



Australian Government
National Emergency Management Agency

Australian Institute for
Disaster Resilience



WEBINAR SERIES

Resilience Matters



Acknowledgement of Country

AIDR acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the various lands on which you all join us from today and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in this event.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters across Australia.



Housekeeping

- You will remain muted and your camera will not be activated for the duration of today's event.
- Today's event will be recorded and made available after the event.
- Please enter questions for our speakers in the Q&A function, not the chat box.
- Please use the chat box to share any thoughts or reflections during the presentation
- Please be respectful to each other when posting your comments or questions.



Welcome

John Richardson

Executive Director

Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR)



Australian Government
National Emergency Management Agency



Speaker Introduction

Maree Grenfell

Founder and Director

Once Upon Tomorrow



Australian Government
National Emergency Management Agency

Putting communities in the centre

Community based preparedness



ONCE UPON
TOMORROW

1. The world has changed

Complex and compounding disasters



Acute Shocks

*are sudden events that
disrupt a town or city*

Chronic Stresses

*are ongoing challenges that weaken
the social fabric of a community*



Interconnections between
Acute Shocks & Chronic Stresses



ONCE UPON
TOMORROW

2. Preparedness is a social process

*Relationships. Trust. Confidence.
Connection. Organising capacity.*

3. Our roles are changing

Collaboration and changing mindsets

Changing mindsets

Traditional mindset

- Expert
- Inform
- Deliver
- Consultation
- Build resilience

Emerging mindset

- Partner
- Listen
- Enable
- Collaboration
- Cultivate collaborative capacity

4. What are we really cultivating?

Conditions that allow communities to learn, organise and act together



ONCE UPON
TOMORROW

A group of approximately 12 people are gathered around a campfire in a wooded area. They are sitting on the ground or on folding chairs, looking towards the fire. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn. The background shows trees and a body of water. The overall mood is peaceful and communal.

5. Connection

Strong, connected communities don't happen by accident. They grow through everyday interactions shared experiences, and relationships built over time



ONCE UPON TOMORROW

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Speaker Introduction

Natasha Odgers

Sector Lead - Disaster Resilience

Neighbourhood Centres Queensland

Sally Foreman

Strategic Projects Lead

Neighbourhood Centres Queensland

**Resilience Matters | Community-
based disaster risk reduction:
Putting communities at the centre**

Community Resilience over Disaster Resilience



State Snapshot of Neighbourhood Centres

2025 Annual Figures

155



Neighbourhood Centres

Of which 128 receive NC Program funding from Qld Gov, and 27 do not receive this funding

2,126



Staff Members

Working a total of 2,598,544 hours over the year

1,637



Community Projects Run

Over the year, and supported 919 Community Projects run by others

2,541

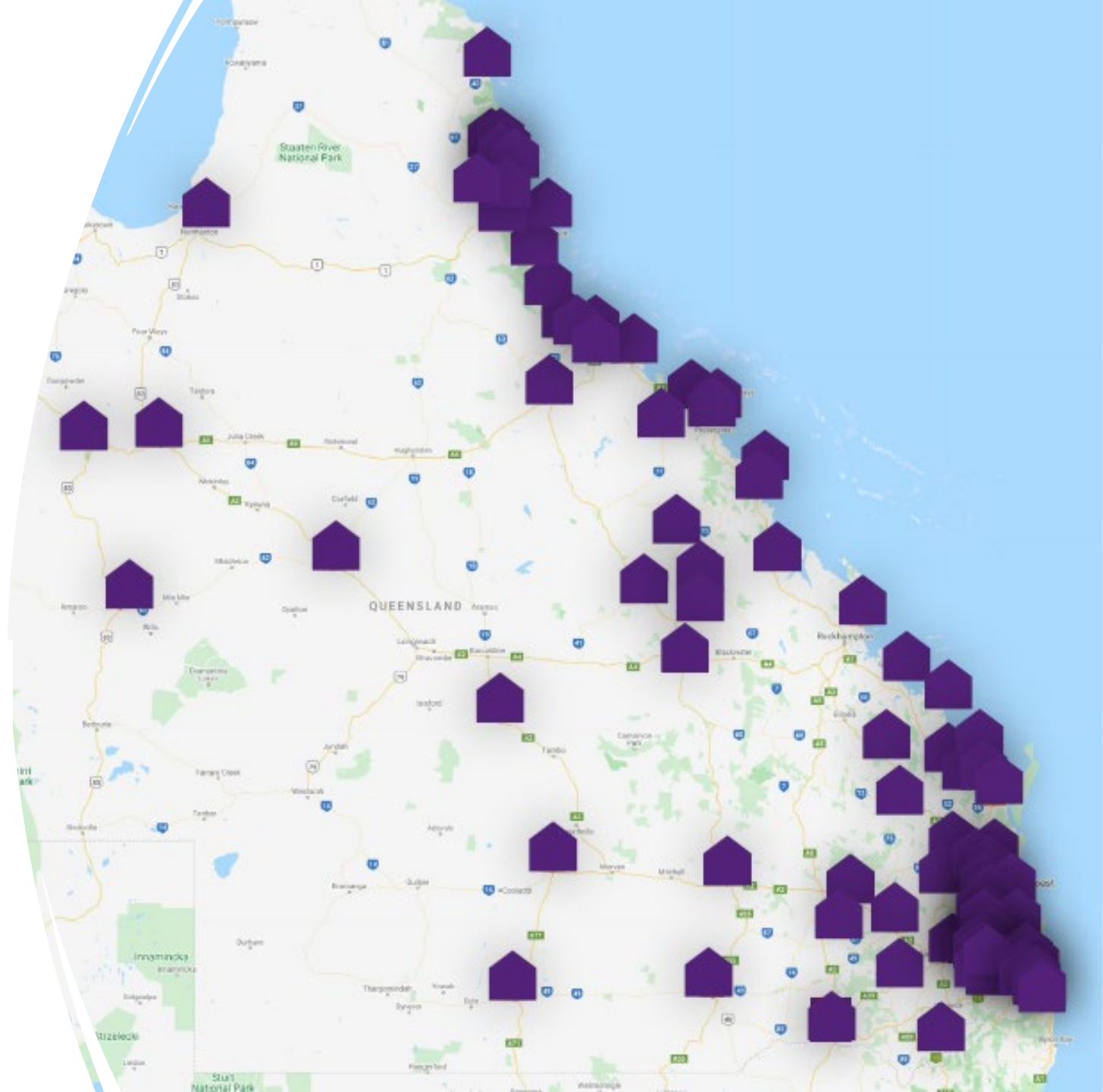


Volunteers each week

Working a total of 655,300 hours over the year. Worth over \$33.8 million

2.6 Million Visitors

in one year alone.



Queensland Neighbourhood Centres

Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2023-2026

A plan to strengthen the resilience
of Queensland's local communities facing
COVID-19, flooding and rainfall events,
drought, bushfires and other disasters.



PRIORITY 1



**Raise Awareness
& Recognition**

PRIORITY 2



**Strengthen Relationships
& Collaboration**

PRIORITY 3



**Influence Policy
& Shape Funding**

PRIORITY 4



**Learning
& Development**

Community Resilience over Disaster Resilience

Are Communities More Resilient Than 30 Years Ago?

If the answer is no, we need to rethink our approach.

Community-led disaster resilience is not an add-on or nice to have. **It is critical for lasting impact and should be central to resilience-building efforts.**

Resilience isn't something delivered to communities!

Investing in community development systems

Community resilience through community-led initiatives requires long-term investment in:

- Neighbourhood Centres (infrastructure)
- Community development practitioners (workforce/capability)
- Local leadership (capacity)
- Community participation (social processes)
- Trusted local relationships (social capital)

We often fund recovery after disasters, while under-investing in the systems that make recovery possible in the first place.

Community-Led Doesn't Mean Community-Alone

There is often an assumption that communities can simply organise themselves. Some can, but for others, the reality is more complex.

Disaster recovery often involves complex psychosocial impacts that require skilled support. Resilience depends on long-term investment in trained workers, not just short-term funding.

Effective practitioners combine expertise in:

- Community development
- Psychosocial recovery
- Disaster management systems

Skilled community development support is essential for community-led resilience.

Relationships over Projects

Resilient communities are built through:

- Leadership
- Shared experience
- Strong networks

**The key isn't sustaining activities.
It's sustaining relationships.**

Measuring Success Through Process, Rather Than Outputs

Success lies in the process communities go through together.

Traditional measures often focus on outputs:

- Number of events
- Number of participants
- Number of projects completed

Community development, which ensuring stronger community resilience, focuses on:

- Relationships formed
- Trust built
- Leadership developed
- Increased participation
- Greater community capacity

Stories of community-led action inspire other communities to take action

Examples of how communities can play a practical role in identifying and addressing disaster risks and build resilience

Neighbourhood level community resilience

"The Oxley Creek Flood Action Group develop neighbourhood and street disaster plans.

People come together, share ideas around flood and disaster risks and preparation, and build community resilience."



benarrawa.org.au/neighbourhood-resilience

Build on existing community strengths

National award winning Resilient Kurilpa is a community-led network of resident volunteers and community groups.

Awareness raising and capacity building initiatives include the Kurilpa Flood Library with local stories, online tools, resources, training and a flood mitigation plan template and multi-hazards app for apartment body corporates.



Collaborative approaches

A partnership has formed with a basis of intentional conversations about building resilience through existing and new relationships with local groups, organisations and services.

This collaboration works towards greater integration across local organisations and with official disaster management arrangements in the region.



**FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND
RESILIENCE PARTNERSHIP**

Delivered by:
Cooktown District Community Centre (CDCC) Partnership

In collaboration with:
Local Councils, Aboriginal Shire Councils
Community Organisations &
Disaster Management Networks

Delivering three integrated programs across
Cook, Douglas, Hope Vale, Wujal Wujal, Mareeba, and Tablelands

P-CEP PERSON-CENTRED EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
BCDP BUSINESS CONTINUITY & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
SSCB SOCIAL SERVICES CAPACITY BUILDING

Strengthening Community Preparedness, Service Continuity, and Regional Coordination

 **4082 1400**  **reception@cooktowndcc.org.au**

Assistance provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)

 Australian Government  Queensland Government  COOKTOWN DISTRICT
COMMUNITY CENTRE

Go to the people - those most vulnerable

Street Up emerged from hearing stories from people experiencing homelessness about their unique challenges during extreme weather events and how these are often overlooked in disaster planning.

Now it is those with lived experience whose voices are heard.



Adapt approaches with the people

"We listened to CALD community members to understand where they were at and developed suitable approaches with them. Council supported with trust, funds, networks and attendance."

- Disaster word game to increase language understanding
- Paintings & exhibition to familiarise with disaster words and information
- Fun mingle activity with migrants and disaster management service providers to understand roles.





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Q&A

Moderated by:

Dr Mayeda Rashid

Manager Capability Development and Engagement

Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR)



Event concludes

Thank you for attending today's webinar.

Next event:

Register now for Australian Disaster
Resilience Conference in Melbourne

19-20 August 2026



Register now.



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