations people over age 7 experience hearing loss in one or both ears.

Communities living with these statistics every day deserve access to the tools to prevent disease.

For too many remote communities, preventable disease has become the norm. Young people grow up watching parents and elders live with conditions like type 2 diabetes and come to believe it's just part of getting older. But it doesn't have to be.

EON is changing that story. By giving children and families the knowledge, skills and access to healthy food, we show that many of these illnesses can be prevented - and that good health can begin at any age.

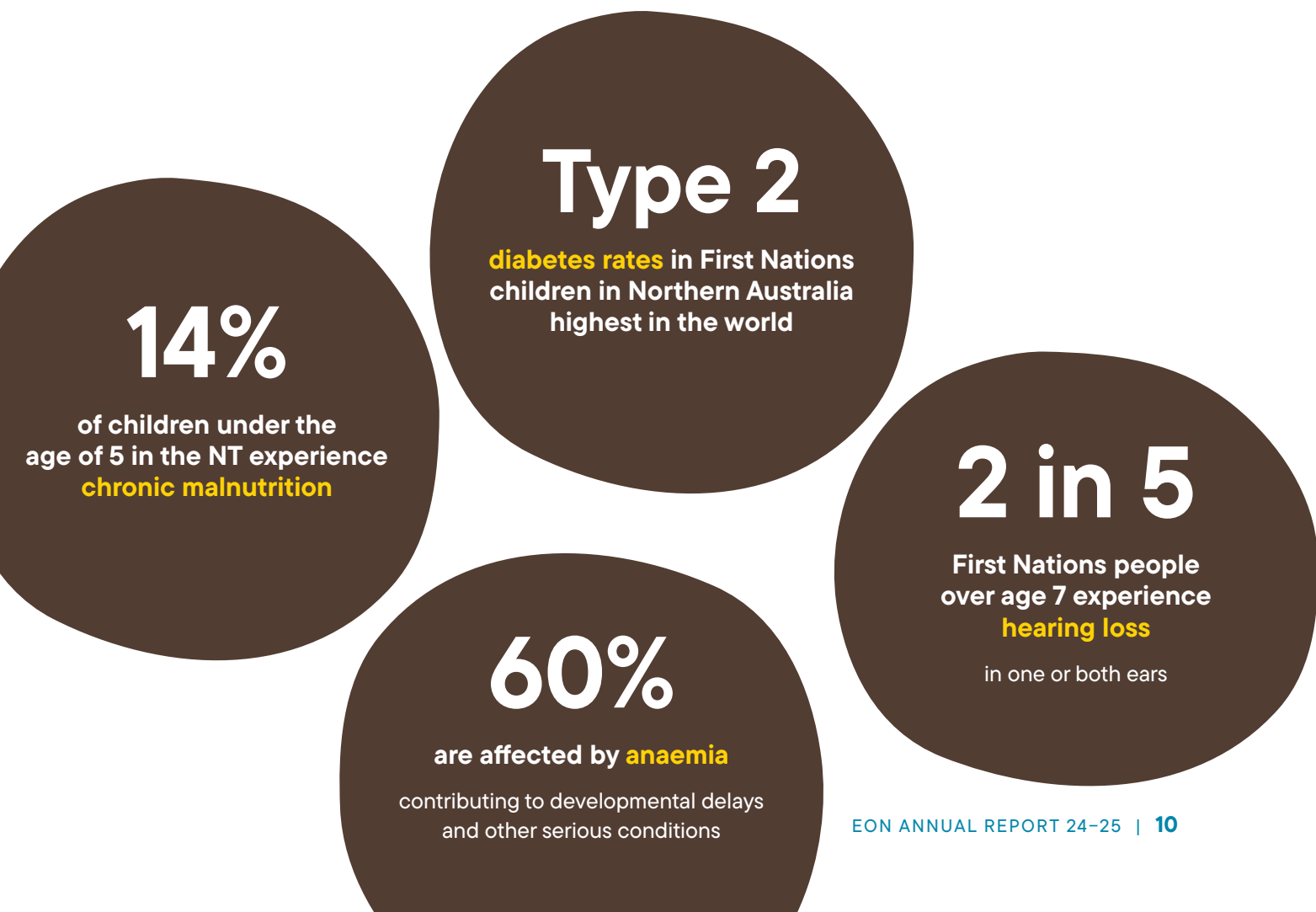
While most approaches to date have centred on treatment, our focus is prevention: improving nutrition and wellbeing to stop people getting sick in the first place.

Prevention not only saves lives, it also saves money - every \$1 invested delivers an estimated \$14.30 return in reduced healthcare and related costs.

Our analysis shows that with the support of a program such as EON's Thriving Communities, Aboriginal communities can turn high rates of type 2 diabetes around. This means more Aboriginal people living longer, healthier lives and communities are relieved of the personal and financial burdens of long-term disease.

Type 2 diabetes has become a \$14billion epidemic across the country - a figure from recent research conducted by Deakin, La Trobe and Curtin universities.

Health data from six NT communities engaged in the EON program showed type 2 diabetes declined in four of those communities compared with predicted rates, highlighting EON's impact.



Food Security

EON supports the National Strategy for Food Security in Remote Aboriginal Communities, published March 2025, to address systemic barriers and establish coordinated, long-term solutions.

“Now I can cook healthy dinners for my family.”

STUDENT

Preserves and Pickles – Growing Food Security

From passata and lemon juice to frozen spinach, preserved eggplant, and homemade curry pastes, EON communities are making sure that nothing grown in the garden goes to waste.

With support from a grant from Aboriginal Investment NT, EON has been able to invest in equipment to dehydrate and preserve excess produce. This means that even when gardens are between growing seasons, families can still access nutritious, homegrown food – strengthening year-round food security in communities where fresh produce can be scarce and expensive.

These preserving and pickling projects build practical skills, reduce food waste, and help communities take control of their food supply – a vital step toward long-term health and self-sufficiency.

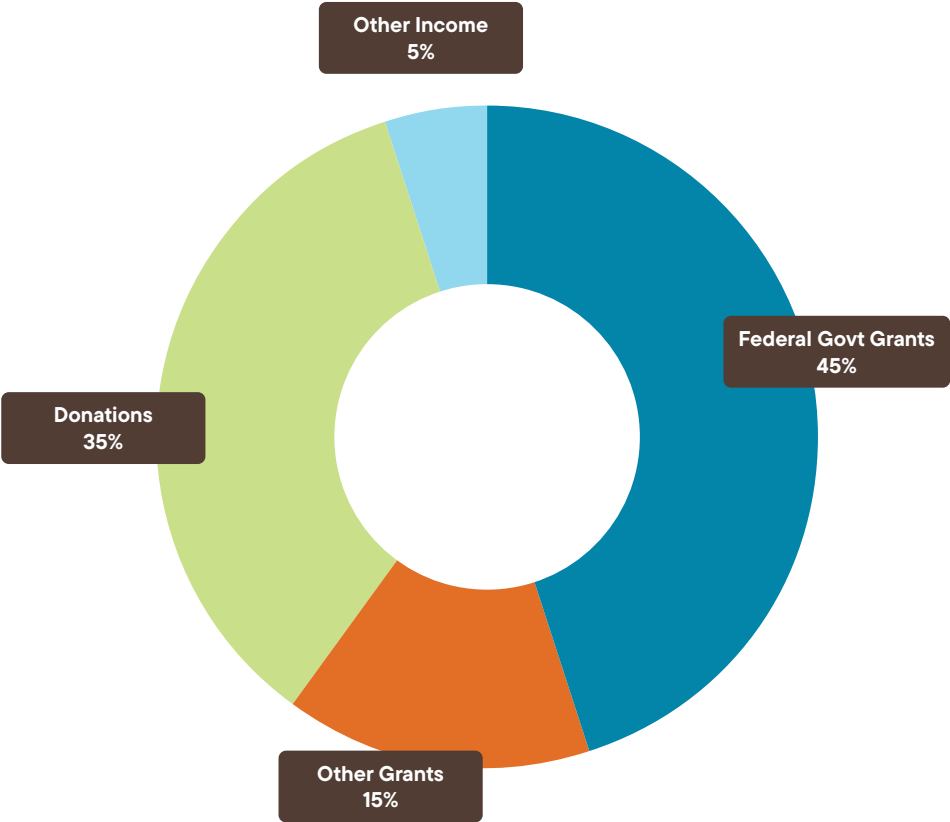


In 2024, this approach to preserving and using excess produce was highlighted in Gardening Australia magazine, shining a national spotlight on the creativity and resilience of remote communities.

Financials

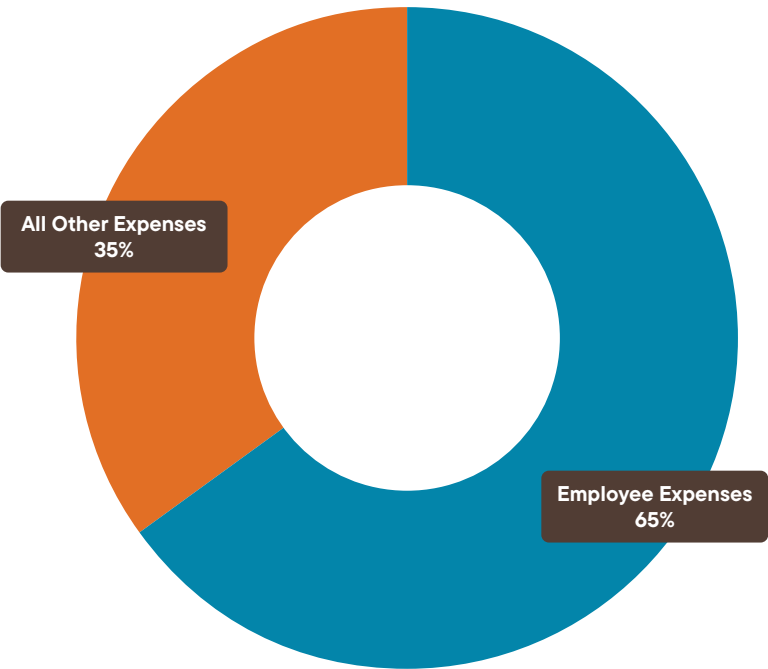
2024/25 EON Revenue

- Federal Government Grants
- Other Grants
- Donations
- Other Income



2024/25 EON Expenditure

- Employee Expenses
- All Other Expenses



Looking Ahead

We have a waiting list of communities who require our support in delivering the EON Thriving Communities Programs. If you would like to discuss a tailored partnership or supporting EON through donations, workplace giving or in-kind support, please contact:

Kathryn Taylor
CEO

Kathryn.taylor@eon.org.au

**“The EON program
is changing lives.”**

COMMUNITY MEMBER



Thank you

On behalf of all our community and school partners, the thousands of students and their families, thank you for helping us make all this possible. Together, we're improving the health and wellbeing of remote Aboriginal communities, improving food security and decreasing the burden of debilitating but preventable diseases.





Acknowledgement of Country

EON Aboriginal Foundation acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present.

