

Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Burnett Inland

Roadmap to Resilience: Kumbia



FRRR
Foundation for Rural
Regional Renewal



Australian Government

Issue Date: March 2026

Updated by: Red Earth Community Foundation
and FRRR



Roadmap to Resilience: Kumbia

- Part 1: Summary4**
- Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Introduction..... 4
- Section A: Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Program Outline and Intent 4
- Section B: Purpose of Document 5
- Section C: Critical Dimensions in Community Disaster Resilience 5
- Section D: Internal Advisory Group..... 6
- Community Journey 7
- Section E: Kumbia Profile 7
- Section F: DR:FR Community Engagement..... 8
- Section G: Localised Reflection on Critical Dimensions..... 9
- Section H: Kumbia Resilience Statement 10
- Section I: DR:FR Funded Initiatives..... 11
 - Kumbia Memorial Hall Prepare and Connect..... 11
 - Increasing Digital Capability of Kumbia Memorial Hall and Raising Awareness of Mental Health and Recovery Networks..... 11
- Section J: Disaster Preparedness and Resilience Rationale..... 12
- Section K: Community Aspirations for the Future..... 13
- Kumbia Disaster Management Information 13
- The Importance of Integrating Cross Sector Collaboration & Partnerships 14
- Section L: Council Disaster Management Officers 14
- Section M: Local Disaster Management Groups 15
- Section N: Neighbourhood Centres..... 16
- Section 2: Learnings from Broader Program Activities & Resources to Support Future Effort.....17**
- Regional Initiatives 17
- Person Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP)..... 17
- Disaster Relief Australia Big Map 18
- Youth Insights Report 19
- Australian Disaster Resilience Conference DR:FR Delegations..... 20
- Red Earth Resilience Leadership Forum 21
- NFP House Capacity Building Workshops..... 21

Climate Trend Conversations Facilitated by Sweltering Cities..... 22

DR:FR Burnett Inland Resources Hub 23

Appendix A:24

Appendix B: DR:FR Program Framework25

Cover photo: Richard Cox Photography

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: Kumbia** document has multiple purposes. Firstly, it serves to document the journey and outcomes of the **Disaster Resilient: Future Ready** program in Kumbia, 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 Kumbia community.

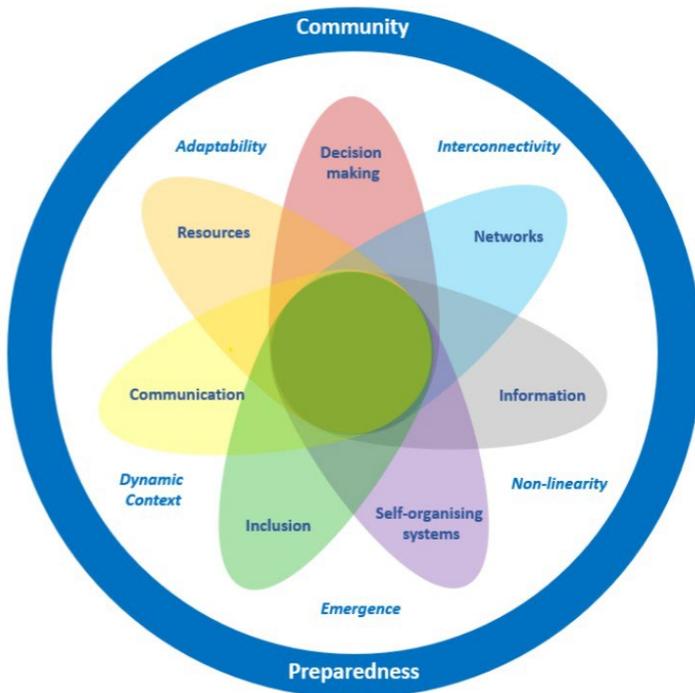
Furthermore, the Roadmap was also a critical element in FRRR's granting due diligence and provided the FRRR Board, which ultimately approved DR:FR Burnett Inland grant applications, with information about the development of initiatives and how they align to program principles, evidence of broader need,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

Kumbia (pronounced 'come-bia') is a small town nestled into the foothills of the Bunya Mountains National Park, on the Bunya Highway, between the mountains and Kingaroy. Other national parks and state forests near this picturesque town include Tarong National Park, Tarong State Forest and Archookoorra State Forest. Kumbia is within the state electorate of Nanango and the federal division of Maranoa. The town is 29 km south-west of Kingaroy, 149 km north of Toowoomba and 222 km north-west of Brisbane.

People and Place

- **First Nations:** Wakka Wakka people
- **Population:** 301 (2021 Census)
- **SEIFA:** 12
- **Remoteness:** Outer Regional (RA3)

History and Identity

Established in the early 20th century (land was auctioned in 1912), Kumbia developed around farming — particularly stone fruit — and has maintained a pastoral identity through the decades. Its heritage is preserved in the Kumbia Federation Heritage Centre, which houses thousands of historic photos (including 13,000 negatives from local photographer Harold Mears) and other artefacts. The town's memorial hall, built in 1922, stands as a community and commemorative hub. A Postal Receiving Office opened in 1913, which was replaced by the Kumbia Post Office in 1915. The Kumbia State School opened in 1914, celebrating its 100 year anniversary in 2014.

Community Assets and Services

Kumbia has many small street front shops including a fuel station with post office, store and caravan park, a mechanic, a general store, a butcher's shop, a hotel, a music shop and craft shop. There are multiple bed and breakfast businesses, plus a farmstay in the area. Kumbia also has a tennis court, golf club, race club, Country Women's Association, the Kumbia & District Memorial School of Arts, historical society and numerous church facilities, all with active volunteers. The Kumbia Party Line is a platform for local communication, with an active Facebook page and regular hard copy newsletter. The local school is early childhood to grade 6 and incorporates an active Kindergarten, with students travelling to Kingaroy State High School for secondary education.

There is one emergency service based in Kumbia, being the Kumbia Police Station.

Climate and Disaster History

Kumbia has been impacted by recurring droughts and major weather events, including the Federation Drought (1895–1902), the Millennium Drought (1997–2009) and more recently (2021 – May 2022) another drought. Other notable events include Ex-Tropical Cyclones Beni (2003), Oswald (2013), Marcia (2015), and Debbie (2017), as well as tornado's in 2017 and 2018. The 2017 Boxing Day tornado was perceived as the worst local disaster impact for 50 years, with loss of power in some areas for three days, powerlines ripped from the ground, and significant damage to properties, community facilities and crops.

Disaster Resilience

Kumbia falls under the South Burnett Region Disaster Management Plan. The [Australian Disaster Resilience Index](#) assesses the broader Kingaroy Region – South (including Kumbia) as having **low capacity for disaster resilience**, with limited coping capacity and adaptive capacity . Contributing factors include entrenched social and economic disadvantage, lower service access, reduced community cohesion and limited opportunities for adaptive learning.

Community Context

Kumbia is a welcoming community that shares resources and pulls together in times of need. Drought in the 1990s affected the farming community, with many families encouraging their children out of the industry, resulting in a more aging population, however there is a recent influx of younger families moving to the area. A number of people who live in Kumbia work in Kingaroy.

Volunteering in Kumbia is mixed. While there are long-term, aging volunteers that form the core of many local organisations, there is also a cohort of younger volunteers emerging and integrating, including the recent formation of the Sports & Recreation organisation which is being led by a young executive and volunteers. On the other hand the local SES ceased operations due to a lack of volunteers and the building was sold in 2014.

A key challenge for Kumbia is the absence of a fire service, with bushfire being one of their greatest risks. There is a Fire Station in Kumbia, however the Queensland Fire Department have been unable to fill the positions for the urban service. Kumbia is advocating for the fire service to become a Rural Fire Service in order for volunteers to be able to respond to local fire risks, without the requirement to attend vehicle accidents.

Section F: DR:FR Community Engagement

Red Earth adopted an agile and responsive community engagement approach in Kumbia, ensuring that the process remained inclusive, iterative, and community-led. Engagement began in December 2023 with initial 'kitchen table' conversations, followed by community sessions in January, February, April, June, August and November 2024.

Across these sessions, the community worked through a program framework organised by the topics of prepare, people, place and possibilities (see appendices) to explore local challenges, map assets, and

identifying priorities. Facilitation activities included community mapping, dotmocracy voting to identify priorities, interactive assessments, and solution-sorting exercises. These activities helped the community build a shared vision for resilience and co-design a set of community-led initiatives.

The engagement process also provided opportunities for collaboration directly with FRRR representatives, who supported conversations around funding guidelines and processes. By the end of 2024, the community had refined and prioritised a set of initiatives that were ready to move forward.

Throughout 2025, regular community engagement continued, with the establishment of the Kumbia DR:FR Working Group. The group, led by Bill and Sandra Steffensen, played a pivotal role in sustaining momentum, working closely with Red Earth and FRRR, to activate and implement the funded initiatives.

The DR:FR program brokered connection between Working Group members and the South Burnett Regional Council, particularly the Disaster Management Officer, to ensure that formal disaster management considerations were incorporated into resources, information and project outcomes.

The South Burnett Regional Council confirmed that the Kumbia Hall is not designated as an 'Evacuation Centre' or 'Place of Refuge', but shared their perspective on the important role the hall can play throughout the disaster cycle (Preparedness, Response and Recovery) as a Community Meeting Place.

Preparedness Phase: During this phase the hall could function as a space for information sessions, continuing to broker connection between locals and Council as well as other emergency services and agencies, and to help raise awareness about Council's emergency dashboard and where to find up-to-date information on evacuation centres etc. The hall also acts as a vital and central community hub that builds cohesion and networks through community events and social activities. The hall also features a whiteboard as a platform to share information about local events and disaster information.

Response Phase: While the hall is not an Evacuation Centre or formalised Place of Refuge, during a disaster the hall could function as a space for community members to come together to charge phones, receive information, boil kettles etc. It is important that the hall not be promoted as an open evacuation centre or place of refuge, as emergency services determine the needs for evacuations, and will work with the Local Disaster Management Group at the time of an event to determine the best place for evacuation location.

Recovery Phase: The hall could function as a recovery hub after an emergency or disaster event, including as a central place for agencies to provide information and support to the community.

This engagement with South Burnett Regional Council has not only fostered stronger local connections, but has also ensured that initiatives remain firmly grounded in community priorities, while aligned with broader disaster resilience planning across the South Burnett region.

Section G: Localised Reflection on Critical Dimensions

Networks: Kumbia has strong networks and active community organisations with passionate and involved volunteers. While everyone pulls together in times of crisis, there is a desire for volunteers and community organisations to network and collaborate more regularly.

Information: The importance of locally vetted information was evidenced in Kumbia when desktop research about local emergency services was not accurate. Drawing on local knowledge is critical to design information.

Self-organising Systems: Informal networks and strong relationships are evident in Kumbia and self-organising systems come to the fore during large community events and in times of disaster with community members sharing resources and coordinating their efforts to support each other.

Inclusion: Kumbia is aware of those in the community who are vulnerable or not connected to an organisation or project, and actively seeks to involve them or advocate for their needs.

Communication: Kumbia has strong communication, both within organisations and within the community in general. One example of this is the Kumbia Party Line, a local, volunteer-organised regular newsletter that is distributed throughout the community in print and online. This is complimented by an active Facebook group of the same name.

Resources, Tools and Support: One of Kumbia’s greatest strengths is its ability to draw on local knowledge, effort and time to activate community-led initiatives through collaboration and collective action. This was evidenced by Kumbia’s innovative and inspiring ‘Buy a Stump’ appeal, which raised over \$60,000 for critical restumping of the Kumbia Hall.

Decision Making: Kumbia values and advocates for their community voice to be heard and to influence decision making at a local and state level. This is evidenced by Kumbia’s consultations with Queensland Fire Department, advocating for their urban Fire Station to be converted to a Rural Fire Station due to community consensus. It is also evidenced through the strong relationship built between the DR:FR Working Group and South Burnett Regional Council throughout the DR:FR program.

Section H: Kumbia Resilience Statement

As part of the community engagement process participating community members co-designed statements to capture what resilience meant for them collectively. It is intended that Kumbia reflects on this statement over time, so that it can evolve to reflect the changing nature of the community life.

“Our resilience is evident in the way we support our neighbours during times of crisis. We extend a helping hand, offer shelter and provide comfort to those in need. Our community stands united, reinforcing the bonds that hold us together. We carry on, no matter what happens, and have the ability to bounce back.”

“Individually strong is good but collectively strong is better, especially in a disaster.”
Kumbia Community Member, DR:FR Community Session, February 2024

Section I: DR:FR Funded Initiatives

Kumbia Memorial Hall Prepare and Connect

Lead organisation: Kumbia Memorial School of Arts Inc.

This initiative focused on infrastructure improvements and social connection opportunities to enhance the Kumbia Memorial Hall as a Community Meeting Place. The upgrades included air conditioning and solar panels with battery to ensure the hall remains accessible and operational during disasters and related power outages. The schedule of events incorporated disaster preparedness and mental health messaging and representation of South Burnett Regional Council and other emergency services, facilitating critical information sharing, communication and social connection for members of the community, particularly those more vulnerable in a disaster situation. First aid training and delivery of Grab'n'Go Disaster Emergency Kits were also aimed to build community confidence in personal safety and aid during a disaster or emergency. Organisational sustainability was also a project focus through training in governance / compliance, and increasing volunteer recruitment and retention.

Project Partners

Kumbia Memorial School of Arts Inc., South Burnett Regional Council, DR:FR Working Group (incorporating community members who have been involved in the DR:FR program process and who represent a range of local organisations), as well as the broader Kumbia community.

Outcomes: “Biggest gain is that we now have a safe Community Meeting Place and there is more communications and collaboration between the groups in Kumbia and local council. Individuals within the community also have a greater understanding of the changing climatic conditions. Upgrades to the Hall supports its use as a meeting place for both social events and disaster recovery, enhancing comfort and usability for various gatherings. Community events, including celebrations, educational workshops, and collaborative activities, highlighted the Hall’s role in fostering social cohesion, intergenerational engagement, and community pride.”

Increasing Digital Capability of Kumbia Memorial Hall and Raising Awareness of Mental Health and Recovery Networks

Lead organisation: Kumbia Memorial School of Arts Inc.

The Kumbia Memorial Hall Committee upgraded the AV capability of the Hall, including a digital projector and complimentary equipment. This upgrade has supported and built community capacity through screenings relevant to mental health, increasing recovery networks, and information about disaster preparation. The movie *Just a Farmer* was screened as a catalyst to start community conversations about mental health and build networks with local services, including disaster recovery agencies.

Project Partners

Kumbia Memorial School of Arts Inc., DR:FR Working Group, the broader Kumbia community, and emergency / recovery services. Project beneficiaries also include regular hall users including the local primary school, local Country Women’s Association group and Neighbourhood Watch.

Outcomes: “These upgrades enable activities such as digital meetings, presentations, events and support other groups’ use of the space. The mental health awareness event started conversations in the community between local people. Due to someone being vulnerable and sharing their story, others then had the confidence and trust to share their personal stories as well.”

Section J: Disaster Preparedness and Resilience Rationale

These funded initiatives support five key Resilience Dimensions – **Networks; Communication; Inclusion; Information; Self-organising Systems;** and **Resources, Tools and Support.**

The schedule of community events strengthens **Networks** by creating opportunities for people to connect, build relationships, and collaborate across diverse groups — all of which help grow social capital and encourage participation.

These events also support **Communication**, keeping conversations flowing between South Burnett Regional Council and the wider community, which is vital for staying informed and engaged. The disaster preparedness messaging and the presence of South Burnett Regional Council and emergency services at these events also helps to share critical information, reinforce key messages, and builds trust and transparency between formal emergency management agencies and community members. The new digital and IT equipment will also help establish communication systems, including potential for conference calling, that supports both the Kumbia Memorial School of Arts committee and broader community connections with support services.

First Aid training contributes to **Inclusion** by giving everyone, regardless of age or background, the chance to build confidence in responding to emergencies. Holding the training locally at Kumbia Memorial Hall ensures that training is more accessible and lowers barriers to participation.

Adding a First Aid Kit to the hall supports the community in **Self-organising Systems**, empowering community members to respond when professional help isn’t immediately available.

Upgrades to the hall, like solar panels with battery backup and air conditioning, provide **Resources, Tools and Support** ensuring the hall remains safe, functional, and ready to serve as a community hub during both the preparedness and recovery phases of a disaster. Although it is not officially designated as an evacuation centre or place of refuge, the hall still plays a vital local role. The ‘Grab ‘n’ Go’ Disaster Emergency Kits offer practical advice on what to pack for emergencies, including essential documents and resources, helping people feel more prepared and capable.

Section K: Community Aspirations for the Future

Write clear disaster plans

- Create step-by-step procedures for emergencies (like storms at night), list who responds first (caretaker, locals), and explain how to switch to backup power at the hall and give immediate help.

Practice disaster drills

- Run mock scenarios (like power outages) so people know what to do, then hold social activities (like barbecues) to build community spirit.

Work with the South Burnett Disaster Group to

- Ask for more updates to be shared with the community after meetings.
- Understand if better storm alerts are possible, especially text messages instead of just web notices.
- Provide training for locals on using the Disaster Dashboard and QDMA tools.

Recruit and train volunteers

- Focus on attracting younger people with tailored strategies to get more community members involved.

Keep communication flowing

- Regularly share council updates and event info, highlight risks as they arise, and keep disaster preparedness part of ongoing community conversations.

Promote Rural Solutions Queensland workshops

- Explore and encourage primary producers to express interest in Property Fire Management Planning workshops being delivered by Rural Solutions QLD.

Develop Alliance with Halls Across the Region

- Explore the benefits of collaborating with other small halls across the region to develop supports and efficiencies to enable improvements around shared issues such as sustainability and disaster preparedness.

Kumbia Disaster Management Information

A key source of disaster information for the Kumbia community is the South Burnett Regional Council.

The South Burnett Regional Council is responsible for coordinating the South Burnett Local Disaster Management Group in line with the Disaster Management Act 2013 and the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements.

For further information:

How to prepare for the next disaster, community members can visit Council's Emergency Management section on their website: [Emergency Management | South Burnett Regional Council](#)

For up-to-date information during a disaster, community can go directly to Council's Disaster Dashboard: <https://dashboard.southburnett.qld.gov.au/>

State Disaster Management Plans <https://www.disaster.qld.gov.au/plans>

Local Disaster Management Plan [Disaster Management | South Burnett Regional Council](#)

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) and 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 L: 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 (P-CEP) Plans with individuals there is awareness of broader formal emergency management protocols.

Section M: 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 DR:FR local community consultation in Dallarnil and Kalpower, with reference to roadmaps noted in North Burnett 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 N: 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.

Building region wide knowledge and support networks

The four Neighbourhood Centres in the Burnett Inland partnered on a DR:FR funding application to coordinate staff training in Person Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) Plans. P-CEP is an inclusive preparedness tool that Neighbourhood Centre staff would then promote broadly as part of regular community engagement events, and ultimately work with individuals to develop unique P-CEP Plans.

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.

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 (DRA), 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 book the Burnett Inland Regional Big Map, visit South Burnett Regional Council's website - [Emergency Management | South Burnett Regional Council](#)

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

To learn more about DRA visit [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

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.

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 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 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](#).

Learn more about Sweltering Cities here: <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.

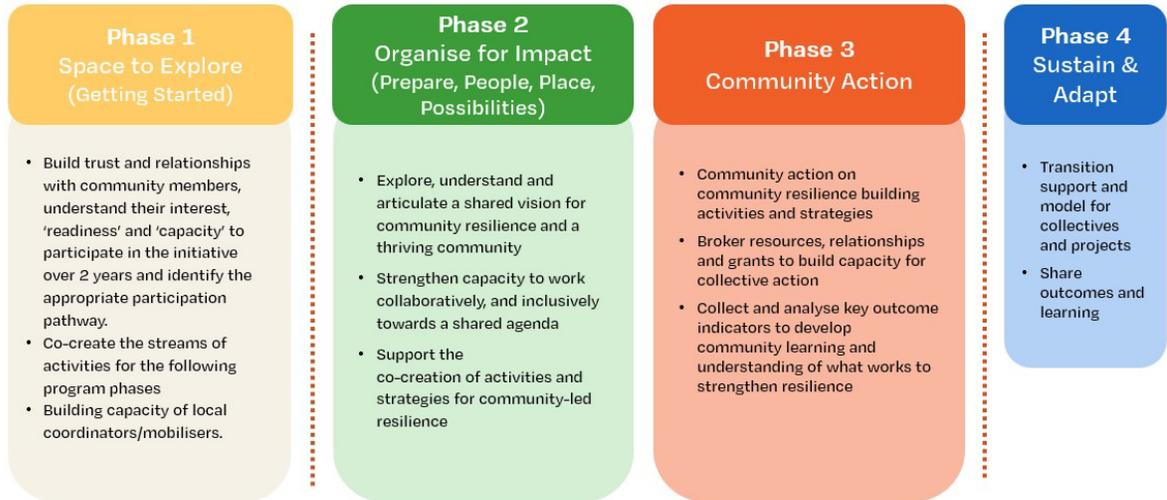


Possibilities

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.

