



QUEENSLAND RECONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY

Evaluation Report

Community Development Program Community Recovery Package

**Queensland Bushfires
September – December 2019**

December 2022

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Introduction

The 2019 bushfire season in Queensland was catastrophic. At the height of the season, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) was dealing with more than 90 bushfires at one time.

The Southern Queensland Bushfires and the Stradbroke Bushfires both occurred in September, and the Eastern Queensland Bushfires burnt throughout November and December. Additionally, fires in other parts of the state resulted in the merging of the bushfire events into one disaster event - Queensland Bushfires, September – December 2019. More than seven and a half million hectares burnt state-wide, resulting in the activation of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) for 23 of the 77 Local Government Areas (LGAs).

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

The purpose of the Community Development Program is to accelerate recovery and build resilience of those communities impacted by the Queensland bushfires, September – December 2019.

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 2022.

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 the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA), The Deloitte Overarching Disaster Recovery Evaluation Framework has also been reviewed and incorporated within this evaluation.

In conclusion, the evaluation of the Community Development Program was shown to contribute to the recovery of the communities and local economies impacted by the Queensland Bushfires. Detailed findings were documented in response to key evaluation questions.

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

This report will be published on the National Disaster Recovery Monitoring and Evaluation Database hosted by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience.

Program Implementation

Summary

Scope

As part of the DRFA Category C assistance, a total of \$3 million was available under the Community Development Program across 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22.

The objective of the Community Development Program is to provide a best-practice and comprehensive response to support communities as they recover from the cumulative impacts of drought and the Southern and Eastern Queensland Bushfires, while minimising longer-term costs to the state.

The Community Development Program intended to support community-led initiatives, facilitate linkages, collaboration and partnerships between and across groups, support and enable the development and achievement of the objectives in their recovery and resilience planning, and have a focus on building upon the strengths and capabilities of the affected communities.

Community Development Officers (CDOs) were implemented to establish a local face-to-face presence across the affected communities to engage and identify community needs and aspirations, facilitate developmental opportunities, facilitate community planning days, and to support and nurture prioritised community recovery and resilience projects.

CDOs were engaged to establish strong working relationships with other key stakeholders involved in community recovery at local and district levels. This included working with stakeholders to ensure they have the ability to effectively plan for long-term sustainability of their communities and are best placed to build capacity in preparedness for and resilience to future disasters.

The lead delivery agency was the (then) Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (DCDSS), engaging with local government as delivery partners to employ five CDOs working within the following regional centres:

- Livingstone
- Noosa
- Somerset
- Southern Downs
- Scenic Rim.

CDOs were employed over a 24-month period through to June 2022. The CDO's recorded their time spent on community development activities as:

- 6,839 hours developing and delivering events
- 1,014 hours developing resources and tools
- 873 hours on training and learning
- 2,816 hours in supporting flexible funding grant (FFG) activities
- 1,063 hours developing recovery and resilience (RR) plans.

CDOs recorded participation in the community development activities as:

- 35,444 participants in events
- 3,955 participants in training activities
- 2,816 participants in FFG activities
- 7,315 participants in developing RR plans.

CDOs also recorded participation from other community agencies in their community development activities as:

- 3,955 community agencies participating in events.

Note: totals are cumulative count of all participants

Cost

The program was implemented for \$2.175 million (72.5% of budget).

Item	Budget	Actual cost
Community Development Program	\$3 million	\$2.175 million

Time

Four of the five CDOs were appointed by September 2020, with the final CDO appointed in early 2021.

Milestone	Target date	Actual date
CDOs appointed	Jun-20	Sep-20/Feb-21
Program completion	Jun-22	Jun-22

Governance activity

Contractual arrangements

DCDSS engaged directly with local government to enter a formal agreement under the Community Development Program, providing funding for human resources and other community development resources, such as event facility hire and training materials.

Each CDO was employed directly by a respective council. Councils were responsible for managing the CDOs and overseeing their work and reporting.

Advisory group

To ensure collaboration and integration of recovery initiatives, DCDSS implemented a district level governance structure. Each group was proposed to include stakeholders from the following groups:

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

Program reviews

QRA conducted regular program reviews which incorporated financial and progress assessments of the Community Development 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.

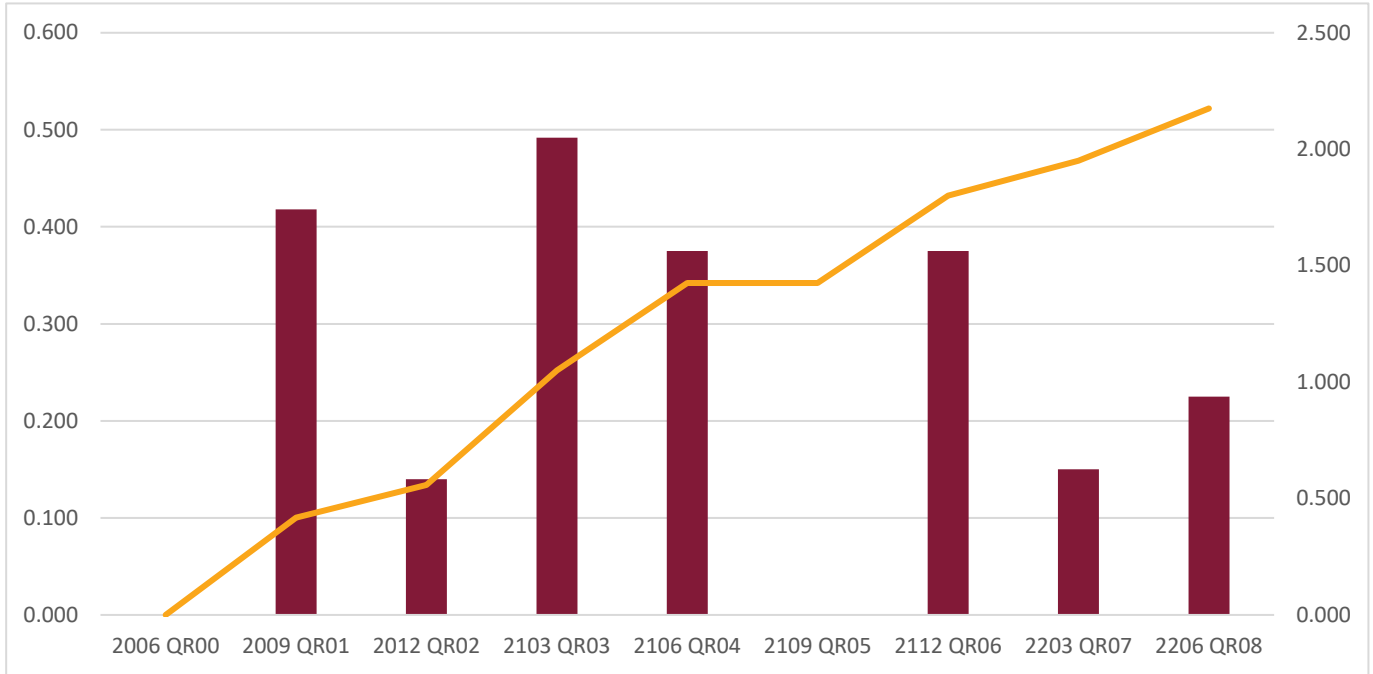
QRA provided quarterly progress reports on all Category C packages, including the Community Development Program, to Emergency Management Australia (EMA) – as the Commonwealth and State jointly funded the program. These reports were made available for evaluation.

Progress monitoring

Quantitative

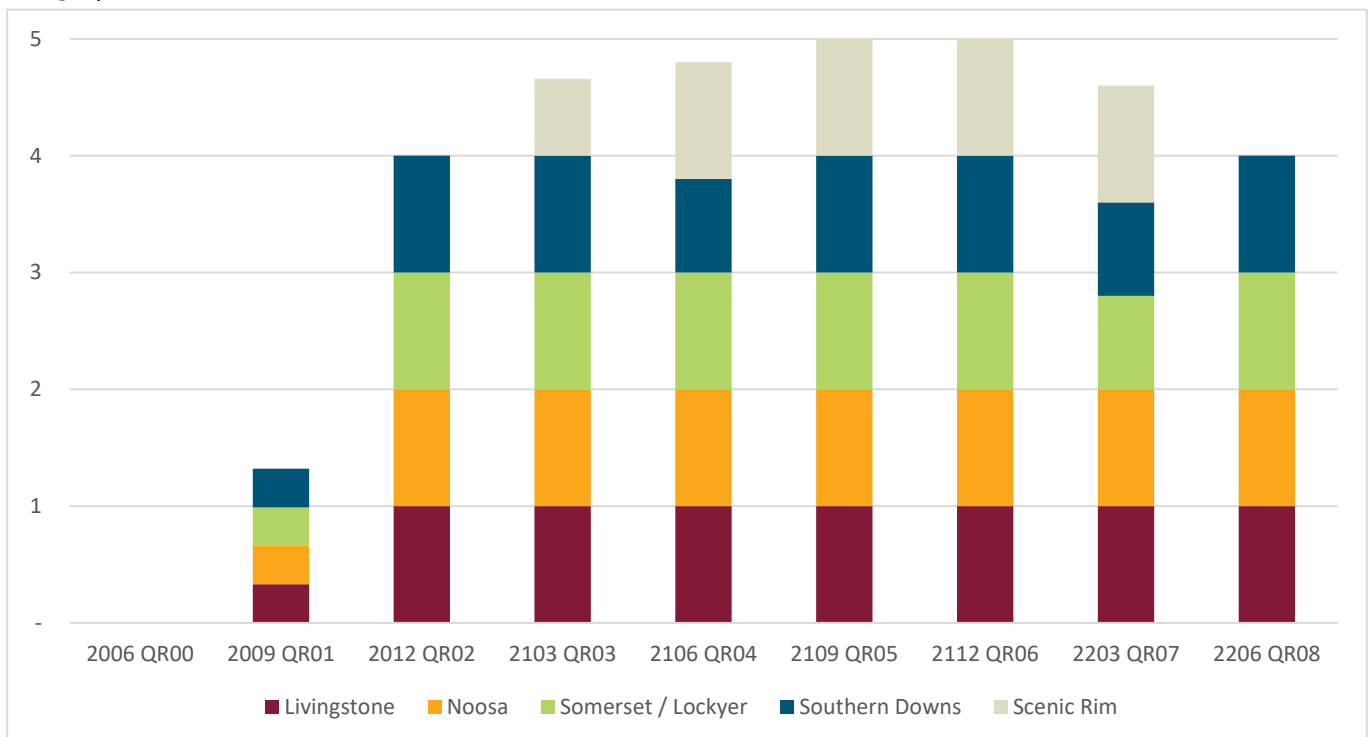
Financial expenditure

The program was delivered for \$2.175 million against an original budget of \$3 million.



Timely procurement

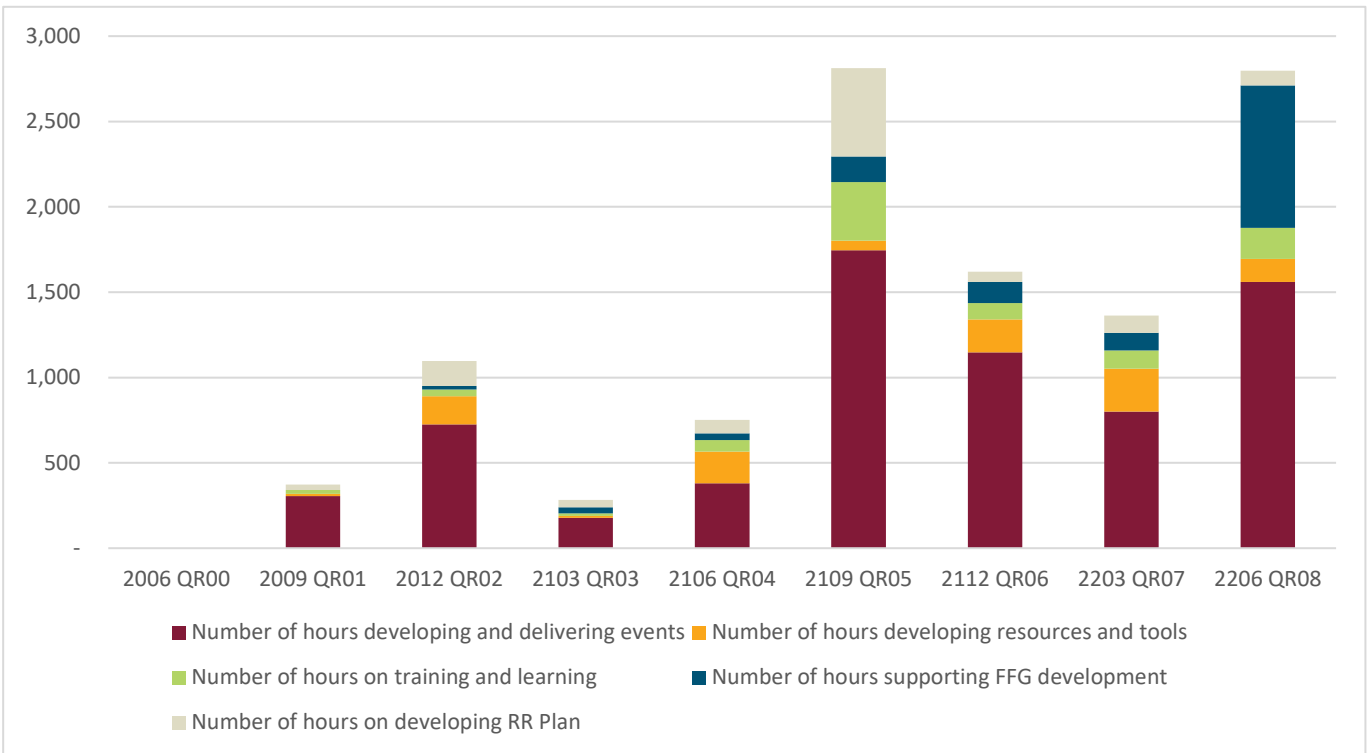
Four of the five CDOs were appointed late in the first reporting quarter, with most CDOs generally available through until June 2022. The full-time equivalent resource availability in each region per quarter is shown in the graph below.



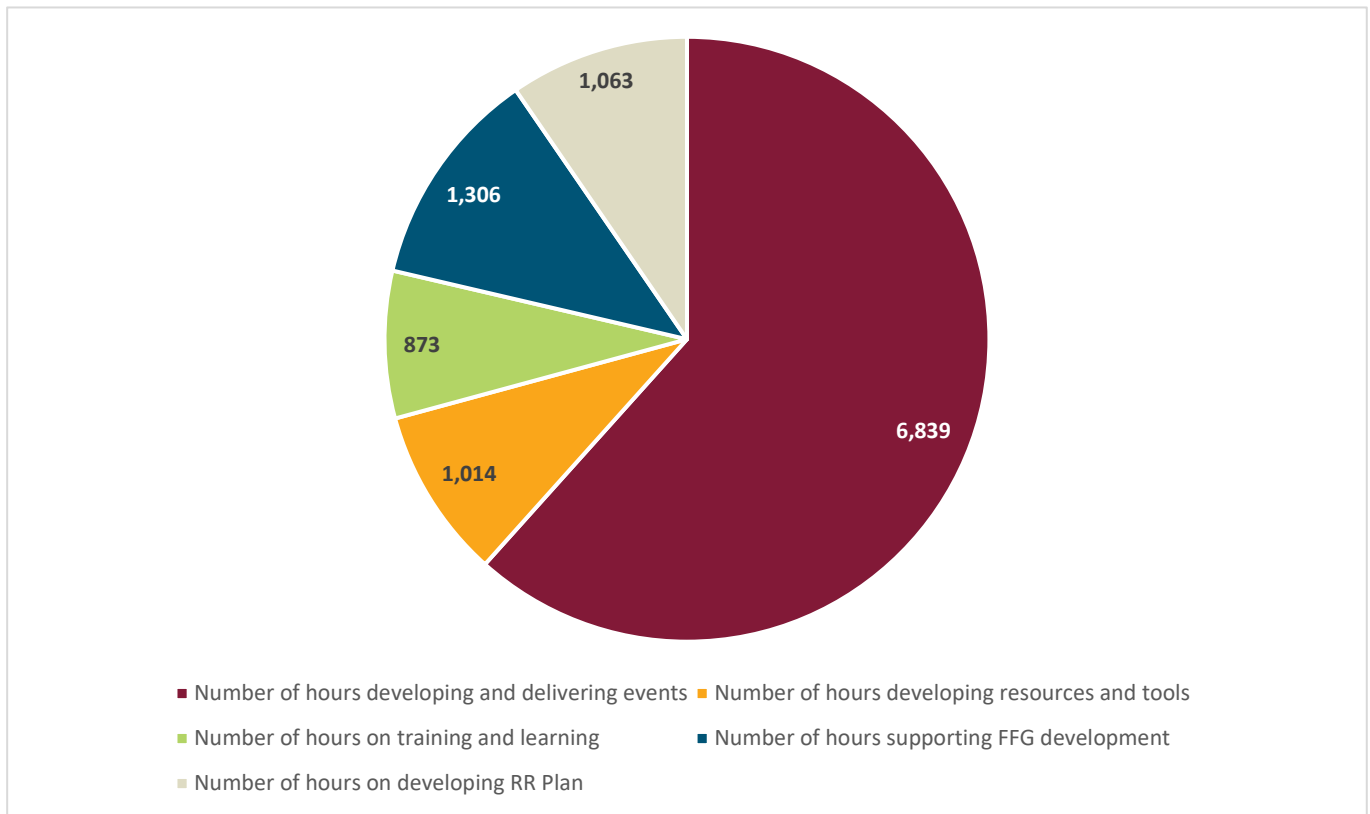
Time invested

The CDOs invested more than 11,000 hours of their time on agreed community development activities. This equates to approximately 92 hours per month for each CDO.

By quarter

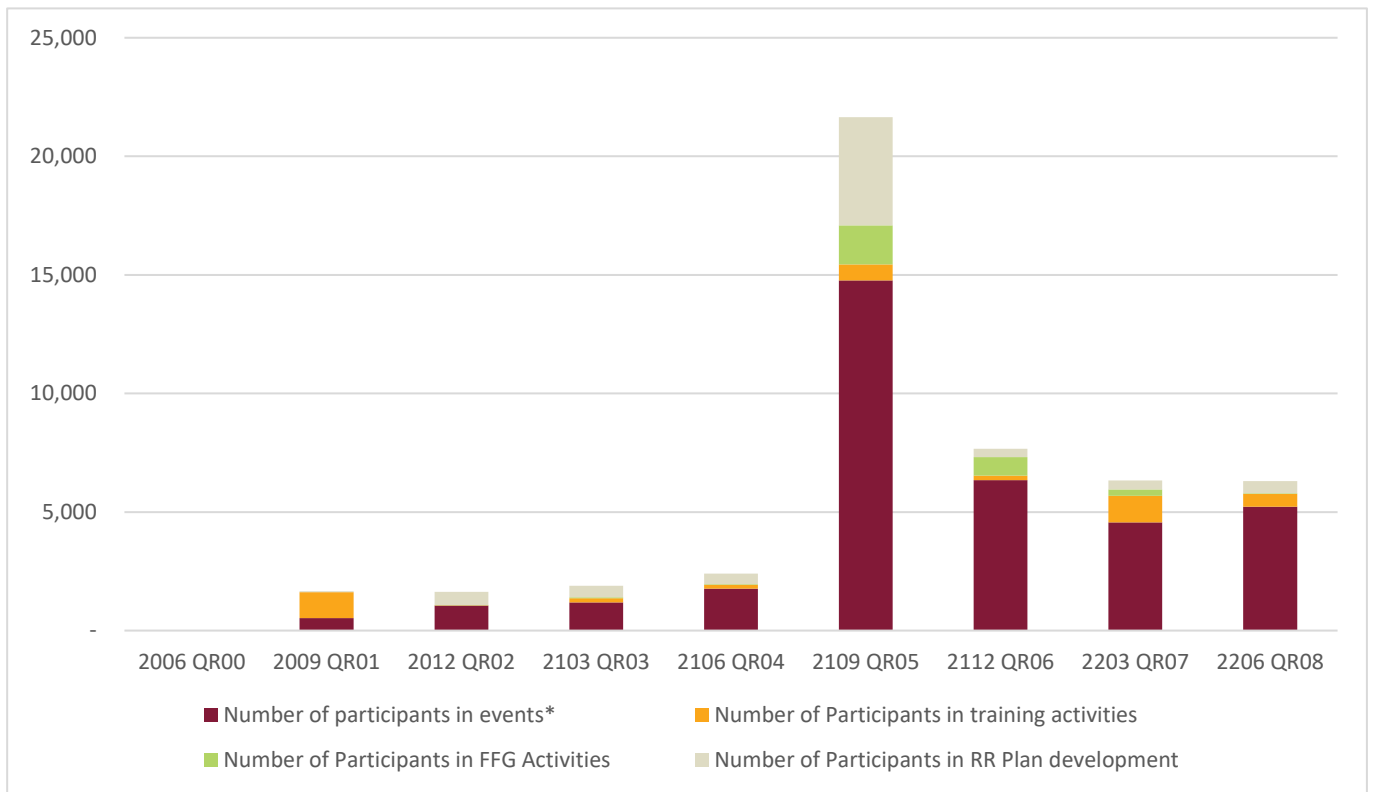


By community development activity



Community participants

The CDOs coordinated community development activities with more than 79,000 community participants across all regions throughout the program.

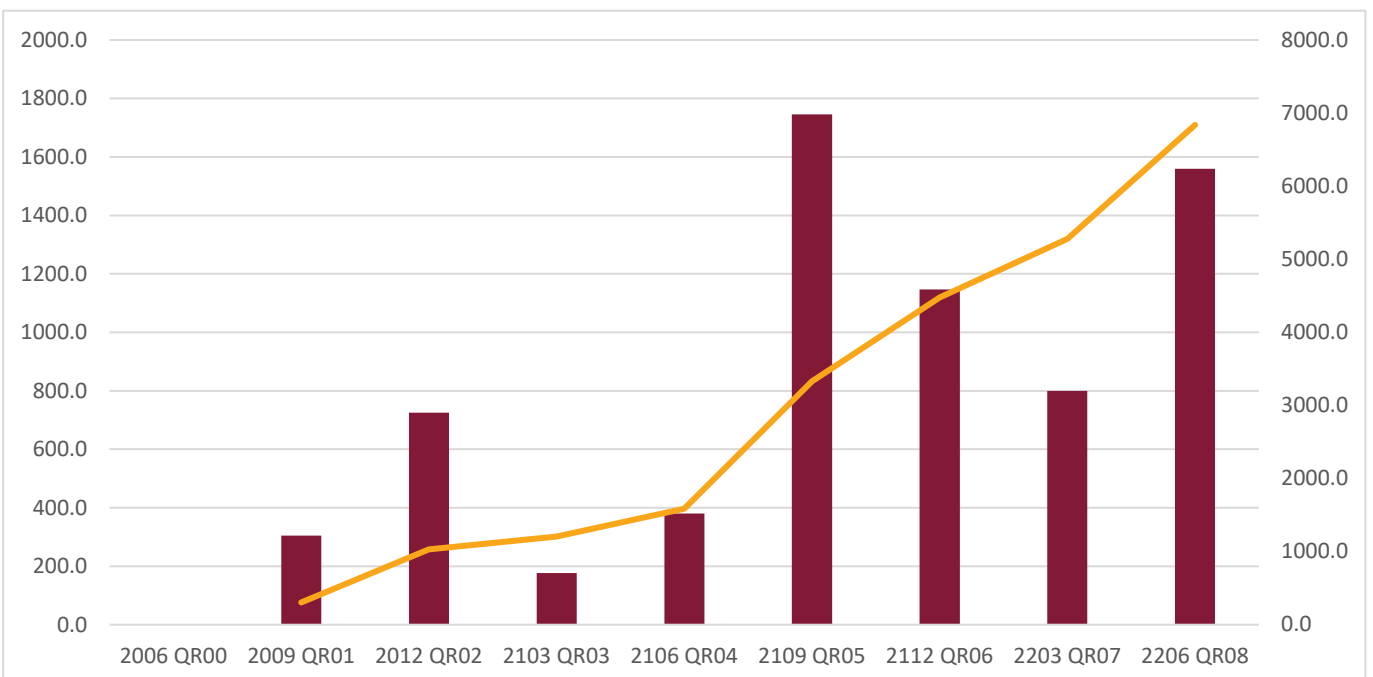


**figure includes participants who have engaged through Facebook or email.*

Engagement events

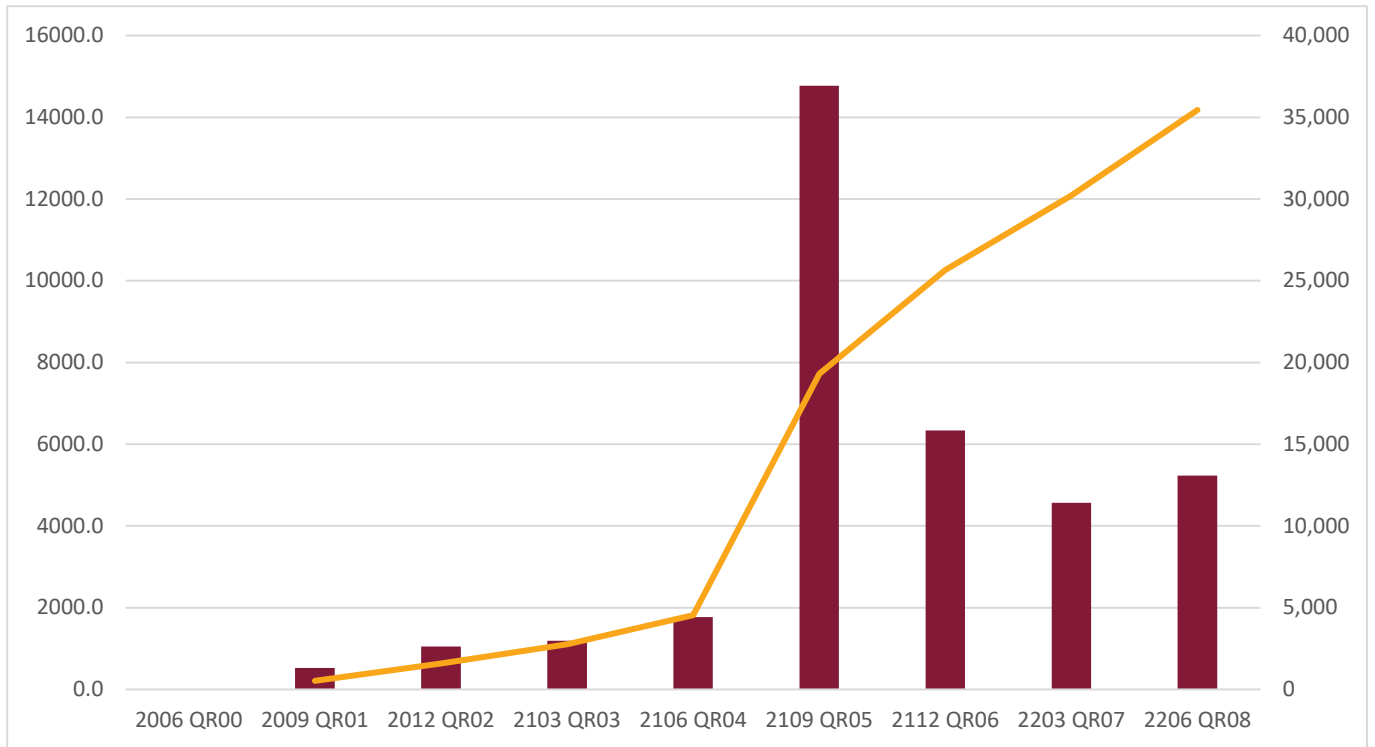
Time invested

The CDOs invested more than 6,000 hours in developing and delivering events throughout the program. This equates to approximately 57 hours per month for each CDO.



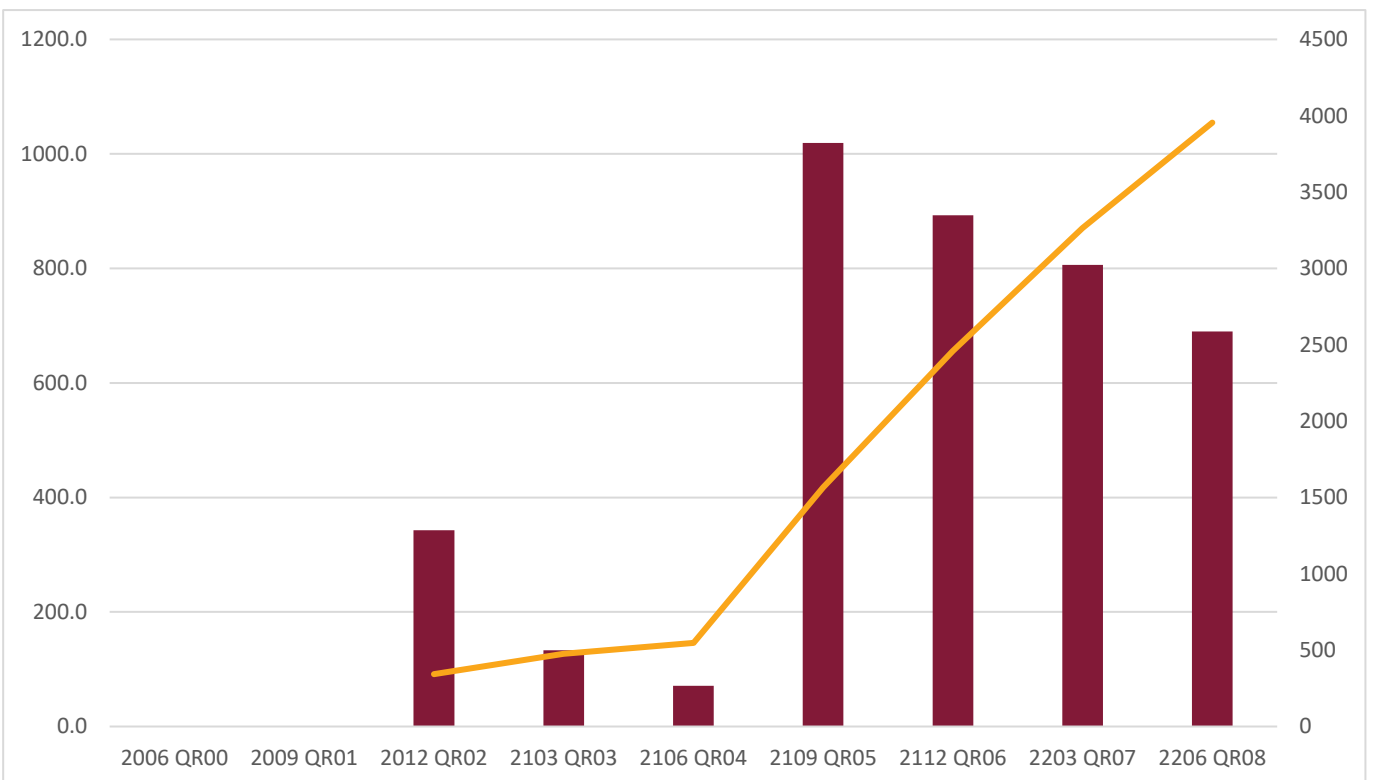
Community participants

The engagement events attracted more than 35,000 participants across all regions throughout the program.



Community agency participants

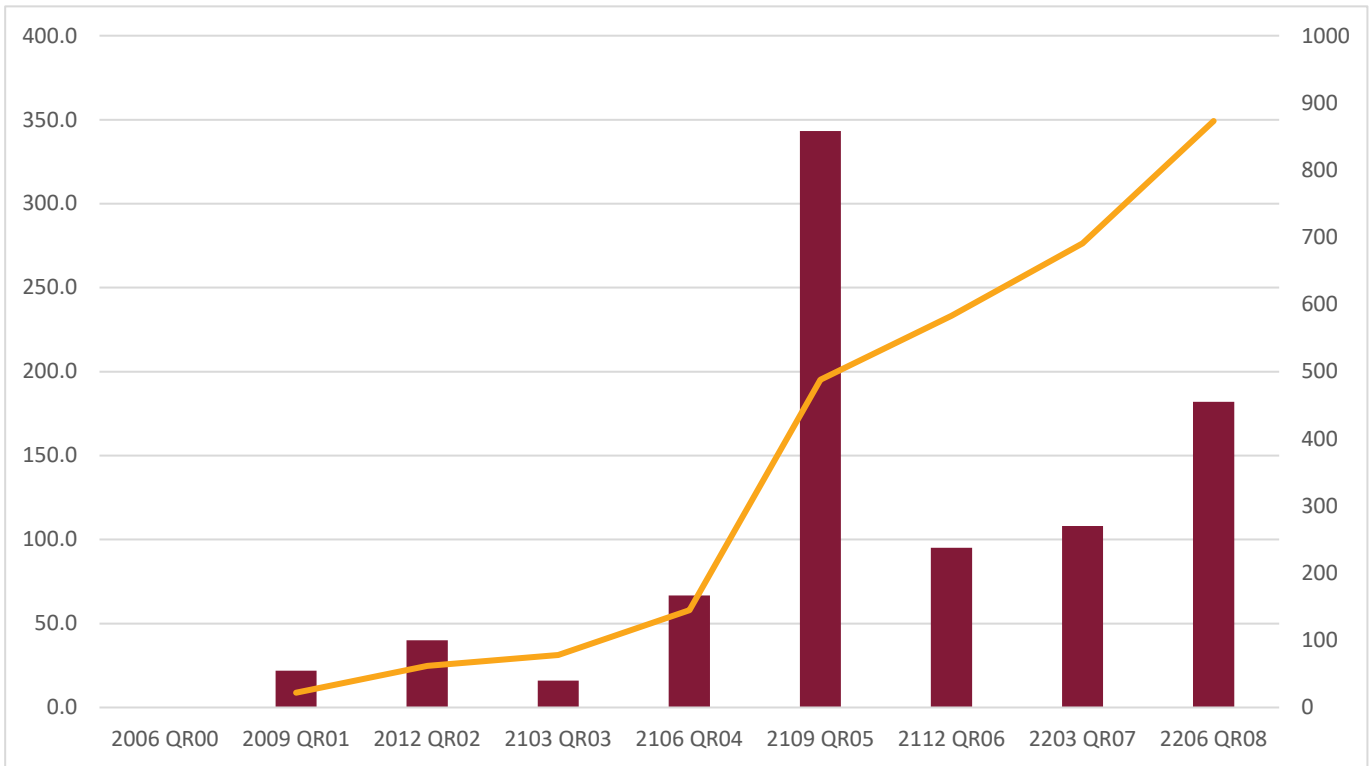
The CDOs reported almost 4,000 community agencies participating in events throughout the program.



Training and learning

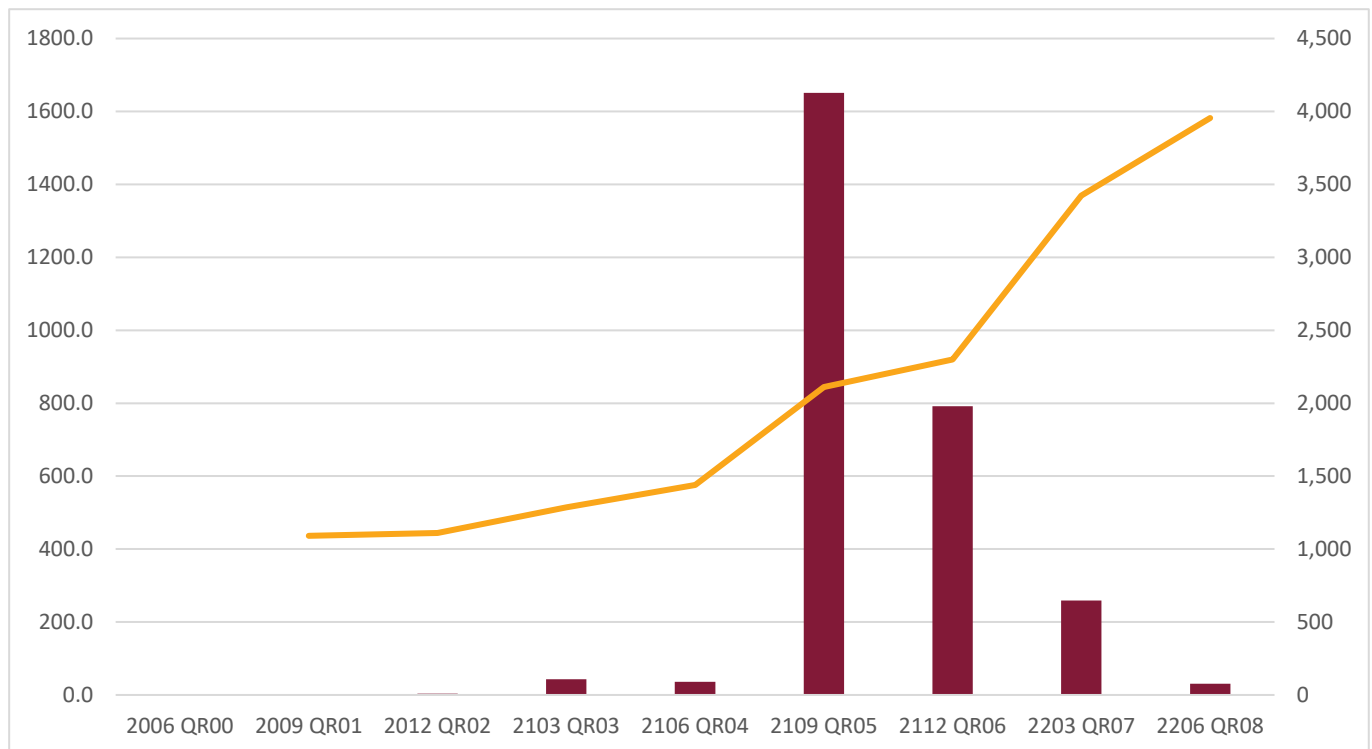
Time invested

The CDOs invested more than 800 hours on training and learning throughout the program. This equates to approximately 7 hours per month for each CDO.



Community participants

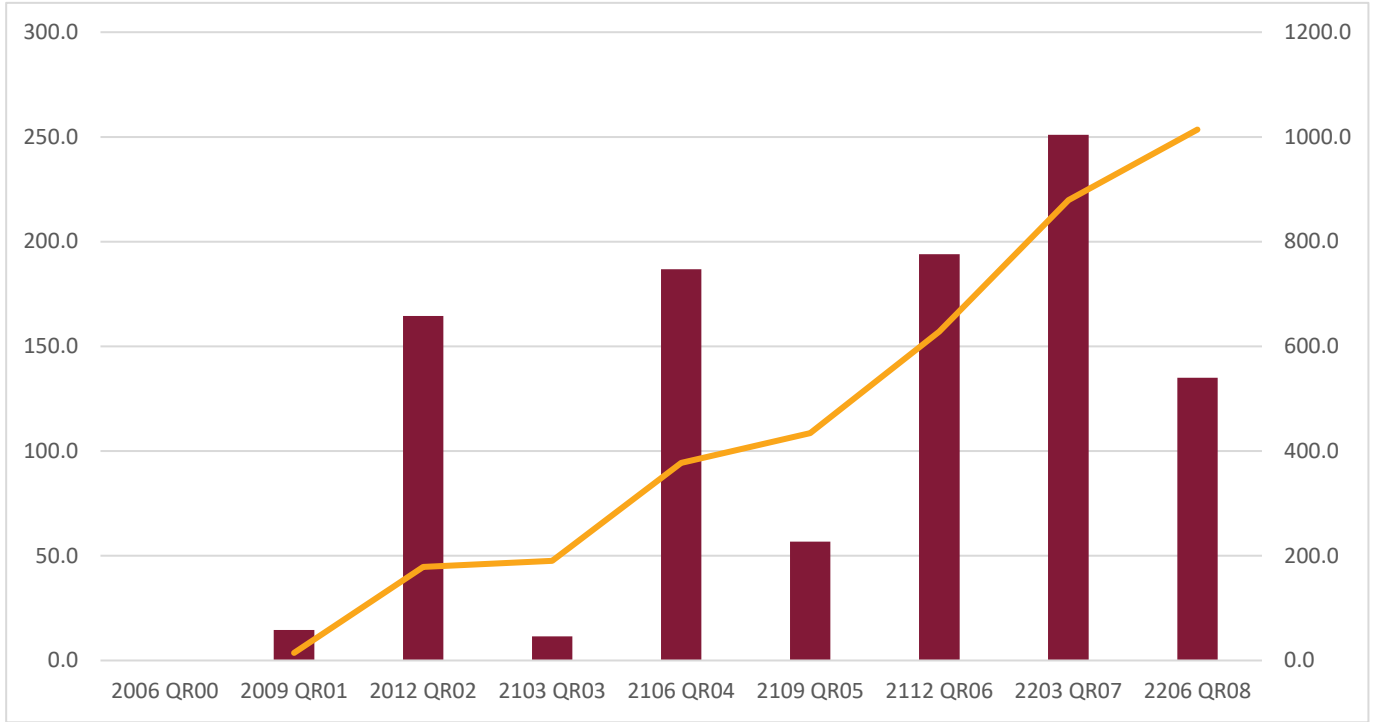
Almost 4,000 participants were involved in training and learning activities across all regions throughout the program.



Resources and tools

Time invested

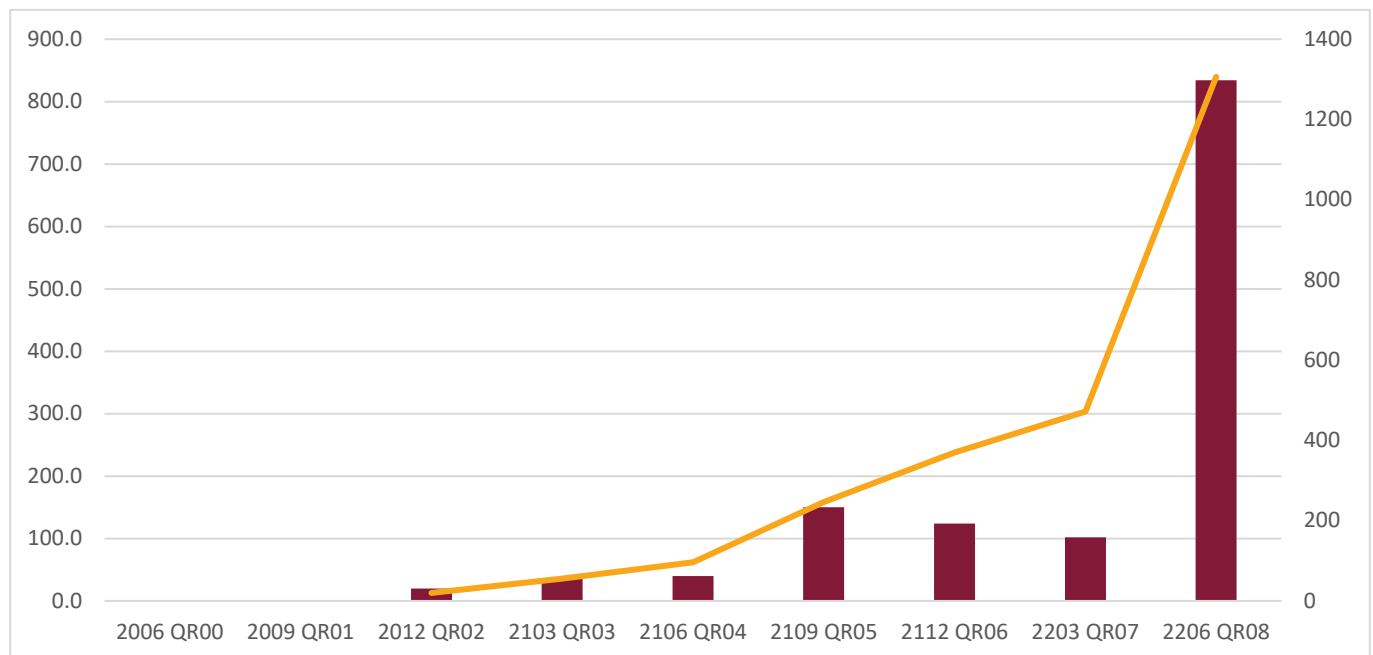
The CDOs invested more than 1,000 hours on developing resources and tools throughout the program. This equates to approximately 25 hours per month for each CDO.



Supporting Flexible Funding Grants

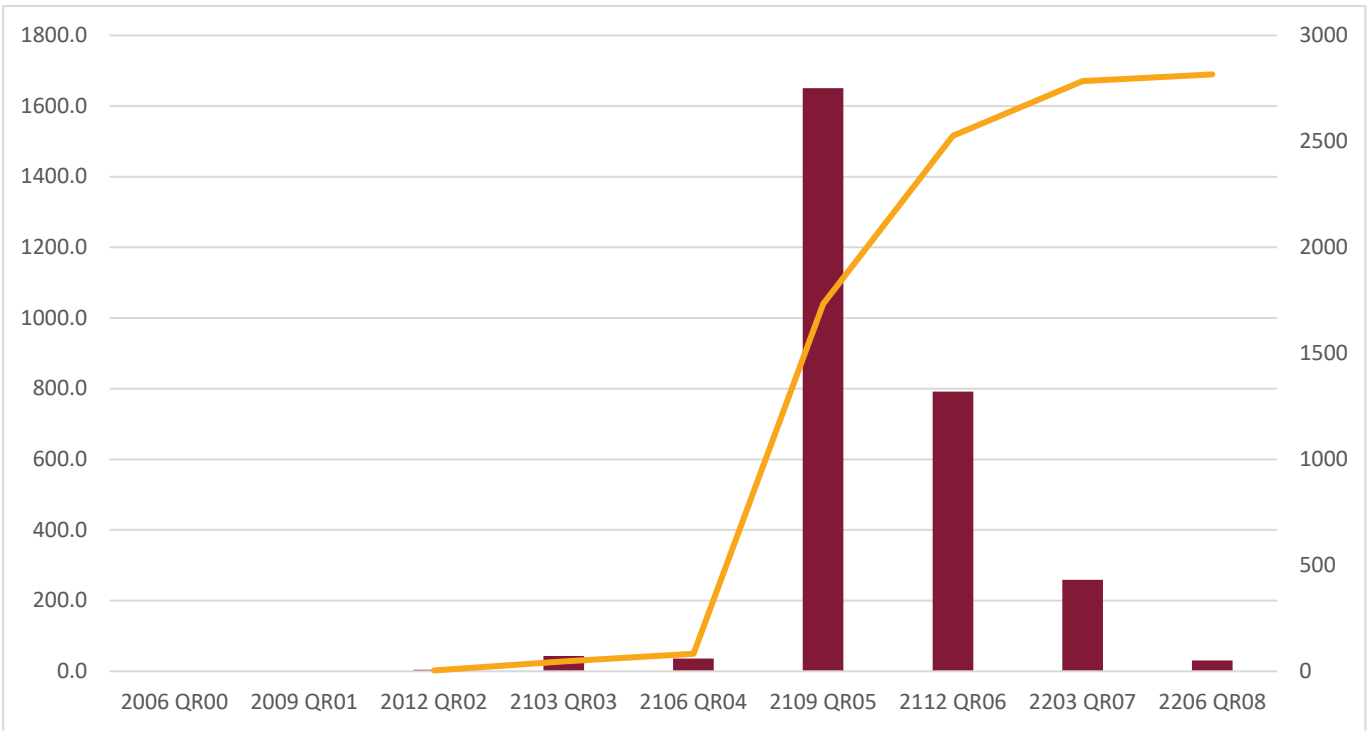
Time invested

The CDOs invested more than 1,300 hours on supporting Flexible Funding Grant (FFG) activities throughout the program. This equates to approximately 11 hours per month for each CDO.



Community participants

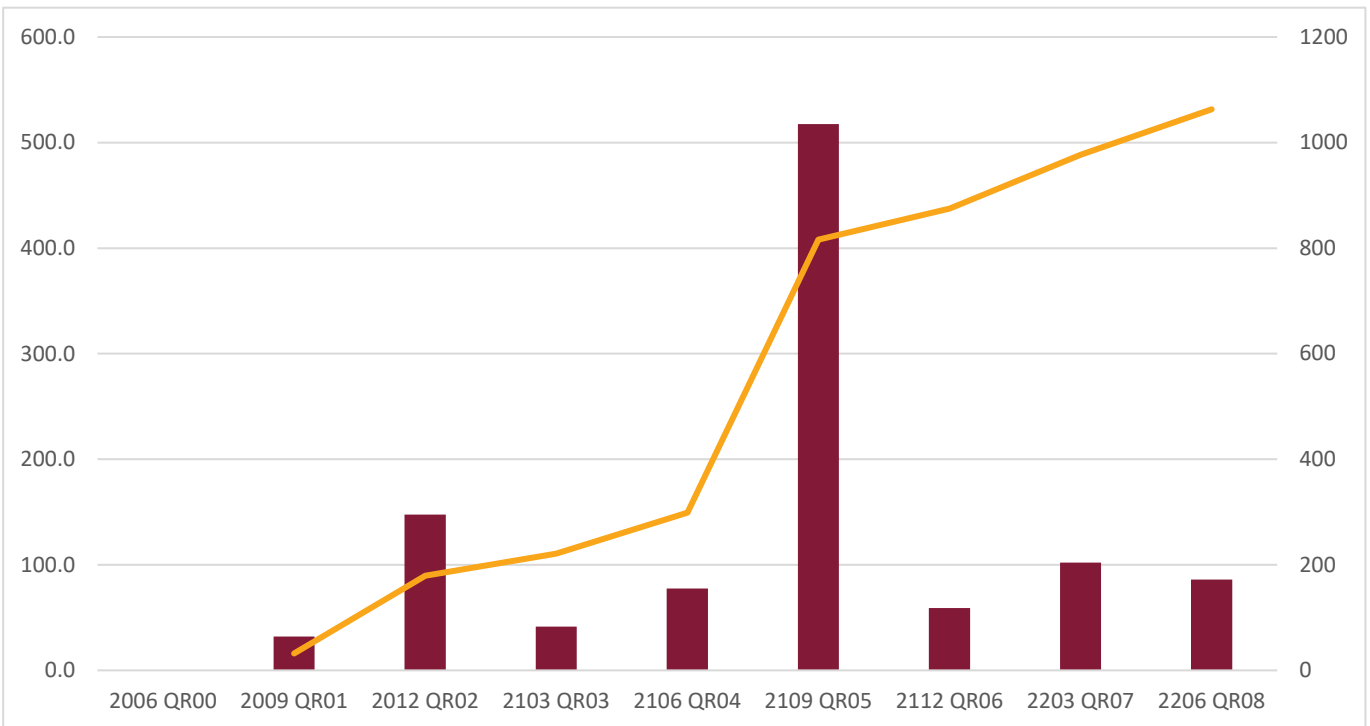
More than 2,800 participants were involved in FFG activities across all regions throughout the program.



Supporting recovery and resilience planning

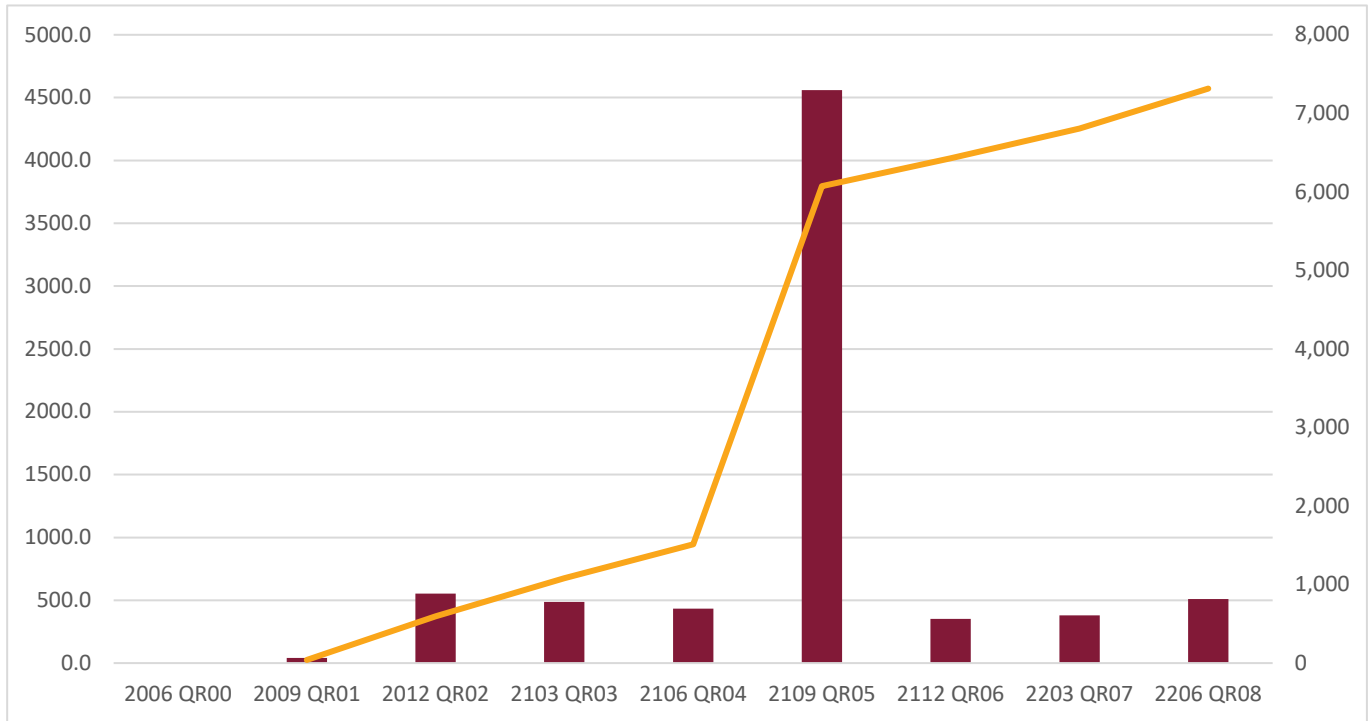
Time invested

The CDOs invested more than 1,000 hours on supporting recovery and resilience (RR) planning activities throughout the program. This equates to approximately 25 hours per month for each CDO.



Community participants

More than 7,300 participants were involved in RR planning activities across all regions throughout the program.



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
CS01	Noosa CDO: Peregian one-year anniversary event
CS02	Southern Downs CDO: Emergency Evacuation Kits – Community Education

Evaluation findings

Governance

Response and recovery transition

G10 – Has the governance structure coordinated response and relief efforts with the recovery process so that the two ‘work together’?

The governance structure has ensured response and recovery activities worked together, although opportunities exist to improve coordination of this transition.

Once CDOs were engaged across the program, (then) DCDSS coordinated a Combined Queensland Bushfires Kick Off Meeting. The session ran for five hours, providing program introduction and context for a broad audience of involved stakeholders.

Session attendees included:

Organisation	Role
Somerset Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDO • Community Development Coordinator
Scenic Rim Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and Culture (Acting CDO)
Livingstone Shire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDO • Economic Development Manager
Southern Downs Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDO • Manager
Noosa Shire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDO • Manager
DCDSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Recovery Branch (x2) • Grants Administration • Contract Manager, Central • Contract Manager, Southern • Development Officers (x8) • Community Recovery Officers (x4)
QRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Officer

Session agenda items included:

Topic	Points of discussion
Getting to know each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions for all attendees
Big picture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall impact of the disaster • How is this disaster different from others • What has occurred so far • How was the funding initiated • The role of QRA • Why are we here – why do we get Cat C funding? • Expected outcomes
Community recovery and contractual arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contextualising relationships, links and separations between Community Recovery, development and contractual arrangements
Contract kick off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of contract arrangements • Reporting requirements
Lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge gained from previous programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tropical Cyclone Debbie ○ Central Queensland Bushfires ○ Monsoon Trough events
A CDO’s perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learnings from current CDOs
Flexible Funding Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the Flexible Funding Grants and how do they work • Relationship between CDO and grants
QRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role and expectations • Evaluation process
Where to from here and how do we work together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has occurred so far? • Governance and Reporting • Cross Agency and District-Wide approach (Reference Group Model)

- Differences and Commonalities between locations. Opportunities from a Community of Practice model.
- Community of Practice model and tools/ suggestions
- Strategies to identify community impact
- Strategies to identify projects
- Strategies to share learnings, opportunities and outcomes across projects.
- Importance of Existing Strategies

The session was viewed as essential for CDOs transitioning from response services and commencing their role in community recovery.

Finding 1: The governance structure has ensured a coordinated transition from response activities to recovery services under the Community Development Program, through a program-wide kick-off meeting.

Advantages exist in coordinating a similar session at the Community Recovery Package level, to facilitate introductions and shared understanding between the other programs. These programs included the:

- Mental Health Recovery Program
- Tourism Recovery Program.

Recommendation 1: Consider incorporating kick-off meetings for the Community Recovery Package to enhance transition from response to recovery and improve implementation integration at the package level.

It is likely the delay in employing CDOs impacted the transition between some response and recovery services. Refer to recommendation 3 in relation to recruiting CDOs.

Community engagement

Information needs

C11 – Do community members have information they need to continue recovering from the disaster?

CDOs invested over 1,000 hours developing resources and tools to support community recovery. They also engaged thousands of participants in events and learning activities to share those resources.

Case study CSo2 (refer to Appendix C) highlights an example of resources developed by the Southern Downs CDO. Some residents communicated their experience from the bushfire evacuation and reflected on choices made in relation to packing emergency supplies. A backpack was prepared containing essential items for emergency situations.

Finding 2: CDOs contributed to the development of information and resources to assist community recovery.

There is no catalogue or quantity of resources developed available for evaluation. Community feedback on information distributed is also unavailable. Refer to recommendation 2 on suggestions for enhancing the evaluation of resources developed.

A proposed template for effectively capturing data for monitoring and evaluating *addressing information needs in recovery* is provided below (with examples).

Addressing information needs in recovery	Example 1	Example 2
Information need identified	<i>What to pack in an evacuation</i>	<i>Essential contact information in an emergency</i>
Identified by	<i>Impacted resident</i>	<i>Impacted resident</i>
Date identified	<i>September 2020</i>	<i>September 2020</i>
Information solution	<i>List of items to pack in an emergency kit</i> <i>Prepare backpack containing items to assist residents with their own emergency kit</i>	<i>Emergency response content (guides)</i> <i>Personal planning content (booklets)</i> <i>Financial assistance content (flyer)</i>
Information distribution	<i>Door knocking in impacted communities in Southern Downs</i>	<i>Inserted into emergency evacuation kits (backpacks)</i> <i>Handed out at community events</i>

Date actioned	<i>September – December 2020</i>	<i>September – December 2020</i>
Quantity distributed	<i>100</i>	<i>1,000</i>
Community feedback [quantitative]: Did this resource support your recovery need?	<i>Yes or 25/30 people said yes</i>	<i>Yes or 50/100 people said yes</i>
Community feedback [qualitative]: How did this resource support your recovery need?	<i>The pack will support our personal readiness for the next disaster event</i>	<i>We will contact support if we need it down the track</i>
Applicable to other communities and regions	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Examples of information distributed in other communities	<i>Packs also distributed in heavily impacted areas within Scenic Rim</i>	<i>Flyers handed out at events by all CDOs in other regions</i>
Resource for future community development programs	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Added to CDO onboarding content for future programs	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Resource reference	<i>DCDSS or QRA shared file location Local government shared file location</i>	<i>DCDSS or QRA shared file location Local government shared file location</i>

It is proposed that capturing data against these categories is likely to be more valuable in monitoring community’s information needs – whilst also enhancing program evaluation – than recorded effort (in hours) by CDOs on these activities.

Recommendation 2: Consider enhancing data capture to ensure information needs are effectively addressed in recovery.

Effectiveness

Sustainable community

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

There is quantitative and qualitative evidence to demonstrate the Community Development Program contributed to a sustainable community.

As outlined in the program logic (*Appendix C*), three recovery objectives were targeted to achieve the overarching objective of sustainable communities:

- The needs of vulnerable groups are addressed
- The community is aware of disaster processes
- The community can express its changing recovery needs.

The success of each objective can be explored individually.

Needs of vulnerable groups are addressed

Strategies to ensuring the needs of vulnerable groups were addressed in the disaster recovery were to:

- employ CDOs to increase capacity to support vulnerable groups
- Build linkages with community service providers.

Employ CDOs

The establishment of CDOs occurred between September 2020 and February 2021 – three to eight months later than originally planned, or nine to 14 months after the disaster event.

It is understood there were delays associated with:

- finalising the State Recovery Plan approval
- negotiating the extent of the disaster event eligibility with EMA
- negotiating the Community Recovery Package with EMA
- negotiating agreements between (then) DCDSS and councils
- recruiting suitable CDOs within the regions.

Finding 3: Delays occurred in finalising recovery planning and funding allocation at the State and Federal level.

Finding 4: Delays occurred in employing CDOs to commence community recovery.

The delayed start had practical implications on program effectiveness. For example, a key responsibility of the CDO was to support community-led proposals for the FFG program. However, Round 1 was released in May 2020, prior to the commencement of any CDOs.

Although the first FFG round was smaller, it is likely some community organisations were unaware or unable to prepare a FFG proposal as part of Round 1 without the support of a CDO. Round 2 was subsequently released in December 2020. Four of the five CDOs were appointed prior to December 2020, with an interim CDO acting in Scenic Rim at this time.

Finding 5: Delays in employing CDOs likely impacted some community recovery activities.

Recommendation 3: Investigate improvements to recruitment processes and invest in strategies to attract and retain temporary staff in geographically diverse locations, to maximise the availability of community recovery services.

Challenges with employing people into these roles also had financial implications. The program was delivered for \$2.175 million. This equates to expenditure of 72.5% of the \$5.25 million budget available for community development.

Finding 6: The availability of CDOs resulted in a \$825,000 underspend for the Community Development Program.

It is understood the underspend was not reallocated to another program within the Community Recovery Package for the Queensland Bushfires event.

Finding 7: The Community Development Program did not fully utilise available funds to maximise the effectiveness of community recovery.

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

Build linkages

The CDOs reported 3,955 community agencies participated in events they developed and delivered across all regions throughout the program. This is a significant quantity indicating regular alignment between service providers and strong representation of community recovery personnel at a local level.

There are also multiple qualitative examples provided to demonstrate linkages between activities delivered by the CDOs and other community recovery agencies. Collaboration partners reported local community recovery workers from:

- Local government, including:
 - Councils in the impacted areas
 - Local Disaster Management Groups.
- Regional organisations, including:

- Regional Organisations of Councils
- Natural Resources Management groups.
- State government, including:
 - Queensland Fire and Emergency Service
 - Queensland Health (mental health)
 - Department of Education (schools).
- Non-government organisations, including:
 - Charities
 - Business groups
 - Community service organisations.

Case study CS01 (*Appendix C*) highlights an example of a community event coordinated by the Noosa CDO. The Peregian one year anniversary event brought two local government areas together and was fully subscribed, attracting approximately 130 people. It was reported the agencies present were:

- Sunshine Coast Council
- DCDSS
- Lifeline
- Australian Red Cross
- Queensland Fire and Emergency Service
- Peregian Surf Lifesaving Club.

Finding 8: The Community Development Program effectively established linkages with community service providers.

Vulnerable groups

CDOs demonstrated they were particularly effective at identifying vulnerable groups in the community. In March 2021, it was reported all CDOs had commenced engagement with community agencies regarding the identification and action planning for vulnerable cohorts. Some examples are provided as follows.

Area	Activities to identify vulnerable groups
Southern Downs	Work with Bendigo Bank and Samaritans purse underway regarding partnership to provide support for identified vulnerable residents.
Somerset	Focused on providing support to property owners impacted by bushfires and their Recovery efforts. This was achieved by collaborations with St Vinnies who still have available funding. A personalised approach was again required due to the lack of computer literacy skills and the ability to complete online application forms.

All CDOs identified examples of working with vulnerable groups, as well as developing events, training or resources targeted at supporting those groups.

All CDOs also demonstrated strong linkages with the Mental Health Recovery Program funded under the Community Recovery Package for the Queensland Bushfires. There was evidence of effective referral pathways between these programs.

Finding 9: CDOs were effective at identifying vulnerable groups and developing targeted programs aimed at supporting these groups in their recovery.

Community is aware of disaster processes

Strategies to ensuring the community is aware of disaster processes were to:

- provide information through widespread engagement
- promote recovery and resilience information.

Widespread engagement

CDOs reported 6,839 hours of their time were spent in the development and delivery of community events across all regions, throughout the program. In delivering the events, CDOs recorded 35,444 participants, including those who engaged through media – such as Facebook or email.

Case study CS01 (*Appendix C*) highlights an example of a community event coordinated by the Noosa CDO. The Peregrian one year anniversary event brought two local government areas together and was fully subscribed, attracting approximately 130 people. It was reported residents:

“reconnected and shared their stories of the 2019 bushfires and their personal recovery stories.”

Finding 10: CDOs effectively undertook widespread engagement, providing information to the community.

Promote recovery and resilience information

CDOs reported 1,014 hours of their time were spent in the development of resources and tools designed to promote recovery and resilience information.

Case study CS02 (*Appendix C*) highlights an example of resources developed by the Southern Downs CDO. Some residents communicated their experience from the bushfire evacuation and reflected on choices made in relation to packing emergency supplies. A backpack was prepared containing essential items for emergency situations.

“A pack was given to each resident, and where possible left at the front door with a compliments slip (including the CDO’s contact details) for those residents who were not at home. The pack was a nice soft entry into engagement and discussion with residents in regards to their readiness pre bushfire season and how prepared they were last year (lessons learned).”

The kit also contained contact information for referral services.

“By providing a list of community Mental Health services and links to websites, apps, resources etc., we are building awareness of support resources locally, state wide and nationally. This increases help-seeking behaviours, and the capacity to assist/refer others to sources of help/support.”

Recovery and resilience information was distributed through widespread engagement as detailed above.

Finding 11: CDOs developed and promoted recovery and resilience information.

The evaluation would benefit from participant feedback (e.g. surveys or interviews) demonstrating how the resources and tools developed promoted recovery and resilience information, and knowledge for community members.

Recommendation 5: Effectiveness of the recovery and resilience information developed could be further evaluated through formal direct feedback from community participants.

Community can express its changing recovery needs

The strategies to ensuring the community can express its changing disaster recovery needs were to:

- raise awareness of and assist with community led Flexible Funding Grant (FFG) proposals
- support and enable the development of recovery and resilience (RR) plans.

Support FFG proposals

CDOs reported 1,306 hours of their time were invested in supporting FFG development with 2,816 participants. There was evidence of all CDOs collaborating with community organisations to support proposals, implementation and reporting in relation to FFG projects.

The majority of this effort and participation would have related to Round 2 of the FFG program, noting that most CDOs were employed after the release of Round 1. Refer to finding 5

Finding 12: CDOs supported community organisations with Flexible Funding Grant activities once they were appointed.

The FFG proposals were not available for evaluation. There are no other qualitative examples available on CDOs actively supporting FFG proposals or project implementation.

Recommendation 6: Community organisations responsible for proposing and implementing Flexible Funding Grant projects should provide feedback on the effectiveness of the CDO support received.

Support recovery and resilience plans

CDOs reported 1,063 hours of their time were invested in developing recovery and resilience plans with 7,315 participants.

The RR plans have not been made available for evaluation.

Finding 13: CDOs coordinated the development and implementation of recovery and resilience plans.

The RR plans were not available for evaluation. There are no other qualitative examples available on CDOs actively supporting RR planning or plan implementation.

Recommendation 7: Local government and other organisations responsible for developing and implementing recovery and resilience plans should provide feedback on the effectiveness of the CDO support received.

Summary of findings

Evaluation of the available quantitative and qualitative data has shown it is likely the Community Development Program has effectively contributed to producing a more sustainable community.

Finding 14: The Community Development Program is likely to have effectively contributed to a sustainable community.

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

Recommendation 8: Evaluation of the Community Development Program effectiveness may be enhanced through direct feedback from participants.

Resilient community

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

Quantitative and qualitative evidence demonstrates the Community Development Program contributed to a resilient community.

As outlined in the program logic (*Appendix D*), the key recovery objective targeted to ensure the community has improved capacity and capability to respond to future disasters, was that community members can respond to their own needs and support others in the community.

Community can respond to its own needs

Strategies to ensuring community members can respond to their own needs and support others in the community were to:

- raise awareness of and assist with community led FFG proposals
- support and enable the development of RR plans
- support and enable capacity and skills development.

Support FFG proposals

This strategy supported both sustainable and resilient community outcomes. Refer to finding 12 concluding CDOs effectively supported FFG proposals.

Support RR plans

This strategy supported both sustainable and resilient community outcomes. Refer to finding 13 concluding CDOs effectively supported RR plans.

Enable capacity and skills development

CDOs reported they invested 873 hours of time on training and learning activities with 3,955 participants.

Case study CS01 (*Appendix C*) highlights an example of a community event coordinated by the Noosa CDO incorporating training and learning elements. The Peregian one year anniversary event brought two local government areas together and was fully subscribed, attracting approximately 130 people. It was reported residents were:

“informed regarding disaster preparedness (all hazards).”

“educated around the facts of the bushfire from QFES and also an environmental perspective.”

Finding 15: CDOs enabled capacity and skills development in their communities.

Summary of findings

Evaluation of the available quantitative and qualitative data revealed it is likely the Community Development Program effectively contributed to producing a more resilient community.

Finding 16: The Community Development Program is likely to have contributed to a resilient community.

Refer to recommendation 8 for opportunities to further substantiate this finding.

Implementation

Program implementation

I2 – Was the program consistent with the National Principles for Disaster Recovery?

A high level assessment of the Community Development Program consistency with the [National Principles for Disaster Recovery](#) has been undertaken. A consistency rating of low, medium and high has been applied subjectively, based on available evidence. Low and medium ratings indicate opportunities for improvement.

Principle	Consistency	Comments
Understanding the context	High	<p>Implementation was focused on the communities impacted most by the disaster.</p> <p>The program located CDOs within six local government areas that experienced the greatest impact from the bushfires.</p> <p>The program drew upon CDOs and community recovery workers with experience from recent events and similar role backgrounds. The Community Development Program also drew upon the expertise of CDOs from other programs, as well as lessons learned provided by DCDSS and QRA.</p> <p>The CDOs worked beyond their immediate geographical base in communities across all five activated local government areas.</p> <p>There was evidence of recognising the importance of environment through involving the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to brief on environmental risks.</p> <p>The CDOs demonstrated evidence of successfully identifying vulnerable groups in the community and providing referral pathways, such as to the Mental Health Recovery Program.</p>
Recognising complexity	Medium	<p>The program was implemented as a reasonable compromise between efficiency (the financial investment in five CDOs) and effectiveness (the ability to service many geographically dispersed communities across six activated local government areas).</p> <p>The CDOs were mobilised within nine to 14 months after the disaster event due to complexities in recovery planning approvals and recruitment on the ground. This is too long in the context of a 24-month DRFA recovery funding window. Community</p>

		<p>Development Program mobilisation should aim for three to six months from the disaster event to maximise effectiveness and ensure transition from response to recovery processes.</p> <p>Once appointed, CDOs were effective in their roles at developing suitable engagement, training, resources and support activities for the impacted communities.</p>
Using community-led approaches	High	<p>Collaborative partnerships were evident, with 3,955 community agencies participating in program related events.</p> <p>There was evidence of channelling effort through existing service providers such as QFES, QH and non-government organisations, such as charities and community recovery organisations.</p> <p>CDOs were locally recruited and regionally based to work within the impacted communities.</p> <p>CDOs nurtured community-led FFG submissions and supported RR plan development for the impacted communities.</p> <p>There was evidence of a wide variety of project types developed for FFG (refer to separate evaluation of the 2019 Queensland Bushfires Flexible Funding Grant Program), reflecting the individuality of different communities, rather than one size fits all solutions.</p>
Ensuring coordination of all activities	Medium-High	<p>The program establishment was coordinated, benefitting from a clear design and establishment phase at the state level through the State Recovery Plan and program guidelines.</p> <p>The CDOs benefitted from a program-wide kick-off session for comprehensive briefing and sharing of lessons learned from all program stakeholders.</p> <p>In program implementation, there was evidence of coordinated activities on the ground, with all CDOs benefitting from being embedded within a local government host and establishing a community recovery reference group with key local representatives.</p> <p>Interaction with other community recovery agencies was strong, as evidenced above.</p> <p>There may be scope for greater interaction between CDOs operating within different regions to share learnings and coordinate larger-scale activities, training and resources.</p>
Employing effective communication	Medium-High	<p>Program implementation demonstrated many opportunities to communicate information regularly through widespread engagement. More than 35,000 participants were engaged</p>

		<p>through events and more than 800 were involved in training or learning activities.</p> <p>Communication methods were diverse and included workshops, information sessions, training programs, emergency backpacks, posters, books, recovery plans and grant submissions.</p> <p>Community members should be invited to participate in formal independent feedback activities, such as interviews or surveys to further evaluate the effectiveness of communication in future programs.</p>
<p>Acknowledging and building capacity</p>	<p>Medium-High</p>	<p>Program implementation strategies focussed on capacity building, particularly through training and learning activities – supporting FFG activities and developing RR plans. 879, 1,306 and 7,315 participants respectively have built their own capacity through this program.</p> <p>Participants should be invited to provide formal feedback – such as through interviews, surveys or feedback forms – made available for evaluation to further assess the effectiveness of capacity building activities in future programs.</p>

Finding 17: The Community Development Program was generally consistent with the National Principles for Disaster Recovery.

Opportunities for improvement have been provided as recommendations in the above evaluation sections.

Conclusion

The evaluation has concluded the Community Development Program contributed to the recovery and resilience of the communities impacted by the Queensland Bushfires disaster. Key findings of the evaluation are provided below.

Governance

1. The governance structure has ensured a coordinated transition from response activities to recovery services under the Community Development Program, through a program-wide kick-off meeting.

Community engagement

2. CDOs contributed to the development of information and resources to assist community recovery.

Effectiveness

3. Delays occurred in finalising recovery planning and funding allocation at the State and Federal level.
4. Delays occurred in employing CDOs to commence community recovery.
5. Delays in employing CDOs likely impacted some community recovery activities.
6. The availability of CDOs resulted in a \$825,000 underspend for the Community Development Program.
7. The Community Development Program did not fully utilise available funds to maximise the effectiveness of community recovery.
8. The Community Development Program effectively established linkages with community service providers.
9. CDOs were effective at identifying vulnerable groups and developing targeted programs aimed at supporting these groups in their recovery.
10. CDOs effectively undertook widespread engagement, providing information to the community.
11. CDOs developed and promoted recovery and resilience information.
12. CDOs supported community organisations with Flexible Funding Grant activities once they were appointed.
13. CDOs coordinated the development and implementation of recovery and resilience plans.
14. The Community Development Program is likely to have effectively contributed to a sustainable community.
15. CDOs enabled capacity and skills development in their communities.
16. The Community Development Program is likely to have contributed to a resilient community.

Implementation

17. The Community Development Program was generally consistent with the National Principles for Disaster Recovery.

Recommendations

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

RECOMMENDATION 1

Consider incorporating kick-off meetings for the Community Recovery Package to enhance transition from response to recovery and improve implementation integration at the package level.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Consider enhancing data capture to ensure information needs are effectively addressed in recovery.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Investigate improvements to recruitment processes and invest in strategies to attract and retain temporary staff in geographically diverse locations, to maximise the availability of community recovery services.

RECOMMENDATION 4

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

RECOMMENDATION 5

Effectiveness of the recovery and resilience information developed could be further evaluated through formal direct feedback from community participants.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Community organisations responsible for proposing and implementing Flexible Funding Grant projects should provide feedback on the effectiveness of the CDO support received.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Local government and other organisations responsible for developing and implementing recovery and resilience plans should provide feedback on the effectiveness of the CDO support received.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Evaluation of the Community Development Program effectiveness may be enhanced through direct feedback from participants.

Appendices

Appendix A – Background

2019 Queensland Bushfires

Impacts

The 2019 bushfire events impacted 23 of the 77 local government areas.

The 2019 bushfire season in Queensland was catastrophic. At the height of the season, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) was dealing with more than 90 bushfires at one time. More than seven and a half million hectares burnt state-wide, resulting in the activation of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) for 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs).

The Southern Queensland Bushfires and the Stradbroke Bushfires both occurred in September, and the Eastern Queensland Bushfires burnt throughout November and December. The fires impacted the 14 LGAs of Bundaberg, Gladstone, Gold Coast, Gympie, Ipswich, Livingstone, Lockyer Valley, Noosa, Redland, Scenic Rim, Somerset, Southern Downs, Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba.

The fires resulted in impacts across the five lines of recovery (Human and Social, Economic, Built, Environment and Roads and Transport) and have exacerbated existing drought related challenges in a number of communities.

Additionally, fires in other parts of the state saw another nine LGAs activated under the DRFA resulting in the merging of the bushfire events into one disaster event - Queensland Bushfires, September - December 2019. The nine LGAs are Brisbane, Cook, Fraser Coast, Mareeba, North Burnett, Rockhampton, South Burnett, Townsville and Whitsunday.

Response

Human and Social

During the bushfire events there were 11,938 instances of psychological first aid provided to residents within these communities, whilst there were over 12,000 residents financially assisted with EHA grants. A number of key community supports, health and wellbeing recovery impacts and issues have been identified across locations and interest groups.

Building

The Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) and the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA), either directly or via member organisations, deployed staff to provide advice and assistance at recovery hubs in the immediate aftermath of the fires. The insurance industry prioritised claims from these events, providing confidence and reassurance to the community. Support continues to be provided to impacted local governments and disaster management groups including provision of information and factsheets to assist with the appropriate clean up and repair of sites.

QBCC also opened the Bushfire Rebuild Register to ensure that impacted residents had access to the details of suitably qualified and certified tradespeople in their local area. 291 licensed tradespeople made themselves available to support the repair and recovery of impacted areas.

Roads and Transport

TMR is undertaking slope stabilisation works and geotechnical inspections for further treatment to bushfire-damaged state roads in South East Queensland.

Critical reconstruction work undertaken included:

- Slope stabilisation works

- Facilitation of limited access traffic control
- Emergency works to temporary road closures
- Tree clearing, installing temporary barriers and replacing damaged signage
- Preliminary geotechnical and structural assessments which identified some long-term slope stability issues, which will require complex design solutions and permanent batter slope protection works.

Economic

The 2019 Queensland Bushfires have had a considerable on-the-ground effect on local businesses and economies with detailed, quantified assessments of capital damage and economic loss underway.

In response to the September bushfires, the Tourism Industry Development Division of the former Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development (DITID) drafted a Southern Queensland Tourism Recovery Package which focuses primarily on supporting tourism recovery in the Southern Downs and Scenic Rim regions.

For the November bushfires, the central Queensland office of the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) communicated with Livingstone Shire Council and the former DSDMIP's Rockhampton regional office to determine the impact of the fires on small businesses.

Environment

Fire scar mapping was undertaken across the state with a mosaic of the data forming a state-wide perspective. Fire scar mapping and historical fire information is important for improving our understanding and management of fire, and its interactions with climate variability, vegetation and land use. Further fine scale analysis of fire extent, severity and field surveys are needed to confirm distribution and level of impact for priority species and locations, including on Minjerriba (Nth Stradbroke Island). Appropriate recovery actions will then be determined.

Consequences

Queensland's 2019-20 bushfire season in numbers



* Data based on situational reports from the fire ground at a point in time, and reliant upon the accuracy of individual updates.

ECONOMIC



more than **7.7Mha** burnt state wide

300,000 emergency alerts issued

OVER **230ha** high value horticulture crops impacted

29 properties in the horticulture industry impacted



est. **\$17.9M** impact on agriculture industry in the Shire of Livingstone

8500ha grazing land impacted

56 Binna Burra Lodge staff directly affected through loss of employment



56 workers from Binna Burra sourced alternative employment



est. **\$1,133,700** Total direct and indirect impact on small business

First

deployment nationally of **Australian Defence Force Reservists** to assist



100-150

interstate and international personnel assisting the Queensland firefighting effort at any one time



Almost 70 small local businesses surveyed nominated a direct or indirect business impact

est. **\$732,500** Direct impacts to small business

est. **\$9.9M** Tourism disruption in the **Scenic Rim**

more than **3000** bushfires have occurred in Queensland this season

23 activated LGAs covering an area of **7.7M ha**

= **4%** Queensland's land mass APPROX

9,362 Contents Claims **89%**

closed average value **\$11,364**

est. **\$5.2M** Impact to **Southern Downs** agriculture industry

13,252 Residential Building Claims **84%**

closed average value **\$59,077**

4,577 Domestic Motor Claims **98%**

closed average value **\$11,810**



37 beef producers experienced impacts to their stock

ROADS + TRANSPORT



APPROX. **340 km** state road network impacted

Recovery Package

State recovery planning

2019 Queensland Bushfires – State Recovery Plan

Former Police Commissioner Ian Stewart was appointed to the role of State Recovery Coordinator (SRC) on 18 September 2019 to lead recovery. The role has involved development of this 2019 Queensland Bushfires – State Recovery Plan 2019-2022 (the Recovery Plan).

This Recovery Plan acknowledged the existing challenges and inherent resilience of impacted communities and provided a framework for communities to recover, rebuild and reconnect. Recovery was delivered across the five lines of disaster recovery – Human and Social, Building, Roads and Transport, Economic and Environment. The Recovery Plan focused on two of the recovery phases – Recovery and Reconstruction.

The aim of the Recovery Plan was to outline support for local governments and communities impacted by the 2019 Queensland Bushfires to enable them to reach a state of ‘recovered.’ The Recovery Plan identified impacts and developed strategies and outcomes required to restore functionality of community. It aligned capacity and capability to deliver those outcomes.

The Recovery Plan supported communities affected by the impacts of the 2019 Queensland Bushfires, providing them with the framework to access support, recover from its devastation, restore essential infrastructure and functionality, capture lessons and acknowledge the impacts of drought on current circumstances and through their recovery journey.

Roles and responsibilities

Local government

Local government is responsible for ensuring recovery occurs in affected community. This responsibility stems from the Disaster Management Act 2003. In this plan, this responsibility is demonstrated through the inclusion of local recovery 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 2019 Queensland Bushfires from a state perspective by providing coordination and facilitation of communication across the five 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 reports outlining recovery progress across local governments, informed by the FRGs at a state level.

State Recovery Policy and Planning Coordinator

The Chief Executive Officer of the QRA also fulfils the role of the 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 2019 Queensland Bushfires, reports regularly to the QDMC, and provides strategic advice to government agencies undertaking disaster recovery work.

Deputy State Recovery Coordinator

The Deputy SRC provides local support to the SRC or acts as the SRC in the SRC's absence. The Deputy SRC also provides Queensland Government with critical insights on how to best assist communities on their road to recovery.

Recovery support and collaboration

Effective recovery requires collaboration between local, state and federal governments, community and non-government agencies in consultation with impacted communities. Other agencies that play a part in assisting with the recovery of impacted communities are listed in Annex A, including their purpose and contact details.

Functional recovery groups

FRGs coordinate and support the planning and implementation of Queensland's whole-of-community recovery activities across the five lines of recovery – Human and Social, Building, Roads and Transport, Economic, and Environment – supporting local government to fulfil its recovery objectives. The FRGs leverage existing strong partnerships between local and state government to ensure close collaboration and coordination during the management of recovery activities. Activities are in accordance with the needs and priorities identified by communities and the state and includes those outlined in local recovery plans. The Recovery Plan is delivered locally with support from FRGs and QRA, with oversight from the Queensland Disaster Management Committee.

National Bushfire Recovery Agency

The Agency is responsible for administering a National Bushfire Recovery Fund which is supporting recovery efforts across Australia over the next two years. An initial \$2 billion has been allocated to this fund, which is in addition to other services and support available under existing natural disaster support mechanisms. The Agency works shoulder to shoulder with and for communities and collaborates with all levels of government, industry experts, business and charity sectors.

Department of Home Affairs – Emergency Management Australia (EMA)

EMA plans and coordinates Australian Government disaster recovery assistance to Queensland and contributes a significant portion of funding to Queensland to help individuals and communities recover from disasters with financial support.

Human and social recovery plan

Impact summary

The human and social impacts from the 2019 Queensland Bushfires have been evident, with community disruption, infrastructure damage, psycho-social impacts and financial hardship affecting the local government areas of Bundaberg, Gladstone, Livingstone, Lockyer Valley, Noosa, Scenic Rim, Somerset, Southern Downs, Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba. Several areas have been evacuated or impacted by bushfires more than once, and this has had significant psychological impact upon the community members in the impacted areas. During the bushfire events there were 11,938 instances of psychological first aid provided to residents within these communities, whilst there were over 12,000 residents financially assisted with EHA grants.

This highlights some of the compounding psychological impacts that the fires have had on the affected communities. Concerns regarding air quality were also raised, with air toxicity levels being some of the highest recorded since 2009 in certain areas. It should also be noted that many of these communities have also been subject to ongoing drought conditions and in recent years, some have been impacted multiple times by cyclones, floods or bushfires.

- Over 3700 claims for Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payments (AGDRP) and Disaster Recovery Allowances were lodged by bushfire affected people in Queensland and New South Wales (across all bushfire events) resulting in \$4,593,400 being paid.
- Over 12,796 donated goods for the 2019 Queensland Bushfires have been provided through GIVIT.
- Significant financial hardship support is also being provided by emergency relief service providers and charities such as Uniting Care QLD, GIVIT and Salvation Army, who have held public appeals for

Queensland and New South Wales bushfire relief. This has been particularly targeted to people who fall outside the grant eligibility criteria and/or who have significant damage/losses.

Southern Queensland Bushfires

A number of key community supports, health and wellbeing recovery impacts and issues have been identified across locations and interest groups.

Financial hardship:

- 3538 EHA grants paid with a total of \$1,443,600 paid to assist 8095 residents.
- 22 Essential Household Contents grants paid with a total value of \$29,035.
- Four Structural Assistance Grants paid with a total value of \$25,400.
- Three ESSR scheme grants paid with a total value of \$13,290.
- In total, \$1,511,325 has been distributed under the jointly funded state and Commonwealth PHA and ESSR schemes to impacted communities throughout the event to date.

Housing and accommodation:

- 87 properties were assessed as damaged with 21 having severe or total destruction.
- DHPW received 49 applications for emergency housing assistance, all 49 applications have been finalised and closed.

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

- Partner agencies (Uniting Care QLD – Lifeline and Red Cross) have provided 5738 instances of psychological first aid.
- 1398 phone calls were made to the community recovery hotline.
- 3484 visitors attended the four community recovery hubs.
- 271 outreach visits were conducted to provide support to impacted communities.

Partner agency referrals:

- Many of these communities were already impacted by drought further compounding the impacts of the bushfires. This was particularly noticeable with the unusually high numbers of farmers seeking financial, emotional and practical support. Referrals to a range of existing community and welfare services, and to the extraordinary disaster-specific partner agencies were crucial in providing the level of additional support that was required by these communities.
- During outreach and hub operations, over 475 referrals were issued to partner agencies working in conjunction with Community Recovery.

Community disruption:

- A total of 18 state schools were closed during this event.
- There was disruption of community social events, volunteering and community services activities (due to impacts upon volunteers and staff), impacts on sporting or service facilities, road closures, and impact on financial capacity of business to support events and/or community members to attend.

Community concerns:

- The ongoing drought continued to be a concern for residents, not only for water preservation but potential of further bushfire danger from the extreme hot and dry weather.
- Air toxicity was also a concern raised by community members based on the smoke-filled haze affecting much of the state during this event. Residents with asthma or respiratory problems were most adversely affected, with children and the elderly also being of concern.

Eastern Queensland Bushfires

A number of key community supports, health and wellbeing recovery impacts and issues have been identified across locations and interest groups.

Financial hardship:

- 1799 EHA grants paid with a total of \$721,620 paid to assist 4080 residents.
- 37 Essential Household Contents grants paid with a total value of \$66,340.
- 11 Structural Assistance Grants paid with a total value of \$133,640.
- 13 ESSR scheme grants paid with a total value of \$64,489.
- In total, \$988,939 has been distributed under the jointly funded state and Commonwealth PHA and ESSR schemes to impacted communities throughout the event to date.

Housing and accommodation:

- 48 properties were assessed as damaged with 29 having severe or total destruction.
- DHPW received 33 applications for emergency housing assistance. 31 applications have now been finalised and closed. DHPW continues to manage the remaining two applications.

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

- Partner agencies (Uniting Care QLD – Lifeline, Queensland Health and Red Cross) have provided 6200 instances of psychological first aid.
- 1129 phone calls were made to the community recovery hotline.
- 1843 visitors attended the three community recovery hubs and five pop-up hubs.
- 836 outreach visits were conducted to provide support to impacted communities.

Partner agency referrals:

- Many of these communities had recently been impacted by the Southern Queensland Bushfires, which has added another layer of complexity with the compounding and cumulative impacts evidenced by the level of personal support required. Referrals to a range of existing community and welfare services and to the extraordinary disaster specific partner agencies were crucial in providing the level of additional support that was required by these communities.
- During outreach and hub operations, over 475 referrals were issued to partner agencies working in conjunction with Community Recovery.

Community disruption:

- A total of three state schools were closed during this event.
- During this event many people were evacuated on more than one occasion, leaving residents in a constant state of heightened vigilance, resulting in individual and community fatigue.
- Disruption of community social events, volunteering and community services activities (due to impacts upon volunteers and staff), impacts upon sporting or service facilities, road closures, and impact on financial capacity of business to support events and/or community members to attend.

Stradbroke Bushfires

- An evacuation centre housed up to 25 residents over the four day peak of the fires.
- Evacuated residents were provided with psychological first aid and counselling through community champions who are trained Red Cross Volunteers.

Community concerns

- The cumulative impacts of multiple events over the last couple of years has begun to deteriorate communities' wellbeing with many communities stating they are 'worn down'. These complications have caused anger, frustration and a genuine level of concern in communities.

- Extremely high referral rates were recorded by partner agencies during this event which further supports the conclusion that the cumulative impact is taxing resilience
- and exceeding community resources.
- Air toxicity was a concern raised by community members based on the smoke-filled haze affecting much of the state during this event. Residents with asthma or respiratory problems, children and the elderly were most adversely affected.
- Concern for wildlife and loss of habitat as well as farming/livestock was also an additional reported stressor.

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 2019 Queensland Bushfires, as well as building community capacity to more effectively respond to future events.

Program

Program guidelines

Eligibility criteria

Community Development Officers will:

- Utilise community development and theories of change methodologies;
- Undertake widespread community engagement activities to discuss the recovery process and to identify the needs and aspirations of diverse groups within the affected area;
- Support and enable capacity and skills development of individuals and groups, businesses and service providers within the affected areas;
- Support and enable the development of recovery and resilience plans for the affected areas;
- Raise awareness of and assist community groups to develop their capacity to submit recovery and/or resilience project proposals under the Flexible Funding Program;
- Promote disaster recovery and resilience information and share ideas/projects from other locations
- Engage with other key workers involved in community recovery at a local level and establish links with workers funded under other components of the Community Recovery Fund.

Eligible costs

Applicants will be responsible for all costs over and above the Approved Funding amount, and/or for ineligible project costs.

Eligible project costs are the total costs of the Community Development Program as detailed in the application, less any ineligible costs and/or other funding contributions toward the program of works.

Eligible project costs are costs directly associated with the delivery of the Community Development Program, and may include, but not limited to:

- staffing and/or salary costs associated with Community Development Officers
- costs associated with travel, allowances and accommodation
- costs associated with establishing a local face to face presence across the affected communities and engaging with affected community through a range of activities, such as community planning days
- costs associated with the extraordinary service delivery such as hire of cars, additional administrative functions directly attributable to the program and any other costs and services that directly relate to the functions and delivery of the Community Development Program
- costs associated with the delivery of training and education programs, including but not limited to:
 - facilities hire
 - planning and facilitation
 - catering
 - design and publication of materials
 - advertising such as radio, print media and billboard space.
- Limited costs associated with the attendance and participation in state facilitated recovery forums.

Any purchase of new assets must align with Section 8.4.6 in the Queensland Disaster Relief and Recovery Guidelines, November 2018 and the Queensland Government Service Agreement – Standard Terms, 17 February 2015.

Ineligible costs

Ineligible costs may include, but not limited to:

- costs of preparing DRFA funding applications, reports or associated supporting material
- remuneration of permanent or executive officers
- unsupported on-cost charges and non-specific indirect and overhead costs
- remuneration of employees for work not directly related to the Community Development Program
- activities that have already commenced or been completed
- profit margins of Qld government agencies and local governments
- legal costs
- in-kind contributions
- cash prizes or commercial gifts
- core business for an organisation
- purchase of core business capital equipment such as office equipment, motor vehicles

- office rental, furnishings and supplies
- duplication of existing initiatives
- ongoing costs for administration, operation or maintenance.

Appendix B – Evaluation plan

Program outcomes

The 2019 Queensland Bushfires identified high level recovery outcomes organised around the five functional lines of recovery. The community recovery objectives that relate to the Community Development Program are as follows:

- The needs of vulnerable groups are addressed
- The community is aware of disaster processes
- The community can express its changing recovery needs.

Program logic

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

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:

- timely procurement
- time invested
- community participants
- engagement events
- training and learning
- resources and tools
- supporting Flexible Funding Grants
- supporting recovery and resilience planning.

Qualitative

The qualitative data planned for regular and ongoing monitoring are:

- 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 Queensland Bushfires, September – December 2019.

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 Community Development 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 (KEQs) 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.



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