Evaluation Report

Flexible Funding Grants Program
Community Recovery Package

North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough
25 January 2019 – 14 February 2019

December 2022

Queensland Government

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Introduction

The North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough produced exceptional rainfall that caused disruption and damage to communities in Far North Queensland. This record-breaking rainfall cut off communities, devastated the livestock industry, left the freight industry at a standstill and destroyed infrastructure, homes and businesses.

In total, 39 of Queensland's 77 Local Government Areas (LGAs) were activated for disaster assistance for this event and more than 116,667 people identified as experiencing hardship. The economic and social recovery from this large-scale disaster was beyond the capacity of local communities to facilitate and continues to require long-term support from all functional lines of recovery.

A Community Recovery Package was announced as a joint Commonwealth and State funded program through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) under Category C. The package included the Flexible Funding Grants Program.

The purpose of the Flexible Funding Grants Program is to accelerate recovery and build resilience of those communities impacted by the devastating effects of the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough (Monsoon Trough).

The (then) Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (DCDSS) – currently Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy – led the implementation of the program with administrative support from the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA). The program concluded in June 2021.

This evaluation requires conduct in accordance with A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Disaster Recovery Programs (2018: 2). The framework allows for examination of the effectiveness, efficiency, appropriateness and implementation of the grants. It also considers if the grants supported disaster affected communities to become more sustainable and resilient.

Developed for QRA, the Deloitte Overarching Disaster Recovery Evaluation Framework has also been reviewed and incorporated within this evaluation.

In conclusion, the evaluation of the Flexible Funding Grants Program was shown to contribute to the recovery of the communities and local economies impacted by the North and Far North Monsoon Trough (Monsoon Trough). Detailed findings were documented in response to key evaluation questions.

Recommendations have been provided to improve the effectiveness of a Flexible Funding Grants Program in future, with the evaluation of grants being an important contribution to improve subsequent disaster programs in government.

Publishing of this report will occur on the Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub.

Program Implementation

Summary

Scope

As part of the DRFA Category C assistance, a total of $15.5 million was available under the Flexible Funding Grants Program released in 2019 and 2020. The objective of the program is to provide funding to non-government organisations, community groups and local governments to deliver projects that:

- drive disaster recovery and build awareness and resilience within communities impacted by the Monsoon Trough
- support community-led engagement activities, development of local recovery initiatives and encourage partnerships and collaboration
- proactively reduce future risks in line with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework and minimise community dependence on government assistance.

Funding was released in two rounds, with all approved projects to be completed by no later than 31 March 2021.

Round 1 – released in September 2019.

Round 2 – released in the first quarter of 2020.

Eligible applicants could apply for more than one grant, with each project required to meet the following grant caps, program objectives, eligibility criteria and requirements:

Small grants (minimum $2,500 up to a maximum of $50,000)

a) demonstrate how the project contributes to the recovery of the community from the impact of the disaster and/or contributes to the future disaster preparedness of the community.

b) include evidence of community support and participation in the project.

Large grants (minimum $50,001 up to a maximum of $150,000)

c) demonstrate how the project contributes to the recovery of the community from the impact of the disaster and/or contributes to the future disaster preparedness of the community.

d) include evidence of significant community support for the project.

e) include evidence of inclusive processes used to identify and prioritise the project/s such as community engagement or community development plans; and endorsement by the Local Recovery Groups and/or Local Disaster Management Group.

f) include evidence of community participation in the development and implementation of the project.

g) include confirmation of alternative funding source of any ongoing costs (e.g. maintenance of facilities).

A project plan, detailing the deliverables, milestones and timelines etc. was to be delivered within the first quarterly funded period to support all approved large grant projects.

From a total of 260 applications, 187 were approved with 174 projects completed.

Round	Applied	Approved	Completed
Round 1	135	68	68
Round 2	125	119	106
Total	**260**	**187**	**174**

Cost

There were 174 grants administered for a total of $13.61 million.

Round	Budget	Actual Cost
Round 1	N/A	$4.47M
Round 2	N/A	$9.14M
Total	**$15.50M**	**$13.61M**

Time

Round 1 was released in September 2019, with Round 2 released in March 2020, aligning with original planned dates. All projects were reported as complete in June 2021, following some extensions beyond the original target date.

Milestone	Target Date	Actual Date
Round 1 released	Sep-19	Sep-19
Round 2 released	Mar-20	Mar-20
Completion	**Mar-21**	**Jun-21**

Governance activity

District groups

As part of the Flexible Funding Grants Program, DCDSS implemented a district level governance structure. Governance groups were established in North West Queensland, Cairns and Townsville. Each group included stakeholders from the following:

- Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors
- Mayor or representative from each local government within the district
- Health and Hospital Service
- Community Development Officers
- Disaster Management Officer/s across the affected districts
- QRA Liaison Officer / Recovery Officer
- Other relevant Recovery Functional Group leads.

Program reviews

QRA conducted regular program reviews which incorporated financial and progress assessments of the Flexible Funding Grants Program. The DRFA program as a whole portfolio was reviewed by QRA in detail three times each year, for a total of nine reviews throughout the program. These reviews included a program briefing from the DCDSS Director of Community Recovery directly to QRA's Executive Leadership Team.

QRA provided quarterly progress reports on all Category C packages, including the Flexible Funding Grants Program, to Emergency Management Australia (EMA) – as the Commonwealth and State jointly funded the program. These reports were made available for evaluation.

Independent audit

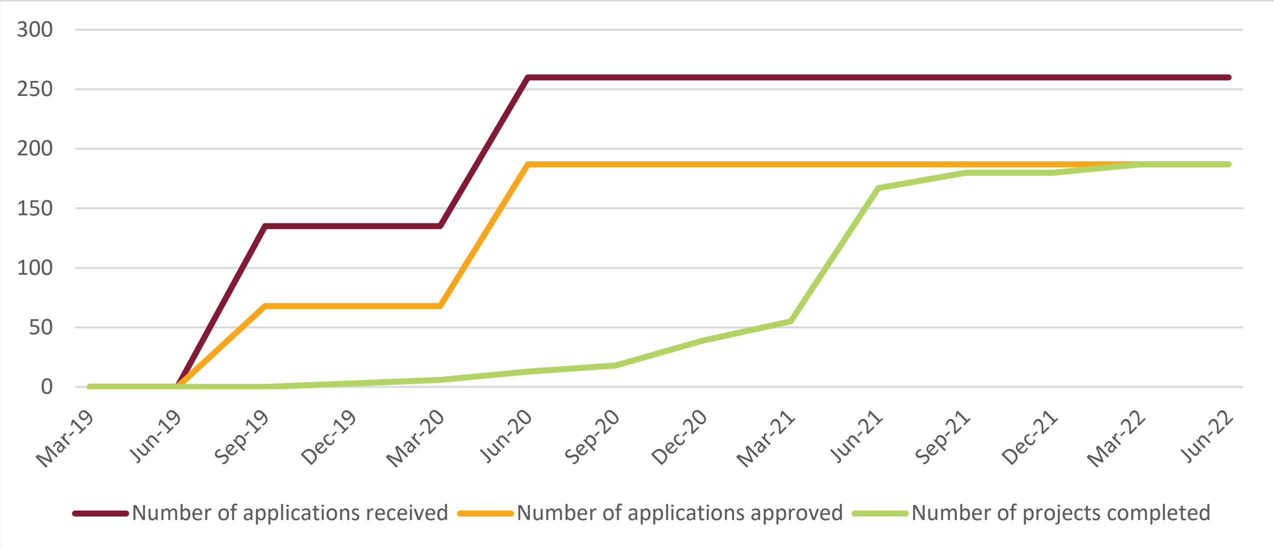
The Queensland Audit Office reviews samples of all programs during delivery and acquittal as part of their audit of Queensland's annual DRFA claim. The Australian National Audit Office also conducts an audit of the claim on behalf of the Australian Government.

Progress monitoring

Quantitative

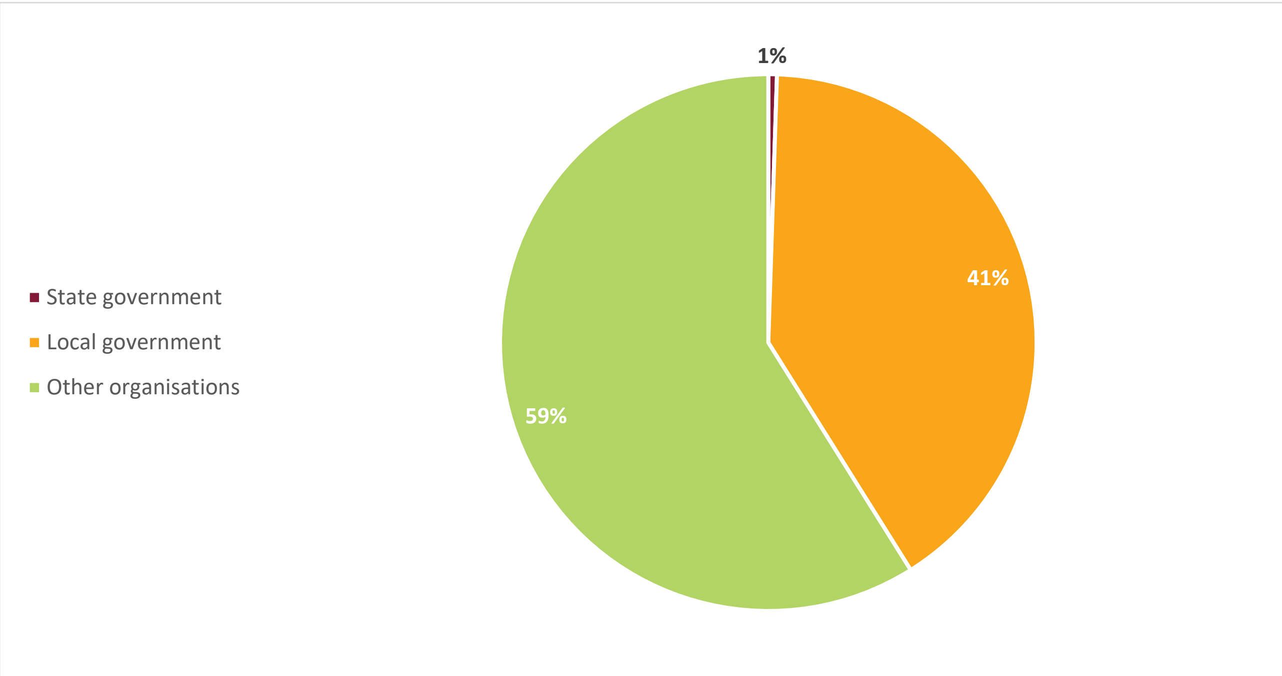
Grant applications over time

Grants were released in two rounds. 187 grant applications were approved from a total of 260 applications received.



Projects funded by organisation

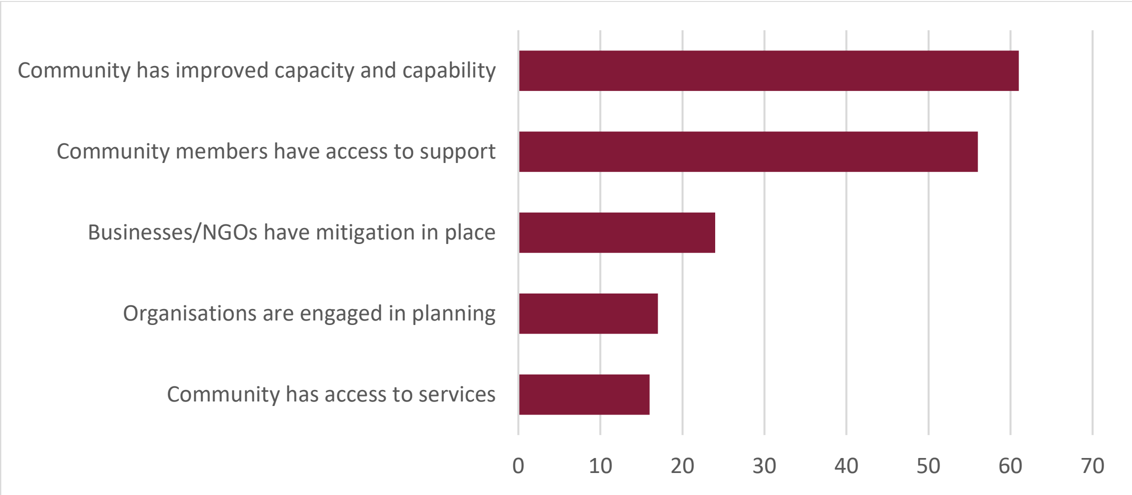
174 projects were funded across 111 unique organisations. Projects were funded for local government (69) and state government (2) organisations, with most of the projects awarded to other entities (103) – such as community groups, non-government agencies, industry groups and non-government organisations.



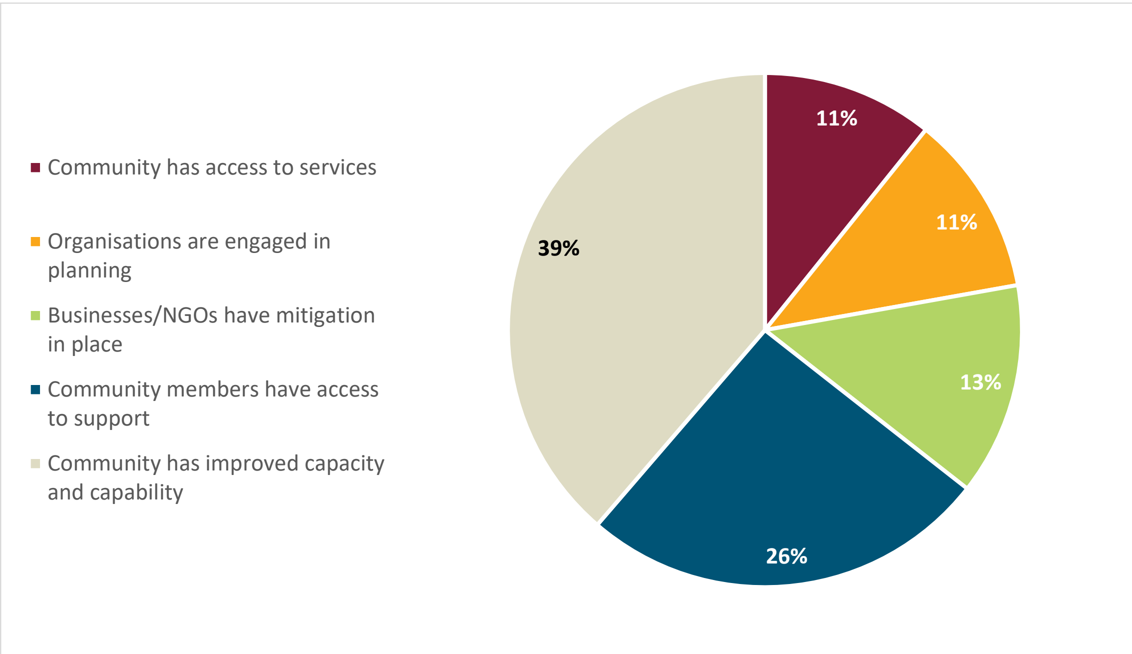
Projects funded by recovery objective

The grants funded 174 projects aligned to the recovery outcomes in the program logic. Most approved projects (61) and funding (39%) related to the community having improved capacity and capability to respond to future disasters.

Number of approved grants by recovery objective



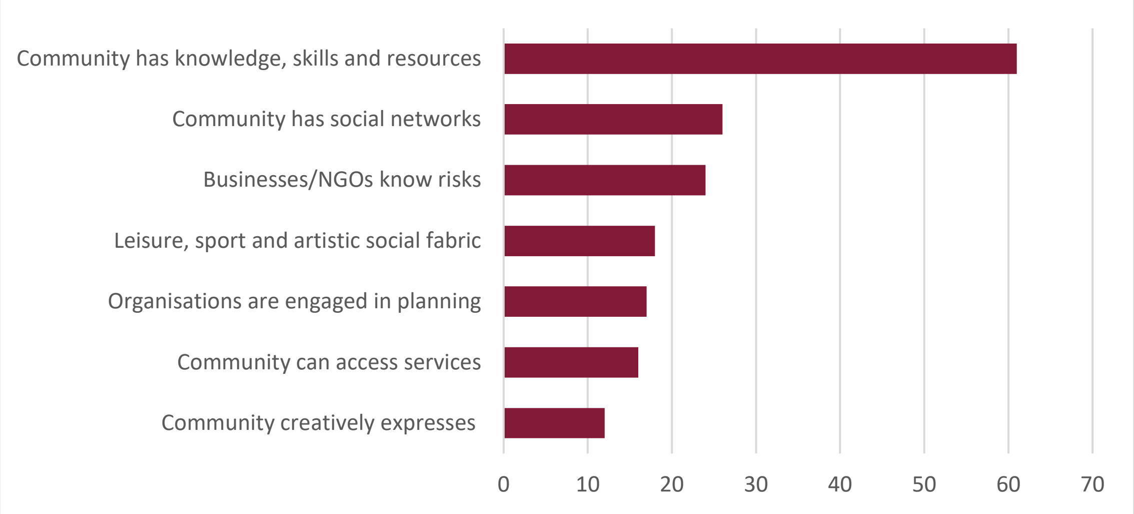
Percentage of approved funding by recovery objective



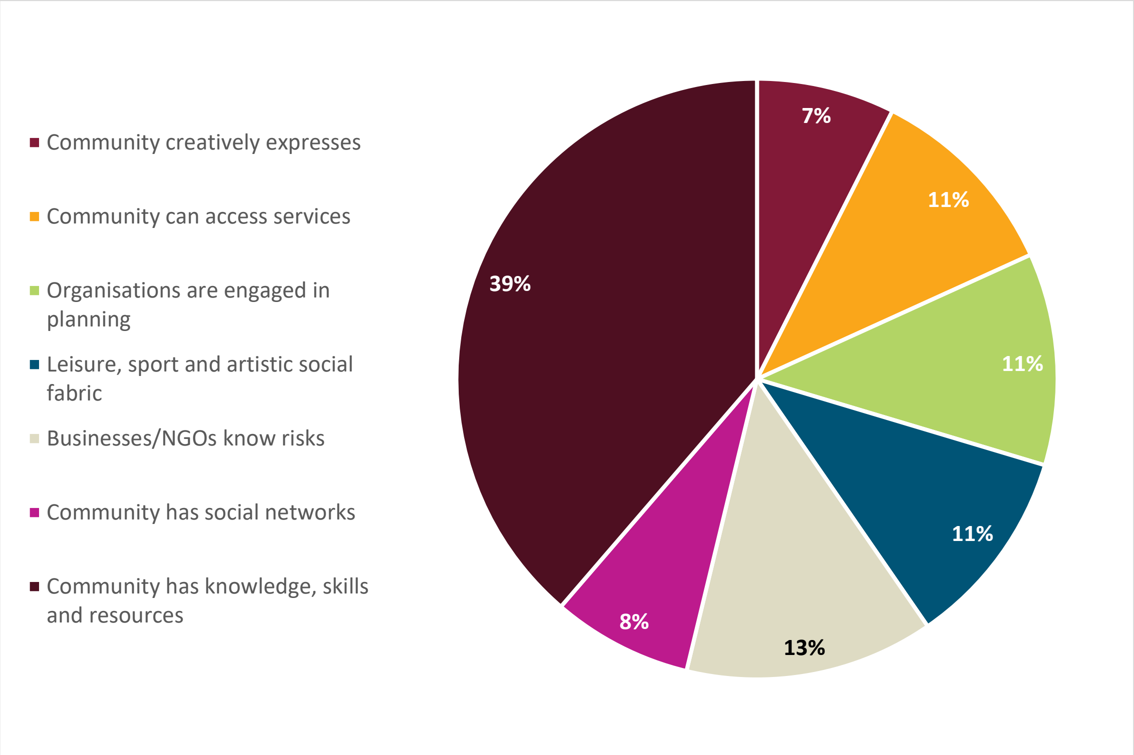
Projects funded by recovery outcome

The grants funded 174 projects aligned to the recovery outcomes in the program logic. Most approved projects (61) and funding (39%) related to the community having the knowledge, skills and resources for dealing with disaster related health risks.

Number of approved grants by recovery outcome



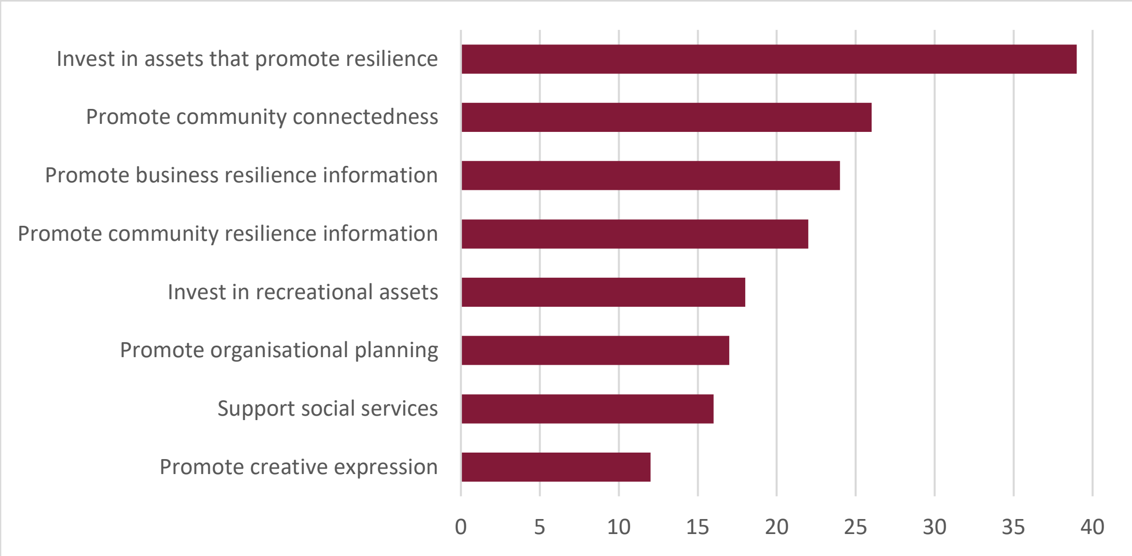
Percentage of approved funding by recovery outcome



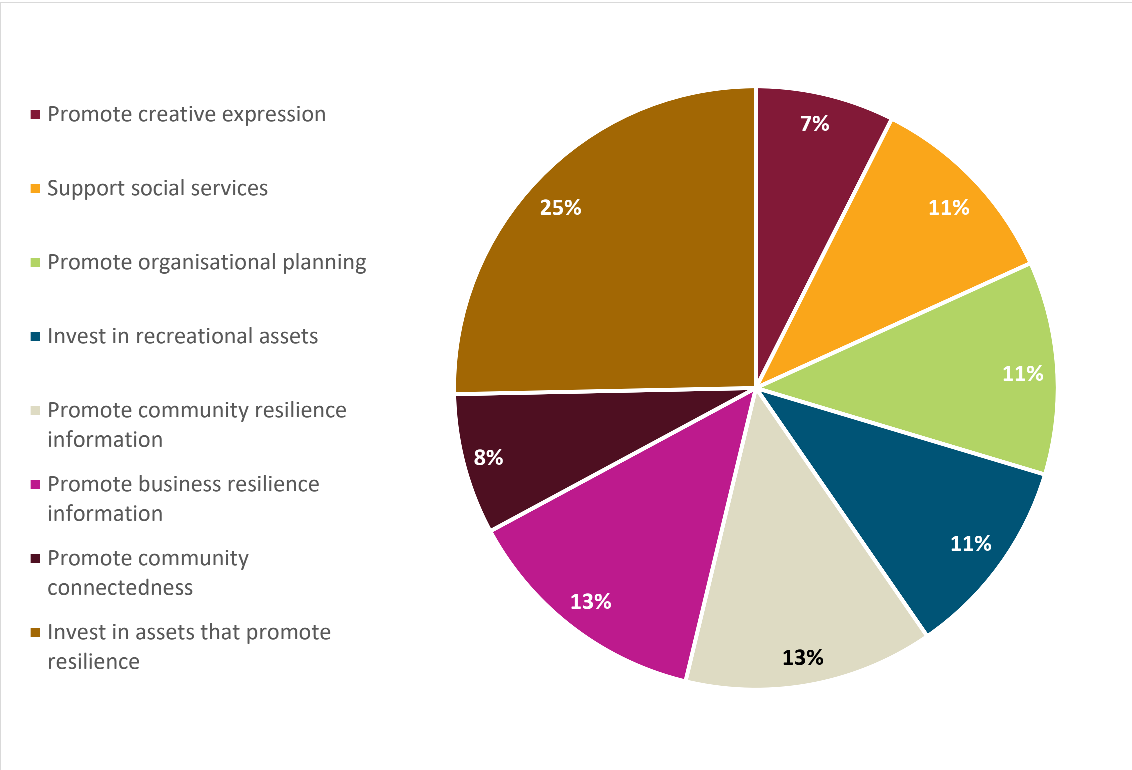
Projects funded by program strategy

The grants funded 174 projects aligned to strategies of the program. Most projects (39) and funding (25%) related to investing in community assets that promote resilience.

Number of approved grants by program strategy



Percentage of approved funding by program strategy

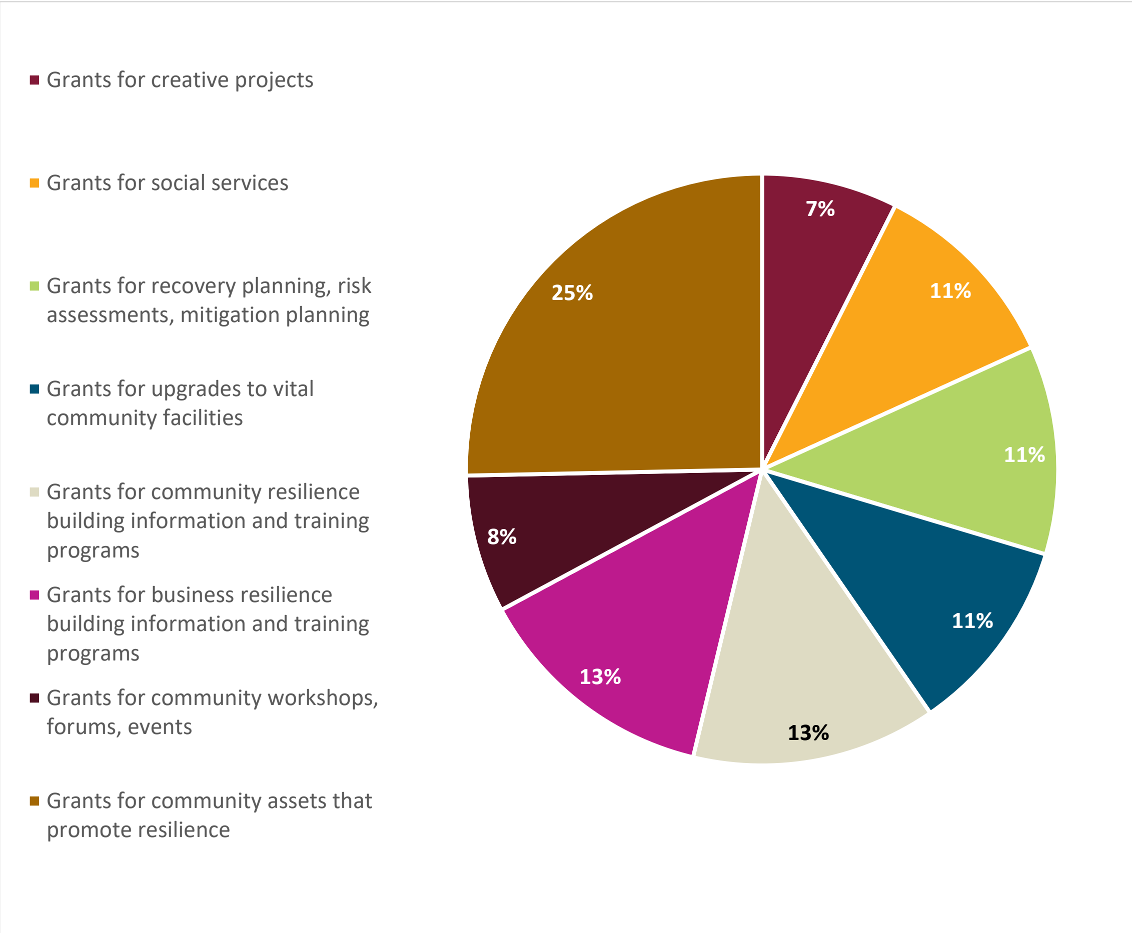


Projects funded by indicator

The grants funded 174 projects aligned to indicators supporting program strategies and recovery outcomes. Most projects (39) and funding (25%) related to grants provided for community assets that promote resilience.

Number of approved grants by indicator

Percentage of approved grants by indicator



Qualitative

Case studies

Throughout grants implementation, case studies were used to highlight examples of qualitative outcomes. Several case studies have been selected and made available for evaluation as indexed below.

Index	Case study	Aligned Recovery Outcomes
CS01	Bloom to Prosper	Community has social networks
CS02	Weather through the Aeons	Community creatively expresses
CS03	Innisfail Men's Shed Improvements	Leisure, sport and artistic activities are part of the community fabric
CS04	Surviving and Thriving in the Grazing Game	Business and non-government organisations know risks
CS05	Four Dams Recreational Fishing	Community has social networks
CS06	Shadow Stories	Community creatively expresses
CS07	LDMG Control Centre Comms Upgrade	Community has knowledge, skills and resources
CS08	Seasons for Growth Project	Community can access services
CS09	Disaster Readiness for the Legal Assistance Sector	Business and non-government organisations know risks
CS10	Enhancing Community Signage	Community has knowledge, skills and resources

Evaluation findings

Governance

Community-managed funds

G6 – Has the governance structure established community-managed funds and other resources for disaster recovery?

A core element of the Flexible Funding Grants Program is to enable representatives of the community to determine their recovery needs and lead initiatives that contribute to sustainable and resilient recovery.

The program design was developed by (then) DCDSS and QRA, following engagement between their regional officers and representatives from the impacted local governments. The program guidelines were endorsed by EMA.

The funding parameters were restricted to small (up to $50,000) and large (up to $150,000) grants. While these parameters limit the scale of each individual community initiative, they also provide a minimum of 100 separate opportunities for community-based organisations to access funds for disaster recovery. Under this program, 174 different initiatives were funded across 111 unique community organisations.

Finding 1: The existing local, State and Commonwealth governance structures established community-managed funds to support disaster recovery and resilience initiatives.

To be eligible for a small or large grant, each applicant was required to include evidence of community support for the project. To access a large grant, applicants were also required to provide evidence of inclusive processes – to identify and prioritise the project – as well as evidence of community participation in developing and implementing the project.

The evidence of community support was considered by DCDSS as part of their grant assessment, forming an important part of the centralised governance arrangements. While evidence of community support was not available for evaluation, examples were shown in case studies of projects implemented collaboratively with other community organisations.

The effectiveness of the governance structure responsible for assessing grant applications could be further demonstrated by cataloguing example applications and evidencing sample decision making processes for publication. This may also provide guidance on future grant applications and other community participants.

Recommendation 1: The governance structure could share examples of sound grant applications and the decision-making processes to provide greater transparency and guide future applicants.

Grant application support was provided to eligible local governments and community organisations by a dedicated network of Community Development Officers (CDOs), funded through the Community Development Program. This was also part of the Community Recovery Package for the Monsoon Trough event.

Nine CDOs based in eight locations, supporting 12 local government areas, recorded more than 8,500 hours supporting Flexible Funding Grant activities with 4,842 participants. These programs complemented each other to maximise grant reach in the impacted communities, enabling 111 organisations to successfully access grants.

Finding 2: The CDOs funded through the Community Development Program supported community organisations to coordinate funding applications.

Once approved, each applicant was responsible for delivering the community project in accordance with their submission. A total of 174 projects were delivered by 111 community organisations by June 2022.

It was reported that three approved projects did not proceed, with the applicants returning funding in full to DCDSS. While reasons were not made clear for evaluation, it represents a minor quantity (approximately 2% of total projects by number) that did not incur program costs.

The flexibility of the grant criteria enabled a wide variety of projects to be delivered throughout the impacted geographical locations. These projects contributed to five recovery objectives and seven recovery outcomes.

Finding 3: The governance structure established community-managed funds available for community-led recovery initiatives across a wide range of impacted geographical areas.

Community engagement

Community access

C1 – To what extent did the community have access to and were engaged in the program?

For the Flexible Funding Grant program, the community is represented by local government and non-government community organisations. This structure appears a suitable way to facilitate funding to community members through an appropriate entity with capacity for project delivery, financial management and governance.

174 different initiatives were funded through 111 unique community organisations across approximately 30 local government areas. This diverse organisational and geographical representation provided opportunities for community members to access or participate in the program.

As concluded in the Governance findings, the CDOs were effective in maximising community awareness and access to the program, recording more than 8,500 hours supporting grant activities with 4,842 participants.

Evidence in case studies highlight community participation in the implementation of the projects. The Bloom and Proper project (case study CS01) reached 63 participants in three rural locations over nine days. The Surviving and Thriving in the Grazing Game project (case study CS04) facilitated 16 workshops attended by 104 primary producers, 19 graziers, 11 agricultural professionals and five financial lenders.

Finding 4: The community likely had access to and participated in the Flexible Funding Grants program.

There are opportunities to further substantiate this finding by expanding evaluation planning – incorporating a mechanism for independently capturing metrics of participants.

Recommendation 2: Evaluation of program reach may be enhanced by capturing metrics on community participation.

Effectiveness

Sustainable community

E1 – To what extent did the disaster recovery program produce a sustainable community?

The Flexible Funding Grant Program targeted three recovery objectives that contribute to sustainable communities:

- Community members can meet health needs
- Community members have access to psychosocial support
- Organisations are engaged in plans for mitigation and management of the recovery.

The success of each objective will be explored individually.

Community members can meet health needs

This objective is linked to the recovery outcome of *community members can access appropriate services to address health needs*. The key strategy of the program was to support community organisations to deliver social services.

Support social services

16 grants (11% in total value) were provided to local government and non-government organisations for new or enhanced social services targeting impacted communities. Examples of funded social services projects included:

- safety for women, youth and children in disasters
- psychosocial and mental health services
- counselling and community support services.

One case study showcased social services:

- CS08 – Seasons for Growth.

This case study highlights the success of the project in delivering two psychological educational programs to individuals experiencing significant change, loss and grief, including:

- Stormbirds program – an evidence-based, trauma informed natural disaster response program supporting youth
- Seasons for Growth program – an early intervention program for all ages to teach effective ways to respond and adapt to the impact of change and loss.

The case study reported outcomes as:

> *"Recipients of the support provided by program facilitators were more likely to communicate their feelings, to set realistic goals, feel more socially connected, and less overwhelmed by change."*

"the project was a success with community members appreciative of the training and resources provided, and the resulting increased capability to support their communities impacted by disaster, significant change, loss and grief."

The case study also identified other indirect benefits to the organisations providing social services – such as schools, churches and community groups. It states that those organisations:

> *"increased their capacity to help in future disasters, including being more capable to work alongside support services in a future disaster, and in sharing knowledge about grief and loss."*

Extent of project reach or examples of participant stories are not available for evaluation.

Finding 5: Flexible Funding Grants supported social service organisations to deliver new or enhanced targeted services to help the community meet their health needs.

Community members have access to psychosocial support

This objective was linked to the following recovery outcomes:

- Community members have social networks to support each other
- Community members have opportunities for creative expression to help recover from disaster
- Leisure, sport and artistic activities are part of the community.

As outlined in the program logic, the strategies aligned to these recovery outcomes respectively are:

- Promote connectedness, support networks and social inclusion
- Promote opportunities for creative expression to help community recovery
- Invest in places for community recreational activities.

Each of these strategies can be explored individually.

Promote connectedness

26 grants (8% in total value) were provided to local government and non-government organisations to promote connectedness, support networks and social inclusion. Examples of funded social inclusion projects included:

- community workshops, forums and programs
- community events – such as fun days, recreational competitions, concerts, festivals and camps.

Two case studies showcased community connectedness projects:

- CS01 – Bloom and Prosper
- CS05 – Four Dams Recreational Fishing.

The Bloom and Prosper case study (CS01) highlights an example of bringing together and supporting vulnerable and isolated women in rural, remote and very remote areas. While being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the project reached 63 participants in three rural locations over nine days.

"The Bloom and Prosper events attracted women from a wide area including Laura and Bloomfield to the north near Cooktown, through to Croydon in the West in Gulf Country, with some travelling 6 hours one way to participate. They came from different circumstances and backgrounds from isolated cattle stations, rural farms, small rural businesses and local government councils."

The case study shares photos of event invitations, the events and some event participants.

In addition to bringing people together, the sessions also focussed on personal resilience content:

"'Community Bred' led the disaster management workshops with practical information which was easy for participants to understand and take home and implement into their existing disaster plan or to start one."

The Four Dams Recreational Fishing case study (CS05) highlights a project aimed at boosting awareness of recreational opportunities within the impacted region. The case study shares the Fish Four Dams website and brochure, designed as part of a promotional campaign to partake in the recreational activity of fishing. Statistics on dam visitors have not been made available for evaluation.

In addition to bringing people together, the project also encouraged tourism opportunities for the impacted regions of Mackay and The Whitsunday, contributing to economic recovery.

Finding 6: Flexible Funding Grants promoted community connectedness and social networks.

Refer to Recommendation 2 in relation to capturing metrics on community participation.

Promote opportunities for creative expression

12 grants (7% in total value) were provided to local government and non-government organisations to promote opportunities for creative expression, to help community recovery. Examples of funded creative projects included:

- public art displays, trails and murals
- storytelling, language retention and messages.

Two case studies showcased creative projects:

- CS02 – Weather through the Aeons
- CS06 – Shadow Stories.

The Weather through the Aeons case study (CS02) highlights painting murals on a community park toilet block depicting the Boulia region's weather events over time. The murals combine messages of the region's unique storytelling with disaster preparedness, while also paying tribute to emergency services personnel. Photographs of the murals have been made available as part of the evaluation.

The Shadow Stories case study (CS06) highlights an example of community participants capturing their personal disaster stories (anonymously) through a community organisation's video production:

"The stories all had clear resilience strategies outlined and were delivered in a positive note, while acknowledging the difficulties experience the focus was on how to keep going and move on."

The video content has not been made available for evaluation. Participant feedback is also unavailable.

Finding 7: Flexible Funding Grants promoted opportunities for creative expression.

Refer also to Recommendation 2 in relation to capturing metrics on community participation.

Invest in recreational assets

18 grants (11% in total value) were provided to local government and non-government organisations to invest in places supporting community recreational activities. Examples of funded recreational assets included showgrounds, gardens, skate parks, arenas and cattle yards.

One case study showcased recreational asset projects:

- CS03 – Innisfail Men's Shed Improvements.

This case study highlights improvements made to an existing facility that provides an important community service aimed at:

- improving the health and wellbeing of members
- reducing the number of men who are at risk from preventable health issues.

The investment was targeted at improving access to the facility during poor weather and disaster events by constructing new concrete driveways, set down areas and drainage.

"There is now all-weather access pads to all buildings including easy entry to the front door and safe parking for elderly members, visitors and disability minibus personnel."

Photographs of the completed works have been made available for evaluation.

Finding 8: Flexible Funding Grants invested in places supporting recreational activities.

Organisations are engaged in plans for mitigation and management of the recovery

A key strategy of the program was to promote organisational mitigation and recovery planning.

Promote organisational planning

17 grants (11% in total value) were provided to local government and non-government organisations to promote organisational mitigation and recovery planning. Examples of funded recovery planning projects included:

- community recovery plans

- flood models
- response strategies
- guidelines and frameworks
- an Engagement Coordinator (human resource)
- risk reduction research
- promotional plans.

Specific case studies were not available for any the 17 organisational planning projects. However, all 10 case studies provide examples of different organisations involved in community recovery more broadly. Overall, the program provided grants to 111 unique community organisations to deliver projects related to community recovery and resilience.

Finding 9: Flexible Funding Grants ensured organisations were engaged in recovery planning activities.

Summary of findings

Through evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data, it is likely the Flexible Funding Grant Program has effectively contributed to producing a more sustainable community.

Finding 10: The Flexible Funding Grant program was generally effective in contributing to a sustainable community.

There are opportunities to further substantiate this finding by:

- capturing additional case studies, particularly in relation to grants for organisational planning
- expanding the evaluation planning to incorporate a mechanism for independently capturing views direct from participants – through interviews, surveys or other anonymous feedback services.

As an example, the case study (CS08) acknowledges a project achievement as:

> *"the project was a success with community members appreciative of the training and resources provided, and the resulting increased capability to support their communities impacted by disaster, significant change, loss and grief."*

This finding could be evidenced through direct feedback from participants, with sourcing managed by either QRA, DCDSS, CDOs, community organisations delivering projects or an independent evaluator.

Recommendation 3: Evaluation of the program's effectiveness may be enhanced by capturing additional case studies and sourcing feedback directly from participants.

Resilient community

E2 – To what extent did the disaster recovery program produce a resilient community?

The Flexible Funding Grant Program targeted two recovery objectives that contribute to resilient communities:

- Community has improved capacity and capability to respond to future disasters
- Business and not for profits have in place adequate mitigation practices for risk and threats.

The success of these objectives will be explored individually.

Community has improved capacity and capability to respond to future disasters

A key strategy to achieve this objective was to promote community resilience to future disasters.

Promote community resilience

61 grants (39% in total value) were provided to local government and non-government organisations to promote community resilience, including:

- 22 grants for community resilience building information and training programs
- 39 grants for community assets promoting resilience.

No case studies were available for community resilience building information and training programs. However, their successful delivery in the community as part of local government's recovery operations was evidenced in Recovery Reporting.

Two case studies showcased projects investing in assets that promote resilience:

- CS07 – Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) Control Centre Communications (Comms) Upgrade
- CS10 – Enhanced Community Signage.

The LDMG Control Centre Comms Upgrade case study (CS07) highlights the investment in a new back-up communication system for the existing Bamaga Council office. The project also funded GPS tracking and satellite communications for staff and coordinators working remotely during disaster response. Project benefits included:

"quick identification and response to areas of impact from events"

"increased the safety for volunteers/workers in undertaking emergency works"

"better and stable communications between the communities of the Northern Peninsula Area enabling increased preparedness through better coordination and hence improve resilience to future events."

The Enhanced Community Signage case study (CS10) highlights the investment in new signage – including an electronic noticeboard, entry signs and a wayfinding sign. The signs provide navigational information and can be updated dynamically to display news and warnings for the community and visitors to the area.

"electronic messaging is already being utilised for all public announcements and cultural activities where all visitors can visually access."

Finding 11: Flexible Funding Grants supported community organisations to promote community resilience.

Business and not for profits have in place adequate mitigation practices for risk and threats

A key strategy to achieving this objective was to promote business resilience to future disasters.

Promote business resilience

24 grants (8% in total value) were provided to community organisations to promote business resilience. Examples of funded business resilience projects included:

- information and training sessions
- leadership programs
- disaster preparedness and business continuity planning.

Targeted business industries and sectors included:

- Agricultural, including primary producers
- Tourism
- Legal
- Financial
- Small to Medium Enterprises.

Topics of sessions funded by the program included:

- Business continuity
- Supply chain resilience.

Two case studies showcased projects promoting business resilience:

- CS04 – Surviving and Thriving in the Grazing Game
- CS09 – Disaster Readiness for the Legal Assistance Sector.

The Surviving and Thriving in the Grazing Game case study (CS04) highlights information sessions that informed primary producers of resilient business practices in the grazing industry across North Queensland. The project facilitated 16 workshops attended by 104 primary producers, 19 graziers, 11 agricultural professionals and five financial lenders.

Workshop attendees were provided with the following content:

> *"a series of presentations from both external presenters and stakeholder employees that aimed to provide information and avenues for future learning on areas identified by the stakeholder groups as being in deficit."*

As a result of the sessions, it was reported that:

> *"Multiple family business succession plans were completed as a result of family members of the business attending this workshop (aided by stakeholder agencies)."*

The Disaster Readiness for the Legal Assistance Sector case study (CS09) highlights a project that aimed to deliver training and resources to those providing legal assistance to businesses and individuals impacted by the disaster. The project concluded several recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the legal assistance sector in the context of disaster events.

Finding 12: Flexible Funding Grants supported community organisations to promote business resilience to future disasters.

Summary of findings

Through evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data, it is likely that the Flexible Funding Grant Program has effectively contributed to producing a more resilient community.

Finding 13: The Flexible Funding Grant program was generally effective in contributing to a resilient community.

Opportunities to further substantiate this finding include expanding evaluation planning to incorporate a mechanism for independently capturing views direct from program participants – through interviews, surveys or other anonymous feedback services.

Refer to recommendation 3.

Efficiency

Value for money

H6 – Did the program achieve value for money relative to the disaster recovery context?

The State Recovery Plan estimates the economic cost of the Monsoon Trough impacts are in the order of $5.68 billion. Almost half can be attributed to human and social consequences, including health, wellbeing and community impacts.

An investment of $15.5 million for community organisations across 39 impacted local government areas, to determine their own recovery priorities, does not appear excessive in relation to the event's scale (0.1%).

$13.6 million was allocated and spent under this program across a range of community initiatives. This spend can be estimated across sustainable and resilient community objectives aligned to the program logic.

Overarching Recovery Objective	Expenditure	Proportion
Sustainable communities	$6.5M	48%
Resilient communities	$7.1M	52%

The program and community organisations appropriately prioritised resilient initiatives in addition to opportunities promoting recovery.

DCDSS delivered the program with internal human resources and grant systems as an in-kind contribution. These were unclaimed program costs due to DRFA eligibility criteria. As a result, the program management and administration costs for the program are reflected as nil.

Finding 14: The Flexible Funding Grant program achieved value for money relative to the $5.68 billion social and economic cost estimate for the Monsoon Trough event.

Across the two funding rounds, only $13.6 million of the $15.5 million was approved and spent, resulting in an underspend of approximately $1.9 million.

It is understood this underspend was not utilised or reallocated to another program, therefore forgoing budget on the total Community Recovery Package. This highlights a potential missed opportunity for either:

- release of an additional Round 3 for small grants later in 2020
- reallocation of underspent funds to another recovery program in demand.

Recommendation 4: The governance structure must exhaust all options to ensure recovery funds are available to meet community needs.

Equity

Fairness and access to recovery support

Q1 – To what extent was the program delivered across different stakeholder, regions and social groups?

The Flexible Funding Grants program was delivered across a wide geographical footprint – involving different stakeholders, regions and social groups.

Organisations

A total of 174 different initiatives were funded across 111 unique community organisations.

Projects were funded for local government (69) and state government (2) organisations, with most of the projects awarded to other entities (103) – such as community groups, non-government agencies, industry groups and non-government organisations.

Townsville City Council received the most at nine projects (5% in value). This allocation appears to align with the State Recovery Plan, highlighting the Townsville region as the most impacted area, identifying 3,299 damaged properties. Three other organisations received seven projects, while all other organisations received six projects or less.

Regions

The projects were distributed among approximately 30 different local government areas across North, Far North and North West Queensland.

Projects were delivered across differing geographies, including:

- community projects (e.g. showground upgrade, mural installation)
- local projects (e.g. events, recovery plans, training programs)
- regional projects (e.g. tourism promotion, psychological training programs).

Social groups

There was evidence of multiple social groups participating in the funded projects, including:

- Community service organisations
- Local government
- Natural resource management groups
- Volunteer groups
- Industry groups
- Not-for-profit and charities
- Business sector
- Tourism sector
- Primary producers
- Families, youth and children
- Schools and education sector
- Sports and recreational clubs

- Arts, cultural and musical groups
- Indigenous groups
- Religious groups.

Outcomes

The program allowed community organisations to determine recovery outcomes, leading to diversity in project allocation. As concluded in the Effectiveness findings of this report, the program contributed to five recovery objectives linked to seven recovery outcomes.

Finding 15: The Flexible Funding Grant program was widely distributed, supporting multiple social groups through an appropriate mix of community organisations.

Implementation

Recovery plan alignment

I3 – To what extent has the program been implemented according to the recovery plan?

The State Recovery Plan identifies the Flexible Funding Grants program as both a recovery and resilience activity, to implement projects driving social recovery and building awareness and resilience within disaster impacted communities.

The State Recovery Plan states the program will be led by DCDSS from September 2019 to June 2021, including a measure of Stage 1 opening by September 2019.

DCDSS led the design and establishment of the program. Round 1 was released in September 2019 as planned. A subsequent Round 2 was released, although not outlined in the State Recovery Plan. DCDSS managed the program through to completion of all projects by June 2021, as planned.

The program demonstrates alignment with Program Guidelines co-developed by DCDSS and QRA, which were endorsed by EMA.

Finding 16: The Flexible Funding Grant program was implemented in accordance with the State Recovery Plan and Program Guidelines.

The program did not exhaust the available funding allocation, resulting in an underspend of approximately $1.9 million. Refer to the Efficiency findings.

Conclusion

The evaluation has concluded the Flexible Funding Grants Program contributed to the recovery and resilience of the communities impacted by the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough disaster. Key findings of the evaluation are provided below.

Governance

1. The existing local, State and Commonwealth governance structures established community-managed funds to support disaster recovery and resilience initiatives.
2. The CDOs funded through the Community Development Program supported community organisations to coordinate funding applications.
3. The governance structure established community-managed funds available for community-led recovery initiatives across a wide range of impacted geographical areas.

Community engagement

4. The community likely had access to and participated in the Flexible Funding Grants program.

Effectiveness

5. Flexible Funding Grants supported social service organisations to deliver new or enhanced targeted services to help the community meet their health needs.
6. Flexible Funding Grants promoted community connectedness and social networks.
7. Flexible Funding Grants promoted opportunities for creative expression.
8. Flexible Funding Grants invested in places supporting recreational activities.
9. Flexible Funding Grants ensured organisations were engaged in recovery planning activities.
10. The Flexible Funding Grant program was generally effective in contributing to a sustainable community.
11. Flexible Funding Grants supported community organisations to promote community resilience.
12. Flexible Funding Grants supported community organisations to promote business resilience to future disasters.
13. The Flexible Funding Grant program was generally effective in contributing to a resilient community.

Efficiency

14. The Flexible Funding Grant program achieved value for money relative to the $5.68 billion social and economic cost estimate for the Monsoon Trough event.

Equity

15. The Flexible Funding Grant program was widely distributed, supporting multiple social groups through an appropriate mix of community organisations.

Implementation

16. The Flexible Funding Grant program was implemented in accordance with the State Recovery Plan and Program Guidelines.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided to improve the effectiveness of future disaster recovery programs:

Recommendation 1

The governance structure could share examples of sound grant applications and the decision-making processes to provide greater transparency and guide future applicants.

Recommendation 2

Evaluation of program reach may be enhanced by capturing metrics on community participants.

Recommendation 3

Evaluation of the program's effectiveness may be enhanced by capturing additional case studies and sourcing feedback directly from participants.

Recommendation 4

The governance structure must exhaust all options to ensure recovery funds are available to meet community needs.

Appendices

Appendix A – Background

2019 North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough

Impacts

The North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough – 25 January to 14 February 2019 (Monsoon Trough) produced exceptional rainfall that caused disruption and damage to communities in Far North Queensland.

The record-breaking rainfall cut off communities, devastated the livestock industry, left the freight industry at a standstill and destroyed infrastructure, homes and businesses. Over 56 per cent of the state's land mass was impacted, with 39 LGAs activated for joint State and Commonwealth DRFA assistance.

More than 70 locations experienced record daily rainfalls, 20 experienced record accumulated rainfall over 10 days and 18 locations set new records for the number of consecutive days of high (50mm or more) rainfall. In and around Townsville, the accumulated daily rainfall totals were the highest since records began in 1888.

The cascading and compounding consequences of this event are yet to be fully quantified but the long-term social and economic cost has been estimated by Deloitte Access Economics at $5.68 billion. Damage to agriculture is estimated at $432 million, including livestock losses of up to 500,000 cattle and 30,000 sheep.

Small business disruption has been estimated at $116 million with 97 per cent of small businesses surveyed across the most heavily flooded areas reporting financial impacts including closures, trade interruptions, forward booking cancellations and damage to premises and equipment.

The extraordinary scale of damage to critical infrastructure included impacts to 6420km of state roads, 307km of Mount Isa rail line, 1000km of water pipelines, 15,000km of on-farm roads and 10,000km of fencing, bringing ongoing financial hardship to individuals, small business and industry until repairs can be undertaken across some of the most remote and challenging terrain in the country.

The closure of the Mount Isa rail line critically disrupted mining and minerals production – the major employer in North West Queensland. Glencore's Collinsville mine, Newlands Coal mine and Incitec Pivot's fertiliser facility were partially shut down – incurring extraordinary costs associated with alternative storage and freight of product.

With more than 116,667 people identified as experiencing hardship, the economic and social recovery from this large-scale disaster is beyond the capacity of local communities to facilitate and will be a long-term effort requiring collaboration and cooperation by all levels of government.

Response

Human and Social
DCDSS, together with partner agencies, established more than 30 community recovery hubs in the most impacted areas in the north, far north and north west of Queensland, providing services to more than 37,000 people.

Building
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) coordinated initial Damage Assessments (DAs) to determine immediate impacts. With the assistance of QRA, QFES undertook 8467 Damage Assessment inspections with approximately 40 per cent of the properties reported as damaged and 15 per cent as uninhabitable. QFES also assisted residents by providing targeted wash out services to more than 300 flooded homes.

Roads and Transport
The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has been progressively assessing and restoring access to the 6420km of state-controlled road network impacted from the event. Inspections and emergency works were required to maintain road access where possible with more than $20 million spent on counter disaster operations, emergency and immediate reconstruction works. TMR also removed 131 carcasses from state-controlled roads in impacted LGAs.

The Flood Recovery Road Access Group (FRRAG) was activated to manage emergency and disaster heavy vehicle access for freight consignors and heavy vehicle transport operators travelling in the affected areas; 86 enquiries were received with 31 permits issued.
The Rail Recovery Taskforce was established to lead the repair of 204 sites across 307km of flood-damaged track on the Mount Isa rail line. Over 400 employees and contractors were mobilised to accelerate the repairs and temporary workers camps established at Julia Creek and Richmond.

Economic
Recovery assistance for primary producers, small business and non-profit organisations has been activated under DRFA. As at 23 August 2019, more than $93 million has been paid to 2224 primary producers, small businesses and not for profits. In addition, 46 Disaster Assistance Loans totalling over $6.3 million have been approved for 15 primary producers and 31 small businesses impacted by the event.

As at 23 August, the Townsville Small Business Recovery Centre had provided 2450 lines of assistance to local businesses. Surveys were also conducted with a total of 794 small businesses and 172 primary producers participating.

Environment
Assessments have been undertaken with regards to riparian damage, biodiversity and habitat loss including the assessment and reopening of 41 national parks. Helping to ensure the safety of the community, saltwater and freshwater crocodiles surveys were undertaken and high risk animals relocated (if safe to do so) as well as increasing key messaging to the community on high risk native wildlife.

Early engagement was undertaken with mining and industrial sites to ensure recovery actions were environmentally safe and compliant with environmental approvals.

Consequences

Estimated impacts	Economic cost
Human and Social • Health, wellbeing and community impacts • Emergency response and clean-up	**$2.419 billion**
Building • Residential damage • Commercial damage • Public asset damage	**$1.927 billion**
Roads and Transport • State road damage • Local road damage • Rail damage	**$742 million**
Economic • Primary production damage and disruption • Small business disruption	**$548 million**
Environment • Riparian streambank damage • Coastal erosion • Pest and disease outbreaks	**$44 million**
Total cost	**$5.68 billion**

Source: Deloitte Access Economics estimates – The social and economic cost of the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough (2019)

Queensland's disaster in numbers

$5.68 billion estimated social and economic cost of the Monsoon Trough event

HUMAN AND SOCIAL

66,728 calls to the Community Recovery Hotline

$2.419 billion estimated health, social and community impacts

$33 million in PHAS grants paid benefitting **116,667 people**

1800 people assisted with housing support

39 Local Government Areas (LGAs) activated for Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements

DRFA ACTIVATION

64,823 people assisted with psychological first aid

4483 requests for assistance received by State Emergency Service during the event

Activated LGAs cover an area of 100 million hectares = 56% of Queensland's land mass

56%

BUILDING

$50 million estimated damage to other **public** assets

3,300 properties damaged

$1.46 billion estimated damage to **residential** property

$14.5 million estimated damage to public **water** and **sewerage** infrastructure

$402 million estimated damage to **commercial** property

ROADS AND TRANSPORT

$742 million estimated damage to roads and transport infrastructure

307km of Mt Isa rail line impacted including
200km severe damage
204 sites of severe erosion
38 bridge abutments damaged

6420km of State road network impacted

40,000km of local government roads in the impact zone

ECONOMIC

More than **27,300** insurance claims lodged with a combined value of **$1.132 billion**

$432 million estimated damage and disruption to primary production

Livestock losses up to **500,000 cattle** and **30,000 sheep**

Direct impacts to small business estimated at **$44.8 million**

More than **17,000 small businesses** in the impact zone

Small business disruption estimated at **$116 million**

on-farm infrastructure damage
10,000km of fencing
1000km of water pipelines
15,000km of on-farm roads

$320 million mining revenue losses estimated due to **rail closure**

2300 bales of hay transported for Fodder Drop Operations

ENVIRONMENT

Rainfall & Flooding
TOWNSVILLE – 1257mm in 10 days
PALUMA, WOOLSHED & UPPER BLUEWATER – more than 2000mm in 12 days
70 locations BROKE **DAILY** RECORDS
20 locations BROKE **ACCUMULATED 10 DAY** RECORDS

Ross River Dam reached **248%** capacity

Floodwaters **700km** long and up to **70km** wide covered **15,000km²** in the Flinders and Norman River basins

Accumulated **TOTALS** from consecutive days of heavy **RAINFALL** in and around Townsville were the **highest** since records began in 1888

41 national parks and state forests **closed**

≥ $40 million estimated damage to riparian, streambank and coastal areas

15

North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough | State Recovery Plan 2019-2021

State recovery planning

North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough – State Recovery Plan

Major General (Retired) Stuart Smith, had his role extended on 8 February 2019 to include leading recovery from the Monsoon Trough flooding. The role involved development and implementation of the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough – State Recovery Plan 2019-2021 (Recovery Plan) to assist communities
to recover, rebuild and reconnect as stronger and more resilient.

The Recovery Plan acknowledges that successful recovery relies on a collaborative, coordinated, adaptable, scalable approach where the responsibility for disaster recovery is shared between all sectors of the community. This includes individuals, families, community groups, businesses and all levels of government. Locally-led approaches to recovery support rapid restoration of services essential to human wellbeing and present an opportunity to build resilience and improve community circumstances and preparedness beyond their pre-disaster state.

The Recovery Plan follows this framework to be delivered across five recognised lines of disaster recovery – Human and Social, Building, Roads and Transport, Economic and Environment. The Recovery Plan recognises the lead role local governments play in the recovery process and the need for them to develop local recovery plans to help guide restoration and enhancement of infrastructure, support vulnerable and isolated members of the community, increase disaster preparedness and build resilience for the future.

Roles and responsibilities

Local government
The Recovery Plan recognises that local governments have a legislated responsibility through the *Disaster Management Act 2003* for implementation of local disaster management plans.

Queensland Reconstruction Authority
QRA is the lead agency for coordination and development of disaster recovery, resilience and mitigation policy in Queensland. QRA supports the delivery of recovery and reconstruction projects for communities impacted by the Monsoon Trough from a state perspective by providing coordination and facilitation of communication across the five Functional Recovery Groups (FRGs) to achieve whole of community outcomes. QRA also administers funding assistance on behalf of the Commonwealth and Queensland governments under the DRFA. QRA will provide regular recovery reports outlining progress across local governments, as informed by the FRGs at a state level. QRA will also report on the recovery process to the QDMC.

State Recovery Policy and Planning Coordinator
The Chief Executive Officer of QRA also fulfils the role of the State Recovery Policy and Planning Coordinator (SRPPC). The SRPPC works with the SRC to ensure a smooth transition between response and recovery, as well as overseeing recovery operations including state level preparedness and recovery policy, planning and capability development.

State Recovery Coordinator
The SRC works in partnership with the SRPPC to coordinate recovery activities for the Monsoon Trough, report regularly to the QDMC and provide strategic advice to government agencies undertaking disaster recovery work.

Deputy State Recovery Coordinator

The DSRC provides local support – geographically located in Townsville for the Monsoon Trough – to the SRC and Queensland Government with critical insights on how to best assist communities on their road to recovery.

Other groups

Further information on the roles and responsibilities of the following entities and positions are detailed in the *Queensland Recovery Plan* and the *State Recovery Coordinator Guide 2018*:

- Local Recovery Groups (LRGs)
- Local Disaster Management Groups (LDMGs)
- Functional Recovery Groups (FRGs)
- Queensland Disaster Management Committee (QDMC)
- The Minister responsible for reconstruction and recovery
- State Recovery Coordinator (SRC)
- Deputy State Recovery Coordinator (DSRC).

Human and social recovery plan

Impact summary

DCDSS has identified a number of key community support, health and wellbeing recovery impacts and issues across various locations and interest groups.

Financial counsellors have reported a significant increase in demand for financial support and low levels of financial literacy with issues being raised such as:

- Nil or insufficient insurance coverage.
- Uninsured but contractually rented contents destroyed by floods. This means renters are not eligible for grants (as they do not own the contents) but must continue to pay rent as per the contract.

Provision of a range of social, emotional and psychological support services:

- Partner agencies have provided 63,600 instances of psychological first aid.
- More than 30 Community Recovery Hubs and Pop-Up Hubs established.
- 8880 Outreach visits conducted to provide support to impacted communities.
- Four Community Recovery Referral and Information Centres and a Rental Recovery Hub have provided support across North, Far North and North West Queensland.

Mental health and wellbeing:

- The cumulative impact of many years of drought, as well as unanticipated flooding, has had a profound effect on the wellbeing of community members.
- To date, 1344 instances of acute mental health support have been provided by agencies such as Queensland Health and North West Rural and Remote Health Services.

Housing and accommodation:

- 3299 properties damaged
- 805 requests received for Emergency Housing Assistance.

Community Disruption:

- Disruption of community social events, volunteering and community service activities due to impacts upon volunteers and staff; impacts upon sporting or service facilities; access and egress issues; financial capacity of business to support events and community members capacity to attend.

Recovery outcomes

Sustainability

- Adequate housing is available to community members at appropriate times in the recovery process.
- Community members have access and are able to meet health needs (including mental health) arising from the disaster.
- Community members have access to psychosocial support.
- Households, families and individuals can act autonomously to contribute to the recovery process.
- Community members have access to education services.
- Community members have access to appropriate and coordinated social services.
- Community members feel sufficiently safe and secure following a disaster to engage in social activities and interactions with other members of the community.

Resilience

- The community has improved capacity and capability to respond to future disasters.
- The Community Recovery Package delivered targeted support to individuals and families to recover from the Monsoon Trough event, as well as building community capacity to more effectively respond to future events.

Program

Program guidelines

Eligibility criteria

Eligible applicants

- Local governments activated for DRFA for the Monsoon Trough.
- Non-government and community organisations with eligible project proposals within the DRFA-activated local government areas for the Monsoon Trough.

Eligible projects

- projects must support communities located within local government areas activated for DRFA for the Monsoon Trough event (refer to the activations summary https://www.qra.qld.gov.au/activations)
- projects must contribute to the recovery of the community from the impact of the disaster and to the future disaster preparedness of the community
- projects must support community-led engagement activities, partnerships and collaboration and the development of local recovery initiatives:
    - reducing future risks in line with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework and minimise community dependence on government assistance
    - enhancing self-efficacy and community-efficacy
    - minimising negative impacts and embrace opportunities
    - promoting connectedness, encourage support networks and social inclusion
    - supporting and promote opportunities for sustainable economic recovery
    - supporting business and service provider continuity
    - promoting preparedness and resilience to future disasters

Ineligible projects

- Clean up activities
- Replacing losses covered by insurance or claimable through other funding sources
- Privately owned cultural assets, including collections, buildings and spaces
- Capital works/places/objects owned by a State or Commonwealth Government department, agency or authority
- Restoration of infrastructure such as buildings, roads or bridges
- Environmental restoration
- Covering existing debts or budget deficits
- Projects that are not related to disaster recovery from or future disaster resilience
- Projects that have a political or religious outcomes focus
- Projects that may have a negative impact on existing businesses/services
- Projects benefiting individuals or individual businesses or primary producers
- Facilities that are not open to the whole community

Eligible costs

Costs directly associated with delivering the approved project, and excluding ineligible costs.

Ineligible costs

- costs associated with ineligible project activities
- costs of preparing applications, reports or associated supporting material
- legal costs
- in-kind contributions
- purchase of land or property
- salaries or general operating costs not directly associated with delivering an approved project
- cash prizes or commercial gifts
- work already commenced or been completed
- core business for an organisation
- purchase of core business capital equipment such as motor vehicles and office equipment
- remuneration of permanent or executive officers
- land acquisition costs
- duplication of existing initiatives
- furnishings and supplies
- temporary works, other than those required to enable completion of the proposed project
- ongoing costs for administration, operation or maintenance

- remuneration of employees for work not directly related to the proposed project
- unsupported on-cost charges and non-specific indirect and overhead costs
- vehicle leasing, unless directly related to the delivery of the project

These lists identify the most common examples and are not intended to be prescriptive or comprehensive.

Appendix B – Evaluation plan

Program outcomes

The North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough State Recovery Plan 2019-2021 identified high level recovery outcomes organised around the five functional lines of recovery. The community recovery outcomes that relate to the Flexible Funding Grants Program are as follows:

- Community members have access and can meet health needs arising from the disaster
- Community members have access to psychosocial support
- Community has improved capacity and capability to respond to future disasters
- Business and not for profits have in place adequate mitigation practices for risk and threats.

The Flexible Funding Grants Program Guidelines also referenced recovery outcomes including:

- Organisations are engaged in plans for mitigation and management of the recovery.

Program logic

A program logic diagram has been developed and is included as *Appendix C*.

The diagram shows the logical relationship for how:

- outputs can be measured against indicators
- indicators relate to the program strategies
- program strategies achieve recovery objectives
- recovery objectives align to the overall recovery objective of sustainable and resilient communities.

Program monitoring data

Quantitative

The quantitative data planned for regular and ongoing monitoring is the:

- number of grant applications received
- number of grant applications approved
- total value of grant applications approved.

Qualitative

The qualitative data planned for regular and ongoing monitoring is:

- case studies.

Financial

The financial data planned for regular and ongoing monitoring is the:

- total expenditure to date.

State reporting

Recovery reporting

The quantitative and qualitative monitoring data and financial progress reports were referenced by QRA to inform the requirements of progress reports prepared as part of the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough State Recovery Plan 2019-2021.

Community Recovery Package reporting

The quantitative and qualitative monitoring data and financial progress reports were reviewed, aggregated and summarised by QRA; then submitted to EMA as part of the DRFA Category C Community Recovery Package reporting arrangements.

Program reviews

QRA conducted regular program reviews of all DRFA funded programs, including a comprehensive program review three times each year. The Flexible Funding Grants Program was incorporated in this review, with time allocated for DCDSS representatives or QRA liaison officers to brief the QRA Executive team on the program and progress.

Program evaluation

Key evaluation questions

Key evaluation questions (KEQ) give focus to different aspects of a disaster recovery program. A list of KEQs is provided in the framework, which has been considered and sampled in the evaluation of the Flexible Funding Grants Program. Additional KEQs have been developed by QRA to support further evaluative activity specific to this program.

KEQs have been sampled based on:

- relevance to this program
- availability of monitoring data
- coverage of all five evaluation aspects of a disaster recovery program.

KEQs sampled for this evaluation are indicated with a tick (ü).

Governance

To evaluate the governance of disaster recovery programs, the following KEQs were sampled to assess whether the governance structure helped to achieve recovery outcomes.

Governance key evaluation questions		Sampled
G1	Has the governance structure taken a long-term perspective on outcomes and recognised the complexity of the process?	
G2	Has the governance structure ensured recovery programs are monitored on a regular basis?	
G3	Has the governance structure ensured programs are adaptive to changing needs and impact?	
G4	Has the governance structure ensured recovery plans clearly define roles and responsibilities for disaster recovery?	
G5	Has the governance structure ensured governance procedures conform to legislation, policies, and other plans?	
G6	Has the governance structure established community-managed funds and other resources for disaster recovery?	✓
G7	Is there a shared understanding among stakeholders regarding disaster recovery responsibilities, authority and decision-making?	
G8	Has the governance structure ensured that governance is transparent and accountable?	
G9	Has the governance structure managed unintended consequences that might flow from recovery activities?	
G10	Has the governance structure coordinated response and relief efforts with the recovery process so that the two ‘work together’?	

Community engagement

To evaluate the community engagement on disaster recovery programs, the following KEQs have been sampled to assess whether the engagement process appropriately drew from the community to ensure the community was integral to the recovery process.

Community engagement key evaluation questions		Sampled
C1	To what extent did the community have access to and were engaged in the program?	✓
C2	Has community engagement occurred in a timely and on-going way that provides adequate representation of community views?	
C3	Is there shared vision of a sustainable and resilient community that is understood by the community?	
C4	Has there been joint planning between community actors and emergency teams and structures?	
C5	Do organisations have capacity to develop and manage community volunteers for disaster recovery?	
C6	Are recovery plans developed through participatory processes?	
C7	Does the community have the capacity and formal avenues to lobby and challenge external agencies on disaster recovery plans, priorities, and actions?	
C8	Is there inclusion/representation of vulnerable groups in community decision-making and management of disaster recovery?	
C9	Are agreed plans and management arrangements well understood by the community and all disaster management agencies?	
C10	Has information been developed and disseminated in multiple media, multi-lingual formats, alternative formats; is appropriate to a diverse audience, user-friendly; and accessible to under-served populations?	
C11	Do community members have information they need to continue recovering from the disaster?	
C12	Are evolving community needs assessed and prioritised during the recovery process to inform recovery activities?	
C13	Are governance processes appropriately inclusive and representative of the affected community?	

Effectiveness

To evaluate the effectiveness of disaster recovery programs, the following KEQs have been sampled to assess whether the program was effective in achieving the overarching recovery outcomes.

Effectiveness key evaluation questions		Sampled
E1	To what extent did the disaster recovery program produce a sustainable community?	✓
E2	To what extent did the disaster recovery program produce a resilient community?	✓
E3	Was there any trade-off between achieving resilient outcomes and sustainable outcomes?	
E4	To what extent did program activities and resources allow positive interaction among the recovery domains (lines of recovery / other programs)?	

Efficiency

To evaluate the effectiveness of disaster recovery programs, the following KEQs have been sampled to assess whether the program was efficient in its implementation.

Efficiency key evaluation questions		Sampled
H1	How cost effective was the program?	
H2	To what extent did the program achieve the right balance between centralisation of some activities to achieve economies of scale while at the same time being responsive to local needs and conditions?	
H3	Did the program prevent price escalation stemming from the level of demand and competition between organisations?	
H4	How well did the program balance the need to optimise between cost of restoring essential public assets and the cost of delaying such projects?	
H5	How appropriate were the price benchmarks used to evaluate service providers?	
H6	Did the program achieve value for money relative to the disaster recovery context?	✓

Equity

To evaluate the equity of disaster recovery programs, the following KEQ has been sampled to assess whether the program was equitable in its implementation.

Equity key evaluation questions		Sampled
Q1	To what extent was program delivered across different stakeholder, regions and social groups?	✓

Implementation

To evaluate the effectiveness of disaster recovery programs, the following KEQs have been sampled to assess whether implementation of the program was appropriate.

Implementation key evaluation questions		Sampled
I1	To what extent was the program delivered as intended?	
I2	Was the program consistent with the National Principles for Disaster Recovery?	
I3	To what extent has the program been implemented according to the recovery plan?	✓
I4	Did the speed of the recovery process compromise quality of services?	
I5	Did the recovery program meet community needs as they changed over time and in response to changes in disaster impact?	
I6	To what extent did program activities and resources effectively encourage interaction between outcome domains?	
I7	Where disaster recovery involved several separate components or projects, how well coordinated were these with each other?	
I8	To what extent was the recovery process affected by external factors that may have had an impact on the community's ability to recover?	

Dissemination of findings

The evaluation will be shared with relevant Queensland Government departments and agencies.

A copy of the evaluation report will be uploaded to the National Disaster Recovery Monitoring and Evaluation Database hosted by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience.

Queensland Government

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