MUDRI / EMV

COMPENDIUM

VICTORIAN COMMUNITY-BASED RESILIENCE BUILDING ACTIVITIES

monash.edu/compendium

MUDRI / EMV Compendium of Victorian Community-based Resilience Building Activities

Introduction

Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) and the Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative (MUDRI) share a strong interest in helping communities develop their resilience, particularly in the setting of disasters / emergencies / unexpected events. As a result the creation of this Compendium of case studies reflects Victorian Community-based Resilience Building Activities, which represents an Australian first. People interested in strengthening the resilience of their communities can draw on the examples and expertise embedded within each project. The creators of each project are keen to share their ideas, how they overcame challenges, discovered new directions or found that unexpected piece of wisdom.

MUDRI Goals

Connect people across Victorian communities

Reduce program duplication

Save valuable resources

Access to Compendium to share Community-based Resilience Building Activities

EMV Role

'Leading emergency management in Victoria by working with communities, government, agencies and business to strengthen their capacity to withstand, plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies'.

Vision, Goal, Role and Values of Emergency Management in Victoria

Emergency Management Victoria supports a sector-wide approach to achieve joined up outcomes that are community-focused. It is only by agencies, departments, industry, business, all levels of government and community working together that we will fully realise a sustainable and efficient emergency management system that reduces the likelihood, effect and consequences of emergencies.

Guidelines and Template for Compendium

For people or community groups wanting to submit a Resilience Building Activity for consideration in the MUDRI / EMV Compendium please use the online link for the guidelines and the template.

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Alpine Shire Council Community Resilience Committee Case Study

Project Summary

The 2009 Bushfires Royal Commission Implementation Monitor identified the Alpine Shire Council Community Resilience Committee (ASCCRC) as an example of good practice. The National Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme funded the development of a case study to provide information about the ASCCRC success factors and support the development of local government and community structures to increase disaster resilience.

Background and situation context

History of the Alpine Shire Council's Community Resilience Committee (ASC CRC)

This committee was borne out of the 2006 Alpine bushfires and its role was to act as a recovery committee in response to 2 recent fires in the Alpine Shire in 2003 and 2006/2007.

Both of these fires had a significant economic impact in the Alpine Shire. This committee consisted of government and non-government agencies looking at ways to rejuvenate the economic viability of the area. The composition of the committee today is virtually unchanged apart from including some community members.

Today the ASC CRC is working to inform people of the need to be aware of the risks they face where they live and to better prepare and plan for an emergency in order to allow them to enjoy living in Alpine Shire.

In the event of an emergency, this committee will automatically revert to a "Recovery Committee" to assist our affected residents to get their lives back on track.

The vision of the ASC CRC is:

> *"The people of the Alpine Shire will be empowered to choose, influence and respond to change."*

The ASCCRC understands that 'one size does not fit all' in addressing disaster resilience, and offers this case study in the spirit of sharing useful insights with interested communities, agencies and governments seeking to collaborate and share responsibility for community resilience.

The Alpine Shire is situated in the north east of Victoria approximately 300km from Melbourne. In recent times the shire has experienced a prolonged drought, major bushfires (4) and flood events (3) and the loss of agricultural industries.

The Community Resilience Committee is central to the Alpine Shire Council's long-term commitment to working together to build individual and community resilience, thus enabling all residents and visitors to look to the future with hope. For further details about Alpine Shire's resilience planning please see the Resilience Plan 2012-2015 at www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au Emergency – Being Prepared – Community Resilience.

Activities and results

Bushfires – including Black Saturday and the Harrietville fire, Bogong power station development, flooding and storms, loss of tobacco industry, changing agricultural conditions, chestnut blight, drought, climate change, and black spot communications.

Relief and Recovery activities: Black Saturday bushfire relief centre & coordination of recovery services to fire affected people - accommodation, food, counselling, financial assistance, volunteer support, fencing, grants, potable water, feed stations, information & newsletters, 'No Bull' workshops, Men's Health nights, Pamper Days, Mental Health First Aid courses, advocacy letters.

Projects looking beyond the immediate: Coordinating Victorian bushfire recovery funding applications and projects, communication black spots lobbying, disaster anniversary events, recognising volunteers, Neighbourhood Safer Places vulnerable person's register, Victorian bushfire recovery funding applications and projects volunteer training, Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund Into Our Hands development, safety DVD, information kits and fridge magnets.

Building resilience with communities: Resilience Workshop, Resilience Week, CFA community planning, National Broadband Network planning, Disaster Recovery.

Toolkit workshop, Business Continuity workshops, 'It's Up To You for 72' project, Resilience Month, Farming Seminar – Succession.

Planning & suicide/trauma, Teens and Alcohol Forum, Resilience Emergency Action Prepare (REAP) school sessions, Myrtleford.

Show – Emergency Management Display, Family Violence workshops, Harrietville Community Plan, Community Foundation workshops, Resilience Champions Project, Emergency Information Kits, Health Promotion, Food Security.

Research, planning and policy: Bushfire research, Murray Darling Basin plan submission, ASC Community Resilience Plan, Through Women's Eyes project, heatwave planning, input to Department of Justice Bushfire planning report, Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative presentations, ASC Liveability Plan, 'Just Ask' conference, Victorian state gender & disaster taskforce, heatwave planning, ASC CRC case study.

URL

http://www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au/files/Being_prepard/Alpine_Shire_Council_Community_Resilience_Committee_Case_Study.pdf

This Case Study is best viewed in its original format as per the link above.

Next steps

We're talking about resilience in community, and one of the roles the ASCCRC could look at is how it gets other communities involved and encourage people at the grassroots that have got a project and are going to motivate within the community.

Reflection

Critical factors for success:

The relationship building between community/agencies + agencies/agencies that happens at the ASCCRC was clearly identified as being at the heart of all the success factors because it improves networking, communication, avoids duplication and 'adds value', adds new knowledge and enables the agencies and communities to build on existing community resilience and use resilience activities to enhance response and recovery capacity.

Participants are from emergency management agencies, local government, state and federal government departments, local community groups, primary industries, volunteer emergency service organisations, employer groups, environmental organisations, community service agencies, infrastructure providers, academic researchers and local community representatives

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings:

ASC CRC operational success and sustainability factors:

- Bringing a broad range of agencies, community representatives and sectors to the table
- Providing paid facilitator role and local government support
- Creating a safe and trusted meeting place
- Nurturing and valuing members
- Supporting local knowledge
- Nothing is off limits
- Very professional, very timely, very routine
- Taking on change
- Amazing cooperation
- Staying focussed on resilience and involving community
- Building relationships and partnerships
- Being responsive to new members
- Bringing community development approach into a traditional emergency response culture
- Aligning with and contributing to state and federal resilience strategies and emerging research

Sustainability = 8 years of successful action since 2007 following the 2006/7 bushfires

Meetings = 51 bimonthly meetings during the case study period (January 2007 - December 2014)

Attendance = 840 attendees at CRC meetings came from 55 different agencies/groups, average of 19 participants at each meeting, with the minimum number of people at any one meeting being 9 and the maximum being 26

Lead organisation/s

Alpine Shire Council

Partner/s

Membership consists of: Alpine Shire Council, VicPol, DHHS, DELWP, ParksVic, DHS (Federal), Dept of Justice, CFA, SES, VCC EM, Red Cross, Alpine Health, Integrated Primary Mental Health, Landcare Groups, Into Our Hands Community Foundation, Victoria University, University of Melbourne, local Neighbourhood Centres,

In all 55 different agencies/organisations have been represented over 49 meetings.

Funding source

National Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme.

Funding amount

Not specified.

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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

Nil specified.

To download this case study please click this link

Be Ready Warrandyte – Living with Bushfire Risk (2012-2015)

Project Summary

'Be Ready Warrandyte' began with the aim of getting most households in 'Greater Warrandyte' to have an effective fire plan. We adopted the tagline 'Living with Bushfire Risk' to emphasise that this was not a scare campaign but another rational insurance decision for people who choose to live in a bushfire prone area. Just as we have house, car and medical insurance, we should have a fire plan.

Background and situation context

'Greater Warrandyte' includes Warrandyte, North Warrandyte and Warrandyte South and was later extended to include Park Orchards. We also engaged with surrounding Townships – Warburton, St Andrews, Dandenong Ranges and others.

In 2011, the WCA was approached by three Community Fireguard Group (CFG) leaders and a CFA Captain to apply for a Victorian Government 'Fire Ready Communities Grant'. WCA had held three very well attended public fire meetings since the 2009 'Black Saturday' fires and made a comprehensive submission to the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission. As Warrandyte had escaped the 2009 fires the emphasis was on 'Preparedness' rather than 'Response' or 'Recovery'. In the view of the CFG Leaders, only 5% of residents had a properly prepared fire-plan and this should be the focus of the grant application. Their view was also that the program should be over three years to be effective, although the State Grant was for only one year. Consequently, the 'Be Ready Warrandyte' (BRW) project was conceived.

The aim of the campaign from 2012-2015 was to ensure that every household in the 'Greater Warrandyte' area has an *effective* bushfire plan. Approximately 9,000 residents of Greater Warrandyte will benefit from this project.

Activities

We developed a programme to encourage residents to prepare an effective fire plan. We conducted a baseline survey then developed a 'toolkit' of products events and activities that included: a website; 'fire-watch app'; sample fire plans; several community forums; fire bunker tours; local and state media campaign; 'Heatwave' effects survey and pilot study; and others listed on our website www.warrandyte.org.au

Resources included:

Part time project management was by the North Warrandyte based 'Good Work Group' who specialise in event and project management. The Warrandyte Community Church made public meeting, conference and workshop facilities available free of charge. The local community is intensely creative and community minded. Three local brigades and two local Councils also provided resources when needed.

Project progress and achievements:

Quantitative survey data, website statistics, feedback forms, meeting attendance etc. suggest that the number of residents with a prepared bushfire plan at least doubled in the time period surveyed. How much was directly due to the BRW campaign can only be surmised as other factors were relevant but we certainly claim to have made a significant contribution to raising awareness.

The campaign won three Fire Awareness Awards in 2013: Community Preparedness Award; Media and Communications Award; and the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV) Insurance Award for Excellence.

This project is completed. The campaign ran between 2012 and 2015 but WCA is maintaining an active website to enable action if needed.

Results

Outputs produced:

- *WCA reports* (see warrandyte.org.au/fire)
  1. Bushfire Survey 2012 Key Findings Report (2013)
  2. Final Report 2012-2015 (2015)
  3. Heatwave Report 2015 (online & hard copy)

4. Be Ready Warrandyte Snapfish Pictorial Report

- *RMIT University (Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC) papers, lead author Blythe McLennan*
  1. Community-Led Bushfire Preparedness in Action: The Case of Be Ready Warrandyte. A case study for the Out of Uniform: Building community resilience through non-traditional volunteering project. Blythe Mclennan, Joshua Whittaker and John Handmer. Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre, 2015.
  2. Be Ready Warrandyte Living with Bushfire Risk (blog)
  3. Community-Led Bushfire Preparedness in Action: The case of Be Ready Warrandyte. (Conference Poster)
  4. Australian Journal of Emergency Management, Volume 31, No 1, January 2106.

URL   www.warrandyte.org.au/fire

POSITIVE impacts/changes/benefits for the target beneficiaries

- Overall, Be Ready Warrandyte was portrayed as an effective vehicle for sharing responsibility in bushfire preparedness that had community safety benefits reaching beyond its specific goal and beyond its local community. Participants felt it had struck a good balance between focusing on meeting community goals and needs while also respecting the established emergency management system, and between seeking to complement EMO community safety approaches while also challenging and influencing them.
- Evidence of impact on the community was that there had been a general increase in the level of bushfire planning amongst local residents over the term of the Be Ready project.
  - This included an increase in the percentage of people who left the area following the fire event in February 2014 compared to an earlier local fire in February 2013. This assessment was based on information gathered in two community surveys and through informal, on-the-spot surveys conducted by Be Ready Warrandyte at the Warrandyte Festival following each of the fires.

NEGATIVE impacts/changes for the target beneficiaries

- The BRW campaign recognised sustainability challenges associated with community-led projects over the three years but was able to sustain activity and commitment.
- Two broad community safety risks for this type of project were identified:
  - giving out information that is incorrect or pursuing bad and untested ideas, and;
  - inadvertently creating community reliance that is beyond the capacity of a community group to meet (e.g. providing community warnings). However, these risks were largely alleviated in Be Ready's case by seeking EMO input, engaging with skilled volunteers as-needed, carefully developing communication materials, and through the committee's willingness to learn.
- In addition, the potential for personal liability of committee members was a project risk. It was reduced by ensuring information given was sound and well-supported by all committee members, having appropriate insurance, and issuing disclaimers.

Next steps

WCA is maintaining the website with a view to reviving the campaign or something similar if needed.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice:

We claim to have introduced humour into EM messaging in Australia. Our video 'Do You Have a Fire Plan? Went viral and has been used as a training tool by CFA, RFS NSW, DFES WA and internationally. (It even got a hit in Afghanistan!)

Critical factors for success:

- Ours is a *Creative Community* which complemented the Emergency Services more straightforward approach.
- The project developed *Clear Governance* protocols. Participants trusted the process with its clearly defined aims, articulated key roles, defined expectations and timely feedback.
- There was a clear *Common Purpose.* Agency personnel came along as *representatives of,* rather than *representing*, their organisation. This enabled frank and open discussion.
- It was *Community Led*, leveraging off WCA's strong existing organisation, local net-works and relationships.

- The campaign *Celebrated Successes* to generate pride in being involved in the 'Be Ready Warrandyte' project. Winning Awards recognizes the effort made by the whole team. Members and advisors who left the Committee were awarded a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of their work.

Challenges faced and solutions:

A major challenge, for the Chair, is to manage community members who have difficulty working in a collaborative committee environment. Unexpected was the change in personnel at State and Local Government level during the three year project. Of 15 EM Officers only two remained for the whole project. Changing leadership of local CFA brigades reflected very different attitudes towards community engagement.

Areas for improvement:

- Pets: The community as a whole does not necessarily share one's concerns. Companion animals are clearly of more concern to residents than bushfire threat. Although material is available on WCA website, pets could be emphasised more in bushfire messaging.
- Concern exists about the focus on 'Community' Resilience is that the monkey has jumped from State Government to Local Government to Community level. Whilst this is a positive development it must be accompanied by adequate resourcing. BRW worked well because we had part time professional project management funded by grants. When these dry up so does the project. WCA as a community group has no office, storage space or other facilities and resources of its own.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings:

Whilst other communities may gain ideas from our experience, each community is different. Attempts to replicate our activities have not always been successful.

Lead organisation/s

Warrandyte Community Association Inc. (WCA)

Partner/s

Country Fire Authority (CFA)
Warrandyte
North Warrandyte
South Warrandyte, Regions 13 & 14
Manningham City Council
Nillumbik Shire Council

Funding sources

State Government Victoria 'Fire Ready Communities' Grant
Manningham City Council
Nillumbik Shire Council
Warrandyte Community Bank Branch, Bendigo Bank
Warrandyte Community Market Committee
Warrandyte Community Association Inc (WCA)

Funding amount

Funding received is given in the Text Table below of $152,200 ($ exc. GST).

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
State Government	43,100	43,100	----
Manningham Council	7,000	15,000	10,000
Nillumbik Council	3,000	10,000	10,000
Bendigo Bank	3,000	----	----
Warrandyte Community Market	1,000	----	2,000
WCA	----	----	5,000
Totals	57,100	68,100	27,000

Contact name

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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

The original online template in 2015 was difficult to use as the text detailing the guidelines disappeared when you began to enter information. The guidelines needed to be printed or viewed separately to be accessible. The online template did not have the ability to save the document during creation.

To download this case study please click this link

Centre of Resilience (CoR)

Project Summary

The Centre of Resilience (CoR) is a community development model piloted at the Emerald Community House (ECH) and was created to underpin the ECH strategic plan which guides decisions in a high risk environment. The CoR is committed to resilience building ideas and community development initiatives which stimulate collective community strength and durability to develop a 'community continuity strategy' similar to a business continuity model.

Background and situation context

The Emerald Community House manages the project in Emerald, Victoria as a pilot program to increase self-reliance and encourage other organisations to adopt a community continuity strategy.

The project was inspired after a meeting in 2008 between local and state government community strengthening representatives and the ECH executive committee. ECH sought planning funds to develop a community development strategy that connected businesses, community groups, local education, events and the arts by exercising our relationships in a practical way and developing local management capacity. The government representatives told us to "Say No to the community, scale back and stick to your core business". We rejected this advice and set about acting on our vision.

'Community continuity' encompasses a variety of planning, preparatory and related activities which are intended to ensure that community functions will either continue to operate despite serious incidents or disasters that might otherwise have interrupted them, or will be recovered to an operational state within a reasonably short period.

The goal of CoR is to contribute to community continuity by encouraging the efficient and effective use of existing social, natural, economic and built community-based assets in a progressive and sustainable way.

Organisations within a community that set-out to have a continuity strategy could contribute directly to:

- sustainable economic, environmental and social benefits
- enhancement of community governance and leadership skills through proactive processes
- an increase in community participation in education, volunteering, the arts, living and employment skills, and;
- safe,happier and connected communities.

Potential benefits could include but are not limited to:

- better local connection
- improved local economy (including sustained growth in house prices)
- heritage protection
- infrastructure renewal
- arts and event management
- local education
- volunteer development
- portals for emergency services promotion, and;
- expanded abilities and trust between groups.

Activities

- We undertook a proactive approach to develop and practice diverse relationships before potential disaster events. The ECH established a CoR steering group from a diverse and talent pool of people including environment, business, community development, and social science consultancy and sustainability practice. The steering group developed the initial strategy, designed a logo that reflected diversity and networks and trademarked the product.
- The idea of a 'community continuity strategy,' is like a 'business continuity strategy'. The CoR Strategy details a range of activities:
  - adopts a strategy that contributes to 'community continuity' using social, economic, natural and built environments
  - embeds resilience building into our goals and objectives, programs, policies and strategic plans
  - commits to long term local community development approaches by empowering people to get involved and be the change they seek
  - explores what people value, where they want to be, identifies what they can do to get there and assists them to achieve it

- identifies lateral networking opportunities and increase local interoperability through activities and partnerships
- develops partnerships locally, nationally and internationally to create collaborative networks with other organisations to spread our collective resilience to support each other, and;
- sources support through creative means - individual, government, philanthropic and organisational and draw interest from business and other organisation partnerships.
- Activities included speaking about CoR at Monash University, conferences and Emergency Management Victoria events, developed a Facebook page to promote the ECH CoR.
- Ensuring that the ECH has sustainable power, important community facilities like toilets, showers, free access to computers/internet/Wi-Fi, stored water supply, food, community kitchen, childcare and connections to business, local government and community groups to ensure community continuity.
- Invested in infrastructure and local economy by creating the Emerald Business Group, contributed toward and sourced state funds to refurbish Council's century old Hall and ECH buildings, sourced heritage funds to restore heritage bakery as a community enterprise and developed the largest monthly community market in the Dandenongs.
- Embedded fire safety messages into the ECH programs and arts festival (PAVE).
- Provided opportunities for local emergency services groups to engage more effectively with the community for example: the presentation of fire safety at the Burlesque night and during PAVE festival (smoke house for kids, free stall at PAVE arts festival), provision of free monthly market stalls at Emerald, CFA bush fire planning workshops at ECH where childcare parents are required to attend.
- ECH's vision embraces many activities that reflect the central themes that have motivated similar communities, for example: Whittlesea Community Emergency Plan; Cockatoo Ready2Go project for vulnerable people inspired by The Go List; Dig In Community Cafe inspired Cockatoo 's community dining project; the Victorian Neighbourhood House sector began to nominate projects for the Fire Awareness Awards after 2010 (previously the sector had not nominated for these awards); Neighbourhood Houses Victoria consulted with ECH to define their Bushfire Community Toolbox, promoted ECH ideas and activities on their Resilience website page; Emergency Services/EMV began to endorse Community Houses since 2009 due to ECH's related projects ; MAV (MEMEG) representative began to recommend that Council childcare programs adopt a policy similar to ECH program, recognised in international studies and publications "to focus on building community strengths through establishing and strengthening trust and mutual benefit in each area of everyday local activities (Emerald Community House, 2014)."
- ECH used resources from the MUDRI / EMV Compendium Guidelines, literature on community recovery committees, post disaster recovery and post traumatic growth. ECH staff worked with groups in Kinglake and Marysville to increase our awareness about the challenges facing recovering communities.

This project was in-progress at the time of publication.

Results

This project is in-progress at the time of submission, however the following portray the initial results of CoR.

- ECH developed a strategy to guide CoR.
- The COR project featured in the book *Strategies for Supporting Community Resilience, Multinational Experiences, Multinational Resilience Policy Group* as an Australian exemplar. Mark Duckworth quotes '...For instance, the Emerald Community House (ECH) has established its own Centre of Resilience within a community of almost six thousand people located at the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges near Melbourne. The centre's vision is 'To be a place where connections are made and opportunities realised,' and people are empowered to confront the risks they face, especially the bushfires. The pursuit of community resilience involves efforts to integrate safety messages across several risks, build local capacities with local resources, and provide training embedded throughout numerous community programs, activities and services.'
- ECH / CoR won 5 Five Fire Awareness Awards in 5 years (2010-2014) based on CoR strategy which reflects its commitment and creativity to building resilience and empowering others.
- ECH promoted the resilience agenda to community house peak bodies. After 5 years the Neighbourhood Houses Victoria Board is now in the process of establishing a Community Resilience Task Group and asked that ECH / CoR provide advice.

CoR activities have been recognised in other international publications in the ASEAN region, for example:

- Strategies for Supporting Community Resilience, Multinational Experiences, Multinational Resilience Policy Group, Editor: Robert Bach
- ASEAN Literary Festival
- The Jakarta Globe news media and The Jakarta Post news media
- Indonesia Development of Education and Permaculture (IDEP)
- Three International PhD studies

- We believe people have been empowered by the CoR strategy. The local community has been advantaged socially, economically and environmentally, and we are collecting the evidence. Some examples include DRREA's Ranges Energy with EmFSuS and the solar power collaboration, Eastern Dandenong Ranges Association development. The Local Voice newspaper, Cockatoo's saving and restoration of the old McBride Street Kindergarten as the first heritage site in Victorian history with a bushfire theme and its associated funding based on our grant application.
- Other groups such as the Dandenong Ranges Renewable Energy Association have supported ECH solar power project to achieve sustainable power as a backup power resource, thus achieving elements of CoR
- Other ECH community development projects besides the Emerald Going Solar project that now come under the banner of CoR include :
  - Dig In Community Cafe (self-funded, feeds people, develops skills, food safety, business partnerships)
  - Emerald Monthly Market (self-funded, raises funds for ECH, contributes to local economy and connections)
  - PAVE and FunFest Festivals (mostly self-funded, some external funding, develops local community capacity through the arts), and;
  - Emerging community enterprises (i.e., century old hall renovation, old bakery restoration, Heritage Walk).

Next Step

Encourage more groups and organisations to adopt Centre of Resilience community continuity strategies.

URL   http://www.emeraldcommunityhouse.org.au/centre-of-resilience-cor/

Reflection

Centres of Resilience are doable, achievable, innovative and empowering. Establishing a vision that results in a strategy that other communities can adopt to collectively raise and strengthen their resilience has the potential to increase self-reliance within Australian communities.

The success of CoR is focused on our own success and not measured by whether anyone else takes up the strategy. When we look at the Victorian Neighbourhood House Coordination Program Agreement, the goals and objectives certainly parallel the philosophy behind CoR from a community development perspective. But the addition of sustainability and 'transition town' values completes the CoR strategy to be more complete, more local, more relevant and more focused.

Looking at our work as a business, even though a not for profit, we still need to continue to be financially viable within the community especially during times of adversity by having a cash operational reserve. The more profit we can generate, the more local people we can employ, the more services we can support and the more independent we become. It is worth noting the ECH is the largest contributor to our own bottom line, rather than government sources which is important in maintaining a balanced view of influence. We have learned that true resilience is enhanced when an organisation feels free to comment critically about government actions, free from worry about financial penalties being leveraged. We have certainly run the gauntlet there.

There is room for centres that operate effectively with this heightened CoR strategy to be formally identified as Centres of Resilience and become eligible for 35 management hours a week funding through DHHS, especially if operating in high risk areas working with EMV's 2021 strategy and Resilient Melbourne (metro and peri-urban areas). There could be a set amount of centres that would be required to apply and maintain the work for the duration of the award. Neighbourhood houses could *aspire* to operate as a Centre of Resilience.

Critical factors for success:

- local partnerships and local governments' facilitation, and;
- training of emergency services personnel in community development practices to assist communities in developing resilience to adverse events.

Challenges faced and solutions:

- There have been incidences where some traditional emergency management/services volunteers have dismissed CoR activities as being 'silly or irrelevant' and 'outside the Emergency Management Act.' While that attitude has actually contributed to our own resilience, independence and success, it illustrates how confronting it is for of community groups to take a leadership role and determine their own local processes and partners.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings:

Any community group can adopt CoR values, modify them to suit their objectives and increase community networks and connections. Imagine if we all did this for the next five years. How much better off we would be....

Lead organisation/s

Emerald Community House (ECH)

Funding source

Emerald Community House (ECH)

Funding amount

Not specified.

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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

Nil.

To download this case study please click this link

CONNECT Warrnambool

Project Summary

CONNECT is an integrated online hub that's the first of its kind in Australia. Open 24/7 it is accessible to all ... And while it has an address, it's a meeting place without walls or doors.

A connected community is a resilient community. CONNECT utilises the power of online communications to provide a new way to meet, communicate and connect – both in good times and when challenges arise.

CONNECT is designed to make it easy for residents and groups to share information, ideas, events, opportunities and get to know each other better.

The website includes a custom built community directory with hundreds of local groups, clubs and organisations; and Facebook provides them with a huge platform to share and distribute information to the wider community.

Background and situation context

CONNECT began as Great South Coast Recovers, which was envisaged as "a website and network that enables councils to capture and develop volunteer resources, donations, list club and service resources and act as an information point for local communities in the time of a disaster" (Resilient Community Program Grant Application).

The initial plan to achieve this was to purchase an existing website product, Recovers, which registers people and groups in order to enlist them in emergency recovery efforts. This procurement was to be followed by a community and organisational engagement and awareness program.

Research in the early stages of the project however, indicated that:

– creating something that is only used in an emergency context means it could potentially be un-used for years;
– this limited use would present difficulties such as lack of ongoing awareness of the site, how to use it and forgotten login details; and
– engaging people in emergency information in isolation from something they're already doing or interested in is very challenging.

Research also indicated that connected communities with capacity to support each other bounce back more strongly after an emergency and so from this initial setback, a concept emerged to build an online meeting place to allow people and groups to connect everyday - not just when things go wrong.

Activities

A resilient community is a CONNECTED community.

CONNECT has been custom designed to be flexible and innovative and can be altered to respond to local events as they happen. It engages the whole community, including groups and individuals not usually involved with emergency management, and continuous use will build familiarity and embed CONNECT as the 'go to' point during recovery. It can also be harnessed for sustained resilience and well-being, rather than being left to taper away outside recovery and renewal processes.

Building the Product:

As the CONNECT concept took shape, the components that would work together as a cohesive and powerful 'whole' were identified:

– A vastly improved community directory that not only provides information about group and club activities, but also captures their skills, interests, resources and volunteering opportunities;
– A volunteer resource hub;
– An emergency information hub;

- What's on' links to calendars of events;
- A Facebook platform as a virtual community noticeboard to find out about local activities and events, get involved in community projects, or ask questions and share ideas.

  It delivers:
  - A substantially improved and more searchable database of clubs, groups and organisations for use by the community.
  - An online updating function for community organisations to maintain and update their own profiles.
  - A database for emergency agencies (including Councils) to locate community assets, equipment, skills and other resources during emergency recovery (eg marquees, temporary furniture, equipment, registered kitchens, first aiders, volunteers etc).
  - New searchable fields including skills and interests; and membership and volunteering opportunities.
  - A single, credible source of local emergency alerts and preparedness information via direct links to ABC Emergency as well as agency websites including CFA, SES, VICPOL, DELWP.
  - Capacity to highlight current and local messages.

  A social media platform where:

  - clubs and organisations can communicate with each other and with residents in a public forum;
  - ideas are shared, questions can be asked and responses sought from other members of the CONNECT community;
  - opportunities to get involved in local events, activities and volunteering are encouraged & promoted;
  - new residents can find out about what's happening/available;
  - good news/positive stories about living in the local area are sourced and shared;
  - a 'can do' attitude is supported;
  - helping & supporting each other is encouraged.

  Future evaluation will provide further data (qualitative and quantitative) as the project progresses to enable continuous improvement and sustainability of CONNECT.

Results

- CONNECT Warrnambool Website hosting the new Warrnambool Community Directory - with 190+ clubs, groups and organisations on a self-managed, automated database, capturing for the first time resources and capacity these groups would offer the community in times of emergency.
- CONNECT Warrnambool Facebook Page - a new communications channel designed to let community groups and individuals 'get to know each other better'
- CONNECT Warrnambool recognisable brand/logo and promotional campaign, and;
- CONNECT Communications Plan which includes promotion of CONNECT's capacity, events/activities/good news to encourage traffic to and awareness of CONNECT, and seasonal emergency preparedness messages.

URL   http://www.connectwarrnambool.com.au/

Reflection

CONNECT is a unique platform which took significant resources to create, but is a model for others to consider and potentially implement. It is a proactive tool which will build community connection in the 'good times' so that the strength can be relied on when challenges arise. It aims to ensure the community are informed, aware and connected.

CONNECT launched in mid September 2015, and the platform has received strong support from groups and organisations, and also a very positive response from individual users.

In the first 6 months of operation, the Connect Warrnambool Facebook page grew to have more than 3000 likes (15% of the target local audience on Facebook). Engagement and reach of the Facebook platform has now exceeded 15,000 individuals.

Lead organisation/s

Warrnambool City Council

Partner/s

Emergency and Community Agencies, organisations, clubs and groups
Connect platform is also being piloted by Glenelg Shire Council

Funding source

Regional Development Victoria

Funding amount

$100,000

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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

Nil specified.

To download this case study [please click this link](#)

Dig In Community Cafe - Resilience through community dining practice

Project Summary

Emerald Community House team of volunteers creates meals from food donated by local businesses and community through a food collection/donation partnership on a regular monthly basis. The Dig In Community Cafe brings together experiences and people with an opportunity to practice feeding the community in a spontaneous environment participating in a shared responsibility exercise.

Background and situation context

The Dig In Community Cafe is held on the last Friday of the month at Emerald Community House Hall in Emerald, Victoria between 6-8 pm.

Emerald Community House collected stories and data on:

- emergency food relief
- provision of food in emergency situations
- recovery of a community after disaster, and;
- community dining models
- Journal entries from diners

The Dig In Community Cafe was developed to provide volunteers an opportunity to participate and train in spontaneous community dining. It also increased the working relationships with other organisations and businesses such as Woolworths, local bakeries, local community groups and green grocers to participate in a shared responsibility model. The hall is managed by ECH and owned by the local council. By partnering with diverse groups, collecting ingredients, donating services, cooking and serving food for the monthly meals, this project is a great mirror of the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience statement which identifies local government, business, organisations, families and individuals as key shared responsibility stakeholders.

Emerald Community House, through a small fund donated to us, also provides formal training for food handlers to attain food safety skills by paying for half of the cost of this training and the council pays for the other half. That training not only puts more food safety education into the community (important when power goes out and food spoils), it also gives them a marketable skill and experience to get a job in hospitality or care services - this is employment resilience.

The people who come to dine (anywhere from 50-100+ diners a night) can be isolated, marginalised, just want to commune and chat about local subjects or try out their skills in the kitchen in a spontaneous environment. They all mix it up with local community leaders, followers, volunteers, CFA members, politicians, tradies, retired people, artists, musicians, tourists, visitors, children and family members. Monetary donations are appreciated but not required and usually cover the cost of anything extra that needs to be purchased for the meal.

Activities

We set our goals:

1. Proactively increase and practice capacity building in community to be resilient in good times or hardship
2. Promote well-being through social inclusion
3. Increase safe food handling skills throughout the community
4. Receive donations for equipment and resources that connect suppliers who support the program
5. Provide training opportunities for public dining and hospitality skills for youth

6. Promote healthy eating, use seasonal produce where possible, sourced locally, and cater for special dietary needs (vegetarian, vegan and gluten free at a minimum), and;
7. Encourage self-reliance with smart food storage and pantry supplies at ECH and at home.

We publicized the date, and used outdoor signage, a Facebook page with website promotion. We then developed the model guidelines document for roles and responsibilities based on our experiences as we went along.

So far we have successfully run the program sustainably for 3 years with donations and interest now increasing. We have served to over 1500 people in that time. Others have come to train in our program and go to their communities to create something similar. Our volunteer base has grown and food sources have stabilized in regularity. Uniting Care modelled their community dining model after our program acknowledging ECH as the creator of the project.

Volunteers attain food safety skills and ECH pays for half of the cost of Food Safety courses and council pays for the other half. That training not only puts more food safety knowledge into the community (important when power goes out and food spoils), it also gives them a marketable skill and experience to get a job in hospitality or care services - more employment resilience.

The Dig In Community Café continues to be a donation based self-funded training program, gaining no funding from government other than council's partial coverage of half the fee for food safety. This contribution is offered to all community groups in the shire, not specifically for the Dig In program. We use this training to embed further benefit within the community.

This project is still in progress. We continue to run this program not only because it is beneficial and yielding results, it's just plain fun!

Results

- The Dig In Community Cafe Guidelines Manual
- Over 200 people have attended our Food safety training.
- We have increased our number of volunteers who have been enticed by a program that involves "mystery box" cooking and food interests.
- We have increased our working relationships with local businesses and other community groups and churches.
- We have provided training for youth in food service and they have gone on to get employment because of that experience.
- Some people who initially came because they were lonely, isolated, looking for connection or just curious about what was going have now become volunteers, feel increased connection and valued in their community. They have gone on to attend courses and functions or even joined our committee of management. In fact, one of our diners joined the committee and is now our Chairman.

URLs   http://www.emeraldcommunityhouse.org.au/events/digin-cafe/

https://www.facebook.com/DigInCafe

Next steps

We are looking now for other community partners to share the program and spread out the responsibility of running it. In this way we reduce a single point of failure and increase our flexibility and relationships. In fact, the future goal is to find a different organisation to run the dinner each month to spread the experience, service, resources and connections.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice:

The Dig In Community Cafe is self-funded and run completely on donations. We just started the program, developed the model based on experience and have run continuously for 3 years. It is important to remain flexible to take advantage of opportunities as they arise and empower people to make decisions with sufficient knowledge to solve any problems.

Critical factors for success:

- Ensure that business partners understand what you are doing and their role in that process.
- Get a freezer or use others that exist in the community already.
- Make sure everyone understands safe food handling.
- Cater for vegans, vegetarians and gluten free diets, cultural diets
- Have fun!
- Don't overburden volunteers with paperwork and rules when they show up to help.

- Welcome them and let them work at their pace, partnering them up with a regular volunteer, gradually allowing them to gain more responsibility.
- Make sure that every volunteer signs in on the Volunteer Register.
- Don't try to do labour intensive meals. Good food, healthy ingredients and enough food to go around is good enough.
- We serve all of our meals using china dinnerware and glassware. No disposables.
- Keep the washing up to a minimum.
- Get a good commercial stove that can handle the demand and commercial dishwasher that can turn the dishes around fast.
- Make sure you have a Dig In Coordinator to set the menu and manage every session.

Challenges faced and solutions:

- Occasionally, holiday periods are hard to get volunteers yet the food donations will overflow. Always accept the food and find a place for it. Availability of cold storage has provided challenges but we have had a freezer donated to us recently. We have run Dig In for the last two Christmas holidays.
- Occasional availability of volunteers early for food prep is a challenge. The program has been designed to run with one person at a minimum to start all of the cooking. Can be done by one person if organised well. Others usually come a few hours before the event. Even diners will roll up their sleeves if they see that you are struggling. We have run Dig In for the last two Christmas holidays but gave everyone a holiday in 2015.

Future recommendations:

- Would be good if we could write a recipe book - big demand for our recipes.
- Would like other organisations to now pick a Friday in a month and run the Dig In to spread the experience and capacity building.
- Need a commercial stove and commercial dishwasher - one day....

Lead organisation/s

Emerald Community House (ECH)

Partner/s

Woolworths
Emerald Bakery
Bakers Delight
Other volunteers from local groups
Random donations

Funding source

ECH and community at large, food from partners listed above.

Funding amount

We receive between about $150-$250 in donations during each meal. ECH provided the first seed money originally. We were given access to $2,000 from Country Women's Association (CWA) through Monash Health from their disbanded kitchen program. This money is to be used in the community to train people in food safety skills.

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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

Nil.

To download this case study please click this link

Gender and Disaster Pod (GAD Pod)

Project Summary

The GAD Pod brings a gender focus to disaster policy and practice. Its website synthesises resources developed since the first research in Australia on violence against women after disaster. Other 'firsts' include research with men after disaster and establishment of the Victorian "Gender and Disaster Taskforce".

Background and situation context

The GAD Pod was formally established in 2015 to promote understanding of the role played by gender in survivor responses to disaster, and to embed these insights into emergency management practice.

In 2009, research about the implications of gender to disaster experience in developed countries was rare. In 2012, the first Australian research directly with women on this subject - *The Way He Tells* It - was released at Australia's first conference on disasters and family violence; *Identifying the Hidden Disaster*.

The *Hidden Disaster* conference galvanised interest in gender issues in disaster, and led to a successful submission to the National Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme. The researchers then considered men's experiences of health and wellbeing during and after Black Saturday. The findings are captured in *Men on Black Saturday: Risks and opportunities for change.* The *'Just Ask'* conference on men's experiences of disaster followed.

Since undertaking these foundational research projects, the Pod partners have led diverse initiatives—with input from emergency management, community members, masculinity experts and government representatives —to inform responses to women and men in future disasters. In January 2014, Australia's first Gender and Disaster Taskforce was established, auspiced by the Victorian Emergency Management Commissioner.

Activities

The GAD Pod has built on community engagement - via qualitative research and consultation - with 30 women, 32 men, and 47 workers affected by the Black Saturday bushfires. The initiative has been led and driven by the two women's health services whose board members and managerial staff comprises of all women, from different backgrounds and communities. The men's research was guided by a high level Men's Advisory Group, Chaired by The Fire Services Commissioner and, after establishment of the GAD Taskforce, by Emeritus Professor Frank Archer. Activities have included the hosting of national conferences with international keynote speakers, and collaborative curating with Steve O'Malley from the Metropolitan Fire Brigade of the gender stream of Victoria's Emergency Management Conference. The GAD Pod's executive support for the GAD Taskforce has involved a key role in developing the foundational documents for this group, along with its workplan and ongoing evaluation. Conference presentation and journal articles, together with training developed and offered to the emergency management sector, have been key ways to disseminate the research findings and achieve positive change for those involved in and affected by disaster. A gender and disaster website and unique 'Roadmaps' section (funded by DHHS) allows easy access to a wealth of resources.

This initiative is now complete.

Results

Gendered research was first covered in two reports entitled "*The Way He Tells It: Relationships after Black Saturday*"[1] and "*Men on Black Saturday - Risks and opportunities for change*"[2]. Recommendations for improving

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[1] *"The Way He Tells It: Relationships after Black Saturday"* is a WHGNE research report that captures the experience and knowledge of **women** who survived Black Saturday. It was published in 2011.

[2] *"Men on Black Saturday – Risks and opportunities for change"* is a 2013 report on research into **men**'s Black Saturday experience in Victoria. The research was conducted under the auspices of WHGNE and Monash University's Injury Research Institute (MIRI).

disaster planning, training and ESO practice have been informed by the stories, experiences and advice offered by community members, community and ESO workers, and academics working in the fields of masculinity, gender and disaster.

Filmed proceedings of the two national conferences, featuring presentations by academics, community members and on-the-ground workers are available online. Both conferences were privileged to host Dr Elaine Enarson as keynote speaker, along with leading Australians experts such as Professor Bob Pease and Dr Christine Eriksen.

These conferences were the catalyst for the Victorian Gender and Disaster Taskforce – the first in Australia, and as far as we know, the first in the world.[3] Established January 2014, the taskforce meetings six times per year. Foundational documents and a workplan have been collaboratively developed and guest speakers inform the senior emergency service organisational leaders, community members, non-government representatives and academics present.

The research has been presented at national and international conferences (Japan and Copenhagen) and forums, and MUDRI Forums and at the 6th Annual Professor Frederick 'Skip' Burkle Jnr Keynote Lecture.

Journal articles and book chapters have been published.

The initiative has been awarded twice – by VicHealth and by the Attorney-General's Department.

URL   www.genderanddisaster.com.au

POSITIVE impacts/changes/benefits for the target beneficiaries

- Funded projects have seen the development, piloting and ongoing delivery of training on Family Violence and Natural Disaster, and Men and Disaster. A further two training modules have been piloted on Gender Equity and Disaster, and Living LGBTI in Disaster. A series of six short films were made as key resources and are available online. Training is aimed at middle managers in the emergency sector, local government and community members.
- A new collaboration with 1800 RESPECT has resulted in inclusion of the gender and disaster information in the web-based information at 1800 RESPECT, a community service announcement to be played through ABC rural radio stations during fire season, and a video.
- The current initiative is the collaborative development of national gender and emergency management guidelines, funded in three parts by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, the Attorney-General's Department and Emergency Management Victoria. It will culminate in a 2-day summit in late 2016.

NEGATIVE impacts/changes for the target beneficiaries

- None

Next steps

- Progressing training so that it is taken up systematically, particularly by the emergency management sector.
- Consulting with all Australian states and territories about the gender and emergency management guidelines.
- Publishing journal articles particularly on the increase of violence against women after disaster in Australia.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice:

- The establishment and successful operation of the first Australian "Gender and Disaster Taskforce" to reduce the compounding effects of gender on disaster impacts, (as detailed in the URL link).
- This initiative is good practice in that it has:
    - catalysed partnerships and collaboration among multiple stakeholders from diverse horizons
    - institutionalized and sustained such partnerships and collaboration over the long term, in a key structure - the Taskforce;
    - galvanised interest in a previously un-researched field; (4) it has made proper use of available technology;
    - resulted in a number of Australian "firsts"; and

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[3] Article about the Taskforce: https://ajem.infoservices.com.au/items/AJEM-30-04-08

- utilized women's skills and leadership for risk reduction and resilience building.

Critical factors for success:

The impacts, results and achievements mentioned above have all been the results of the leadership and work of WHGNE and WHIN whose board members and managerial staff are all women from different backgrounds and communities. The women's efforts have made the project a success in the Gender & Disaster area in particular, and in the disaster/climate risk reduction and resilience building areas in general. The collaboration with Monash Injury Research Institute since 2012 has assisted immeasurably in gaining recognition for the work and extending its reach.

Challenges faced and solutions:

Major challenges have included the need to include gender into the disaster context, when people feel there is no time to consider this. Dr Elaine Enarson writes about this challenge. "Each summer," she says, "the bushfire season again diverts attention on to 'urgent' matters and attention to gender issues is relegated to the unimportant. Yet its importance lives on as both men and women suffer from the gendered expectations of ESOs, their communities and society as a whole."

Areas for improvement:

- Training would ideally be adapted for different audiences.
- Sex-disaggregated data could be gathered by all disaster agencies.
- Family violence data should be collected and monitored by a nominated agency.
- Prioritization of family violence awareness before a disaster occurs.
- More documentation through journal articles should be completed.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings:

Project funding has been achieved to late 2016. Further funding is as yet unknown.

Lead organisation/s

Women's Health Goulburn North East (WHGNE)
North Women's Health Goulburn (WHIN)

Partner/s

Monash Injury Research Institute, Monash University (MIRI)

Funding source

WHGNE
WHIN
National Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme (NDRGS)
National Emergency Management Projects, Attorney General's Department
Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
Emergency Management Victoria (EMV)
1800 RESPECT
Department of Environment, Lands, Water and Planning (DELWP)

Funding amount

From external sources: $550,000 since 2012

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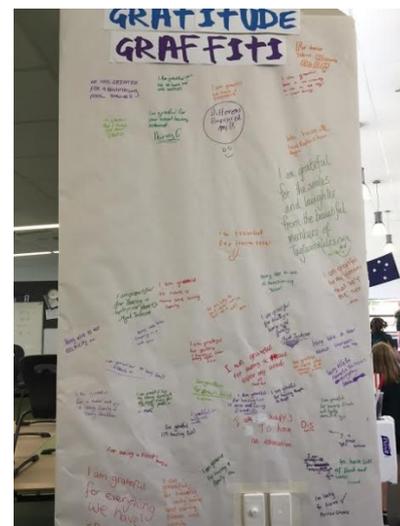space@netc.net.au

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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

This Initiative is now complete.

To download this case study [please click this link]

Healthy And Resilient Together (HART) Project

Project Summary

The HART project is a community-wide approach to building resilience in the towns of Beechworth, Wooragee and surrounding areas. The project brings together 3 primary schools and 2 early childhood services to address an identified need to enhance and build resilience in children within the community. It also provides and plans for bushfire and fire safety education for children and young people.

Background and situation context

The HART project is being conducted in Beechworth, Wooragee and the surrounding areas of North East Victoria. This region is situated in the bushfire arear of the Indigo Shire. It has a population of approximately 4,000 people, and has experienced 3 large bushfires over the last 12 years.

The project partners include local government, local CFA, health and education settings working collaboratively to develop an innovative approach to building resilience and providing fire safety education to children, staff and families in the local community.

Groups participating include Beechworth Primary School, St Joseph's Primary School, Wooragee Primary School, Beechworth Kindergarten, Beechworth Community Child Care Centre, Indigo Shire Council, local CFA and Beechworth Health Service. There is commitment from the partners to work together and combine efforts to support funding and future activities.

The need for building resilience in children in our community was identified by consultation with parents, staff and students from primary schools and early childhood services in the area that are all participating in the Healthy Together Achievement Program (AP). It is also supported by the recommendations from the Bushfire Royal Commission and the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre to support resilience education and disaster risk education in children and young people. HART supports and enhances the current work and framework of the AP to support the groups to become health promoting schools and services to address health and well-being in each.

Activities

There are 4 components to the HART project:

1. To provide resilience education and strategies for children aged 5-12 years, attending primary schools and brought together Prep/1/2, year 3/4 and year 5/6 to attend a session as a group of combined schools.
2. To provide resilience education and strategies to parents/carers and staff from primary schools (PS) and early childhood education services (ECS).
3. Delivery of bushfire and fire safety education prior to summer and the up and coming bushfire season.
4. Development of action plans to utilise the strategies and skills learnt to implement ongoing actions for building resilience in children.

The project design was developed by the partners and the Health and Well Being Teams (HWBT) in the settings with the commitment to try something different and together. Funding was received from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) to conduct the project with additional financial support gained from Berry St.

The HART project is still in progress. The resilience education sessions are complete and the fire safety sessions are also complete. The groups are all currently developing and reviewing their actions plans to define further activities and actions for the ongoing commitment to enhancing resilience in children and the community.

Results

The HART project has provided resilience education to:

- 340 primary school students from Foundation to year 6
- Education to approximately 40+ primary school and early childhood education staff
- 120 + parents/carers in the community
- 136 evaluations gathered from staff/parents/carers
- 89.71% rating of 9 &10/10 for satisfaction

By the middle of December 2015, over 400 children received fire safety education provided by the local CFA to the participating primary schools and early childhood groups in Beechworth and surrounding areas. The fire safety education is vital to children and young people living in the bushfire prone area of Beechworth, Wooragee, Stanley and the surrounding areas.

The HART project has generated positive discussions in the community with actions already implemented such as a gratitude wall at Beechworth Primary School, and a staff gratitude wall at the child care centre.

Other results include:

- Ongoing commitment from the partners with action plans to address resilience in the groups are being developed and reviewed
- Common language and strategies being discussed in primary schools and early childhood services
- Discussions and ideas gathered to support strategies to share the learning such as gratitude to wider community and celebrate the positive things
- Identified need for follow up session and further education for those who were unable to attend
- Implementation of 2 community discussion groups, *Putting Resilience Into Action* to reflect on results from education sessions and identify community led actions
- Establishment of *Putting Resilience Into Action* network of 115 members with regular communication

Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness (GEM) were taught to the children, parents/carers and staff which are essential elements in developing resilience in children and young people.

The feedback received through evaluation forms and informal conversations has been extremely positive. The gratitude from all involved in the sessions (including children, staff, parents/carers and onlookers) was overwhelming.

The action plans will provide setting-specific frameworks to continue to support and implement the strategies. The action plans also support the continuation of the collaboration for the development of further initiatives and the promotion of activities to support the ongoing development of resilience in children.

The community-wide approach has created considerable conversations within and between the community, schools and early childhood services.

Evaluation has identified actions from participants and these have been presented to the HWBT and *Putting Resilience Into Action* groups.

Next steps

Replicating this community-wide approach would be beneficial in other communities and discussions have commenced.

Reflection

HART is providing the children and families in our community with skills and strategies to support the development of resilience in children and the underlying foundations necessary to manage disaster or challenges that are presented to them.

Factors that were unique/good practice:

- Engagement of education services working in partnership with health, Local Government and local CFA
- Employment of a groups approach to support and promote health and well-being, and in particular resilience
- AP framework and HWBT that include membership from Local Government and health as well as parents and education staff, provides ongoing framework for action in area resilience and bushfire education to support the community.

Critical factors for success:

- Commitment from partners to work together as all committed to building resilience in children and to support a community wide approach
- Listening to the needs of the community and developing action to address the need

Challenges faced and solutions:

The only challenge for the HART project lay primarily with ensuring that parents/carers attend the resilience education and to have more than 100 attend as our target. The parent/carer education sessions were therefore offered in the morning and the evening to provide accessibility and to allow more child care centre staff to attend a session if they were unable to attend the professional development session due to the centre opening hours.

Areas for improvement:

The recommendation would be to provide this opportunity to other bushfire communities such as Yackandandah, Kiewa and surrounding areas to lead their own community wide resilience project. HART assists in laying the foundations in supporting children, families and groups to build resilience and engage a wider community. The settings-based approach with community, health, education, local government and emergency services is based on evidence to promote health and well-being. It contributes to the multi-pronged approach to support communities to build resilience and can support individuals and community to return to near normal functioning post disaster.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other groups:

The strategies and skills provided are simple and can be easily introduced to families and children in the groups. These can also be easily translated into other groups and communities to further enhance resilience and building capacity for children and communities to respond and manage before during and after disaster.

The presence of the HWBT, the local partnerships and action plans provide a foundation for building further initiatives and community action to support building resilience within the community and for community led actions. Whilst the funding is no longer present, the structures that support the initiatives are sound and ongoing so that the groups can work together to enhance resilience in children that is vital for planning for reducing disaster risk.

Lead organisation/s

Beechworth Health Service

Partner/s

Beechworth Primary School
Beechworth Community Child Care Centre
Beechworth Kindergarten
Wooragee Primary School
Indigo Shire Council
St Joseph's Primary School
Beechworth CFA

Funding source

Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR)

Funding amount

$12,260

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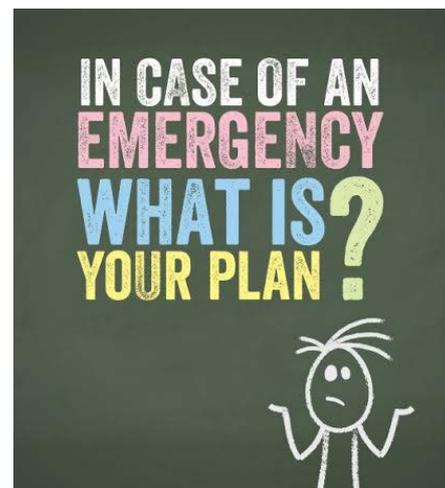
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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

The project is currently in progress and actions are still to be defined and completed.

To download this case study please click this link

In an emergency, what's your plan?

Project Summary

The City of Greater Bendigo joined with Victoria Police, Victoria SES, Country Fire Authority, Department Health and Human services and Australian Red Cross to work collaboratively with our community to increase resilience and preparedness when faced with a disaster/hazard. The 'In an emergency, what's your plan?' project aims to simplify and personalise preparedness, therefore increasing capacity for resilience throughout the community.

Background and situation context

- Emergency management is evolving and has shifted away from, 'what are agencies doing for the community' to a 'sector-wide approach to achieve joined-up outcomes that are community-focused.' (Emergency Management Victoria)
- The City of Greater Bendigo (CoGB), community resilience pilot project supports both a regional city setting and surrounding rural areas, with a particular focus on vulnerable communities/people.
- The initiative was established due to an identified need to increase community resilience, preparedness and awareness, throughout the community.
- Emergency agencies worked collaboratively, focusing on a multi-hazard approach to information sharing and preparedness.
    - Initial objectives:
        - Increase overall community resilience, by delivering a risk communication strategy tailored to suit target audience
        - Coordinate a tailored public education program delivered in partnership with VicSES, CFA and the Australian Red Cross
        - Reduce inefficiency of current and future public education programs, by achieving cost efficiency in communication

The project supports the entire CoGB community, however significant focus has been placed on members and groups within the community that are often identified as vulnerable, e.g. deaf community, refugee groups, socially and geographically isolated people, the elderly, children and teenagers, people with disabilities, low literacy levels etc. Often traditional messaging and information has not been accessible or understood by these groups, therefore they are more vulnerable in the event of an emergency.

The focus of the project is to develop tools, strategies and easy to access information for these groups which assists them to develop emergency plans and to support themselves, family and community. This was done by utilising known information sources and broadening how information was delivered to these groups – with the ultimate goal of increasing resilience of these community members and developing local leaders to further support the community.

Activities

The project, 'In case of Emergency, what's your plan?' was launched in November 2015, with a TV commercial, radio and social media campaign and a flip chart delivered to every household in the City of Greater Bendigo. This was also supported with media promotion and community education sessions with various organisations and services.

Additionally, in collaboration with Scope, an Easy English version of 'In an Emergency, what's your plan?' was developed to support people with low literacy, intellectual disability, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) etc.   This has been a valuable inclusion to the project and has been widely utilised and valued by the community.

The roll out of community education to build preparedness is ongoing. This involves continually engaging with local communities to ensure the message is reaching the right audiences and to make sure that the message has been understood.

The project consisted of various phases:

Forum: 'Building Stronger Communities in the face of disaster'
- Focus: Improve how individuals and the community prepare, respond and cope with natural disaster and emergencies
- Multi-agency and community event, held on June 21st 2014
- Featuring: Craig Lapsley, John Richardson, Mark Squirrell and Dr. Yoko Akama – presenting 'Playful Triggers' activity

Engaging with academic institutions, researching aspects of community resilience and engagement
- Household Pets and Community Disaster Resilience, Josh Trigg, Appleton Institute, GQ University
- Community Resilience and Preparedness Survey, Douglas Paton and Katelyn Russiter

Multi-agency working group established, including;
- VicSES (State Emergency Services)
- VicPolice
- Red Cross
- Country Fire Authority (CFA)
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- City of Greater Bendigo (CoGB)

'In an Emergency, what's your plan?' community education tool(s)
- Five key themes developed from working group;
  - Knowledge
  - Have a Plan
  - Connectedness
  - Safety & Wellbeing
  - Information
- Products:
  - Flip chart distributed to all CoGB households (via 'GB' magazine)
  - TV commercial- Auslan & text included (animation & human component- local Emergency service personnel)
  - Media release & launch by CoGB Mayor & agencies
  - Radio broadcasts (message)
  - Social media
  - Website- linked to the COGB website with all agency information, if community requires specific information
  - Business forum – supporting businesses with preparedness & business continuity planning

Partnerships within community, supporting community

- Neighbourhood & Community houses- training volunteers to work with people to develop plans, support with identify risks etc.
- Schools- education & peer mentoring
- Aged & HACC services
- Bendigo Deaf community & interpreters
- Emergency Service agencies (community information)
- Linking with refugee communities & interpreters

Results

The outputs listed below were developed in collaboration with all emergency service agencies. Each agency identified five key messages that were important to their organisation. As a working group, five themes were developed – encompassing all the agencies' key messages (many which were the same). The challenge was to create something that had not been done before, to be innovative and follow the principles of shared responsibility.
Consultation with community members and potentially vulnerable people was also undertaken. Information on how people like to receive, are able to best comprehend and engage with information was gathered via email, face to face, phone conversations, in groups and one-on-one.

From this information we developed a concept brief for our products: bright, modern, interactive, engaging (wide audience), pictorial, simple language, able to be personalised.

The inclusion of Auslan has been a positive addition into the project. Information and knowledge that has been learnt and shared over the journey has been invaluable. This process has highlighted the importance of engaging and working within communities to ensure that resources are reflective of true community needs.

Working collaboratively was very positive and an efficient use of resources for all agencies and organisations involved. Challenges were overcome by going back to objectives, looking at the 'big picture' and ongoing communication.

A continuing challenge within this space will be, challenging traditional thinking and being agile in our thinking.

Outputs:

– Flip chart to all CoGB households (via Bendigo Weekly paper)- simple information and simple planning structure included;
– TV commercial- Auslan & text included (animation and human component)
– Media release & launch by CoGB Mayor & agencies
– Radio broadcasts (message)
– Social media
– Website- linked to the COGB website with all agency information, if community requires specific information
– Business forum – supporting businesses with preparedness and continuity planning
– Building Stronger Communities' in the face of disaster, forum

Evaluation of the project will occur informally throughout the roll out of the project and the working group will come back to reflect on successes, improvements, changes, community feedback etc. As a pilot project the initial plan was a trial within City of Greater Bendigo, however it has the potential to roll out to the broader Loddon Mallee Region in the future.

URL: City of Greater Bendigo In case of an emergency, what is your plan?

Provided Courtesy of the City of Greater Bendigo

Reflection

The Community Resilience Pilot Project was developed using the theme 'all agencies and all hazards', stepping away from the traditional single agency and single incident planning and response. The project focused on empowering community to take responsibility for preparedness and building individual and community resilience. The initial stage of this project has been rolled out, however monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness is still in progress.

Lead organisation/s   City of Greater Bendigo

Partner/s

Victoria Police
Victoria SES
Red Cross
Department Health & Human services (DHHS)

Funding source

Rural Development Victoria (RDV)

Funding amount

$68,400

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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

Nil specified.

To download this case study please click this link

Mansfield Community Resilience Leadership Program

Project Summary

The Mansfield Community Resilience Leadership Program aimed to build the skills and awareness of behind-the-scenes community leaders to enable them to be better able to support a community in crisis and assist them to recover quickly.

Background and situation context

Situated 180kms north east of Melbourne, Mansfield Shire covers 3,843 square kilometres and includes vast tracts of 'High Country'. The most recent ABS data sets the Shire's population at 8,067. The major urban centre of the Shire is Mansfield and there are numerous outlying and isolated communities throughout the Shire, which can swell considerably during holiday periods with visitors and part-time residents.

Since 2010, Mansfield Shire Council has been conducting a community development program that has seen 12 of our small communities develop their own community plans. Many much-needed community initiatives have been achieved through these community plans which include a newly renovated hall in Merton and the popular Merrijig community newsletter.

Mansfield Shire's local communities are inherently resilient and, through the community planning processes, have built on this resilience. Through projects such as renovating a local hall, networks have been created, new skills learnt, information shared and community ownership developed.

To keep the community planning program fresh, relevant, inspiring and valuable, we are now working with communities to identify the characteristics of successful projects, which build resilience in the community. One such characteristic is strong community leadership.

The Mansfield Community Resilience Leadership Program was developed to build behind-the-scenes community leaders who will be able to support a community in crisis and assist them to recover quickly.

Activities

The Mansfield Community Resilience Leadership Program (CRLP) was promoted via networks already established through community planning and the local newspaper. There was an initial information session about the program after which 22 community members were selected through an expression of interest process. The participants represented eight communities in the Mansfield Shire, including Woods Point, one of the most isolated communities in Victoria.

The program covered a broad range of topics that included:

- Disaster planning, response and recovery cycle
- Individual and collective strengths
- Leadership styles and temperaments
- Project planning
- Communities in crisis
- Roles of emergency services and agencies
- Review and evaluation

An expert facilitator, with experience in delivering regional and national leadership programs as well as community development initiatives post black Saturday, was engaged to deliver the program which spanned 30 contact hours and included workshops, peer to peer learning, guest speakers and an emergency services panel session.

A working group made up of Council staff, emergency services and a community member with participatory experience in a highly regarded leadership program oversaw the planning, delivery and evaluation of the program.

The program culminated in a one-day Community Conference in which the participants took a part in the planning and delivery and shared what they had learned with the broader community. Over 70 community members and local emergency service personal attended the conference.

Results

Mansfield Shire Council evaluated the CRLP using the Most Significant Change technique. Twenty interviews with CRLP participants and Steering Committee were conducted. Interviewees answered a series of questions around program outcomes, issues, lessons learned and future ideas. This participatory type evaluation method was chosen specifically to continue building the skills of the participants and to demonstrate an evaluation method they could use.

The following most significant outcomes were identified:

– An increase in participant understanding of the importance of wider community consultation and engagement in the risk management process. This includes understanding that the community has skills and knowledge that can be utilised; that understanding the community's needs are critical along with ownership of needs and solutions.
– Participants identified that the CRLP increased their understanding and skills in preparing and planning for emergencies including how to prepare for and recover from emergencies, mapping of community assets and understanding community responses in crises.
– A number of CRLP participants identified networking and connecting with others as a key outcome. This includes understanding what other communities are doing, sharing ideas, bonding, opening up pathways and networks, and engaging with relevant agencies.
– Participants recognised leadership skills within themselves including an increased understanding of their own abilities and self-discovery. The CRLP built confidence and recognition of own value. Participants learnt how to listen to and accept others' points of view.
– The participants co-delivered the 2015 Community Conference with its emergency management and resilience focus. They graduated from the program with projects and ideas for their communities aimed at building the characteristics of resilience.
– A new network consisting of community, Council and emergency services has now formed and will be the basis of a strong collaborative approach in times of both peace and crisis.

URL

www.mansfield.vic.gov.au/councilservices/communityservices/communitydevelopment/community-resilience-development.aspx

Reflection

The CRLP brought together emerging community leaders, Council and emergency services and resulted in an enhanced understanding of each other's roles in times of emergency, the risks facing small communities and the part that well-prepared community leaders can play in building community resilience and in emergency response and recovery.

A turning point for many of the participants was community asset mapping and a disaster scenario exercise. This activity raised the importance of understanding each other's roles, the plans already in place, the community's involvement in emergency management planning, preparation, response and recovery and the formation of solid partnerships, particularly that of community/Council.

Post this exercise, a forum was held that featured an emergency services panel and guest speakers from other communities who provided examples of community initiatives in both the preparation and recovery phases.

The participants invited some of these speakers to share their story with the broader community at the Community Conference. The community asset mapping and simulated disaster exercise was repeated at the Conference with the Emergency Services taking a listening role only to hear first-hand the types of questions raised by the community.

The participant's eyes were opened to the extent of planning and behind-the-scenes preparation that happens in the emergency management sector and also to the need for preparation and readiness at the community level. The Emergency Services learnt of the local knowledge, skills and willingness of the community to partner in building stronger, more capable and resilient communities.

One of the great aspects of the CRLP is that the participants are committed, established residents of their communities. The CRLP is self-sustaining in that each of the community leaders will continue to take a role in driving the future of their communities and applying the skills they have learnt in developing their community's resilience and future risk readiness

All of the participants are community group members and will share their learnings with their groups and ultimately, the broader community. Many concluded the program with the purpose of instigating projects in their

community that will result in increased communications, stronger networks and a greater understanding of emergency management planning, response and the recovery pathway.

Lead organisation/s

Mansfield Shire Council

Partner/s

Mansfield Shire Council

The Regional Development Company

Funding source

Resilient Community Program – Regional Development Victoria

Mansfield Shire Council

Funding amount

$49,500

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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

None.

To download this case study please click this link

Rural People: Resilient Futures (RP:RF)

Project Summary

The Rural People: Resilient Futures (RP:RF) project investigated vulnerability in a rural shire and worked to increase capacity of health and community service agencies to enhance resilience.

Background and situation context

According to the Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) (2007) the impacts of climate change will be felt most by those who are already subject to social or economic marginalisation. Climate change and environmental sustainability are emergent issues in the health and community services sector. Although inherent concern exists there has been little increase in capacity to create systemic change. This limited capacity poses a barrier to action. Similarly, the language of environmental sustainability and climate change could seem alien to agencies or even disengaging. Linking with Southern Grampians Glenelg Primary Care Partnership (SGGPCP) demystified the language and enabled creation of a shared conversation to highlight relevance and opportunities. SGGPCP is a partnership of 20 health and community services agencies who work together to improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

The project objectives were:

– Understand the context and nature of social vulnerability in a rural Victorian Shire and compare this to the academic and policy definitions
– Understand how vulnerability is likely to change in this context under the impacts of climate change
– Increase the capacity of community service organisations under the SGGPCP platform to plan for the impacts of climate change on their operations, service delivery and clients
– Develop a model of engagement to promote throughout the community service sector, and increase the resilience or rural communities across Victoria and potentially Australia

Through building awareness and capacity of agencies who work with vulnerable people it was anticipated that both the agency and the community would benefit from RP:RF.

Activities

- RP:RF was a collaboration between SGGPCP, RMIT and Southern Grampians Shire Council with support from the Victorian Department of Environment and Primary Industries (now the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning) as part of the Victorian Adaptation and Sustainability (VAS) Partnership conducted in 2013 - 2014.

RP:RF employed an action research approach that enabled the project team to engage with local community service providers through the platform of SGGPCP to determine the current context of social vulnerability. Agencies were asked who is doing it tough in their community and what would make like easier. Agencies then used relationships with community to enable further consultation with community groups.

Phase 2 of the project engaged with agencies to identify climate change impacts on their service delivery and client groups. A workbook was developed to support this phase and consultations were conducted with agencies to work through the major themes. The next phase involved planning for the future and integrating adaptation into operations, procedures and policy. The final phase of the project ensured information was disseminated to other stakeholders including the research and policy sector. Outcomes and learnings were documented in reports, papers, case studies and a short film was produced.

Over 30 consultations with partner agencies and community were conducted in the Southern Grampians Shire to investigate vulnerability. Project partners identified low income families and farming families living in isolated areas as particularly vulnerable while socially isolated individuals and those living with cognitive difficulties were also

mentioned often. The literature review highlighted that managing social vulnerability needs to be highly contextual requiring local community knowledge and engagement.

Five community agencies completed all the steps in an adaptation handbook developed through the project. Other stakeholders and partners learned about the project as observers and through workshop and media engagements. Agencies reflected that as a result of participation in the project they had increased networks and partnerships, reviewed policy and operational procedures, initiated education programs and advocated to leadership, government and peak bodies.

This project is completed.

Results

RP:RF produced a number of co-generated outputs including:

- Literature review   Click here
- Project Report Click here
- Short Film
- Agency Case studies
    - Balmoral Bush Nursing Centre
    - Hamilton Community House
    - Mental Illness Fellowship - ASPIRE
    - Mulleraterong
    - Southern Grampians Shire Council
    - Western District Health Service

URL   http://sggpcp.com/?page_id=241

POSITIVE impacts/changes/benefits for the target beneficiaries

Understanding social vulnerability has uncovered four top categories of those doing it tough including low income families, farming families living in isolated areas, socially isolated individuals and those with cognitive difficulties. It was important to further understand through the literature review and consultation that managing vulnerability needs to be highly contextual and requires local community engagement to better understand effective ways for individuals and communities to adapt to a changing climate and its socio-economic consequences. RP:RF also found that access to services (transport, community service organisations, health), community support and social engagement and access to consistent and accurate information made life easier.

Agencies and stakeholders reported that the most valuable aspect of the project were learning more about social vulnerability, learning about climate change , learning from researchers and from other agencies.

NEGATIVE impacts/changes for the target beneficiaries

No negative impacts were observed or described in feedback from agencies. When working with community during the consultation phase, PCP worked with community agencies who then introduced PCP to community making the most of trusted relationships.

Next steps

The next steps have already begun through *the Enhancing Networks For Resilience Project* (EN4R). This project will build more on understanding the relationships and networks that enhance resilience.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice:

- Utilising the PCP platform has capitalised on the already existing and trusted relationship the PCP has with partner agencies. This enabled consultation to be easily conducted with agencies and introductions to community. This relationship was critical to the success of the project particularly given the limited capacity of agencies and likely low priority of climate change adaptation.
- Partnering with DELWP enabled a multi-sectoral approach increasing capacity for both SGGPCP and the state government.

Critical factors for success:

- The leadership platform in the PCP and the relationship with agencies was a key critical success factor to enable engagement of agencies.
- The partnership with RMIT was critical to enable co-generation of the research bringing new knowledge and links to the partnership. It was key to note that when participants were asked what the most valuable aspects of eth project were the opportunity to learn from research experts was among the highest responses (under learning about vulnerability and climate change).

Challenges faced and solutions:

Community Service agencies are generally unused to discussing climate change impacts and could easily have been disengaged from these conversations with a myriad of conflicting priorities coupled with limited capacity. On the other hand, community service agencies have strong connections with vulnerable community members, however possible limited capacity to build adaptation to enhance resilience into their practice. Linking with the PCP enabled agencies an opportunity to identify opportunities and integrate actions into everyday planning, policies and operations.

Areas for improvement:

Typically there were only one or two representatives from each agency engaged and generally participants were working at a practitioner level. This meant that embedding adaptation to build resilience required leadership support in agencies. This tended to be easier to implement in smaller agencies than those with bigger more complex structures.

Recommendations for further projects

- Understand local connections and relationships
- Use language relevant to the agency and the consumer groups
- Consider communication options – we produced a short film which has assisted to tell the story of the project, but also engaged agencies and the community making the film
- Provide opportunities to share and learn from each other.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings:

There are 29 PCPs across Victoria, however this model could be applied to other peak bodies and umbrella organisations across Australia.

Lead organisation/s

Southern Grampians and Glenelg Primary Care Partnership (SGGPCP)

Partner/s

Southern Grampians Shire Council (SGSC)
RMIT University (RMIT)

Funding source

Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP) formerly Department of Environment and Primary Industries through a Victorian Adaptation and Sustainability (VAS) Partnership Grant

Funding amount

$67,760 from DEPI

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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

There were very limited hurdles. There is capacity at SGGPCP to communicate and follow up with past projects as part of our core business. Communication is part of the final phase of the project and the project outputs include reports, short film and case studies.

To download this case study please click this link

Supporting communities in the 3799 postcode to determine and develop community led emergency management plans which reflect local needs and priorities

Project Summary

This project supports communities in the 3799 postcode area (Yarra Ranges Municipality; Millgrove, Warburton, East Warburton, Reefton, McMahons Creek, Big Pats Creek) to develop community led, emergency management plans which reflect local needs and priorities. Plans will enable communities to work through each of the stages of planning, preparedness, response and recovery, building self-reliance and capacity to respond to emergencies that directly or indirectly affect their local area.

Background and situation context

The connection between community and municipal planning has been identified by both state and local authorities as underdeveloped. The Yarra Ranges Municipal Recovery Evaluation from the 2009 Black Saturday Bushfires highlighted the need for better connection with local communities in preparation for emergencies, to assist in effective recovery occurring. The communities within 3799 not only feature the highest bushfire risk in the country and reside on natural water courses and in close proximity to man-made water catchments. They are also over-represented in the social disadvantage rating system (SIEFA).

The project works with communities in the 3799 postcode to develop unique emergency management plans tailored to their specific needs. In the process of developing the plans, communities are supported to consider local risks, demographics, geography and capacity to plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies. This allows communities to self-determine their own community safety and emergency management objectives and initiatives, greatly contributing to enhancing community connectedness and resilience. The project provides much needed connections between local communities and local agencies, therefore enhancing their chances of survival, and recovery from a significant event.

The process for this project was supported by Yarra Ranges Council, along with emergency service and relevant agencies. A diverse range of community participation and involvement has been fundamental to the process. This will enhance the planning process and ultimate success of the emergency management plans being adopted by communities.

Activities

Planning started with an introduction into emergency management, followed by a risk assessment based on the process of the *Community Emergency Risk Assessment* (CERA) tool for each of the local communities, working towards a transparent and mature conversation about the local needs and requirements for each community. Council utilised a broad range of corporate resources to support this initiative, including, but not limited to, the following departments: Social and Economic Development, Risk, Emergency and Community Safety, Environment, Planning, Local Laws, and Urban Design. This broad level of support, along with the agency specialist skills and knowledge aims to ensure that the aspirations for community led planning is bolstered by science, statistics and evidence.

The process allowed for the partnering up of the following: CFA, SES, DEPI, Victoria Police, Melbourne Water, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Upper Yarra Community House, Chambers of Commerce, Traders Groups, Service Groups, schools, other groups as identified, and the communities located in the postcode area of 3799.This project included the following factors within the Project:

- 15 community events, including large scale open community consultation events
- focused workshops, and subject specific forums, and
- significant and high profile advocacy to rectify communication blackspots led by the community and supported widely by Yarra Ranges Council staff.

Project 3799 actively pursued five townships in the highest bushfire risk area of the Upper Yarra Region of the Yarra Ranges to embark on Community Emergency Management Planning journey. The townships had a varying degree of engagement in emergency management thinking and planning, which provided a great opportunity to refresh local thinking.

The project team undertook the following activities:

- engaged community leaders from each of the townships
- met and shared the new research with groups from each township
- supported the design of locally relevant plans to share the knowledge with the local communities, using a presence at community festivals, events and community markets. Five separate sessions were hosted throughout the region in the lead-up to the 2014/15 Fire Danger Period, and

- drawing on the level of interest from the local community, the increased connection between emergency service agencies and community leaders, continue to facilitate meetings that address the needs identified by the community in the pursuit of community disaster resilience building.

Results

The communities who participated were placed at the centre of the project. Using a community development approach to drive the project meant that the needs and priorities of the communities involved were self-identified and supported with evidence. This process lead to greater community empowerment and broad based community support. It also involved local champions in the project, ensuring that project outcomes and outputs were relevant to each community's context. The very real risk of bushfire and other risks to this part of the world also assisted with a call to action for the local community who face the imminent risk of property loss, isolation for protracted periods as a result of limited access and egress, as well as poor telecommunications infrastructure.

The project supported the following local successes:

- **Millgrove** - increasing knowledge of fire behaviour and local community levels of preparedness which dovetailed nicely with the community engagement relating to the establishment of a community fire refuge in the centre of town, which already had in place a partnership with government and all agencies, along with key community leaders, church and school groups.
- **Warburton** – shifting of old thinking habits centred on a printed shelf document as a Plan, and onto a more dynamic system which involves the whole of the community. Including the development of a website, a community education video to played at local cinemas, the support and establishment of a Neighbourhood Safer Place in the Community, along with multiple community workshops in and around the community to gather data and share disaster related knowledge.
- **East Warburton** - enabled the momentum from the community consultation from the recently designated Community Fire Refuge in East Warburton to broaden and continue. This meant that the group could address the telecommunications blackspot, which is a significant problem for the area, and directly relates to the community level of resilience. The community group, along with council, state and federal government members were able to lobby for this particular blackspot to be addressed, leveraging on recently released federal funding. This was a significant win for the community and greatly contributes to their ability to make plans and timely decisions.

URL   http://www.warburtonemergency.org.au/

Reflection

The real value in Community Emergency Management Planning is in the process of planning. The outcomes and outputs are without doubt beneficial and ought to be strived for, however it is through the planning process that evidence is gathered, shared learning occurs, and crucial relationships and connections are built. It is with the knowledge, along with these elements that contribute to community disaster resilience.

Challenges faced and solutions:

The key challenge for this project, in a rapidly evolving sector is the limited understanding of the subjective nature of disaster resilience. There are many communities undertaking community emergency planning across Victoria, and with varied success. The challenge with this project is that the project managers were learning as they worked, which is best described as an organic approach. This was important to attain the right mix of industry / government led (based on cutting edge research and knowledge) work, along with a deep determination for community owned programs and projects (based on the said research and practice).

Other challenges that will always face pilot based projects like these, are largely linked to the short term nature of the funding. As it takes quite some time to establish community rapport, build knowledge about the inherent risks and set about embarking on a journey of community led, community disaster resilience planning and activity, there was always a risk that the time frames would be too short to effectively embed sustained cultural change within a community that is based on a sound understanding of the risk. One of the key lessons from the pilot project revealed that this type of work requires a long term vision and a sustained effort, along with a clear understanding of the measures of success.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings

This project has provided a new level of clarity for Yarra Ranges and will inform future projects of this nature. This will also support other activities being undertaken by council which contribute to broader community resilience.

Lead organisation/s

Yarra Ranges Council

Partner/s

CFA
SES
DEPI
Victoria Police
Melbourne Water
Red Cross
Salvation Army
Upper Yarra Community House
Chambers of Commerce
Traders Groups
Service Groups
Schools and other groups as identified, and the communities within the 3799 postcode area.

Funding source

Safer Community Grant (RDV)

Funding amount

$110,000 (Overall project costs including in-kind support $213,346

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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

Nil specified.

To download this case study please click this link

Warramunda Village Builds Resilient Leadership

Project Summary

This three-year workplace improvement project introduced a series of initiatives and activities to realign our team to our mission, vision and values. It improved resilience and emotional agility among staff, and quality of care for residents.

Background and situation context

Warramunda Village is a not-for-profit, community-governed aged care complex, located on seven acres in the town of Kyabram in northern Victoria. It comprises 56 independent one- and two-bedroom living units, Warramunda apartments (consisting of nine bedsits and five flats) and a 61 bed residential facility with two respite rooms. The 105 members of the Warramunda team, backed and supported by more than 150 community volunteers, pride ourselves on person-centred care.

Initiating factor(s)/needs:

After a period of unprecedented change, our workforce was not functioning as a cohesive team. Our organisational chart no longer reflected our needs, and our workplace culture did not support or encourage our team to be either creative or accountable. Furthermore, individual team members did not understand how their contribution related to our organisation's mission, vision or values.

We made the decision to engage with Kru Consulting, who provide coaching for individuals, teams and organisations wanting to improve wellbeing and performance in the workplace. In collaboration with Kru Consulting, we made a comprehensive plan for addressing the challenges facing our team, and achieving sustainable change in the culture and performance of our organisation.

Objectives:

1. Build a resilient, engaged and high performing workforce.
2. Use "The Four Rooms of Change"™ to develop a common language around managing change.
3. Adopt the Organisational Barometer© with our team, in order to:
   – Provide a safe space to share reflections, celebrate successes and diagnose challenges.
   – Normalise experiences of change as legitimate psychological experiences.
   – Gain a deeper understanding of staff concerns and barriers to resilience.
   – Appoint members of the leadership team to prioritise and enact a collective plan to resolve issues.
   – Engage staff in problem-solving about issues that were identified.
4. Define and clarify the roles and expectations of leaders, and equip them with the skills and mindsets to build resilience in their teams.
5. Develop 'critical friend' (peer coaching) relationships among senior leaders, supporting their capacity to and accountability in embodying the organisation's mission, vision and values.
6. Create a workplace environment where all members of the organisation - unrestricted by role or reporting relationships - engage in candid and respectful conversations and feedback to improve their working relationships and collective performance.
7. Promote the 'leader as coach' model to build and sustain resilience through:
   – Reinforcing the importance of emotional intelligence and positive psychology.

- Equipping leaders with confidence and competence to coach team members towards achieving personal and organisational goals.
- Utilising tools such as GROW, RUUM™ and STAR/AR to build awareness of personal impact and potential.
- Reviewing processes and systems (e.g. recruitment and performance management) to ensure they best support the development of optimal skills and mindsets.
- Harvesting success stories to recognise and reinforce changes made.

Target beneficiaries:
- On a personal level, staff are more engaged, feel respected, have a voice, and have a regular opportunity to give and receive feedback that is both positive and developmental. They also have a greater capacity to rebound after change.
- Our leadership team has greater knowledge of themselves on an emotional level since undergoing the MSCEIT self-assessment emotional intelligence process. They also have greater skills, and broader vocabulary, to engage with team members using quality questions (GROW) to solve problems.
- Leaders also have a broader knowledge of the role they and others play in the organisation, and understand the relationship between leadership behaviour, workplace culture, and collective performance.
- The organisation can expect more resilient staff and decreased turnover.
- Personal goals will be aligned to organisational goals, producing better outcomes.
- Residents can expect to receive high standards of care even in periods of change. Staff will understand management's expectations, which nurtures consistency.
- Families can expect continuity of care for their loved ones, with a more stable staff cohort.
-

Activities

By collaborating with Kru Consulting, we were able to introduce a number of staff development activities that now form part of Warramunda's ongoing professional development strategy. These include:
- Using the Organisational Barometer© as a tool to engage our team in providing comprehensive information, instead of fragmented information through anonymous staff surveys. The information gathered is analysed for themes, allowing a deeper understanding of staff issues. Members of the leadership team are then appointed to address these issues through planning, action and reflective practice.
- Define the role of leaders, and equip them with the skills to build resilience in their teams (i.e. through the 'leader as coach' model).
- Acknowledge the importance of emotional intelligence and utilising tools such as GROW, RUUM™ and STAR/AR to create and sustain a coaching culture.
- Use "The Four Rooms of Change"™ to develop a common language around managing change.
-
The leadership team work with Kru Consulting to undertake activities which:
- Promote the leader as coach model within our organisation (i.e. each leader coaches their team to achieve personal and organisational goals).
- Encourage leaders to involve people in finding solutions to identified issues.
- Develop 'critical friend' relationships to support senior team members, while holding people accountable.
- Create a workplace environment where both positive and developmental feedback is expected and sought.
-
Progress & Achievements:

The organisational chart has been restructured, and the staff professional development activities mentioned above are now utilised regularly. There has also been a cultural shift in philosophy to viewing leaders as coaches, and widespread support for ongoing collaboration with staff to resolve issues.

Results

Output:

An oral presentation that is now used in a staff development session for our leadership team.

URL   **https://www.monash.edu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/461648/10b.-Warramunda-Building-Resilient-Leadership-Slides-13-April-2016.pdf**

POSITIVE impacts/changes/benefits for the target beneficiaries

- We use the leader as coach model to promote staff wellbeing - supporting our goal of building a resilient workforce.
- We have developed a language around managing change, and to identify the emotions we experience during times of change. Having the capacity to name and normalise these emotions creates resilience.

- Using the Organisational Barometer©, we directly identify and involve all staff in highlighting opportunities to improve the workplace.

NEGATIVE impacts/changes for the target beneficiaries

- A significant commitment of time and resources was required to implement the changes. However, such commitment is required to shift often well-entrenched workplace culture.

Next steps

- We are striving to continue building on our leader as coach model with our team members. In addition, leaders will be working on their personal and team SMARTER goals. These goals seek to embed performance planning in our organisation, instilling accountability and fuelling development. Through greater accountability, our team will be more attuned to how they are performing, and be clearer about what their managers are seeking from them.
- We are seeking to actively develop our team to ensure that individuals continually improve their skills, while optimising preparations for succession planning, future recruitment and selection.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice:

Our core business focuses on care of the aged across several fronts, including community housing, independent living and residential care. For the first time, we have truly considered our team as being at the core of what we do. Deciding to apply our 'person-centred' approach to staff, required an organisational shift and change in workplace culture.

Critical factors for success:

The full support of our Committee of Management and leadership team, and the stamina to stick to our convictions.

Challenges faced and solutions:

For some team members, the process of self-reflection is too uncomfortable. We respected everyone's right to participate (or not). This, in itself, demonstrated their appetite for change and capacity for resilience.

Areas for improvement:

We could have budgeted better, to best manage the investment in our human capital. More importantly, we learned that individuals will differ in terms of their capacity to hear the message and apply it in the workplace. Just as people learn differently, so does their capacity to adapt their practice and replicate their learning, especially when stressed. Being equipped to manage these challenges is a vital part of the process.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings:

This project has great potential to be replicated in many organisations. It can build high-performing, resilient and dynamic workforces. We thoroughly recommend it to other organisations.

Lead organisation/s

Kru Consulting and Warramunda Village Inc

Partner/s

Nil

Funding source

No external funding was sought for the project

Funding amount

Not available

Contact name

Sandi Websdale, CEO, Warramunda Village
Kerryn Velleman, Director, Kru Consulting

Contact email

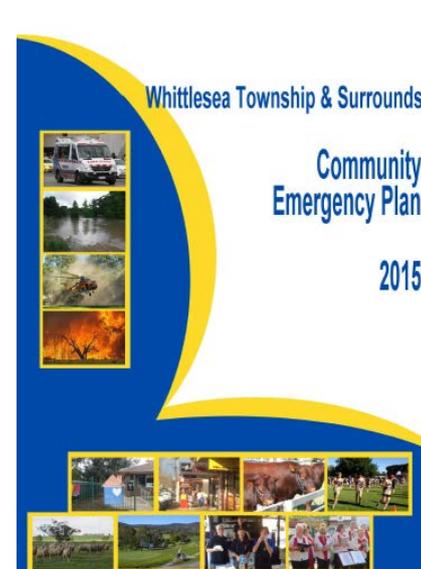sandi@warramunda.com.au and kerryn@kruconsulting.com.au

Contact telephone

0358522611 (Warramunda Village) or 0401716346 (Kru Consulting)

Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

Nil specified.

To download this case study please click this link

Whittlesea Township and Surrounds Community Emergency Plan

Project Summary

This project builds upon the success of existing work of the Whittlesea Community Resilience Committee (WCRC) to develop a Community Emergency Plan (CEP) as a locally owned and recognised approach for future emergencies. The Community Emergency Plan will be an invaluable community tool that will be used to help the community to prepare for emergencies that may affect them in the future.

Background and situation context

During the 2009 Black Saturday Bushfires Whittlesea Township was a main focal point for firefighting co-ordination, immediate relief of displaced persons and domestic animals. It was a central hub for recovery activities immediately and for several years after. This publication seeks to build on the knowledge gained over the recovery period.

The Whittlesea Township and Surrounds Community Emergency Plan stemmed from the Whittlesea Community Recovery Committee's (CRC) project "Building Community Resilience" under the auspice of the Whittlesea Community House. With community champions driving the project, support and funding from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR), Emergency Management Victoria, the Whittlesea Community Resilience Committee and the City of Whittlesea it has enabled the development of a local Community Emergency Plan.

The Whittlesea Community Emergency Plan provides a local focus on emergencies and support for the community in being prepared for any event.

Activities

The project encompassed many activities including:

– Intensive research of community emergency projects across the globe
– Community meetings and workshops to develop the plan content
– Regular working group meetings
– Consultation with local and regional emergency services
– Community displays at community markets and events
– Meetings and presentations to a range of local government departments, agencies, Monash University, local services groups, sports clubs.
– Community conversations

For the desired format of the publication we collaborated with a graphic designer and printer.

Each of these activities was designed to get a much broad community input, feedback and support for the plan.

All meetings and workshops were open and the entire community invited to participate.

Results

Consistent with the aims of the Community Emergency Plan, the community would like to secure funding support to pursue the future development of a Community Emergency Response Network (CERN) and will identify key

community organisations, individuals and resources that will come together as a network to respond in times of Emergency or as needed by the community. The network is based on identified community sectors and will meet during the year to develop their collective response to community crisis, undertake planning and risk assessment and receive training.

The principle behind the CERN is for sector representatives to support Emergency Management teams by providing a local resource to support effective two way communication that reflects local knowledge and experience.

URL   http://wchi.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Whole-Plan-Final-Edition-1-Feb-2015.pdf

Lead organisation/s

Whittlesea Resilience Committee

Partner/s

City of Whittlesea
Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR)
Emergency Management Victoria
State Emergency Service
Red Cross
Town Crier (Community newspaper)
Whittlesea Agricultural Society
Whittlesea CFA
Whittlesea Community Resilience Committee
Whittlesea Ministries Inc.
Whittlesea Community House
Whittlesea Secondary College,
Whittlesea Uniting Church _ a member body of Whittlesea Ministries Inc.

Funding source

FRRR
Emergency Management Victoria
City of Whittlesea

Funding amount

$38,000

Contact names

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Hurdles to submitting the details of this project

Nil specified.

To download this case study please click this link

https://www.monash.edu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/461682/11.-MUARC-compendium-Whittlesea-13-April-2016.pdf