

# Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Burnett Inland

## Roadmap to Resilience: Cherbourg



**FRRR**  
Foundation for Rural  
Regional Renewal



**Australian Government**

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# Roadmap to Resilience: Cherbourg

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# Part 1: Summary

## Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Introduction

### Section A: Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Program Outline and Intent

Disaster Resilient: Future Ready (DR:FR) is a national program that helps remote, rural and regional communities to be better prepared for future disasters. Place-based, FRRR first piloted the DR:FR program in New South Wales, before subsequently undertaking multi-year programs in both Victoria and the Burnett Inland region of Queensland.

An evolution of the DR:FR program in Queensland is that FRRR worked with local delivery partner Red Earth Community Foundation (Red Earth). Red Earth leveraged their networks, expertise and adaptable approach towards community resilience planning to support local partner communities in the Burnett Inland to strengthen their resilience. This effort has been made possible through the financial support of the Minderoo Foundation and the Australian Government's Preparing Australian Communities Program – Local.

The overall aim of the DR:FR program is to develop and lead regional and localised community initiatives that strengthen awareness, increase preparedness, and enhance capacity of the local community to thrive and be resilient to the impacts of climate, disasters, and other disruptions. This includes building local knowledge of climate risks, catalysing leadership, fostering collaboration and facilitating community-driven innovation processes to develop and activate strategic actions and strategies that:

- Strengthen community capacity to positively adapt and evolve to change and disruption;
- Increase disaster preparedness to better mitigate, avoid, withstand and / or recover more effectively from the increasing effects of hazards such as bushfires and floods; and
- Improve community wellbeing and enhance resilience, so communities can grow and flourish.

The pace of program delivery aims to respond to the individual needs of each community and activities may include:

- Capacity building workshops;
- Facilitated community conversations;
- Community building and engagement events;
- Co-design workshops;
- Relationship and network building; and
- Activation of priority initiatives.

The partner communities identified by Red Earth in the early phase of the program included Cherbourg, Dallarnil, Kalpowar, Kumbia, Proston and Tansey. A focus in the selection process was assessment of a community's capacity in the first 72 hours after a disaster. These communities had access to local community funding for activities that enhanced their capacity to thrive and be resilient to the impacts of climate, disasters and other disruptions.

Another stream of activities supported collaboration across regional agencies and organisations through the development of regional level resilience building initiatives for collective impact.

## Section B: Purpose of Document

This **Roadmap to Resilience: Cherbourg** document has multiple purposes. Firstly, it serves to document the journey and outcomes of the **Disaster Resilient: Future Ready** program in Cherbourg, including community engagement processes, community mapping and the identification and development of locally driven initiatives aimed at enhancing disaster preparedness and resilience in the present, and to support local community considerations in the development of future initiatives.

Iterative versions of the Roadmap acted as a vital resource for the program's Internal Advisory Group (IAG), whose remit was to provide local advice and insights to the overall DR:FR Burnett Inland program to ensure it was delivered in alignment with local needs and priorities, within the construct of program donor parameters. By consolidating information, insights, actions and outcomes, the Roadmap aims to foster alignment with the broader disaster management ecosystem and capture the unique strengths and needs of the Cherbourg community.

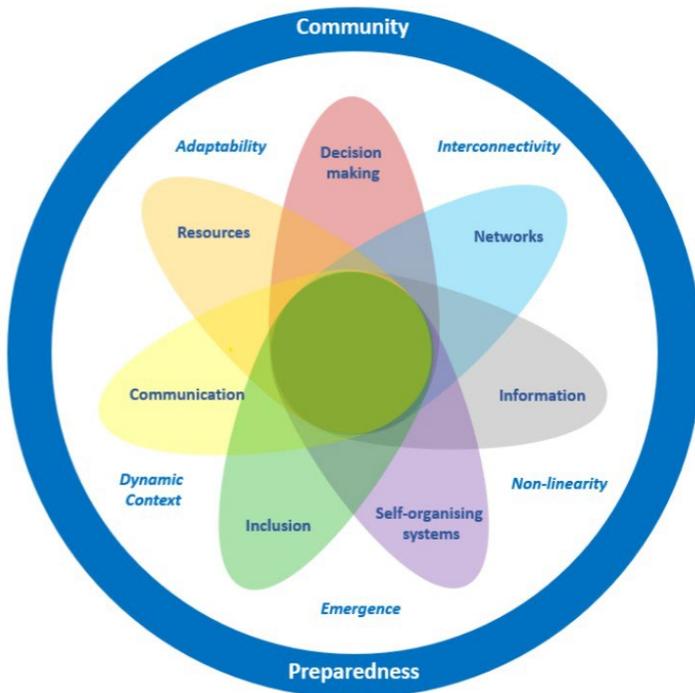
Furthermore, the Roadmap was also a critical element in FRRR's granting due diligence and provided the FRRR Board, which ultimately approved DR:FR Burnett Inland grant applications, with information about the development of initiatives and how they align to program principles, evidence of broader need, and considerations of the context.

## Section C: Critical Dimensions in Community Disaster Resilience

The place-based model of the DR:FR program integrates workshops, resources and learning opportunities into the model to support local activation. These ways of learning are informed by FRRR's previous experiences delivering disaster resilience and recovery programs across Australia, and are also drawn from endorsed industry sources.

A key framework that underpins how the DR:FR program understands and considers resilience is the Critical Dimensions for Community Resilience. Drawing on research with communities experiencing disasters and other shocks in Australia over time, as well as a growing body of published research, University of Sydney researchers documented and developed a set of key areas, or dimensions, which are helpful in guiding and supporting community led work in disaster preparedness and resilience building. In collaboration with FRRR through an action research partnership, these dimensions were seen in action in communities impacted by disasters.

As noted in the [Action Research Report for Community Partners into FRRR's Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Victoria Program](#) report (Joseph, P., Rawsthorne, M. & Howard, A. (2025) "While the Resilience Dimensions identify seven distinct areas of action to strengthen disaster preparedness, these sit within a larger realm of complexity thinking or complex systems." Furthermore, "Including this kind of thinking offers new and promising directions for anyone interested in disaster resilience building, and it helps us understand often invisible dynamics and feedback loops which enable and prevent action."



Resilience-building Dimensions (Rawsthorne, M., Howard, A., Joseph, P., Sampson, D., and Katrak Harris, M. (2023). Understanding community-led disaster preparedness. *Australian Journal of Emergency Management*. 38(2), 49-54)

FRRR recognises that, nationally, disaster management is a busy and complex space and so takes an inclusive approach through focusing efforts on the Critical Dimensions in Community Disaster Resilience as a supportive framework for affected communities, regardless of the type of climate related impact. While ‘drought’ by national definition and by program donors is not considered a disaster, it is listed in the community profile for Cherbourg given its wide ranging local climatic and social impact, particularly given the history of drought in the region and its close connection to both heatwaves and fire.

**Section D: Internal Advisory Group**

DR:FR Burnett Inland established an Internal Advisory Group (IAG) to create an informal advisory mechanism in relation to operational processes of the program. The IAG was designed to engender collaboration, information sharing, local input, and a continual learning loop to strengthen the working relationship between Red Earth, FRRR, local organisations and community, and bolster coordination between local emergency management agencies and community level self-determination.

In addition to Red Earth and FRRR participation, broader local representation included Disaster Management Officers from South Burnett Regional Council, North Burnett Regional Council and Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council. Leadership from local community organisations and government agencies were also represented, including South Burnett CTC, Liver Better Monto, and the Department of Primary Industries QLD.

Governance of the IAG was critical and supported by Terms of Reference which outlined the remit, roles and responsibilities, confidentiality, conflict of interest and respectful conduct. The IAG aimed to meet monthly through the program which mainly occurred online.

## Community Journey

### Section E: Cherbourg Profile

Cherbourg is an Aboriginal community town that sits within the State electorate of Nanango and the Federal division of Wide Bay. Located 6 km from Murgon and 170 km north-west of Brisbane, it is on the Barambah Creek and is located in Wakka Wakka tribal boundaries, near the border of Gubbi Gubbi territory.

### People and Place

- **First Nations:** Wakka Wakka tribal boundaries, near the border of Gubbi Gubbi territory.
- **Population:** 1,194 (2021 Census)
- **SEIFA:** 1
- **Remoteness:** Regional (Inner Regional RA2)

### History and Identity

The history of Cherbourg is one of Aboriginal people being forcibly removed and brought from all over Queensland and Northern New South Wales to a newly formed government reserve. Under the Aborigines Protection Act of 1897, the settlement, then called Barambah, was gazetted and established in 1904. In 1932, the name Barambah was then changed to Cherbourg due to a nearby property called “Barambah Station” which caused confusion in mail delivery.

### Community Assets and Services

Cherbourg features its own council – Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council – and is home to The Ration Shed Museum, Material Exchange Recycling Facility, call centre, Barambah Pottery, a joinery works, and a sporting complex with football oval and recreation reserves. It also has a war memorial, TAFE with theatre, skill centred training centre, job agency, hospital and health centre with helipad. There is an Early Childhood Learning Centre and primary school, with the nearest secondary school being Murgon State High School. Other local organisations include the Barambah Local Justice Group, Mercy Services (Youth Justice), Uniting Care women’s safe house, Wondin-Dee counselling service, aged care facility, a children’s hostel and men’s hub. There is a Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnership office in Cherbourg. Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council is recognised nationally as an innovative leader, which also supports the Cherbourg Elders Advisory Group. Agencies that regularly provide services include BlueCare, CentaCare, Graham House, and South Burnett CTC. Emergency services include Cherbourg Police, Ambulance, Fire Brigade and State Emergency Service (SES).

## Climate and Disaster History

Cherbourg has experienced recurring droughts, including the Federation Drought (1895–1902) and the Millennium Drought (1997–2009), as well as declared droughts in 1914-15, 1965-1966, 1982-1983, 2017-19 and 2021-22. Local impacts were experienced from Ex-Tropical Cyclones Beni (2003), Oswald (2013), Marcia (2015), and Debbie (2017). Other notable events include extreme weather events in December 2010-January 2011 which caused isolation due to localised flooding, and a tornado in October 2018.

## Disaster Resilience

The [Australian Disaster Resilience Index](#) assesses the broader Southern Queensland area (including Cherbourg) as having a **moderate to low capacity for disaster resilience**, primarily due to its outer regional and remote status, which is associated with lower coping and adaptive capacities. The Index highlights that while emergency services and some community capital may be strengths, systemic issues related to remoteness, such as lower economic capital and accessibility, can constrain resilience.

## Section F: DR:FR Community Engagement

Different methods of engagement were explored in Cherbourg, including three early meetings with the CEO and other Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council representatives in mid-2023, attendance at the Cherbourg Christmas Fair in December 2023, and further meetings with council in mid-2024. In January 2025, the program's Internal Advisory Group suggested that Red Earth engage with The Ration Shed, as a local not-for-profit, to discuss the program and to see if there were any gaps in protecting cultural assets from climatic impacts. This was a positive and enthusiastic engagement which resulted in the development of the 'Protecting Cultural Assets' initiatives. Other positive engagements included the Cherbourg Big Map event in August 2025 and a youth engagement activity in October 2025.

Open community sessions attracted no local attendance, therefore engagement focused on building strong relationships with the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and The Ration Shed, as well as collaborating with existing local events and activities. Council CEO Chatur Zala has been very supportive and Council representative Sean Nicholson has been part of the program's Internal Advisory Group throughout.

## Christmas Fair

During the Cherbourg Christmas Fair in December 2023, Red Earth enjoyed the high energy, family-friendly event and had direct engagements with 19 community members and great conversations with many others. Two questions were explored: 'What does Cherbourg need to thrive', and 'What do you want Cherbourg to look like in 20 years'. Some inspiring responses were received from people of all ages.

### What does Cherbourg need to thrive?

- Culture and respect
- Stronger families
- Future vision

- Healthy communities
- Working together
- More housing
- Upskilling
- People with expertise to empower the Cherbourg mob
- More employment
- Parks and a pool
- Better health services, including after hours
- Next generation voices speaking up about what vision Cherbourg needs
- Community people having more confidence to speak up and have a say
- To be self sufficient
- Sustainable economics for independence
- More activities for young people

#### **What do you want Cherbourg to look like in 20 years?**

- Strong, healthy families that stay together in a community that is safe and well
- Networking and conversations that ensure everyone is heard
- More community to have a voice
- More community contribution

### **Cherbourg Big Map Event – Coming Together for Disaster Preparedness**

In October 2024 Disaster Relief Australia (DRA) delivered Big Map activities across the Burnett Inland region as an opportunity to discuss risk mitigation for community and emergency agencies from a whole of catchment perspective. Big Map exercises amplify community voice and knowledge. Through literally standing on a massive floor map of the local area with community, DRA volunteers help locals identify risks, share experiences, and develop strategies to strengthen disaster preparedness and resilience. After seeing the value of this exercise, conversations were initiated with Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council to developing the Big Map floor asset and delivering a Big Map activity specifically for Cherbourg. This idea was further discussed and explored with council CEO Chatur Zala, council representative Sean Nicholson, Mayor Bruce Simpson, a representative of the Elders Advisory Group and DRA in May 2025. The concept was endorsed at a Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council meeting in May 2025.

Red Earth, FRRR, DRA and Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council collaborated on the delivery and promotion, which culminated in Cherbourg Big Map activities being hosted in community on 12 August 2025.

Throughout the day, multiple sessions were held on the 10m x 10m fabric Big Map of Cherbourg – including a key stakeholder workshop, an after-school activity, and an open community session.

Over 30 representatives from council, emergency services, service providers, community leaders and Elders gathered on the Big Map to explore disaster preparedness, response strategies and opportunities to collaborate.

In the afternoon, community members came to yarn on the Big Map, highlighting areas of risk, critical infrastructure and what matters most to them. They also shared past experiences of disaster impacts and their concerns for the future.

Students who joined the after-school activity loved finding their homes on the Big Map and were keen to share their own perspectives. Many went home excited to talk to their families about emergency planning.

Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council will act as ongoing custodians of the Big Map assets, where it will continue to be a valuable tool for the Local Disaster Management Group and emergency services into the future.

DRA also produced a Cherbourg Big Map Report which provides an overview of the Cherbourg community's disaster risks and outlines key discussions as well as opportunities to build preparedness. ***The report can be found on the DR:FR Digital Resource Hub.***

## Section G: DR:FR Funded Initiatives

### Protecting Cultural Assets: The Ration Shed Museum

*Lead organisation: Cherbourg Historical Precinct Group Inc.*

This initiative will deliver essential infrastructure improvements to better support artists, visitors, staff, and the community by safeguarding working environments, cultural spaces, and significant heritage assets. The original project included a preservation assessment to provide vital guidance on caring for culturally significant objects, the installation of cyclone-rated Crimsafe window coverings, air conditioning and fireproof storage. These enhancements aimed to reduce the risk of damage during severe weather events and emergencies, enable temperature-controlled environments ensure user friendly workspaces and safe preservation of culturally significant items.

*Project Partners*

Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council, Cherbourg Historical Precinct Group Inc, Cherbourg Elders Advisory Group, Red Earth Community Foundation, FRRR.

*Outcomes*

This initiative instills a deep sense of reassurance knowing that the irreplaceable, culturally significant artefacts, are being protected and cultural spaces are being improved to create a safer, more stable environment. Upgrades also support volunteers and artists ensuring the museum continues to serve as a vital hub for the Cherbourg community.

## Section H: Disaster Preparedness and Resilience Rationale

The funded initiative aligns with three of the Resilience Dimensions: **Inclusion; Decision Making; and Resources, Tools and Support.**

This initiative supports **Inclusion** by amplifying the protection of cultural assets for Aboriginal people and raising awareness of their priorities into disaster management **Decision Making.**

It also builds **Resources, Tools and Support** by providing practical, long-lasting infrastructure improvements – such as cyclone-rated Crimsafe and air-conditioning – equipping artists, Elders, staff, and community members with a safe and stable meeting place.

## Section I: Community Aspirations for the Future

### *Protection of Cultural Assets and Heritage*

- Map sacred sites, cemeteries, and cultural trees as protected areas in hazard plans.
- Map the cultural artefacts that are located across the community and develop and deliver an action plan that includes significance assessment and disaster planning.
- Integrate traditional fire and land-care practices into mitigation efforts.
- Ensure Elders' input in all planning and recovery decisions.

### *Flood Gauge Awareness Program*

- Develop a local initiative to help residents clearly understand what flood gauge readings mean for their community.
- Create visual tools that show what each gauge level looks like on the ground.
- Install physical markers near bridges, creeks, and roads to indicate risk levels.
- Share simple explanations through Cherbourg Radio and community notice boards ahead of each wet season.

### *Build Community Capacity*

- Empower the community to lead preparedness and response activities.
- Provide Incident Management Team (IMT) awareness training so locals understand the emergency management cycle.
- Offer hands-on workshops in using basic mitigation tools already available through council (e.g., pumps, sandbags, barriers).
- Support community champions to lead local preparedness initiatives and build shared confidence.

### *Dual-Hazard Evacuation Plans*

- Create clear, hazard-specific evacuation plans for both flood and fire.
- Map separate evacuation routes and safe places for each hazard type.
- Explain why each location is suitable for one hazard but not the other.
- Present plans in visual, easy-to-follow formats for households and community facilities.

### *Youth Preparedness Program*

- Establish a youth-led initiative that builds practical skills and leadership in emergency readiness.
- Deliver training in firefighting, first aid, and leadership development.
- Combine Elder mentorship with youth training to connect traditional knowledge and modern preparedness.

### *Community Isolation Plan*

- Prepare for extended isolation due to road closures or supply disruption.
- Document supply chain processes for food, fuel, water, and medical items.

- Identify local roles and responsibilities for welfare checks and communication.
- Maintain and test backup power and fuel stores before each high-risk season.

#### *Strengthen Communication Pathways*

- Build on existing local communication strengths to improve preparedness and response.
- Use Cherbourg Radio (94.9 FM) as the central channel for alerts and updates.
- Deliver clear, plain-language messages that reflect community understanding.
- Launch pre-season campaigns through schools, council, and community hubs.

#### *Establish an Ongoing Collaboration Forum*

- Create a regular platform to maintain momentum and coordination.
- Hold quarterly meetings bringing together council, community, Elders, youth, and partner agencies.
- Review progress, share lessons, and plan upcoming training and exercises.
- Ensure decisions remain community-led and inclusive of all voices.

## Cherbourg Disaster Management Information

A key source of emergency management information for the Cherbourg Community is the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council.

For information about how to prepare for the next disaster, community members can visit Council's Disaster Management section on their website: <https://cherbourg.qld.gov.au/services/disaster-management/>

## The Importance of Integrating Cross Sector Collaboration & Partnerships

Informed by the [National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework](#) (NDRRF), the DR:FR program was designed with awareness that “disaster risk reduction is a shared responsibility.” This mutual obligation is between emergency management agencies, including local government (formal) business, community organisations and individuals (informal). As the NDRRF also acknowledges, responsibilities between these stakeholders “is not equally shared, and it can often be unclear where certain responsibilities lie.” For this reason, a very important aspect of the DR:FR program is about brokering partnerships and collaboration to support understanding of who can do what to support risk reduction and resilience building.

The DR:FR program aims to support, resource and strengthen the ‘informal’ community resilience building and preparedness efforts at the grassroots level, while working in collaboration with the formalised support systems. Part of the program’s intent is to increase local awareness of current ‘formal’ disaster preparedness efforts, as well as response and recovery roles and responsibilities, particularly by local government.

This section of the Roadmap aims to detail mechanisms that were established as part of the program to bring about shared responsibility, the benefits of collaborating with local government and the role neighbourhood centres could play in supporting local working groups of volunteer community members to develop, coordinate and deliver initiatives.

The IAG was a strategic way to support this critical activation of collaboration. IAG representatives were vital in the program's ability to understand the local context with regards to service provisions and emergency management arrangements, providing an easeful resource to ensure locally designed initiatives worked in concert with existing activities.

## Section J: Council Disaster Management Officers

Disaster Management Officers (DMO) from South Burnett Regional Council, North Burnett Regional Council and Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council were active members of the IAG. Furthermore, these representatives, in addition to the DMO at Gympie Regional Council, were engaged in conversations with community working groups and grantee applicants to support the development of initiatives so that grassroots projects complimented and understood the roles and responsibilities of formal disaster emergency management arrangements and protocols.

Brokering collaboration between these key roles in formal disaster management with community members and grantees supported local awareness of:

- **Local Disaster Dashboards** as the source of truth for up-to-date weather warning and emergency news.
- How suitable facilities can act as important **community meeting places** throughout the disaster cycle.
  - In **preparedness** this may be holding information sessions or having a noticeboard with relevant info and hosting regular social cohesion activities.
  - In times of **response** these spaces may be used by community members to charge phones, receive information together, boil kettles, share stories and support.
  - These spaces may also be established as **recovery** hubs after a disaster where required agencies could attend or where community led activities could occur like creative and craft projects that foster connection.
- The **Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements**, particularly for staff from four Neighbourhood Centres in the Burnett Inland, so that when developing Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness Plans with individuals there is awareness of broader formal emergency management protocols.

## Section K: Local Disaster Management Groups

Local governments appoint Local Disaster Management Groups (LDMG). Their role is to:

- Develop, review and assess effective disaster management practices;
- Help local government to prepare a local disaster management plan;
- Ensure the community knows how to respond in a disaster;
- Identify and coordinate disaster resources;
- Manage local disaster operations; and
- Ensure local disaster management and disaster operations integrate with state disaster management.

During the DR:FR Program, Red Earth and FRRR staff met with LDMG members in the South and North Burnett through face-to-face meetings and online deputations as part of scheduled meetings. The purpose of these opportunities was to build awareness of the DR:FR program intent, activities and community needs, and to foster an ethos of collaboration and feedback loops to support best possible outcomes on the ground and into the future.

Outcomes of the program engagement with LDMG's included:

- Recognition by North Burnett LDMG of the DR:FR local community consultation in Dallarnil and Kalpowar in Local Disaster Management Plans.
- Custodianship by South Burnett LDMG of the DRA Big Map assets as a tool to support ongoing emergency management training, plus collaborative education events between emergency management agencies, councils, schools and community organisations.

## Section L: Neighbourhood Centres

The purposes of Neighbourhood Centres commonly reflect community needs, with a particular focus to support those marginalised or disadvantaged, they also can act as a hub for other support agencies in rural and regional areas. For these reasons these organisations and the established systems that they have can play an important role for local communities throughout the disaster cycle. This has been the case, dependent on capacities for Neighbourhood Centres, within the Burnett Inland.

Through both locally funded initiatives, as well as through projects that offered region wide support, Neighbourhood Centres have been engaged in the DR:FR program.

One example involved collaboration between four Neighbourhood Centres and focused on Person Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP), building region wide knowledge and support networks.

The DR:FR program saw strength in this partnership as the approach created efficiencies towards building knowledge across the Burnett Inland region, and also offered an opportunity for the Neighbourhood Centres to strengthen their networks and working relationships so that in times of disaster, opportunities to support each other are more likely and straightforward. This P-CEP project is detailed further in section two of this document.

It is also important to note that both North Burnett Regional Council and Neighbourhood Centre representatives were members of the IAG. Whilst the program ensured that all conflicts were appropriately managed, the IAG mechanism enhanced project outcomes through increasing opportunities for formal and informal collaboration in disaster preparedness efforts. A fantastic example of this was Neighbourhood Centre representatives engaging in training in the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements, supported by local councils, so that when developing P-CEP Plans with individuals across the region, they could have increased awareness of formal emergency management protocols and responsibilities.

# Section 2: Learnings from Broader Program

## Activities & Resources to Support Future Effort

### Regional Initiatives

#### Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP)

##### *Overview*

South Burnett CTC Inc. delivered a region-wide disaster preparedness initiative across the Burnett Inland, combining accredited Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) training for Neighbourhood Centre staff with direct community engagement, personalised planning and resilience-building activities. With \$200,000 in combined funding, the project strengthened the capability of four Neighborhood Centres and supported vulnerable residents to better understand their risks and prepare for emergencies.

##### *Phase 1: Capability Building*

Staff from four Neighbourhood Centres—Graham House, Nanango Neighbourhood Centre, LiveBetter Community Services and North Burnett Community Service—completed accredited P-CEP training through the University of Sydney, alongside training in the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements, to ensure formal disaster management information was integrated into the delivery. This created a shared, consistent framework for supporting vulnerable residents before, during and after disasters.

##### *Phase 2: Community Delivery*

Centres activated their new capability through outreach, events, home visits and one-on-one planning sessions. Staff used P-CEP tools to guide personalised conversations about risks, supports, health needs, mobility, pets and communication preferences. Activities were delivered across multiple towns and outreach locations throughout 2025, with support from local government, emergency services and community groups.

##### *Outcomes*

- Neighbourhood Centres collaborated to embed P-CEP into everyday practice, increasing long-term capacity and consistency.
- 19 staff across four Neighbourhood Centres completed accredited P-CEP training.
- Strengthened cross-sector collaboration improved preparedness pathways and community connectedness across the region.
- Vulnerable residents gained personalised emergency plans and stronger connections to local support services.
- 1,272 community contacts and 83 personalised P-CEP Plans were delivered to older people, isolated residents and individuals not previously connected to services.

**“The connections built through P-CEP are essential when disaster does strike. It means people have a point of contact at the Neighbourhood Centre for the right information and an identified connection that could help with the clean up after an event.”**

**“This work has made a meaningful contribution to community safety and preparedness, while reinforcing Nanango Neighbourhood Centre’s role as a trusted, local, person-centred support before, during and after emergencies.”**

### *Links*

To learn more about the benefits of P-CEP, view the video case study on the [DR:FR Burnett Inland Resources Hub](#).

Are you interested in a P-CEP Plan for yourself or someone you know? Monto Neighbourhood Centre, Graham House and South Burnett CTC now offer P-CEP planning as part of their services. Reach out to one of these Neighbourhood Centres to discuss P-CEP planning:

- Monto Neighbourhood Centre: Phone: 1800 580 580. Website: <https://livebetter.org.au/child-and-family/monto-community-services/>
- Graham House: Phone: 4169 8400. Website: <https://grahamhouse.org.au/>
- North Burnett Community Services: Phone: 4165 4690. Website: <http://www.nbcs.org.au>
- South Burnett CTC: Phone: 4162 9000. Website: <https://sbctc.com.au/>

## **Disaster Relief Australia Big Map**

### *Overview*

Big Map exercises were delivered to stakeholders and communities in the North Burnett, South Burnett and Cherbourg Local Government areas.

Big Map exercises are a valuable community resilience activity which plays a part in identifying potential risk and hazards. Developed by Disaster Relief Australia, a giant floor map of the area creates opportunity for a community to collaborate and work together to identify risks, share experiences and discuss ways to better prepare for future disaster events.

A ‘Burnett Inland’ 15m x 15m fabric Big Map was created, incorporating the North Burnett, South Burnett, Cherbourg and relevant catchments. This Big Map was then utilised to stimulate collaboration and discussions, firstly at a regional stakeholder event, then at five community sessions, all held in October 2024. The stakeholder session took place in Gayndah with over 30 emergency services, council and other agency representatives. Community sessions were held in Biggenden, Mundubbera, Monto, Kingaroy and Murgon with over 70 attendees across the four sessions.

A Cherbourg-specific 10m x 10m fabric Big Map was also created, with stakeholder and community sessions held in August 2025 in Cherbourg, attended by over 30 people, including Elders, council, emergency services and agency representatives, and community members.

Big Map exercises were identified early in the DR:FR program as a key capacity building, information-sharing and collaboration tools for regional impact, particularly given the whole-of-catchment and all-hazards approach employed by DRA.

#### *Outcomes*

There were significant outcomes from this regional initiative, including:

- The developed Burnett **Inland Big Map Resilience Report**, which provides key information about the Burnett River catchment, outlines insights, analysis and key points from discussions during the Big Map events, and lists suggested future opportunities.
- The fabric Big Maps, which have been retained in the region as valuable assets for the future. The South Burnett Regional Council Local Disaster Management Group are custodians of the Burnett Inland Regional Big Map and are committed to ensuring broad community and agency access to the Big Map for supported activities that increase disaster preparedness and resilience. The Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council are custodians of the Cherbourg Big Map, which will be used to enhance disaster preparedness planning and coordination.
- Increased understanding of how the catchment functions and of potential future impacts at a Council, agency and community level by those who attended.

#### *Links*

To request use of the Cherbourg Big Map, contact Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council.

<https://cherbourg.qld.gov.au>

Check out the DRA Burnett Inland report on the [DR:FR Burnett Inland Resources Hub](#).

To learn more about DRA visit [disasterreliefaus.org](https://disasterreliefaus.org)

## Youth Insights Report

#### *Overview*

This initiative focused on engaging young people across the Burnett Inland to discuss disaster preparedness and the development of the **Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Burnett Inland Youth Insights Report**.

Futures Isle were engaged to host youth consultations across the region to better understand how young people experience, understand and imagine disaster preparedness. Over 170 young people were engaged across nine locations.

Through both sentiments shared at community sessions, and during discussions at Internal Advisory Group meetings, the lack of integration of young people with disaster preparedness activities became apparent and a strong support for youth voices to contribute to disaster preparedness planning emerged, with a particular view to gaining insights about how to best engage young people and prepare them for future disaster events.

### *Outcome*

The *Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Burnett Inland Youth Insights Report* was developed to capture the perspectives of young people and translate them into actionable insights for community-aligned investment and advocacy. The report demonstrates that youth engagement directly informed a set of priority themes and big ideas, showing where meaningful progress can be achieved. The themes identified through this process were:

- Practical knowledge is experience-based
- Conversations at home matter
- Social media use is high, but trust is low
- Trusted sources go beyond the internet
- Education needs to be practical, not just scientific

**As part of the regional 'roadtrip' the youth engagement team held a workshop during the after-school program at the Cherbourg Sports Complex. The team collaborated with the manager of the Sports Complex, Lavina, who supported and encouraged the young people to engage with the activities. Over 24 primary school aged students took part in activities throughout the afternoon. When asked how they feel about Cherbourg and their connection to it, most expressed that they were either 'happy' or 'inspired'. Discussions took place about awareness of risks, disaster preparedness and ideas that could help keep their community safe. Most young people went home with the intention to talk to their families about their household safety plan.**

### *Links*

Check out the Youth Insights Report on the [DR:FR Burnett Inland Resources Hub](#).

## **Australian Disaster Resilience Conference DR:FR Delegations**

### *Overview*

The DR:FR program built the capacity of local leaders through attendance at the annual Australian Disaster Resilience Conference (ADRC), a national conference that brings together a diverse range of people from different sectors across the country to share knowledge and build connections for a disaster resilient Australia.

In 2024 and 2025, cohorts of community leaders attended ADRC alongside Red Earth and FRRR representatives. Expressions of Interest were open to working group members in each of the six DR:FR communities, with successful applications based on a number of factors, such as disaster-related volunteering and commitment to community leadership.

### *Outcomes*

Community leaders who attended the conference each year said they felt activated to incorporate learnings into their local context and inspired to continue learning about innovative disaster preparedness and response strategies and resources.

Key delegate insights included:

- Progress "moves at the speed of trust." Trust – whether it is with community members, or among colleagues – provides a solid foundation to build on.
- The importance of building homes suited to our environment will help mitigate disaster risks.
- Better preparedness – assets, planning, or mental resilience – can help shorten the long recovery journey.

#### *Links*

To learn more about the Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience Conference visit

<https://www.aidr.org.au>

## Red Earth Resilience Leadership Forum

#### *Overview*

From 2022 – 2024, Red Earth hosted an annual regional in-person Forum that provided space for community members and leaders to come together to start region-wide conversations and develop actions towards co-designing an event better future for the Burnett Inland.

In August 2024, the Forum was aligned with the DR:FR program to increase disaster preparedness and resilience at a regional level. The Forum was hosted with the theme 'Resilience as an Ecosystem', fostering conversation around personal resilience and disaster preparedness, response and recovery. Keynote speakers were Paul Ryan (Australian Resilience Centre) and Melanie Bloor (Resilient Uki). There was also a panel discussion which explored local, regional and national perspectives on disaster preparedness and resilience building.

#### *Outcomes*

Over 60 people from across the Burnett Inland attended the Forum. Survey responses evidencing resilience built through the Forum included:

- 82% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that the Forum increased their knowledge about disaster recovery and resilience;
- 95% learnt new information;
- 95% are more likely to increase involvement in their local community;
- 90% met new people and developed new networks;
- 96% were inspired to act on new ideas.

#### *Links*

To read more about the keynote presentations, panel member insights, and 'Big Ideas' that were captured at the Forum, you can view or download the 2024 Red Earth Regional Leadership Forum Report on the

[DR:FR Burnett Inland Resources Hub](#).

## NFP House Capacity Building Workshops

### *Overview*

To support local organisations and volunteers, capacity-building workshops were delivered for not-for-profit community groups across the Burnett Inland.

NFP House delivered a two-session workshop in Kumbia, Biggenden and Monto in October 2025. The first session focused on good organisational governance and the second explored volunteer engagement, including how to create a fun and inclusive experience for volunteers.

Through engagement with representatives of numerous community groups, it was clearly identified that effective governance structures and retention/recruitment of volunteers were shared challenges in the region. Local capacity building was also a DR:FR priority due to awareness that if local organisations are stronger in how they operate, they have more ability to support their local communities with the challenges at hand, such as increasing disaster impacts on local communities. NFP House were contracted to deliver workshops across the region.

### *Outcomes*

Over 40 volunteers, representing a wide range of community groups, attended the workshops, with 79% indicating they found the workshops extremely useful, and 95% responding that they would recommend the workshops to other community groups.

When surveyed about what skills and knowledge volunteers would put into practice straight away, responses included policy development, collaboration with younger people, improved communication strategies, equitable volunteer recognition, creation of task lists, meeting structure and constitution reviews, as well as implementing strategic planning.

**“These workshops have given me the opportunity to look at things differently.” Trevor, Monto**

### *Links*

To learn more about the local value of the NFP House workshops, view the video case study on the [DR:FR Burnett Inland Resources Hub](#).

To learn more about NFP House and the services they offer to support not-for-profit organisations, visit their website: <https://nfphouse.org.au/>

## Climate Trend Conversations Facilitated by Sweltering Cities

### *Overview*

The DR:FR program hosted an online series of small Climate Trend Conversations for the Burnett Inland, bringing together community members, local councils and service providers to strengthen local disaster resilience. As climate risks intensify, these sessions offered a valuable space for people to connect, share experiences and learn from one another.

Emma Bacon from Sweltering Cities facilitated the discussions, providing insights into the growing impacts of extreme heat and its links with drought, bushfires, storms and rising cost-of-living pressures. Emma also shared examples from Sweltering Cities' work in Townsville, demonstrating how community-led conversations can build practical awareness and support local adaptation.

Participants described clear shifts in their local climate, including earlier, longer and more intense heat that is affecting routines, sleep and wellbeing—particularly for older residents. They also reflected on lived experiences of floods, storms and bushfires, noting the stress and long recovery periods that follow. Rising temperatures were linked to growing pressures on agriculture, from heat-stressed cattle to increased irrigation costs and impacts on wine production. Many highlighted how these climate changes are becoming harder to manage alongside rising living costs, especially for renters and people unable to modify their homes.

### *Outcomes*

Through the conversations, participants deepened their understanding of local climate impacts, shared adaptations already working well, identified gaps needing attention and generated practical ideas for next steps.

Across all sessions, participants reinforced that the Burnett Inland's resilience depends on:

- Stronger interpersonal networks
- Respect for local expertise
- Practical, low-tech communication
- Community-led initiatives
- Climate conversations grounded in lived experience rather than politics

An overarching insight: climate resilience in the Burnett Inland will succeed when it is locally driven, relational, and grounded in the everyday realities of the people who live there.

Based on these initial conversation resources were developed by Sweltering Cities to support community members and organisations in continuing these conversations and working towards impactful solutions. The resources include guides to support engagement in climate related data, community conversations prompts and facilitation tips.

### *Links*

Resources developed by Sweltering Cities can be found on the [DR:FR Burnett Inland Resources Hub](#).

To learn more about Sweltering Cities head to <https://swelteringcities.org>.

## DR:FR Burnett Inland Resources Hub

<https://frrr.org.au/reports/impact-reports/drfr-qld-hub>

# Appendix A:

Community workshops and activities were progressively introduced during the DR:FR initiative, to place the program in the local context, understand the community, local environment and the climate & natural disaster risks, to enable the community to develop and prioritise actions to strengthen their resilience to climate and disaster impacts. This diagram outlines the workshop topics and objectives.



## Prepare

Introduce the DR:FR initiative, explain the timeframe and process, build a group of local community members willing to engage with the DR:FR process to consider ways of building community resilience to climate risks and disasters.



## People

Understand the makeup of the community, map different groups, connections, decision makers, and networks, explore community dynamics through the resilience dimensions, understand changes in community composition (e.g. seasonal workers, transient population, new residents) and consider groups or individuals who might be particularly vulnerable in a disaster.



## Place

Explore the physical extent of the community, as understood by the community, consider the local context of natural and built environment, understand what community critical assets exist, how they are accessed and used, understand natural hazards, climate risks and future challenges.



## Possibilities

Generate and develop ideas for initiatives to strengthen community resilience, understanding community capacity and using the resilience dimensions to test and prioritise for action.

# Appendix B: DR:FR Program Framework

## Disaster Resilient : Future Ready Where do communities start and how does it work? (The Phases)



## Phase 2. Organise for Impact and Phase 3. Community Action Community Engagement and Activity

Throughout the project and more intensively through these phases, FRRR works directly or through partners/facilitators with community members and local organisations, supporting them to develop and activate strategic initiatives that enhance community resilience and disaster preparedness by:

- connecting people and organisations, understanding their community and building local capacity to work together.
- building awareness of climate risks, disaster impacts and vulnerabilities.
- Increasing knowledge of resilience principles and how they are applied.
- identifying opportunities and developing ideas for community-led action.
- making decisions and implementing actions prioritized by the community.

