

**From:** [NSW Government](#)  
**To:** [Flood Inquiry](#)  
**Subject:** Floods Inquiry  
**Date:** Thursday, 23 June 2022 1:49:19 PM  
**Attachments:** [FFR-Resilient-Communities-FrameworkFINAL.pdf](#)

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## Submission details

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**I am making this submission as** Other

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**Submission type** I am submitting on behalf of my organisation

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**Organisation making the submission (if applicable)** Minderoo Foundation

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**Your position in the organisation (if applicable)** Director, Fire and Flood Resilience initiative

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**Consent to make submission public** I give my consent for this submission to be made public

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## Share your experience or tell your story

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## Your story

Minderoo Foundation is a modern philanthropic organisation taking on the tough, persistent issues. It is purpose led which seeks to arrest unfairness and create opportunities to better the world and works with global partners, guided by our values and dedicated staff, to drive real and lasting change. Minderoo Foundation supports and funds early-stage innovation, develops major programs on the ground in communities, and advocates for change at domestic and international policy forums.

In the aftermath of the devastating Black Summer bushfires across Australia in 2019-2020, Minderoo Foundation established the Fire and Flood Resilience initiative (MFFRI) and committed AU\$70 million to response, recovery and long-term resilience. We are partnering with government, corporates, community, emergency services, philanthropies and the research sector to prevent fires and floods from becoming disasters.

The MFFRI has three Apollo style missions, each evidence based, time bound, with audacious goals and underpinned by data:

1. Fire Shield – to extinguish dangerous fires within an hour by 2025.
2. Resilient Communities - lift the 50 least resilient communities to be on par with the 50 most resilient communities by 2025.
3. Healthy Landscapes - to halve the exposure in Australia's most 50 fire and flood prone regions by 2025.

In partnership with the New South Wales Government, the Red Cross, Salvation Army and communities, Minderoo Foundation first developed the recovery 'pods' to provide reusable shelter for people who had lost their homes during the 2019-2020 Black Summer Bushfires. To date, 378 pods have been built and

used across New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia and are available as part of a national stock which can be deployed following disasters. Most recently, 25 pods have been deployed by Minderoo to the Northern Rivers region following the floods and up to 55 additional pods are expected to arrive in the coming weeks subject to agreements. Minderoo has also been working with the Canberra Region Joint Organisation, in collaboration with the Insurance Council of Australia, Resilience NSW and the National Resilience and Recovery Agency (NRRRA) to deliver a resilient housing toolkit.

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## **Terms of Reference (optional)**

The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#)

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### **1.2 Preparation and planning**

The 2022 floods in New South Wales compounded the impact of successive events that came before them for many communities that are now experiencing a crisis while still in recovery from previous crises.

In this era of climate change we are experiencing more intense and frequent natural hazard events. Events are beginning to compound accentuating impacts and stressing communities further. In some regions of NSW that had been affected by the bushfires we saw exactly this as landscapes that had been impacted by fire were less able to hold water in the catchment, and rather contributed to flooding as debris washed into the waterways creating drainage issues that exacerbated flooding in local communities. These are the stories we are hearing from impacted communities as we reach out to start their resilience journey.

Minderoo Foundation recommends that the NSW Government applies a three-part community-led approach in the least resilient communities across NSW, to help reduce the harm caused by

future floods and extreme weather events. This includes:

1. Using a data driven approach to identify vulnerable communities.
2. Applying a practical framework to help communities plan ahead and identify priorities for building their resilience action plans.
3. Supporting the provision of capability and capacity and action on the ground for preparedness ahead of disasters through a new volunteer initiative, The Australian Resilience Corps.

1.1 The first step in ensuring preparation and planning is directed towards those who need it most, is to have a clear data-driven picture of the least resilient communities in the face of future floods and extreme weather events in NSW.

Often the same communities successfully receive funding, and vulnerable communities miss out because they may not be equipped with the skills or knowledge to apply for grants – leaving them at a disadvantage.

The Resilience Index is a decision support tool that can be used to inform the investment and coordination of community planning and preparedness programs in NSW's least resilient communities. It can also be used to measure improvements in resilience over time against a number of key indicators.

Developed by Minderoo Foundation and Risk Frontiers, the Resilience Index identifies key factors which will help lift community resilience. It can help government to determine the least resilient communities across Australia (at the granular SA1 population level of between 200-700 people). It is based on over 30 indicators covering hazard (fire and flood) exposure, social

vulnerability and community capacity and expands on work by the Australian National Disaster Resilience Index (ANDRI).

The Resilience Index has built-in dynamic indicators which are updated when data becomes available and are aligned with other resilience-based interventions in communities. This spatial data can also be filtered by political and geographical regions.

Minderoo wishes to contribute the Resilience Index to the national intelligence about resilience. Minderoo recognises that there are a series of data assets and tools emerging designed to identify exposures, vulnerabilities and facilitate a pathway to practical actions that can be taken to strengthen the resilience of our communities. Minderoo wishes to contribute the data to an authority that can make best use of it to guide resilience action.

Recommendation 1 – Minderoo recommends that the NSW government uses the Resilience Index (as NSW wishes) to determine the allocation of resources required to lift disaster resilience of Australia’s most vulnerable communities ahead of disasters occurring.

2.1 The second step in enabling effective planning is to apply a consistent approach – one that captures the diverse needs of all people within a community and is easy for practitioners to use to engage with communities to identify all the elements that go into an effective resilience plan.

Minderoo Foundation has invested in and contributed to the development of a Resilient Communities Framework with the Resilient Cities Catalyst together with contributions from the Australian Red Cross, Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, Ellis Kent and Australian

National University.

The Framework identifies and explains the principles that underpin effective community engagement to build disaster resilience. It identifies and explains the environments that exist in any community and describes what these environments will look like in a community that is thriving. By doing this, it provides community leaders and practitioners with a shared and consistent focus and intention in building disaster resilience in any community. The Framework also provides practical tools for resilience practitioners, community leaders, policy makers and funders to support resilience-building efforts across sectors and disciplines.

Practitioners in a community can use the Framework to facilitate discussions in order to identify community led resilience building solutions. One of the tools in the Framework can be used to help a community identify priority preparedness activities that can be undertaken in the short, medium and long term.

The Framework is currently being used in the Yarra Ranges, Victoria and in Wooroloo, Western Australia.

Recommendation 2 - Minderoo recommends that NSW Government consider the Resilient Communities Framework and how to use it alongside a suite of other tools, to guide the implementation of community projects and access to grants to help communities prepare for floods in the future. Minderoo has been established as an organisation to convene and collaborate for resilient communities; the Resilient Communities Framework is one of the tools we are using to build collaborations. We ask that NSW Government engage with us around use of the Resilient Communities Framework.

3.1 The third step to enhance planning in NSW around floods in the future is to mobilise volunteers who can help communities prepare long before disasters take place to lessen the impact of these events.

Minderoo acknowledges the sacrifices and service of the brave volunteers who were involved in the NSW floods. Many ventured out in unsafe conditions over an extended period of time to support the communities who were affected. Others slept in cars and mobilised those around them to secure the resources needed. It is often in the direct aftermath of a crisis that volunteers are called upon.

Currently, no volunteer organisation exists that focuses on helping communities prepare in the off season long before disasters take place. The Australian Resilience Corps is a new national volunteer network which aims to help communities prepare for natural threats, like fires and floods, before they occur.

The Australian Resilience Corps was conceived by the Minderoo Foundation with a founding partner NRMA Insurance. It operates with and through partner organisations such as Rotary, Lifeline, Rural Aid, Disaster Relief Australia, Parkycare as well as corporates such as Optus, BCG and Fortescue.

The aim of The Corps is to skill-up and match volunteers with volunteer organisations and activate resilience building and disaster preparedness to reduce the impacts of natural disasters.

Anyone can sign up to the Corps online. Volunteers are equipped with free online training, developed by experts, on how to build resilience to fire and flood within our homes and communities.

Volunteers can also gain access to a resource of practical steps to improve resilience and preparedness. Volunteers can also become part of a network of volunteers that can be directed to support communities in preparing for fires and floods before they happen.

This volunteer resources will be directed to support communities in preparing for fires and floods before they happen through community 'Musters'. A calendar of Muster events is already kicking off.

Recommendation 3 - Minderoo recommends that the NSW Government supports The Corps by promoting it via its services and channels to encourage citizens across NSW to learn about the basics of resilience.

The NSW Government can support a series of Muster events in NSW in at risk communities which have been identified through the Resilience Index as the most vulnerable and exposed to fires and floods.

Through partnering with Minderoo Foundation and our network of partners, identifying vulnerable and at-risk communities ahead of disasters, galvanising efforts under a unified practitioner framework with pre-determined risk factors at local scale, supported through a national volunteering movement resilience and preparedness ahead of disasters can be possible, measurable, and cost effective.

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### **1.5 Recovery from floods**

Displacement as a result of natural disasters like the NSW floods has had a negative impact not only on the housing conditions, but also the livelihoods, education, security and health, including mental health of many of those forced to leave their homes.

There is a shortage of appropriate and purpose build temporary housing solutions. There are no national or state-based temporary housing



solutions, assets, or capability allowing for quick deployment post natural disaster.

Recommendation 4 - A national temporary accommodation program is needed that is purpose built and addresses future natural disaster situations and based on community needs and geography.

Temporary housing can take form of accommodation pods, modular homes, campsites, repurposed accommodation sites, shared temporary rental services and other solutions based on geography and community needs.

The NSW State government has made a commitment to deliver 2,000 temporary accommodation dwellings, including pods, over the next two years that will cost \$350 million to meet current demand for flood affected communities. This exceeds 10 times of what was supplied post Black Summer bushfires, only two years prior.

To date 25 pods have been deployed by Minderoo to the Northern Rivers region following the floods and up to 55 additional pods are expected to arrive in the coming weeks subject to agreements. Minderoo has a real demonstrated capability and capacity to meet a supply demand of greater than 18 recovery pods per week again subject to reaching agreement with stakeholders.

A nationally agreed approach to temporary accommodation is needed to ensure these assets, including Minderoo's pods can be deployed quickly in the event of future disasters. A national temporary accommodation program is needed that is purpose built and addresses future natural disaster situations and based on community needs and geography.

The benefits of this include:

- The government can quickly deploy temporary housing where it's most needed with a national asset that is affordable, can be redeployed, maintained and repurposed.
- The Minderoo recovery pods can be used to jumpstart the national program, ensuring it is stood up with hundreds of assets.
- Lower costs of recovery are realised through less protracted clean up and repair. Impacted households are given a choice to remain on their own private property during the clean-up and recover process.
- Disaster affected communities stay together, without the flight of local populations away from the area, and conditions for improved pre-disaster planning and response are improved.
- Reduced hardship, greater regional growth, and improved community wellness and resilience.

How it works

A coordination role is required at both federal and state level to meet demands for temporary housing solutions including management of already available assets and their efficient deployment, as well as suitability assessments of other temporary housing solutions appropriate for different emergency response and recovery situations and community needs.

A national temporary housing asset register could be set up in a co-funded model, enabling state governments to manage deployment of temporary housing solutions and for these assets to be re-deployed based on where assets are most needed for efficient, timely and cost-effective use of assets and resources.

A register of pre-approved temporary accommodation vendors could be established to streamline procurement processes in the event that additional accommodation units are required quickly in the aftermath of a disaster.

State governments would be offered right of first refusal on assets that they co-fund.

Minderoo Foundation can retain daily management responsibility of its recovery pods as part of the national program, supported by the state government working groups on allocations and case management of at-risk disaster victims  
Purpose-built temporary housing solutions

There are associated risks with rolling out a non-purpose-built, temporary accommodation. Pods are not purpose built for every recovery situation. Investment in research and development of appropriate, solutions for different scenarios and efficient deployment is required.

Development of fit-for purpose solutions that are appropriate and safe for rural, peri-urban and urban communities need to take into account the type of natural disaster and displacement needs including: average time for recovery and rebuild, if livelihood is affected, the need to stay on property (e.g. farming communities), safety and longevity of the solutions, the likelihood of stronger social and economic recovery with the ability of affected communities stay together, without the flight of local populations.

Minderoo Foundation recovery pod program has pioneered a solution for Australia post Black Summer bushfires with two years of on ground learning, working with communities and developing both logistical, program management and social community impacts. This accommodation type works well in rural areas. Similar solutions are required for urban areas. These learnings can be applied as part of a

national solution that extends beyond Minderoo recovery pods. Co-development of associated social benefits into a national program.

Minderoo Foundation has worked closely with partners to understand the needs of communities to deliver temporary accommodation. Presently, Minderoo Recovery Pods (MRPs) make up 100% of temporary housing pod solutions in Australia purpose built for post disaster recovery.

The recovery pods are administered under a lease agreement that is signed with the recipient, the pods are then installed and removed under the relevant partnering agreements at no cost to the recipient.

The recovery pods are built to Australian Standards and meet regulatory compliance as required. Assessed as having a minimum BAL rating and classified only as temporary emergency accommodation.

The average time to set up a recovery pod is four-weeks post natural disaster occurring and all other arrangements being in place.

The average lease of temporary accommodation is between 18 months to two years whilst families rebuild. Due to variable conditions including socio economic indicators, trade labour and material availability, insurance, building codes the timeframe for many is more likely three years.

There is a need to establish storage, maintenance, and logistics efficiencies. Under Minderoo Foundation's agreement with the pod manufacturer, storage of pods post deployment is available for a minimal cost in South Australia and Western Australia and can be considered extending to Queensland and others for strategic state-based storage.

Minderoo Foundation has worked on a holistic solution to help communities bounce back quicker with impacted households remaining on their own private property during the clean-up and recovery process. By incorporating social service providers into the Minderoo recovery pod program to assist with mental health, pastoral care, volunteering, school and youth programs, and other related community-support services - the positive social and economic impacts can be realised and to counter the compounding negative impacts of displacement in affected communities.

Mental health support during displacement has been a key factor in helping families and communities recover and is a critical service immediately post natural disaster. Organisations such as Lifeline have set up dedicated bushfire recovery phone lines, with the service still receiving hundreds of calls a day, years on. This is supported by most recent feedback in flood affected communities. Minderoo Foundation recommends that a national program incorporates mental health support and key national service providers.

An opportunity exists to explore and develop a nationwide engagement and employment model to heal country and provide aid to communities to lift resilience to disasters or assist post an event by incorporating Indigenous-led programs that complete the full circle of resilience building, response and recovery in vulnerable communities, linked to the temporary accommodation program. Utilise the Minderoo Foundation Resilience Index to efficiently manage assets ahead of disasters.

Minderoo Foundation Resilience Index has identified fire and flood prone regions and vulnerable communities where assets could be pre-deployed ahead of natural disasters.

## **matters**

management and building standards in flood prone locations across NSW

As we work to rebuild communities and lift the resilience of the most vulnerable, we recommend that NSW Government review the planning regime in NSW and adapt it to account for the future natural disasters, not those of the past. As the climate changes, Australia needs to re-gear the planning regime to shape settlements, infrastructure and landscapes that provide for safety and security of Australians in a more hazardous future. This is not a new recommendation/request – it echoes in the series of recent enquires including ACCC enquiry into Insurance Affordability in Northern Australia, The Senate Enquiry into Natural Disasters, The NSW bushfires enquiry and the Royal Commission. It is becoming increasingly urgent to take a robust stance and address the planning regime to stop putting population in harms way by enabling the development of hazard prone areas.

### 1.6.2 Coordination and collaboration between all levels of government

Successive commonwealth governments have constructed and deconstructed national capability to plan for and take action on climate change; both mitigation and adaptation. Australia has wasted precious time and squandered resources on continuous restructuring and planning. We are stuck in a cycle of inaction. To build a resilient Australia we need to take bold steps and resource and enable our communities to build back better, build back stronger and face into our climate changed future with the confidence that we can make it better, then prosper and grow in an ecologically sustainable future.

There is a myriad of activity at all levels of government and in the private sector as Australia

joins the global effort to adapt to and address the causes of climate change. Collaboration and coordination of all efforts will deliver a resilient Australia quicker and more efficiently. Minderoo recommends that NSW Government advocate for greater collaboration, coordination and communication between states and territories, and the private sector as we mutually strive for a resilient Australia. Further we recommend that the national government convene a body specifically to build government and private collaborations for resilience action.

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### **Supporting documents or images**

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#### **Attach files**

- [FFR-Resilient-Communities-FrameworkFINAL.pdf](#)
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# RESILIENT COMMUNITIES FRAMEWORK

Version 1.0  
June 2022



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Neighbours having coffee  
Photo credit: via Getty Images

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## Acknowledgements

The Minderoo Foundation acknowledges the First Nations People as the traditional owners of the lands on which we work and live, and acknowledge the continuous contributions of all Indigenous peoples who care for the lands and waters across this great planet. This report was created by people living on Wadawurrung, Whadjuk Nyoongar, Olmec, Multnomah, Lenape, Coast Salish, and Duwamish lands.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging and acknowledge the sovereignty of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Native Americans.

This acknowledgment does not take the place of authentic relationships with Indigenous communities but serves as a first step in honouring the land we are on and a commitment to collaboration that furthers self-determination and creates a better future for all.

We acknowledge and thank the many stakeholders and organisations that have shared their knowledge and expertise throughout the development of the Resilient Communities Framework. In particular, we would like to thank the Minderoo Foundation Fire and Flood Resilience Initiative's Resilient Communities Advisory Group for their time and thoughtful contributions:

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**Toby Kent**  
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EllisKent

**Natalie Egleton**  
CEO,  
Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal

The Resilient Communities Framework was developed by Resilient Cities Catalyst in partnership with the Minderoo Foundation's Resilient Communities Mission team. It aims to build upon the robust resilience work and thought leadership occurring in Australia and beyond, most notably the efforts being led by Minderoo Foundation's strategic and delivery partners.

For a full list of documents reviewed in the development of this Framework see Appendix C. Please note that we have intentionally titled the Framework "Version 1.0, June 2022", as it is a living document that will be improved upon as we partner and learn with communities across Australia and beyond.

### **Note on Terminology:**

This Framework is intended to be applicable in all contexts within Australia. As such, the term "Indigenous" is used in order to be inclusive of both Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## About Minderoo Foundation

Minderoo Foundation is a modern philanthropic organisation. We take on tough, persistent issues with the potential to drive massive change globally. We are independent and forward thinking. We seek effective and scalable solutions to some of the world's most challenging and seemingly intractable problems.

We are proudly Australian, and one of Asia's largest philanthropies, with AUD \$2 billion committed to a range of global initiatives. We both support and fund early-stage innovation, develop major programs on the ground in communities, and advocate for systemic change at domestic and international policy forums.

Everything we do is driven by a deep care for people and the environment in which we all live, and a mission to improve the world for future generations. We aim to empower both our employees and others to have a positive impact through inclusion, collaboration and, most importantly, kindness. The world needs more of it.

Through our Fire and Flood Resilience Initiative we aim to reduce the harm caused to communities and the environment, by fire and flood. We are harnessing the collective power of communities, industry, government, philanthropy and the research sector to lift Australia to be the global leader in fire and flood resilience by 2025.

The Resilient Communities Mission is one of three missions working to reduce the scale and impact of fires, halve the hazard exposure to fire and flood in the landscape, and lift the resilience of Australia's 50 most vulnerable and exposed communities to be on par with Australia's 50 most resilient communities. The Resilience Communities Mission assists communities to access the support and resources they need to mitigate their disaster risk, strengthen their leadership capacity, plan and implement activities to achieve resilience and invest in the future through their educating and encouraging their children and young people.

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### **Margaret Moreton and Jamie Loyd**

Minderoo Foundation Resilient Communities Mission team

## About RCC

Resilient Cities Catalyst is a nonprofit that was founded in 2019 by members of the 100 Resilient Cities (100RC) leadership team. Building on the pioneering legacy of 100RC, and in partnership with a community of resilience actors, RCC is helping cities and communities build the capacities and partnerships needed to understand, prioritise and concretely address their risks and chronic stresses as they pursue their strategic goals or recover from a crisis.

We work with our partners around the world to act boldly in the face of deep uncertainty by determining, designing, and implementing the priority actions that will support vibrant and healthy communities in ordinary times, and safeguard the things we most value in the extraordinary times.

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**Michael Berkowitz, Paul Nelson, Sam Perkins,  
Alex Quinto, Ameneé Siahpush, Amelia Smyth**  
Resilient Cities Catalyst team

# Section 1: **INTRODUCTION**



Australian coastline  
Photo credit: Twenty20 Stock

## Why now?

The last two years have underscored why we're so passionate about helping communities strengthen their resilience. Frequent, intense, repeated, and even overlapping shocks such as fires, floods, and drought, coupled with chronic stresses including economic inequity or reduced services in rural, regional and remote communities, have conspired to challenge communities across the country. Communities have had little or no time to prepare, respond and recover from each of these events before the next arrives.

Black Summer and the 2022 floods in the Northern Rivers Region of New South Wales and South East Queensland remind us that fires and floods are increasingly frequent and intense. They are also having a more devastating impact on human populations because of changes in where and how we live. The Black Summer fires burned over 24 million hectares and occurred simultaneously in many States and Territories; while extreme flooding devastated communities, such as the city of Brisbane, which received 792 millimetres of rain in just three days. Any concept of these shocks occurring once in a hundred years must be rejected.

Communities and governments are realising that we cannot afford to be unprepared for fires and floods. Response agencies are unable to protect everyone, and the social, cultural, health, economic, built and natural losses are both immediate and last for generations.

This leaves many of us, from community members to policy makers, in a sense of discontinuity as decades of expertise and experience across institutions are losing effectiveness, and in some cases, cease to work. We have an opportunity now to learn from our past

practices, acknowledge the increased frequency and intensity of the fires and floods that we face, and develop a new approach to preparation, response, recovery, and above all to building resilience.

We know that among the most affected communities are those experiencing long-term disadvantage. Indigenous Australians continue to face disproportionate impacts of these shocks and stresses, influenced in part by the cultural and intergenerational trauma as well as the complex historical and current disadvantage. We recognise that Indigenous culture in Australia is the oldest living culture on the planet, and that the future must be built with this wisdom. By ensuring that all community members have a seat at the table, we are confronting centuries of systemic and structural racism and its resultant inequities, while leveraging the vast knowledge and expertise from all members of society to engage in a national conversation about how best to forge a path forward.

Now is a time for fundamental change in the ways that we plan and act. Our ability to survive, adapt and grow, individually and collectively, depends on the capacities that we build in recovery from today's crises, and how effectively we use those lessons to shape and prepare for whatever challenges come next.

The Resilient Communities Framework offers Australian communities, NGOs, governments, and other organisations an approach to planning and acting that builds on our strengths. It reflects our commitment to working with communities, walking alongside them to build resilience in the face of the known and unknown challenges of the 21st century.



### Definition of Community Resilience:

The capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, and systems exposed to hazards to survive, adapt, and thrive in ways that improve outcomes in the next disaster event and improve community well-being more broadly.

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*Family at picnic table. Photo credit: Twenty20 Stook*

## Framework Purpose & Audience

There is a rich and growing body of literature on community resilience, with many of the most robust frameworks, tools and guidance being put forth by our colleagues and partners right here in Australia. At the same time, our experience has uncovered an opportunity to build on this existing work to address a gap in our national approach to strengthening community resilience.

We see the need for a framework that describes resilience in an accessible and holistic way that leverages our

existing knowledge, values Indigenous ways of building community, acknowledges our complex history, and engages with communities directly to uplift their strengths and capacities so that we can all face future shocks and stresses with confidence and capability.

The Resilient Communities Framework was developed to more thoroughly support a systemic and whole-of-society approach to understanding and building disaster resilience at a community level.



The Framework provides a holistic model to catalyse and influence disaster resilience strategy, policy, practice and evaluation across Australia and internationally.



The Framework provides actionable and accessible tools for resilience practitioners, community leaders, policy-makers and funders to support resilience building efforts across sectors and disciplines.

## The Framework is primarily intended to:



### 1 Facilitate Alignment:

Establish a common platform for aligning actors and directing resources towards addressing shocks and stresses faced by a community.

#### For example:

*Community and State use the Framework to align areas of funding in order to directly support agreed upon priorities.*



### 2 Catalyse Practice:

Build on the rich work in Australia and elsewhere to provide a common foundation for the development of tools and methodologies that enable resilience-building and promote learning.

#### For example:

*Practitioners use the Framework in a community to facilitate a discussion about the community's risks and strengths in order to identify resilience building priorities and solutions.*



### 3 Promote Communications:

Provide a shared language for understanding, describing and aligning resilience-building opportunities.

#### For example:

*Local mayor publishes a thought piece to describe why the Resilient Communities Framework is making communities more resilient to fire and flood.*

Section 2:

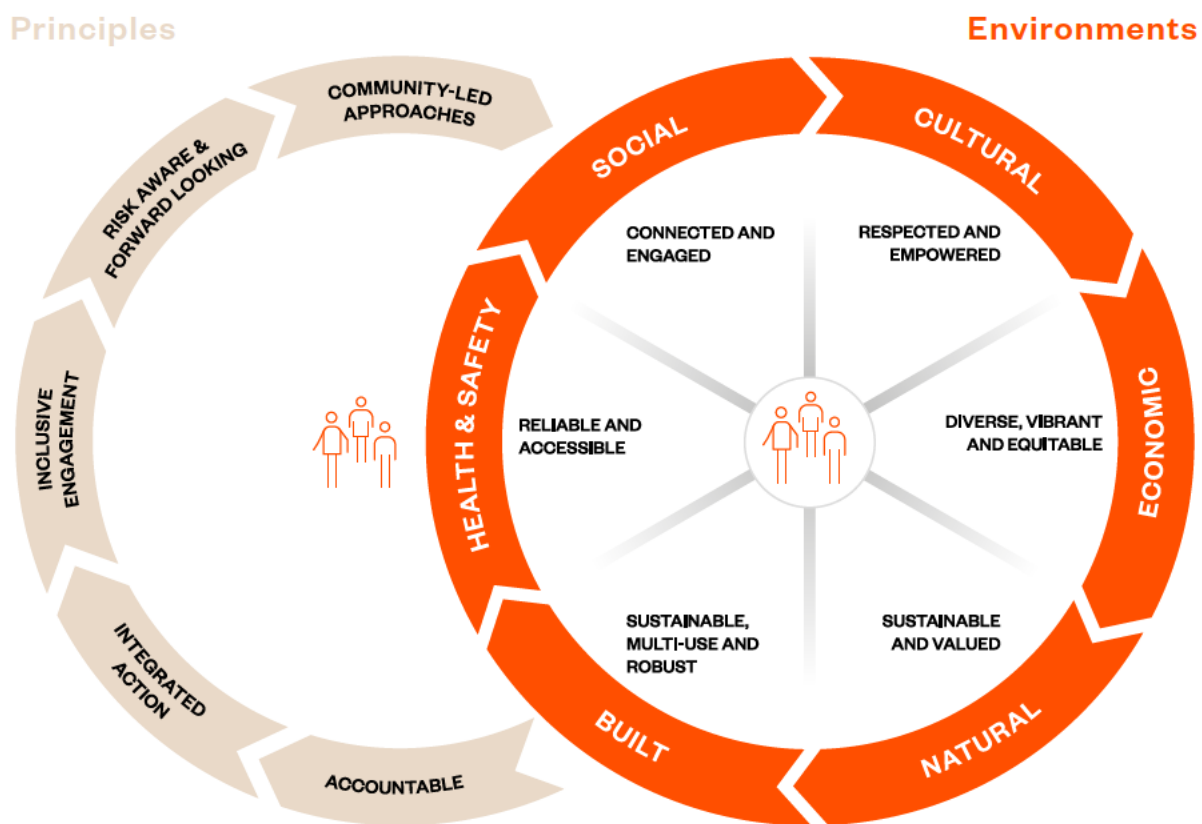
# RESILIENT COMMUNITIES FRAMEWORK



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Backyard Cricket  
Photo credit: Twenty20 Stock

## Principles and Environments

Building resilience is equally about *how* we approach our work as it is *what* we ultimately achieve as a result of the work. The Resilient Communities Framework is comprised of two mutually-reinforcing components – **the principles and the environments** – which are designed to holistically guide practitioners, community leaders, government officials and funders in their work within communities.



### Principles

Serve as a guide for how we should approach our work within a community, throughout all stages of a collaboration. The sole act of infusing these principles into how we plan, resource and implement our work, regardless of the level or scope of intervention, will contribute to a more resilient community.

### Environments

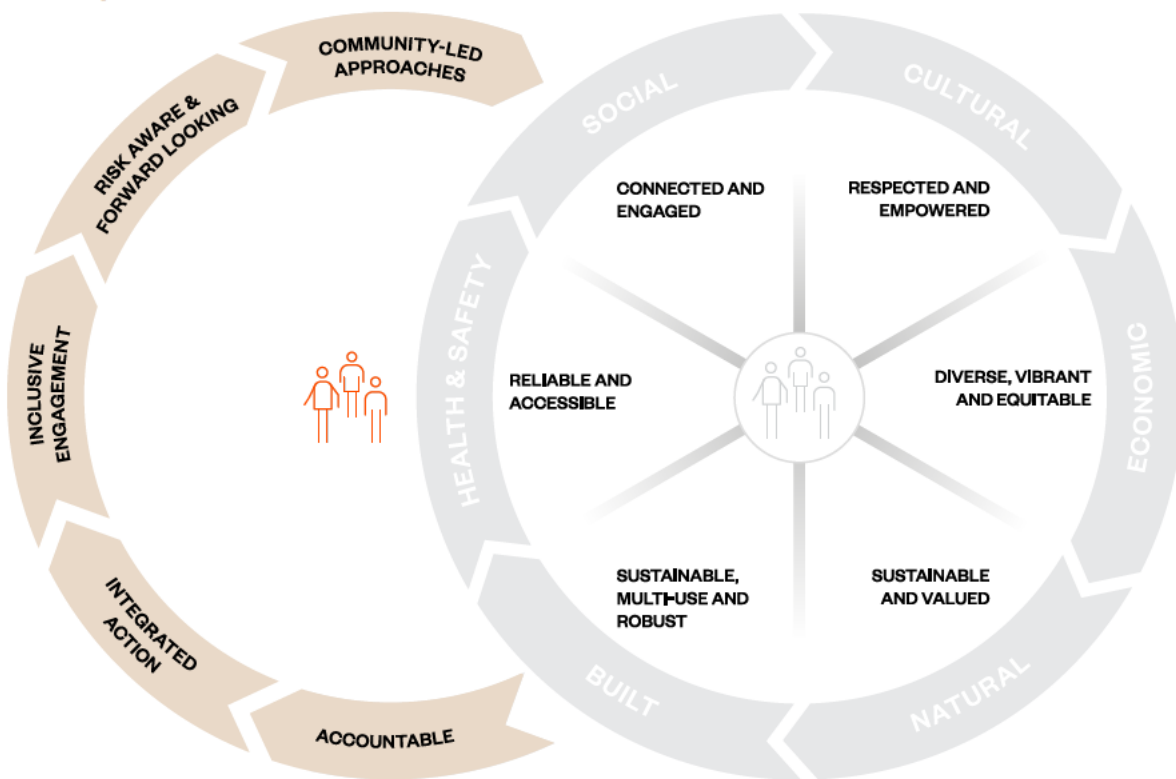
Provide a holistic view of the interconnected systems and assets that make up a community and the key qualities that we should foster as a result of our work. The state of these overlapping environments can either enhance or diminish a community's resilience.



## Principles

Principles serve as a guide for how we should approach our work within a community, throughout all stages of a collaboration. The sole act of infusing these principles into how we plan, resource and implement our work, regardless of the level or scope of intervention, will contribute to a more resilient community.

### Principles



#### Community-Led Approaches

Strengthen the ownership and decision-making power of community members, and ensure all efforts reflect and leverage a community's unique context, history, assets and local knowledge.

#### Risk Aware & Forward Looking

Draw from a wealth of knowledge and experience to understand and respond to risk, but recognise that the past is not always predictive of a changing future. Create a vision of a more resilient future that community members can align around.

#### Inclusive Engagement

Ensure broad and equitable participation of those who represent a community's diverse perspectives, priorities and histories.

#### Integrated Action

Align efforts across sectors and disciplines, utilising a collaborative approach to support and advance holistic, coordinated and shared outcomes.

#### Accountable

Hold self and others accountable for decisions, actions and outcomes, including the responsibility for learning and continuous improvement, in a way that builds trust and promotes transparency and a sense of shared ownership.

## Principles

### Community-Led Approaches

Strengthen the ownership and decision-making power of community members, and ensure all efforts reflect and leverage a community's unique context, history, assets and local knowledge.



### Why this matters:

Community-led projects are proven to be especially effective and durable over the long term. By establishing a sense of shared dialogue, decision making, and ownership of local development efforts, community members are empowered to engage with resilience building projects in ways that strengthen local leadership, accurately address local context, and ultimately lead to better outcomes during times of crisis.<sup>12</sup>

On the other hand, by failing to leverage a community's unique leadership, needs, desires, and assets, practitioners run the risk of developing short-lived solutions that overlook the best interest of local residents and do not benefit from or strengthen their knowledge and capacities.

### Examples of community-led approaches in practice:

- Practitioners move the focus for resilience planning, decision making, and action from a top-down approach to a more collaborative and inclusive model – actively seeking out opportunities to resource and empower a diverse range of community members and groups, to design and implement resilience building projects.
- Community members determine target areas and generate ideas for economic, environmental, and social development within their own communities. They are actively involved in designing, leading and implementing community projects to strengthen resilience. Formal project owners establish robust community feedback loops to measure project outcomes and to adjust and refine projects.
- Community members tailor resilience building information and resources to reflect the local context. They utilise word-of-mouth networks and local bulletins to establish ownership and revision of critical preparedness information.
- Community leaders establish projects and local groups to oversee the implementation of resilience plans. Young people are included in these processes to strengthen the knowledge and skills of future community leaders.

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*Intergenerational firefighters*  
Photo credit: A Fire Inside, FINCH

## Principles

### Risk Aware and Forward Looking

Draw from a wealth of knowledge and experience to understand and respond to risk, but recognise that the past is not always predictive of a changing future. Create a vision of a more resilient future that community members can align around.



### Why this matters:

Traditionally, risk managers (and resilience builders) have focused on past events to understand risk, estimating the 100 year flood or historic bushfire exposure. While that is still an important perspective, climate change and other macro trends, like shifting migration patterns, increased population growth and land use in vulnerable, exposed or high risk locations, underscore the point that the past is not always a good predictor of the future in the 21st Century.<sup>3</sup>

The most resilient communities are able to imagine uncertain futures and events, and plan and act accordingly.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, communities can use forward looking processes to imagine secure futures for all, another important tool for aligning community actors around multi-benefit actions that contribute to strengthening resilience.

### Examples of risk aware and forward looking approaches in practice:

- As part of a planning process, community members and experts engage in a visioning exercise that seeks to understand the possibilities for a more equitable, sustainable and resilient future. Children and young people are involved in the process as they share the world they want to create and live in.
- Practitioners establish tools and proactive measures to give community members clear historical data from the past, up to date information about existing hazards and maximum visibility into future risks.
- Community members are aware of risk management data, such as previous and present flood or fire risks, and balance that against potential climate change scenarios.
- Practitioners recognize the need to transition from existing practises that expose local residents to future hazards. Local residents recognise the importance of planning for the future, preserving local history and identity, identifying and protecting key assets, and creating an (natural, built and community) environment that is diverse and vibrant for future generations.

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*Bushfire hazard reduction burn*  
Photo credit: Twenty20 Stock

## Principles

### Inclusive Engagement

Ensure broad and equitable participation of those who represent a community's diverse perspectives, priorities and histories.



### Why this matters:

At its core, resilience demands whole of society interventions that require broad engagement across diverse communities. By engaging with representatives from all groups, a community enhances social cohesion, better understands the full magnitude of the challenges it faces and is able to deploy holistic interventions that will prove more successful for the entire community in the face of disaster, given the diverse perspectives that will influence the development process.<sup>5</sup>

Without representation from, and engagement with, all of a community's diverse groups before the next disaster, communities will continue to face inequitable recovery cycles where excluded groups, those often most impacted by disaster, may lack the resources and support necessary to prepare, respond, and recover.<sup>6</sup>

### Examples of inclusive approaches in practice:

- Community engagement and outreach is conducted in flexible and varied ways, using a variety of methods, and at various times and venues, to encourage engagement with diverse groups who might not usually participate in activities or conversations.
- Facilitators leading community workshops pay careful attention to power dynamics across the group, with an awareness of historical patterns of power and participation based on race, gender, class, age, role and community context (e.g. family name and historical relationships).
- Practitioners host community engagement activities at local community events or in popular community gathering places – schools, community centres, and churches – where community members already gather.

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*Circle Work by Backtrack*

*Photo credit: James Shakeshaft*

## Principles

### Integrated Action

Align efforts across sectors and disciplines utilising a collaborative approach to support and advance holistic, coordinated and shared outcomes.



### Why this matters:

Resilience-building involves efforts across many diverse systems and stakeholders. For efficiency reasons however, our society has evolved into sectors and silos organised around organisation type, such as a public, private or nonprofit, as well as professional disciplines, such as transportation, health or housing or land use and planning.

Ensuring alignment and collaboration between these silos is a resilience issue for two reasons. First, during large-scale disasters we see cascading impacts across sectors. Too often, vulnerabilities that originate in one sector are not recognised by other sectors. Traffic engineers designing a new highway may not fully anticipate the impacts on health, economy or culture. The second reason is that working in an integrated way across sectors and silos allows communities to leverage diverse areas of expertise to ensure that a single intervention results in multiple benefits to its residents, thus strengthening the community's ability to respond to a variety of crises and their consequences.<sup>7</sup>

### Examples of integrated action approaches in practice:

- A housing program works with local community groups and climate specialists to build green roofs and permeable surfaces, providing low-cost housing, cooler streets and reduced flood risk, while also strengthening social connections and community pride.
- An economic development program works with local community members to pass on knowledge about water conservation and management. This results in the community developing a stronger understanding of water conservation and storage, enhances their preparation for drought, and helps the community tackle one of its top climate change priorities.
- Federal, State and Local Government planners align work programs around a shared set of priorities, using common frameworks and tools. These levels of government combine resources to invest in high priority local projects.
- A land-use planning project manager invites diverse groups and organisations to participate and to influence a new land development project – including emergency managers, education, housing, and businesses.

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*Volunteers sit in circle to make a plan*  
Photo credit: South\_agency, via Getty images

## Principles

### Accountable

Hold self and others accountable for decisions, actions and outcomes, including the responsibility for learning and continuous improvement, in a way that builds trust and promotes transparency and a sense of shared ownership.



### Why this matters:

Resilience-building is often a multi-year (or even generational) process involving efforts across many diverse stakeholders. As such, it is critical to put mechanisms in place to specify and track key roles, responsibilities, lessons and progress towards goals over time. Without this accountability, a project is at risk of incompleteness, a 'watering down' of multi-benefit outcomes, and a missed opportunity to learn from failures and scale successes.

When all parties remain transparent and committed over time, communities are more willing to engage with and trust practitioners – enhancing the productivity of ongoing and future preparation, recovery, and resilience building efforts.<sup>8</sup>

### Examples of accountable approaches in practice:

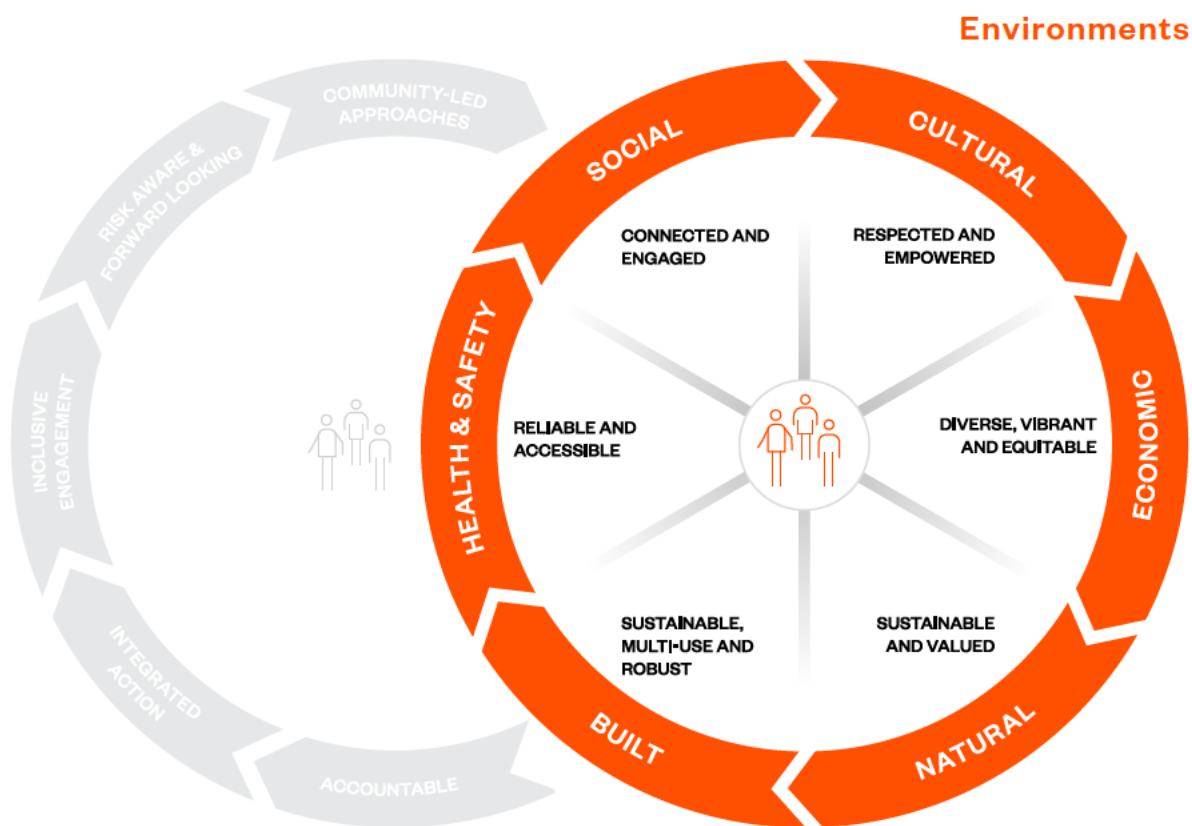
- At key intervals throughout a project, the project team holds forums for feedback, questions, and updates with community members and the public, to ensure transparent updates on key results, challenges, mistakes and lessons learned.
- A project lead establishes an Advisory Group, composed of diverse community members, to participate in the planning process for a resilience project, to discuss risks and make decisions throughout the project, to lead on the development of measures of success, and to ultimately determine and agree whether a project is achieving its intended outcomes.
- A project team quantifies the costs and benefits of reducing risk, shares their analysis with the community, discusses options and agrees on priorities, implementing prioritised projects.
- Local, State and Federal leaders consistently release public reports of their actions to help communities reduce the risk of climate change.

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*Fire and Rescue crew member  
Photo credit: Twenty20 Stock*

## Environments

Every community consists of a series of interconnected systems and assets – we refer to these as environments. The state of these environments, as described and measured by qualities, can either enhance or diminish a community’s resilience. Most aspects of a community cannot be placed neatly within one environment, but rather, the **six environments presented in this Framework are meant to be viewed together, as overlapping and deeply connected elements that influence each other.** As such, our work in a community should aim to foster and strengthen these qualities across multiple environments.



### Social

A community’s people, governance, leadership and social networks, civic and educational institutions, justice and rule of law.

### Cultural

A community’s customs, identities, history, wisdom, arts, cultural responsibilities and landmarks.

### Economic

A community’s economic activities, workforce, businesses, household livelihoods, goods and services, social services and occupational opportunities.

### Natural

A community’s biodiversity and ecosystems, land management, wildlife, natural resources, agriculture, water and air.

### Built

A community’s residential and commercial buildings, transportation, communications and information systems, and utilities.

### Health & Safety

A community’s health facilities and services, disaster planning, essential and emergency services.

## Environments

Connected & Engaged

### Social Environment

Social cohesion is prioritised and diversity is celebrated. Community leadership and governing mechanisms are clear, purposeful and trusted. Residents are empowered to create and participate in civic opportunities. Educational opportunities are varied, accessible and effective. Social infrastructure creates common ground between diverse residents and forms the basis of a larger sense of belonging and collective life.

### Systems and Assets

A community's people, governance, leadership and social networks, civic and educational institutions, justice and rule of law.



### Qualities

Connected & Engaged

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*Checking in with young person by Backtrack*

*Photo credit: James Shakeshaft*

### Why it matters:

Strong social systems within a community – those that promote high levels of social cohesion, integration and trust – are among the most important determinants of how well a community will perform in the face of disasters.<sup>9</sup>

In these communities, neighbours share resources and civic and public institutions provide reliable support and information. This sense of belonging is reinforced when residents are encouraged to participate in diverse civic and educational opportunities. These communities also ensure residents have an effective ability to influence decision-making and resource allocation, while purposeful leadership helps to organise and give voice to the priorities of a community.<sup>10</sup> Social infrastructure, such as libraries, parks or courtyards, are places where social connections are formed before a disaster strikes.<sup>11</sup>

Without these qualities, the burdens of disasters continue to fall disproportionately on the most isolated, socially disconnected and vulnerable populations, not only exacerbating existing stresses, but also increasing the likelihood of civil unrest, violence and a distrust in institutions and government.

### Examples of resilience in practice:

- Strong social connections and high levels of trust exist within and across diverse groups and generations, and residents feel a secure sense of belonging and inclusion in their community.
- Residents have high levels of trust in institutions and in public leadership, for example, demonstrated by participation in high levels of compliance with public health and community safety measures.
- Residents are actively engaged with public and nonprofit institutions, through a robust civic dialogue, high levels of volunteering across the population and diverse charitable giving.
- Social infrastructure, such as libraries, schools, playgrounds, open spaces and parks, is vibrant, well-used, well cared for and accessible for diverse groups.
- Opportunities for life-long learning are varied and are accessed across all ages and diverse groups and geographic areas; primary, secondary and university school attendance rates are high across geographic locations; mature aged learning is commonplace and the 'third age' is a vibrant sector of learning for older citizens.
- Inclusive local government and community leaders recognise the importance of grassroots knowledge and value evidence-based decision-making. Community leaders are visible and represented at both the State and Federal government levels.
- Judicial system is transparent, representative and culturally informed, based on ethical principles that balance prevention and rehabilitation.
- Robust civic education is prioritised as a preventative measure to reduce corruption and crime, and promote mental and physical health.



## Environments

Respected & Empowered

### Cultural Environment

Community members' knowledge, histories and identities are valued and celebrated. Culturally informed knowledge and practises are utilised before, during and after disaster. Residents develop and engage in diverse cultural activities.



#### Systems and Assets

A community's customs, identities, history, wisdom, arts, cultural responsibilities and landmarks.

#### Qualities

Respected & Empowered.

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*Photo credit: Wander Women Collective via Getty Images*

#### Why it matters:

Broadly, culture shapes our beliefs and behaviours. Mainstream Australian culture – its customs, identity, history, among other assets – was originally shaped through colonial legacies of dispossession, assimilation, and racism.<sup>12</sup> This history is still reflected in the current experience with repercussions on the well-being of both Indigenous people, immigrants, and more recent arrivals.

Addressing exclusion requires ameliorating discriminatory structures and processes, and supporting and resourcing Indigenous peoples' decision making authority. Drawing on local cultural practices can increase the capacity of local communities to take ownership of their own process of preparedness, recovery and restoration.<sup>13</sup> Without the combined knowledge, practises, and leadership across all of our communities' cultures – particularly Indigenous culture – our preparation, response, and recovery from disasters is inadequate.<sup>14</sup>

Other diverse groups have also become increasingly visible and active, advocating for their knowledge and customs to be welcomed and celebrated as part of Australian culture. Building trust and support between diverse groups can help to address inequitable recovery outcomes in communities experiencing disadvantage – challenges that would otherwise be exacerbated in the face of future disasters.<sup>15</sup>

#### Examples of resilience in practice:

- Members of diverse groups (cultural, linguistic and social) are welcomed and celebrated as a valuable part of the richness of Australian communities, sharing the knowledge, qualities, practises and traditions that define them.
- Members of all cultural groups actively collaborate and listen to one another.
- Art and local media reflect the community's diverse culture, and promote cross-cultural learning – building bridges and creating shared understanding between diverse groups.
- Factual and inclusive history that encompasses Indigenous history and perspectives is taught in schools and through other institutions including museums, art galleries, monuments and memorials, and schools and universities.
- Communities value and utilise Indigenous knowledge with the understanding that ownership of that knowledge remains with Indigenous custodians.
- Indigenous cultural sites are protected in partnership with Indigenous people.
- Cultural and historical assets honour a community's identity, especially the perspective of present and past Indigenous community members, and other groups who have lived in the area.
- Diverse cultural activities and celebrations are accessible to all members of a community.
- Indigenous community members and leaders oversee the application of traditional knowledge and representation of their culture throughout the community.

## Environments

Diverse, Equitable & Vibrant

### Economic Environment

Economic activities do not entirely depend on one sector; the local and greater regional economy is thriving; there is sufficient investment in resilience-building; and there are minimal economic disparities between groups.



### Systems and Assets

A community's economic activities, workforce, businesses, household livelihoods, goods and services, social services and occupational opportunities.

### Qualities

Diverse, Equitable & Vibrant.

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*Paula Zaja who set up a community pantry during the Black Summer bushfires.*  
*Photo credit: A Fire Inside, FINCH*

### Why it matters:

Nearly all disasters stress and reshape the economic environment. Communities that promote innovation and diversification – so as to not rely on a single industry or opportunity – are more likely to have the resources necessary to appropriately prepare for and recover from these shocks.<sup>16</sup>

The impacts of disaster often disproportionately impact a community's most disadvantaged group. Economies that promote inclusive growth are better able to mitigate these stresses in ways that do not exacerbate vulnerabilities and extend cycles of disadvantage and fragility. Similarly, communities with strong social safety nets are able to promote economic security for households and businesses.<sup>17</sup> These efforts combined enhance social cohesion and bolster trust in public institutions, all critical elements of disaster recovery.<sup>18</sup>

### Examples of resilience in practice:

- Diverse livelihood and employment opportunities are available and provide livable wages.
- Accessible social safety nets are in place and support community members from a variety of social, cultural, and economic backgrounds – especially those who experience disadvantage.
- Communities experience reliably high labour force participation rates regardless of gender, race, sexuality, age, and culture.
- Households have control of expenses, the ability to make financial choices, appropriate levels of savings and insurance, and are on track to meet their financial goals.
- Basic needs across industries are accessible and affordable as a result of reliable supply chains and fair pricing.
- Businesses seek out and embrace opportunities for growth such as skills training, mentorship, networking, and diversified income streams.
- Businesses have continuity plans in place to maintain operations and support the community (through employment, service provision, or other kinds of support) in the face of disaster.
- Opportunities exist to acquire new occupational knowledge and change jobs.

## Environments

### Sustainable & Valued Natural Environment

Natural assets and ecosystems are understood, valued, invested in, and managed to maintain a wide array of services, safeguard culture and tradition, support local amenity, enhance biodiversity, and mitigate natural-hazard risk.



#### Systems and Assets

A community's biodiversity and ecosystems, land management, wildlife, natural resources, agriculture, water and air.

#### Qualities

Sustainable & Valued.

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*Australian Landscape*

*Photo credit: Twenty20 Stook*

### Why it matters:

The natural environment is what supports all life on earth, providing healthy and productive ecosystems, food and natural resources, essential habitats, and clean water and air. These are core underpinnings of resilient communities.

Also critical is maintaining natural protections from fire, flood, and other risks, through interventions such as fire-adapted forests or coastal wetlands. When the natural environment is deprioritised, communities face greater exposure to these hazards. When it is sustained, valued and managed, the natural environment strengthens connections to place, identity, and culture; supports recreation, leisure and subsistence; and improves mental and physical health.<sup>19</sup> In this sense, the health and well-being of the natural environment is closely related to the health and well-being of the community.

By valuing the natural environment and supporting it through sustainable actions and investments, we can create healthier and happier communities, accommodate continuous demand, mitigate hazard impacts, and preserve cultural rights and interests throughout the disaster cycle.<sup>20,21</sup>

### Examples of resilience in practice:

- Cultural connection to Country is understood, and land use rights and interests held by Indigenous people are respected and formally and informally recognised.
- Indigenous environmental practices are understood and utilised to enhance ecosystem health, and to prepare for and recover from disaster.
- Natural environments, such as forests and wetlands, are prioritised to mitigate environmental hazards, such as fire and flood.
- The flora and fauna is valued and invested in before, during, and after disaster events through diverse perspectives, including the use of traditional and informal knowledge systems.
- Community members apply and measure locally adapted land management practises to expand knowledge and inform future practice.
- Outdoor spaces are accessible to community members and are equitably managed for leisure, recreation, and subsistence.
- Farmers actively implement sustainable practices that improve soil quality and crop yield, reduce the impacts of pests and disease, and avoid air and water contamination, such as through crop rotation, planting of native species, or reducing unnecessary pesticide use, burning or tillage.
- Community members engage in solutions that involve the protection, restoration, or management of natural or semi-natural ecosystems, such as the reduction of fire fuels, the improvement of riparian areas or the reintroduction of native species.

## Environments

### Sustainable, Multi-Use & Robust Built Environment

Infrastructure promotes socioeconomic and ecological processes that enhance equity and well-being. It is designed to withstand hazards, has appropriate redundancy, and is not over-reliant on a single asset.



#### Systems and Assets

A community's residential and commercial buildings, transportation, communications and information systems, and utilities.

#### Qualities

Sustainable, Multi-Use & Robust.

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*Water treatment plants*

*Photo credit: Twenty20 Stook*

### Why it matters:

The built environment protects residents, supports basic needs, and connects community members to others within and beyond their community. When essential and recreational infrastructure are designed reliably with community priorities in mind, the built environment fosters a healthy and safe environment for everyday working and living, enhancing health, opportunity, intercultural competencies, and social cohesion – critical components for positive outcomes in the face of disasters.<sup>22</sup>

Further, sustainable infrastructure, while providing environmental benefits to a community, also has the ability to minimise physical exposure – protecting people and assets amid ongoing climate change and rapid onset disasters.<sup>23</sup> When infrastructure is well-maintained, built systems can better accommodate abnormal demand and continue to function during periods of stress, strengthening a community's overall capacity.<sup>24</sup>

### Examples of resilience in practice:

- Amenities including parks and shared community facilities are accessible to all.
- Housing meets the needs of community members across diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds.
- Integrated land-use and infrastructure planning is in place – minimising negative impacts to the natural environment and maximising the benefits to the community.
- Communications infrastructure and broadband reaches all communities equitably and is reasonably protected against known risks and hazards.
- Multi-modal transportation reliably, affordably and sustainably connects community members to work, education, necessities, and social and recreational opportunities.
- Utility owners and operators, community, political and business leaders have conversations about redundancy expectations and investment and act accordingly.
- Residential and commercial building strategies prioritise climate impacts through careful evaluation of site design, use of hazard resistant building materials, and risk-aware landscape management.
- Investments in nature-based solutions account for future needs by incorporating sustainable, natural processes to promote adaptation and resilience, such as through permeable pavements, stormwater parks, and greenways.

## Environments

Reliable & Accessible

### Health and Safety Environment

All residents feel safe, secure and informed. Essential and emergency services actively plan for all phases of the disaster cycle, and prioritise residents' and their own staff's physical and mental health and well-being. Comprehensive, transparent and contextually appropriate law enforcement promotes safety and security for all community members.



#### Systems and Assets

A community's health facilities and services, disaster planning, essential and emergency services.

#### Qualities

Reliable & Accessible.

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*Fire crews attend a house fire  
Photo credit: Twenty20 Stook*

### Why it matters:

The health and safety environment has far-reaching implications for people, property, and environment. The ability to face and recover from unforeseen challenges depends greatly on a community's overall well-being – their physical and mental health and feeling of safety. This is particularly true for vulnerable groups, who are already more susceptible to devastating impacts from any given shock, often with the effects continuing well beyond the immediacy of the event.<sup>25</sup>

Communities with robust and integrated health and safety services bolster individual and collective resilience, foster social cohesion, and promote greater well-being outcomes which, taken together, have a powerful ability to enable faster recovery between disasters and improve community well-being more broadly.<sup>26</sup>

### Examples of resilience in practice:

- Regular disaster planning is undertaken with diverse stakeholders. Mechanisms are in place for regular hazard mitigation planning and action, timely detection of a hazard, prediction of hazard expansion and likely impacts, and critical information sharing and action (between emergency services and between residents).
- Local emergency services are appropriately resourced, trained, effective, proactive and innovative. As appropriate, they embrace new technologies and response capabilities.
- Local community members are active volunteers in emergency services and in community based activity to ensure appropriate emergency planning and response capability.
- Communities provide accessible and affordable individual healthcare and appropriate population-based interventions that prioritise both preventative and responsive care, available and accessed by diverse groups in the community.
- Public health messages are culturally appropriate and promote healthy living across diverse groups, reflective of community populations.
- Public health services and support are culturally appropriate and promote mental and physical health and well-being.
- Community members have knowledge about natural hazards, take action with families and neighbours about household preparedness, and participate in activities to minimise losses from disaster events.

Section 3:

# FRAMEWORK TOOLS AND GUIDANCE



A key goal of the **Resilient Communities Framework** is to ensure practitioners can engage with the content through diverse entry points – whether that means focusing on a specific principle or a particular environment – so that they can directly respond to a community's unique priorities, while encouraging a holistic view of those priorities.

Two tools were developed to support flexible engagement with the Framework, and can be deployed sequentially or independently of one another.

### Assessment and Prioritisation Tool

The Assessment and Prioritisation Tool is a qualitative exercise meant to shape a holistic conversation and assessment about a community's perceived strengths and weaknesses across environments and principles.

### Initiative Enhancement Tool

The Initiative Enhancement Tool is meant to encourage a holistic review of a project, program or policy to identify specific opportunities for enhancing the resilience value of the planned work – or ensuring multiple benefits across a community's environments – while helping to avoid unintended negative consequences.



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*Kinglake and surrounding communities host bush fire recovery events on 19 July, 2009 in Kinglake, VIC, Australia. Photo credit: Raoul Wegat/Getty Images.*

## Assessment & Prioritisation Tool

### Purpose:

This qualitative tool is meant to shape a holistic conversation and assessment about a community's perceived strengths and weaknesses across environments and principles, in order to:

- Inform further study and data-driven analysis.
- Elevate and align on priority areas for resilience-building interventions.
- Track progress or changes in attitude over time, if used before and after an intervention, planning process or disaster event.
- Engage, familiarise and educate community leaders and stakeholders about the Resilient Communities Framework.

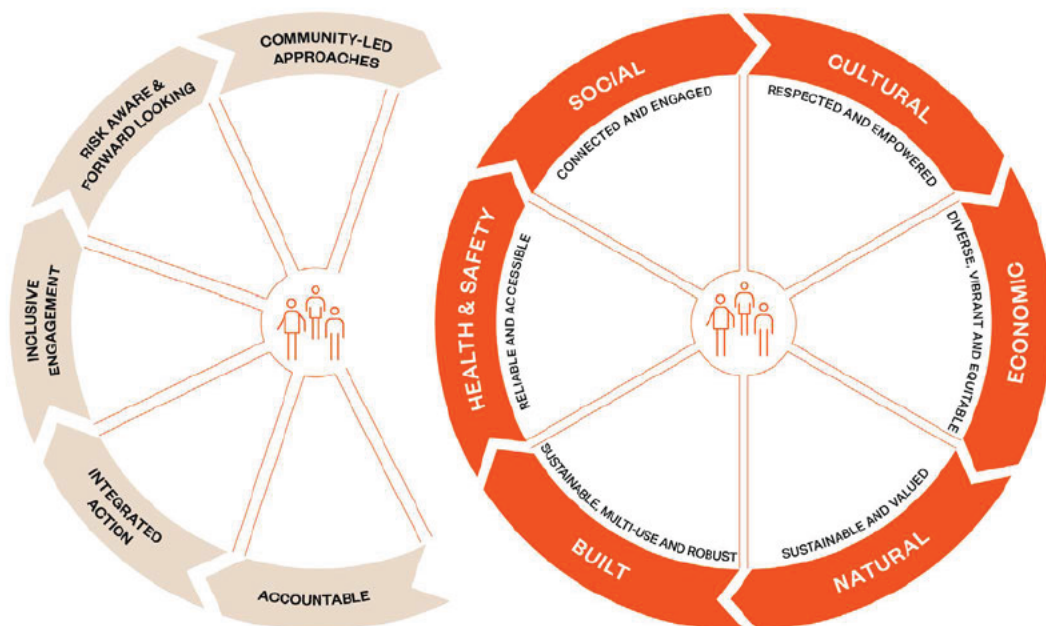
### User:

The tool is designed for use by practitioners and community leaders in partnership with diverse community stakeholders.

### Scope:

The tool is flexible and can be used to document perceptions of strengths and weaknesses of a community or place of any scale, i.e. a neighbourhood, community or city-wide scale.

## Community Assessment & Prioritisation Worksheet



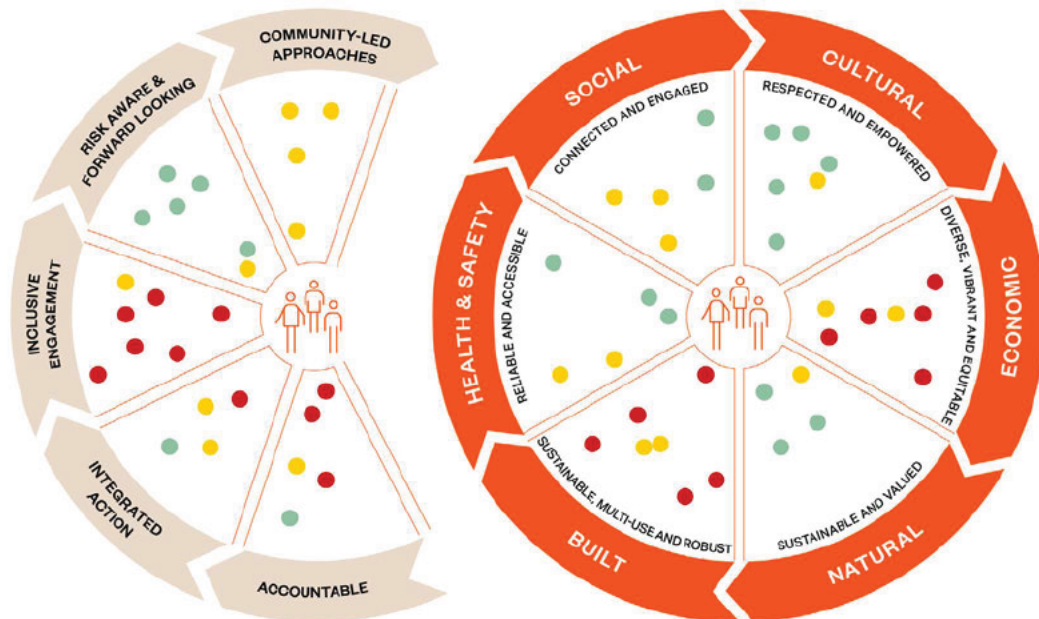
Principles

Environments



**Outputs:**

The tool captures participants' assessments (red, yellow, green) for each of the **Principles and Environments**. Facilitators can also provide a short written summary on observed areas of alignment and disagreement as well as suggested areas for further study, including opportunities to integrate data.

**Community Assessment & Prioritisation Tool Output**

Principles

Environments

**Facilitation Notes****1 Briefing:**

Facilitators should provide participants with an overview of the Framework by presenting and discussing the Framework Brief or the Framework Roadshow.

The tool then allows for diverse entry points into a resilience conversation, ensuring the ability to focus on the participants' priorities (i.e. principles or environments; strengths or weaknesses).

**2 Instructions:**

Practitioners should provide participants with 12 sticky dots (4 red dots, 4 yellow dots, and 4 green dots) and either individual Framework graphic worksheets or a large poster of the Framework graphic for the entire group to collaborate on together. Practitioners should ask participants to place all 12 dots on any area of the Framework graphic (multiple dots on one area is acceptable) that they feel, when considering their community, most closely correspond to:

- Red - Area of weakness
- Yellow - Can improve
- Green - Area of strength

**3 Discussion:**

Once the dots have been placed, practitioners should lead a discussion based on the position of the dots, focusing on:

- Areas of alignment, where participants generally agree on areas of strength or weakness
- Areas of divergence, where there are sharp disagreements
- Opportunities for further study or priority next steps.

## Initiative Enhancement Tool

### Purpose:

The Initiative Enhancement tool is meant to encourage a holistic review of a project, program or policy to identify specific opportunities for enhancing the resilience value of the planned work – or ensuring multiple benefits across a community's environments – while helping to avoid unintended negative consequences.

### User:

The tool is primarily intended for use by a project, program or policy "owner" in partnership with a strategic mix of stakeholders, including Subject Matter Experts, internal project team members, community leaders and residents, etc., to ensure a diversity of perspective.

### Scope:

The tool is designed to support a project, program or policy of any size, scope or thematic area.

### Timing:

The tool will be most useful if applied in the early design phases of a project, program or policy. We recommend planning for several iterations of a project's design to appropriately listen to and incorporate feedback from diverse stakeholders. The tool can strategically build on the Assessment and Prioritisation Tool by taking the identified and agreed upon priorities, strengths and challenges of a community and helping project owners enhance their projects by addressing those specific objectives. Without the identified priority areas, a project owner can still benefit from use of the tool, systematically applying the Framework to enhance the resilience value of the planned work.

### Outputs:

- Recommendations for project owners to improve the project design, team structure, funding and resourcing strategy, and/or implementation plans
- New framing of the project's multiple benefits and resilience value, specifically identifying qualities/environments as goals and outcomes
- Enhanced concept note or project plan to deliver the project.

## Facilitation Notes

### 1 Guiding Questions:

The tool provides a list of questions that can be used with stakeholders to facilitate a conversation about how to enhance the resilience value (or multiple benefits) of a proposed project, program or policy.

The questions can be used as written or can be adapted to your specific context. The questions are organised by the Framework environments, and the connection to a suggested principle is included in parenthesis.

### 2 Interconnected Environments:

The most useful conversations typically occur when stakeholders are prompted to consider if and how a project can contribute to multiple environments (e.g. a transportation project that addresses economic inequities and fosters social connections) and how it can demonstrate the principles (e.g. more locally led, greater accountability, more inclusive).

Social Environment
1. How can this program/project/policy be leveraged to promote a greater sense of belonging in the community? (inclusive engagement, community-led approaches)
2. How can we increase accessibility to all residents, despite differences in racial, social, cultural and economic differences? (inclusive engagement)
3. Are diverse community members engaged in key decisions and leadership opportunities related to this program/project/policy? (inclusive engagement, accountable, community-led approaches)
4. How can we use this program/project/policy to strengthen educational opportunities and respond to the needs of all residents? (community-led, risk aware and forward looking, accountable)
5. Will this program/project/policy improve governance systems in place that uplift the priorities and needs of all residents? (community-led approaches, accountable)
6. How can we leverage this program/project/policy to address lingering cultural grievances or issues that might cause strain on the communities social capital? (community-led approaches, inclusive engagement)
Cultural Environment
1. In what ways are all language and cultural subsets of a community actively present and involved in leadership and decision making of this program/project/policy? (community-led approaches, accountable, integrated action)
2. In the context of the program/project/policy design, rollout and operations, how can we promote culturally-specific engagement and deep listening across diverse communities? (community-led approaches, inclusive engagement)
3. How can this program/project/policy promote and enhance cultural wisdom, knowledge and practice sharing to the benefit of the larger community? (risk aware and forward looking, accountable, inclusive engagement)
4. How can this program/project/policy promote opportunities to reflect and improve engagement and co-creation with Indigenous people to better the well-being for all community members? (community-led approaches, accountable, inclusive engagement)
5. How can this program/project/policy address the issues of recent immigrants and welcome them to the community so that their cultural practices and customs are equally valued? (inclusive engagement)
Economic Environment
1. How can the program/project/policy improve access to reliable and living-wage jobs? (accountable)
2. Are there opportunities through the program/project/policy to appropriately strengthen social safety net programs designed to most appropriately respond to community needs? (community-led approaches, accountable, risk aware and forward looking)
3. How can the program/project/policy be leveraged to improve equitable access to financial opportunities for all community members? (community-led approaches, inclusive engagement)
4. How can the program/project/policy improve connectivity to the regional economy? Are there supply chain issues to be aware of? (integrated action)
5. How can this program/project/policy help households and businesses in planning for disasters? Are there accessible support systems in place to financially prepare for and recover from these events? (risk aware and forward looking)
6. How can the program/project/policy improve small business growth, local entrepreneurship and economic revitalisation? (community-led approaches, risk aware and forward looking)

7. How can the program/project/policy be leveraged to improve economic diversity? Is the region over reliant on a single industry? (risk aware and forward looking)
8. How can the program/project/policy help local business attract markets and customers beyond the local community? (integrated action, risk aware and forward looking, community-led approaches)
9. How can we leverage this program/project/policy to help households have access to diverse income streams, savings, insurance and/or other financial support that they can rely on in the face of an emergency? (integrated action)
<b>Natural Environment</b>
1. How can this program/project/policy provide opportunities to enhance the natural environment and specifically reduce risk and harm caused by fires and floods? Drought, water and air quality? (risk aware and forward looking, accountable)
2. How can this program/project/policy work across sectors to improve and align local policies and practices that preserve and value the natural environment? (integrated action)
3. If there are land use aspects, how does this program/project/policy facilitate community engagement? (community-led approaches, integrated action)
4. How are Indigenous environmental practices understood and implemented in the context of this program/project/policy? (inclusive engagement, integrated action, accountable)
<b>Built Environment</b>
1. Is this program/project/policy a critical infrastructure and how will it be built to withstand the risks of known disasters? Are there appropriate redundancies? (risk aware and forward looking)
2. How can this program/project/policy facilitate a better understanding by the public of the risk assessment/risk mitigation for critical infrastructure? Is there a process to discuss it? (community-led approaches, inclusive engagement)
3. How have the program/project/policy owners completed modelling for future needs given the changing climate, population and economic environment? (risk aware and forward looking)
4. How can we use the program/project/policy to improve how infrastructure in our community is built in ways that serve a variety of community priorities and maximise impact? (community-led approaches, accountable, integrated action)
5. In what ways might the program/project/policy accelerate negative impacts of the built environment (on natural, social, cultural environments). (risk aware and forward looking, accountable, integrated action)
6. How can the built environment maximise social connections as a preparation and mitigation strategy? (community-led approaches, inclusive engagement)
<b>Health &amp; Safety Environment</b>
1. How are there opportunities within this program/project/policy to create inclusive public space that promotes social stability and security? (inclusive engagement)
2. How can we increase trust between residents of all backgrounds and law enforcement? (community-led approaches, accountable, inclusive engagement)
3. How can this program/project/policy provide opportunities to improve the skills, technology and resources of first responders? (risk aware and forward looking, accountable)
4. How can this program/project/policy improve the mechanisms by which community members go to seek out health and emergency services? (community-led approaches)
5. How can this program/project/policy strengthen the ability of community government and public institutions to share critical information with residents? (accountable, integrated action)

## Section 3: **APPENDICES**



## Appendix A: Glossary

### Community:

A community is a social group formed around a common place, identity, interests, or experiences. Communities are diverse, complex, and personal – and an individual may belong to many different communities at one time. Given that fires and floods occur within a specific geographic area, this Framework is centred around communities of place.

### Environments:

Every community is composed of a series of interconnected systems and assets. For the purposes of this Framework, we have organised these systems and assets into a series of environments. The state of these environments can either enhance or diminish a community's resilience.

### Principles:

Resilience is both a process and an outcome. The principles of resilience-building serve as a guide for how practitioners and others should engage and approach their work.

### Qualities:

Resilient communities share a set of qualities across their environments. Communities should aim to support these qualities in communities through the nature and focus of their engagement.

### Resilience:

Resilience is the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, and systems exposed to hazards to survive, adapt, and thrive in ways that improve outcomes in the next disaster event and improve community well-being more broadly.

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*King tides came within inches of inundating Cairns. The city reportedly spent \$millions on new pumping stations that pump storm water out to sea in Cairns, Queensland - March 2010.  
Photo credit: Ashley Cooper/Construction Photography/Avalon/Getty Images*



## Appendix B: Framework Methodology

The Framework for the Resilient Communities mission has primarily been developed through secondary research leveraging the significant body of resilience work in Australia while also ensuring that it ultimately resonated with the communities for which it is intended.

RCC catalogued over 20 frameworks and tools related to resilience, disaster preparedness, wildfires, floods, community resilience, rural Australia, and other related themes. This initial scan consisted of national and international best practice including the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. From this initial catalogue, further analysis was conducted into select frameworks that similarly were developed to be used by practitioners, community leaders, policy-makers, and funders, and describe the ways to approach resilience building and what a resilient community is.

Within this landscape, the Resilient Communities Framework occupies a unique space focused most prominently on holistic resilience for community leaders and practitioners while simultaneously offering, but not requiring, the use of qualitative tools that allow users to immediately put the Framework into action through a variety of use cases and can be paired with quantitative data as is available. Frameworks and programs that describe the stages of the resilience building process for practitioners, although critical to nationwide resilience building efforts, were not included in this analysis; however, that robust body of work was reviewed throughout the development of this Framework.<sup>27</sup>

This research has been supplemented through broad and diverse feedback from leaders across organisations focused on building resilience and RCC's decade-long experience building resilience across 100 cities.

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*Installation of pod*

*Photo credit: A Fire Inside, FINCH*



## Appendix C: Landscape Analysis

A range of frameworks and other resources have influenced the formulation of this Framework.

The following is an overview of key resources.

- 1 ARUP, *City Resilience Framework*, <https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/City-Resilience-Framework-2015.pdf>
- 2 Australian Council on Health, *National Strategic Framework for Rural and Remote Health*, <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/10/national-strategic-framework-for-rural-and-remote-health.pdf>
- 3 Australian Government, *National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well-being*, [https://www.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/mhsewb-framework\\_0.pdf](https://www.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/mhsewb-framework_0.pdf)
- 4 Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, *Australian Disaster Preparedness Framework: A guideline to develop the capabilities required to manage severe to catastrophic disasters*, <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/emergency/files/australian-disaster-preparedness-framework.pdf>
- 5 Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, *National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework*, Retrieved from <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/national-disaster-risk-reduction-framework/>
- 6 Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, *Profiling Australia's Vulnerability: The interconnected causes and cascading effects of systemic disaster risk*, Retrieved from <https://www.aidr.org.au/media/6682/national-resilience-taskforce-profiling-australias-vulnerability.pdf>
- 7 Australian Government Digital Transformation Agency, *Future of Disaster Recovery and Resilience*.
- 8 Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC, *Australian Disaster Resilience Index*, <https://www.adri.bnhcro.com.au/#/>
- 9 Bushfire Recovery Victoria, *Community Recovery Toolkit*, <https://www.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-02/Community%20Recovery%20Toolkit%203.9.pdf>
- 10 Council of Australian Governments, *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience*, Retrieved from <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/2153/nationalstrategyfordisasterresilience.pdf>
- 11 CSIRO, *Preparing Australia for Future Extreme Bushfire Events*, <https://www.csiro.au/en/research/natural-disasters/bushfires/preparing-australia>
- 12 Emergency Management Victoria, *Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management*, <https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/resilience/community-resilience-framework-for-emergency-management>
- 13 Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, *Supporting Community Led Approaches to Disaster Preparedness*, <https://frrr.org.au/wp-content/uploads/FRRR-DRFR-Report-Summary-FINAL-for-WEB.pdf>
- 14 Government of South Australia, *Stronger Together - South Australia's Disaster Resilience Strategy*, <https://www.safecom.sa.gov.au/initiatives/stronger-together-south-australias-disaster-resilience-strategy/>
- 15 Monash University and The Australian Centre for Social Innovation, *Fire to Flourish - An Agenda for Change: Community-led Disaster Resilience*, [https://www.monash.edu/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/2676751/F2F\\_Agenda-Setting-Report\\_COMPLETE\\_FA3.pdf](https://www.monash.edu/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/2676751/F2F_Agenda-Setting-Report_COMPLETE_FA3.pdf)
- 16 Red Cross Australia, *RediCommunities: Community-Led Resilience for Emergencies A guide & toolkit for communities*, <https://www.redcross.org.au/getmedia/2d973b71-d7d5-4d39-b478-233d5cbf15c1/RediCommunitiesGuide.pdf.aspx>
- 17 Red Cross New Zealand, *Leading in Disaster Recovery: A Companion Through the Chaos*, [https://media.redcross.org.nz/media/documents/Leading\\_in\\_Disaster\\_Recovery\\_A\\_Companion\\_Through\\_the\\_Chaos.pdf](https://media.redcross.org.nz/media/documents/Leading_in_Disaster_Recovery_A_Companion_Through_the_Chaos.pdf)
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- 19 Risk Frontiers, *Fire & Flood Measurement: Report prepared for Minderoo Foundation*.
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- 21 United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Recovery (UNDRR; 2021) *Sendai Framework for Natural Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, <https://www.undrr.org/publication/sendai-framework-disaster-risk-reduction-2015-2030>



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- 9 Aldrich DP. Building resilience: Social capital in post-disaster recovery. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 2012. 232 p.
- 10 Sanderson, 2000; Lowe & Schilderman, 2001; McLeod, 2001; Mayunga, 2007.
- 11 Townshend I, Awosoga O, Kulig J, Fan H. Social cohesion and resilience across communities that have experienced a disaster. Natural Hazards. 2015;76(2):913–38.
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- 27 All frameworks and tools researched and analysed in the development of this Framework can be found in Appendix C.





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