



Adaptation for Recovery Evaluation Report For East Gippsland Shire Council

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Acronyms used in the report

the Project	Adaptation for Recovery Project
BADEG	Bonang and District Emergency Group
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services (formerly DHS)
EGSC	East Gippsland Shire Council
GDEMG	Glenaladale and District Emergency Management Group
LIMP	Local Incident Management Plans
ORH	Orbost Regional Health
RAV	Regional Arts Victoria
RDV	Regional Development Victoria

About the Author

Helen Scott is a Research Associate and PhD Candidate at the School of Global Urban and Social Studies and UN Global Compact Cities Programme at RMIT University, Melbourne.

Helen's research interests focus on how best to engage individuals and groups of people, to modify behaviour towards a more sustainable approach to living and working.

Her focus to date has involved the approach of working through local government mechanisms, but she is also interested in the mechanisms to facilitate involvement of the private sector in sustainability outcomes.

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The evaluator would like to acknowledge the openness and willingness to contribute of all those interviewed. The community groups in each area were welcoming, and prepared to give up their time for yet another meeting to help evaluate the Project. Those who could not participate gave me their time for interview. The insights and openness of the individuals in the community were invaluable.

The Project facilitators made themselves available, and were open and forthcoming with their different approaches and perspectives; it was greatly appreciated.

East Gippsland Shire Council staff have been open and honest, and always available to respond to queries as they arose. Thank you. Thanks also to Maddy Harford for her facilitation of four of the community evaluation meetings.

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Executive Summary

East Gippsland Shire Council (EGSC) is frequently exposed to, and has experienced numerous natural hazard related disasters in the past. After the significant 2014 bushfires in the municipality, EGSC implemented a new approach to disaster recovery. The Adaptation for Recovery project (the Project) aimed to support resilience building and development of individual and collective adaptive capacity across the diverse, fire-affected communities of Glenaladale, Bonang, Tubbut and Goongerah using an “asset-based community development” (ABCD) approach.

This report provides an evaluation of the Project, presenting key findings and recommendations to inform implementation of similar models in future fire-affected communities.

The project delivered both immediately tangible outputs for the affected communities, as well as longer-term, less easily quantifiable outcomes that will likely contribute to the communities’ overall resilience. Additionally, the evaluation found that the modified ‘ABCD’ project model, underpinned by community-

directed recovery, contributed to the achievements of the Project. Key findings are:

Significant and diverse activity was generated in each area, targeting individual capacity needs as well as broader community emergency preparedness concerns. The activities attracted participation from across the affected communities, receiving generally positive community feedback.

Factors contributing to community resilience were identified by each of the community working groups, and the Project was perceived to have positively influenced these factors.

Community-level preparedness for future fire events was perceived to have improved, however individual preparedness was varied, with some community members noting they felt unprepared and fearful in the lead up to summer.

Active participants in the project reported having more positive, confident outlooks and greater willingness to

participate in community activities. They noted feeling empowered and a sense of pride in their community's achievements, and felt more connected to their community as a result of participating in the Project.

Relationships and capacity to engage with some government agencies was reportedly enhanced, with working group members expressing more confidence to engage with government agencies, and a greater awareness of their processes and limitations.

The modified 'asset-based community development' model was perceived to have contributed to the outcomes. Important components of the Project model were identified as:

- a. Facilitator role: The facilitator role was critical. Appropriate facilitators were chosen for each community, with both professional and personal skills and attributes needed to guide their respective communities.
- b. Community directed recovery: The community identified issues and ways to address these, helping to generate a sense of ownership and pride in their achievements.
- c. Flexibility of Project delivery: There were no predetermined steps or inclusions, which left the Project open to being directed by the community.
- d. Tangible outputs: Quick wins helped to keep the community motivated and the Project visible.
- e. Untied project funds: Allowed the community to determine how money was spent.
- f. Length of time spent in the community: A minimum two-years allowed recovery to move towards resilience at a pace determined by the communities.
- g. Cooperative approach: Multiple projects address varied needs; working cooperatively was perceived to have enhanced outcomes for all recovery projects delivered.

Implementation differed in each location, based on the Recovery Facilitator skills, support structure provided and the community focus.

Recommendations to guide future recovery and resilience projects using a modified ABCD approach

are presented for pre-event planning, post-event planning, delivery and conclusion phases. Key recommendations include:

- Establish a strategic approach to recovery assistance and funding, coordinated by a single agency such as the Department of Health and Human Services. Different agencies can still provide recovery funds for a variety of targeted projects, but coordination by a single entity is likely to enhance impact.
- Incorporate a modified ABCD approach within local recovery plans, incorporating the elements identified above.
- Establish a recovery partnership with local mental health professionals, and integrate mental health expertise in the recovery project design.
- Undertake a local community assessment soon after an event, to adequately tailor recovery efforts.
- Recruit appropriate facilitators, including consideration of professional skills, personality traits and local context. Provide training in the ABCD approach if needed, prior to the project commencing.
- Undertake a structured, post-event debrief with impacted communities to diffuse anger and address issues of immediate hurt and concern.
- Facilitate the transition from emergency management to community development and resilience towards the end of the project to further embed project impact, enabling the community to carry new capacities into the future.

Opportunities for further research were also identified, including understanding the longevity of the outcomes in each of the communities, identifying how best to negotiate community divisions during recovery and resilience building, understanding how best to alleviate emotional trauma through recovery and resilience projects, and exploring how participatory evaluation of recovery and resilience projects could enhance project learning and outcomes.

1. Introduction & Background

Over many years, East Gippsland has experienced natural hazard related disasters. In recognition that previous recovery efforts could be improved, the East Gippsland Shire Council (EGSC) designed a new approach to disaster recovery. This approach was implemented as the Adaptation for Recovery Project (the Project) in communities affected by the 2014 Mt Ray-Boundary Track fire and the Goongerah-Deddick Trail fire.

The Project sought to address both immediate needs, but also to address cumulative impacts of disasters on communities. It ultimately aimed to support resilience building and development of individual and collective adaptive capacity across the diverse, fire-affected communities of Glenaladale (including nearby communities of Iguana Creek and Fernbank), Bonang, Tubbut and Goongerah (the latter three areas will be referred to collectively as the Mountain Rivers area where relevant.¹)

RMIT University was engaged to undertake the evaluation of the Project. The evaluation assessed both

the outcomes of the Project, as well as the different processes undertaken in each of the communities. In addition to a researcher from RMIT University, a third-party facilitator from Maddy Harford and Associates was contracted to facilitate community meetings.

The following report presents the overarching evaluation findings, as well as findings against the Key Evaluation Questions (KEQ) for each of the project areas. Finally, recommendations are presented to strengthen the Project model, should it be implemented in other areas in the future.

A separate report prepared by Future Creation, “Adaptation for Recovery: Learning from the East Gippsland Experience”, documents particular lessons gained from the implementation of the ‘asset-based community development’ (ABCD) model through the Project.²

¹ Bendoc was originally included in this Project area, but did not actually engage with the Project

² Future Creation (2016)

2. Evaluation Approach

The evaluation approach was developed collaboratively with EGSC, key stakeholders, community representatives and the Recovery Facilitators. The program logic that informed the Project evaluation is presented in Appendix B and Appendix A outlines the Evaluation approach in further detail.

The methodology involved reviewing project documentation, conducting organisational stakeholder interviews (x 12), community member interviews (x 10), community evaluation meetings (x5) and a vox pop session at a Project community event.

The aims of the evaluation were:

1. To engage the community in measuring changes in individual and collective adaptive capacity.
2. To support community learning and improvement.
3. To determine the efficiency of the Project.
4. To measure the effectiveness of the Project in achieving Project outcomes.
5. To determine and describe the local, context-specific outcomes of the Project.
6. To assess the impact of the delivery model on the Project.

Aims 1 and 2 were addressed in the way the evaluation was conducted, particularly through requiring both personal and collective identification, sharing and reflection of key ingredients of resilience and adaptive capacity, and how they may have changed in their community. Each community is interested in “quick snappy” formal reporting of the findings, however, the participatory processes enabled some immediate reflection, reporting and localised learning.

Aim 3 was not captured in the Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs), and budget expenditure for the Project was not available for each Project area at the time of the evaluation. This aim has not been addressed in the report.

3. Adaptation for Recovery project model

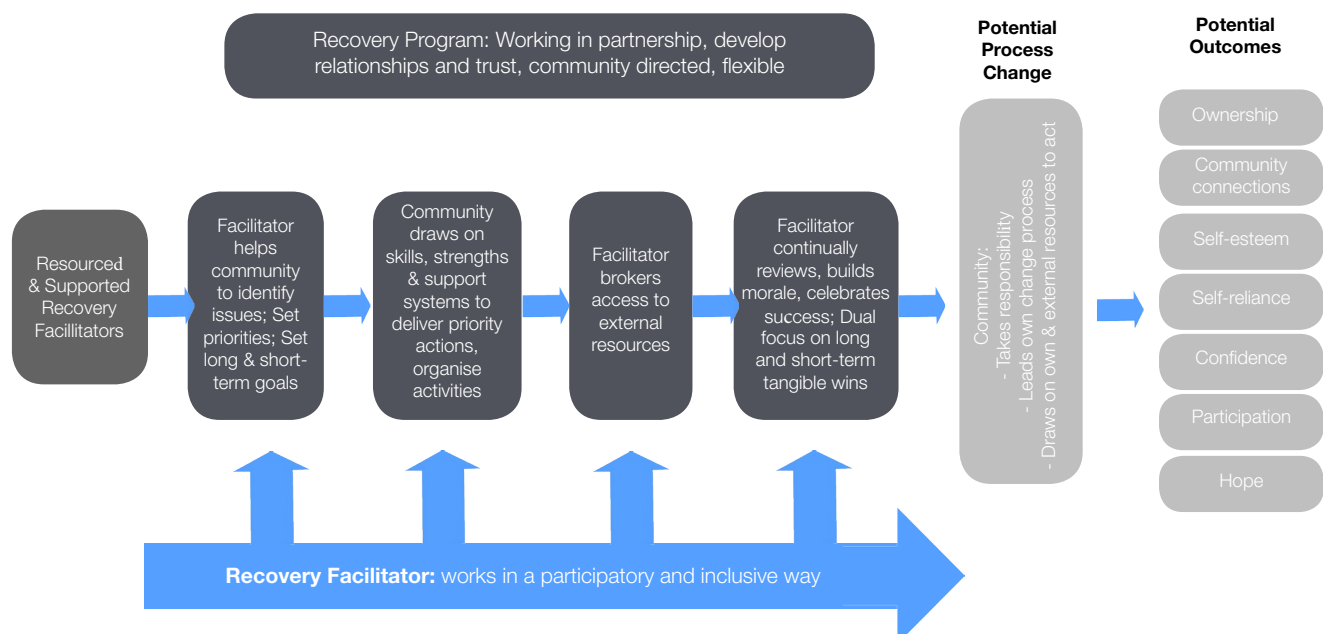
The model underpinning the Project stems from community development and is referred to variously as a “strengths-based”, “asset-based” or “capacity-focused” community development approach (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993, p3). The dominant model for community development is often a “deficiency” or “needs” based model – which relies on outside help and services. The asset-based-community-development or ABCD model, recognises that “significant community development takes place only when local community people are committed to investing themselves and their resources in the effort” (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993, p3). It actively seeks to identify and draw out the inherent strengths of community members, to draw on existing community organisational and institutional assets to establish a community-driven path that is specific to the relevant communities. (Refer Future Creation, 2016, p.8 for more detail)

After undertaking a review of previous recovery efforts, EGSC recognised that they were informed by the “needs” model and that for the community to recover and build resilience to future natural hazards, a different approach was required. Thus, the Project model applied the ABCD approach to the recovery situation, but in a slightly modified form.

The classic ABCD approach involves a specific skills/capacity/asset mapping exercise, to create awareness of latent strengths, and draw on these skills to address issues and needs. For EGSC, this step was not undertaken, preferring instead to facilitate the emergence of strengths from within the community.

Figure 1 below outlines the overarching model for the Project. In Section 7.2 the variations to this model in each Project area are discussed.

Figure 1: Asset-Based Approach to Recovery and Resilience in East Gippsland



4. Context

The fire-affected communities were different in many ways. Table 1 provides summary information about the communities, the material impact of the fires and concurrent recovery projects implemented.

Communities were also emotionally impacted by the

fires, but no information is available on the extent of the emotional impact and psychological trauma caused by the fires. Further research into this is required, as well as how best to incorporate this knowledge into recovery project design.

Table 1: Community Context for the Project

Community Context			
Element	Glenaladale (and surrounding communities)	Goongerah	Bonang/Tubbut
Geographic Location	30 minutes from Bairnsdale, easily accessible	Remote area an hour from Orbost, along winding roads	Remote area, two to two and a half hours from Orbost; Unsealed roads for most of the way to Tubbut from Bonang
Community	Population including Fernbank and surrounding areas – 393 (2011 census) ³ Farmers (broadacre grazing and horticulture) Rural lifestyle properties Employment off-farm in Bairnsdale	Population of 47 (2011) ⁴ Small-scale farmers Alternative lifestyle Environmentally focused	Population of Bonang: 51 (2011 census) ⁵ Population of Tubbut: 32 (2011 census) ⁶ Large-scale farmers (Bonang) Some small-scale farmers and Lifestyle properties (Tubbut and Cabanandra)
Nature of fire impact	Threat was ongoing for 67 days Fire claimed: 3 residences, 7 sheds and outbuildings 900 livestock 73 km fencing 6,727ha of private, plantation and public land burnt ⁷	Threat was ongoing for 70 days Fire claimed: > 9 residences > 163 livestock 165,806 hectares of private and public land burnt ⁸ unknown km of fencing (reports are not conclusive)	
Other recovery projects active in the area (Refer Appendix D)	East Gippsland Mental Health Initiative (EGMHI) Recovery events	EGMHI Creative arts and Streetscapes project Resilient Community Program Business Capacity building (not particularly active) ATAP – Relationships Australia project	EGMHI Creative arts and Streetscapes project Resilient Community Program Business Capacity building (not particularly active) ATAP – Relationships Australia project

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016)

⁴ Profile.id community, n.d., "Summary Profiles, Goongerah"

⁵ Profile.id community, n.d., "Summary Profiles, Bonang"

⁶ Profile.id community, n.d., "Summary Profiles, Tubbut"

⁷ EMV, 2014a.

⁸ EMV, 2014b. Note data as of 25 March 2014

The Project was implemented differently in each area. This is addressed in detail in Section 7.2, however

a summary of contextual elements for the Project delivery is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Project Delivery Context

Project Delivery Context			
Element	Glenaladale & surrounds	Goongerah	Bonang/Tubbut
Start date	Approx. 6 months after the fire	Approx. 18 months after the fire	Approx. 14 months after the fire
Facilitator	External to community Facilitation skills Has used the ABCD approach before	Internal to community Strong organisational skills, but not a trained facilitator No experience with ABCD approach	Perceived as 'local' to the community Strong organisational skills, but not a trained facilitator No experience with ABCD approach
Time allocation for Project	2 days per week		2 days per week
Organisational base of facilitator	East Gippsland Shire offices		Orbost Regional Health offices

5. Project Aims:

What did the project hope to achieve?

EGSC's stated aims for the Project were deliberately broad, so as not to limit or narrowly direct the possibilities of the new approach. The Project therefore aimed to build resilience to natural hazards, by addressing adaptive capacity at the individual, family and community levels. Its intention was to move the community through recovery to resilience – as defined by each community.

Additionally, the Project sought to test the ABCD model in a recovery situation, in order to examine how the ABCD principles might be effective in guiding recovery projects. Project activities aimed to:

- *“Focus on trusting and workable relationships*
- *Empower people to take a lead in their own individual and community processes*
- *Work in collaborative ways on mutually agreed upon goals*

- *Draw upon the individual and community resources of motivation and hope*
- *Create sustainable change through learning and experiential growth”⁹*

EGSC aimed to develop human skills and societal infrastructure within each community, in order to reduce risk, and to facilitate development of resources within the affected communities.

6. Evaluation Findings – What did the project achieve?

The project delivered both immediately tangible outputs for the affected communities, as well as longer-term, less easily quantifiable outcomes that will likely contribute to the communities' overall resilience.

Overarching evaluation findings are presented below, followed by findings against each KEQ. Where possible, they are presented for each community.

Significant and diverse activity was generated in each area: An array of initiatives was undertaken that targeted individual capacity needs, as well as broader community preparedness concerns (refer Appendix E for a list of activities in each community). Additional activity was also leveraged as a result of the Project.

Activities attracted participation from across the affected communities: Attendance varied from a few people at targeted workshops, to over 150 people at the Glenaladale Emergency Services Day held in October 2015.

Community response to these activities was generally positive: Feedback was not undertaken for all events, however for those activities where feedback was gathered, responses were positive, although room for improvement was noted in some activities.

Resilience, as defined by each of the communities, was believed to have improved through the Project: The ingredients for resilience proposed by the community working groups were:

- Access to resources – financial, physical,

facilitated assistance and emotional

- Accessible, engaged, responsive organisations – such as Department of Environment, Land and Water (DELWP), Country Fire Authority (CFA), VicRoads and EGSC
- Good communications – internal and external to the community
- Strong community connections – across and between communities
- Effective leadership – internal to the community and externally from agencies
- Sense of self-reliance – collectively for the community
- Community commitment and participation
- Sense of a future direction
- Practical preparedness – at individual and community levels

The Project working group members acknowledged varied improvement across the ingredients, however, and noted that not all of these would persist after the Project had finished.

Community level preparedness for natural hazards was perceived to have improved: Communities in Bonang/Tubbut and Glenaladale actively sought to improve the collective practical preparedness of their communities for future fire events. Community members also felt that many of the Project activities enhanced their sense of connection with the broader community, and improved awareness of what steps should be taken in an emergency.

There was a perceived change in individual attitudes for some community members:

Community members reported having more positive, confident outlooks and greater willingness to participate. They noted feeling empowered and a sense of pride in their achievements, and felt more connected to their community as a result of participating in the Project.

Individual preparedness for natural hazards was perceived to have improved for some people, but not for all:

Some project participants reported increased clearing on their properties, and feeling more prepared. However, organisational stakeholders noted they had not seen evidence of individuals changing their behaviour to be more prepared in the lead up to the summer fire season, and concern was expressed over the lack of incident management training and skills. Additionally, some community members conveyed that they felt unprepared, and fearful in the lead up to summer.

Relationships and capacity to engage with some government agencies was reportedly enhanced:

Both community members and stakeholders noted that healthier relationships were established with DELWP Bairnsdale. Glenaladale and District Emergency Management Group (GDEMG) members expressed more confidence engaging with government departments in general.

The modified 'asset-based community development' model was perceived to have contributed to the outcomes:

Important components of the Project model were identified as:

- a. Facilitator role: The facilitator role was critical. Appropriate facilitators were chosen for each community, with both professional and personal skills and attributes needed to guide their respective communities.
- b. Community directed recovery: The community identified issues and ways to address these, helping to generate a sense of ownership and pride in their achievements.
- c. Flexibility of Project delivery: There were no predetermined steps or inclusions, which left the Project open to being directed by the community.
- d. Tangible outputs: Quick wins helped to keep the community motivated and the Project visible.
- e. Untied project funds: Allowed the community to determine how money was spent.
- f. Length of time spent in the community: A minimum two-years allowed recovery to move towards resilience at a pace determined by the communities.
- g. Cooperative approach: Multiple projects address varied needs; working cooperatively enhanced outcomes for all recovery projects delivered.

6.1 What level of community activity has the Project generated/leveraged?

Key findings for this KEQ

- The Project generated significant activity in each area.
- The activities scaled from targeting capacity at the individual level, through to family and the community level.
- Further activity was leveraged in addition to that delivered by the Project, both within affected communities and further afield.

In both communities, a range of activities were undertaken. Appendix E provides a list for each area. These activities can be classified as:

- Community events – incorporating practical and social activities such as emergency services days, sprinkler system information & CFA

bushfire planning days, fire preparation planning days, launch events for various Project outputs

- Tangible outputs – Local Incident Management Plans (LIMPs), emergency management booklets, roadside numbering.
- Infrastructure projects – contributing a lasting, tangible legacy for the communities, including static water supply, information shelter, deck and fencing.
- Capacity building/training – conference attendance, workshops, skills development

The activities scaled from targeting capacity at the individual level, through to family and the community level. For example, at the individual level, workshops and conference attendance developed individual capacities; at the family level the Glenaladale Emergency Management Booklets aimed to assist individuals and families prepare for the fire season. This level of activity demonstrates considerable time and effort invested by community members, however no record of actual time was kept.

In addition to the Project undertakings, further activity was also generated. In Goongerah for example, there were efforts to improve radio communications infrastructure, to establish a community

Neighbourhood House staffed by volunteers and applications for external grant funding. In Bonang, the annual ‘Big Bonang Arvo’ was noticeably larger in 2016, which community members attributed to the active involvement of the Recovery Facilitator.

“[facilitator] had a lot of involvement; hassling different areas to come; bringing advertising together; linking people together; encouraging them” (Community member, Goongerah, Nov 2016);

“there were more people there, more people talking to each other, being involved” (Community member, Goongerah, Nov 2016)

Glenaladale’s emergency services days inspired Wy Yung and Mt Taylor to both run similar events.

“the Glen was the start of it, an example of what could be done” (Community member, Glenaladale, Oct 2016).

Additionally, as a direct consequence of the Project in Glenaladale, the DELWP have trialed a new messaging, information and local knowledge process across four communities, and are likely to expand it further.

Figure 2: Glenaladale Emergency Services Day, Oct 2015



6.2 Who participated in the Project activities and to what extent?

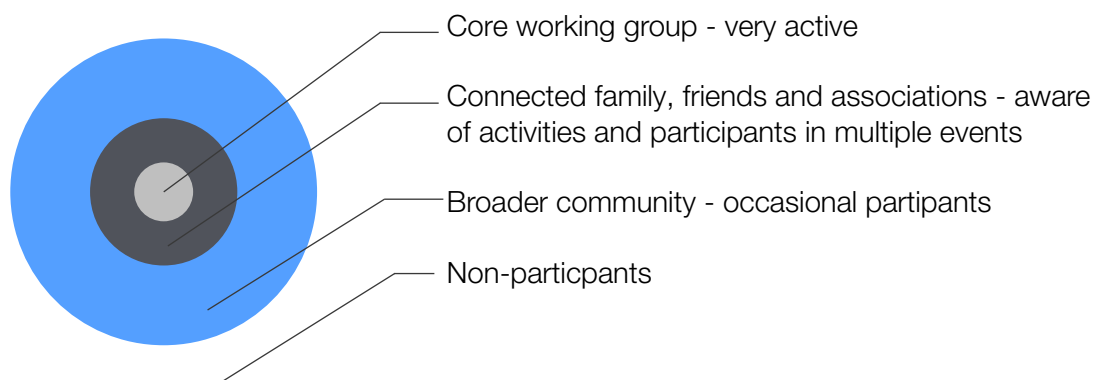
Key findings for this KEQ

- Progressive levels of community member involvement were observed, which could be represented as concentric levels of participation.
- There was broad reach of the Project activities, however some community members were not reached, or did not participate in the Project.
- If broad community engagement is desired, then future Recovery Facilitators can assist to target activities to each level of engagement, with attention paid to how to attract and engage 'non-participants'.

Levels of participation in the Project can be represented as concentric circles of participation, with higher engagement at the centre of the circle, leading to ad hoc engagement in the outer circle. (Refer Figure

3). In all regions, an initial community meeting was held to outline the Project and to invite participation. These meetings were well attended by community members.

Figure 3: Levels of participation in the Project



These levels of participation were:

- Core group of very active participants: Project working groups were established in each of Bonang/Tubbut and Glenaladale, called the Bonang and District Emergency Group (BADEG) and the Glenaladale and District Emergency Management Group (GDEMG) respectively. Each had approximately 8 – 10 members who were highly engaged and active in the Project. They held regular meetings, identified priority areas for action, organised initiatives and events. In Goongerah, a formal group was not established, however a group of community members came together for meetings and took responsibility for implementing different initiatives for the Project.
- Connected group of less active participants: This group was connected to active core working group members as either family, friends or through local associations such as Landcare and CFA. They had word-of-mouth contact with core working group members, so were highly aware of Project activities and consequently tended to have a higher level of participation.

- Broader community: These community members were occasional participants in selected activities, depending on personal relevance and interest. The range of activities attracted a high percentage of the fire-affected communities.
- Non-participants: Outside this group were individuals who did not participate in the Project activities. Stakeholders and community members suggested that non-participants may already be socially-isolated individuals; *“all these isolated people who were never brought into this project”* (Community member, Bonang, Mar 2016) and were those *“who needed to participate the most,”* (Community member, Glenaladale, Oct 2016).
- Some community members who identified as ‘non-participants’ discovered that they had attended activities without recognising they were part of the Project. One community member noted: *“I attended more than I remembered”* (Community member, Glenaladale, March 2016).

Who participated in: Glenaladale

The original community meeting introducing the Project, and establishing the GDEMG attracted approximately 40 – 50 community members.

- GDEMG: Membership of 9 individuals
- Priority setting meeting (April 2015): approximately 25 community members attended
- Events e.g.: Emergency Services day and Fingerboards information shelter launch: Between 60 and 150 community members attended.
- Individual fire management plans: 11 local businesses/properties.
- Distribution of Emergency Management Booklet:

180 distributed across Glenaladale, Fernbank and Iguana Creek areas

Who participated in: Bonang/Tubbut

The original community meeting introducing the Project (March 2015) attracted approximately 28 – 30 community members.

- BADEG: Membership of 8 - 10 individuals, with 6 – 8 people regularly attending meetings predominantly from the immediate Bonang area (3 people regularly travelled from the Tubbut area)
- Events: e.g.: Sprinkler day and LIMP launch: Approximately 30 people from across Goongerah, Bonang, Tubbut, Bendoc and Delegate River.
- Workshops (iFarm, Financial Information session etc): between 10 – 15 individuals
- Men’s Stress Free nights: 14 – 20 individuals (Sept 2015 and May 2016 respectively)
- Conference Attendance: up to 3 individuals per conference from Goongerah, Bonang and Tubbut)
- Bolder Bush Beats workshops: 15 children at the Goongerah – Tubbut P-8 College

Who participated in: Goongerah

Approximately 19 community members attended the meeting that introduced the Project (April 2015).

- No core group was established.
- Project meetings: Up to 12 individuals with three or four people leading on different projects, working with the Recovery Facilitator.
- Events: e.g.: the Give Me A Sign installation day: approximately 10 - 12 people attended.
- (NB: Goongerah community members also attended the activities listed under Bonang/Tubbut)

6.3. How do participants perceive the quality of the activities organised by the agency and by community members within the Project?

Key findings for this KEQ

- Participants perceived the Project activities to be generally of good quality.
- In Bonang/Tubbut, the initial meeting to launch the Project still displayed anger about how the fire was managed, which was perceived to have alienated some people from attending later Project meetings.
- BADEG and GDEMG meetings were not perceived as open to broader community attendance, which may have limited engagement by some people. However, attendance was also influenced by existing internal tensions in the community.

The Recovery Facilitators in each area undertook evaluations of activities where possible. However, a consistent format was not used between the areas or activities, so aggregation of results was not possible. Other quality insights came from community member interviews (in all areas) and vox pop interviews at a community event in Glenaladale. Feedback provided about the quality of Project activities was positive. A selection of comments is provided below.

“There was great benefit to our students to be able to participate in this program.... The feedback from the parents and general community at the concert was very positive and the clear message around fire safety and preparedness from the children was powerful and timely for all”

(Bolder Bush Beats, Feb 2016)

“100% of participants stated they would be able to better manage their land after the workshop”

(iFarm, Workshop evaluation, Dec 2015)

“[Conflict and Negotiation Skills workshop] meeting protocol, how to deal with various scenarios I found quite useful as a fire recovery thing but just as a general skill”

(Community member, Goongerah, Nov 2016)

“The development of a LIMP for Goongerah is a good outcome I think”

(Community member, Goongerah, Oct 2016)

“The sprinkler day – that was a useful exercise. It gave me some ideas”

(Community member, Mountain Rivers region)

“[The Information shelter at the Fingerboards] is a great idea. Should have been there a long time ago”

(Community member, Glenaladale, Sept 2016)

“Emergency Services Day was a good day – it was very useful to see everything”

(Community member, Glenaladale, Sept 2016)

Feedback on the quality of activities was not all positive, however, and included suggestions for improvement. For example, some concern was expressed about organisation of the Glenaladale emergency services day, distribution of emergency information, and the Emergency Assembly area. These concerns were noted and addressed where relevant.

Perceptions of the initial community meetings after the fires were varied. Community members spoke of the level of anger expressed and the confusion about what the next steps were. This affected engagement with the Project.

There were also differing perceptions of how open the BADEG and GDEMG meetings were for the broader community to attend. Some of these perceptions related to existing tensions within the communities. In Glenaladale, members of the GDEMG acknowledged

that ongoing communication with the community could have been improved. The intention was there (noting a survey had asked people to identify if and how they wanted to be kept up to date), however was

not implemented by the GDEMG. The advertising of community events, however, improved with experience as the Project progressed.

6.4 To what extent has the Project contributed to community resilience, as defined by the communities and agencies of the Project regions, in the context of disaster preparedness and recovery?

Key findings for this KEQ

- No 'definition' of resilience was formalised for the Project. The agencies involved and the communities identified 'ingredients of resilience'. These differed across the communities; however there were areas of overlap. The community-generated ingredients of resilience can be represented by the following:
 - Access to resources – financial, physical, facilitated assistance and emotional
 - Accessible, engaged, responsive organisations – such as DEWLP, CFA, VicRoads and EGSC
 - Communications – internal and external to the community
 - Strong community connections – across and between communities
 - Leadership – internal to the community and externally from agencies
 - Sense of self-reliance – collectively for the community
 - Community commitment and participation
 - Future direction
 - Practical preparedness – at individual and community levels
- Generally, the Project was seen to positively contribute to the resilience ingredients, however, whether these ingredients will persist past the life of the Project is unknown.
- Significant improvement (attributed to the Project), was identified for leadership from within the community, stronger community connections within the community (and between Bonang/Tubbut and Goongerah), increased community commitment and participation, and access to resources.
- Changes in these ingredients were not as evident for individuals who did not participate in the Project.
- Some community members interpreted 'resilience' as 'safety', and they had concerns about how much the 'level of safety' had changed as a result of the Project.

To understand the extent of the Project's contribution to community resilience, 'resilience in the context of disaster preparedness and recovery' needs to be defined, as understood by the communities and government agencies.

The government agencies that were represented on the Reference Group for the Project did not have a succinct definition of resilience, however, provided a list

of potential ingredients of resilience.

- Clear leadership: from responsible agencies (DELWP, EGSC, CFA etc) and also from within the community
- Clear processes: to follow during and after an emergency
- Clarity about roles and responsibilities: of both organisations and community for before, during and after an emergency, and wide

understanding of this within organisations and the community

- Knowledge and skills: for preparing for, responding to and recovering from a disaster
- Resources: financial and physical resources
- Connections to/relationships: with others in the community, across different communities, between community and organisations and between organisations
- Communications: clear, respectful and ongoing
- Trust: between community members, and between agency staff and community members
- Shared sense of purpose

For each community, ingredients were generated during the community evaluation meetings. The term 'resilience' was not used, rather, the question was posed asking what the community needed to 'bounce back, to recover from and to cope with' such an event as bushfires. The ingredients thus incorporated practical elements particularly related to emergency response and preparedness, as well as more general community building elements. The following Table 3 provides the prioritised ingredients as determined by each community.

Table 3: Ingredients of resilience as defined by the participating communities

Glenaladale – ingredients to bounce back	Bonang/Tubbut – ingredients to bounce back	Goongerah – ingredients to bounce back
Support (financial, physical, emotional)	Resourcing – facilitator, counselling	Self-reliance
Responsiveness of agencies	Responsiveness of the Shire	Person to approach in agencies/shire
Communications – internal to community and external to community	Organisations – agencies who listen --> continuing communications	Heard and respected by agencies
Social capital – connections and networks in the community	Community Commitment	Strong community
Emergency management specialist capacity	Active fire preparation	Balance of practical and social activities
Leadership	Responsiveness of insurance companies	Self-directed recovery
Future Direction		Communications infrastructure in times of disaster

Contribution of Project to resilience as defined by the government agencies: The Project was perceived as positively affecting all ingredients of resilience that were identified by agencies, although the extent of contribution varied. Simply having a core working group with increased skills, knowledge and contacts, working together to advocate for the community assisted the perception of broader community resilience.

As Goongerah did not start the Project until later, it was difficult to ascertain the nature and extent of impact at the time interviews were conducted, so the responses below mainly relate to Glenaladale and Bonang/Tubbut, as indicated. Additionally, responses generally related to active participants in the Project activities, unless broader community impact was indicated.

Table 4: Perceived contribution of the Project to ingredients of resilience identified by government agencies

Ingredient	Perceived influence	Comment
Clear leadership	Positive for community	Most interviewees felt the Project had a positive influence on clear leadership from within the community. Individuals in each community have accepted responsibility, and provided leadership.
	Varied for organisations	It was perceived as having little or no effect on leadership from responsible organisations – identified as DELWP, EGSC, CFA and VicRoads. Glenaladale acknowledged that leadership from Bairnsdale DEWLP was very positive, this was seen as mainly due to the change in management focus. It was felt the Project provided a vehicle for this focus to be demonstrated. The EGSC Emergency Management & Recovery Team were recognised as providing clear leadership in all regions, and this was directly linked to the Project.
Clear processes to follow during and after an emergency	Positive	Development of the LIMP was seen as part of the Project, and contributed to this ingredient. In Glenaladale, establishment of the Assembly area, Emergency Management Booklet and the improved contact with DELWP were seen as contributing to clarity of processes. In Bonang/Tubbut, initiatives such as the Intentions book and water tank were perceived as contributing to emergency procedures. Some interviewees, however, thought that the Project had not contributed to broader community clarity about emergency processes.
Clarity about roles and responsibilities	Positive	As per above.
Knowledge and skills	Positive	Various activities provided access to knowledge and skill development opportunities. In Glenaladale, the relationships that were established within, and outside the community as a result of the Project contributed to a sense of knowing what to do after an emergency. In Glenaladale, there was an expressed desire to have done more direct skills training.
Resources	Positive	Both regions applied some of the Project's financial resources to small infrastructure projects which will stay in the community past the life of the Project, and were perceived to contribute to longer-term emergency management capacity.
Connections and relationships	Positive to neutral	Connections within communities were perceived to have been enhanced. Connections across different communities were more tenuous, with the Project influence perceived to be neutral by most. There was some evidence that connections were being formed between Bonang/Tubbut and Goongerah community members. Relationships between community and organisations is explored more deeply in Section 6.6 later in this report.
Communications	Varied	One Glenaladale community member noted: "Communication with locals has definitely improved" while another noted communications was definitely not clear and respectful; this demonstrates the variation in opinion about this ingredient.
Trust	Varied	Contribution to trust was a difficult and varied criteria. The trust in agencies by the community members varied markedly between agencies, and is explored in Section 6.6 in this report.
Shared sense of purpose	Positive	This ingredient was positively influenced by the Project, but particularly in relation to the GDEMG and BADEG members. Priority areas of action were agreed and most were actioned. It was recognised that the broader community may not be as committed to the priority areas, although there was recognition that things 'got done' through the Project.

Glenaladale

The ingredients of resilience for Glenaladale were discussed and assessed at two different meetings, one in March 2016 and one in October 2016. There was a palpable feeling of camaraderie, positivity and support at the first meeting. However, by October 2016, the mineral sand mine had emerged as a very divisive issue in the community¹⁰. It had “*derailed the group and divided the community*” (Community member, Glenaladale, Oct 2016). There was not the same sense of positivity moving forward as there had been at the previous meeting.

Table 5: Perceived contribution of the project to resilience, as identified by GDEMG

Ingredient	Perceived influence	Comment
Support (financial, physical, emotional)	Positive	The support provided by the Facilitator was rated very highly. Financial and physical support provided to the community during the Project was recognised as very positive, however, they also recognised this will not continue after the Project. The emotional support for GDEMG members was drawn predominantly from other group members.
Responsiveness of agencies	Varied – depending on agency	The responsiveness of DELWP was emphasised as an improvement over the life of the Project. It was recognised that most agencies, including VicRoads and EGSC had responded well to GDEMG requests as relationships were built. The local CFA brigade was not perceived by the GDEMG to be as responsive.
Communications – internal to community and external to community	Positive	Communications on several levels were nominated as improving: communications between GDEMG group members, with the Glenaladale community and with agencies external to the community. It was noted by the GDEMG, as well as Glenaladale community members, that communication with the wider community could have been better (Refer 6.3)
Leadership	Positive	Leadership skills were identified and improved in the GDEMG through the Project. The emergence of the mineral sand mine issue suggested to the GDEMG that stronger leadership skills were still needed, to help guide the community through the divisive issue.
Social capital – connections and networks in the community	Positive, but with concerns	Prior to the emergence of the sand mine issue, there was perceived to be a strong sense of community and a willingness to participate. It was noted that connections to various networks had improved through the Project, but that connections throughout the community were possibly still challenged.
Emergency management specialist capacity	No Change	There was not confidence that this specialist capacity had been significantly enabled through the Project.
Future Direction	Positive	There was a perception that the Project had positively influenced the future direction for the community, but there were concerns expressed on how this would be maintained after the Project finished. The GDEMG indicated that to progress, their status as an ‘Emergency group’ should be changed to ‘Community building’ – to take in the broader remit exposed by the mine.

¹⁰ Kalbar Resources Ltd is completing a feasibility study of the mineral sands deposit in the Glenaladale area, and a Retention License has been granted by the Minister for Resources. The proposed mine covers a significant area of the Glenaladale farming community.

Bonang/Tubbut

The ingredients for resilience were discussed and assessed at two different meetings, one in March 2016 and one in October 2016. At the March meeting, only members of the BADEG were in attendance, however in October, the meeting was opened to members of the wider community who had not actively participated in the Project, and who lived further away than the immediate Bonang area.

When considering the ingredients and how the Project had affected them, there was a difference in perception between those who were part of BADEG and close to the Project, and those who had not participated. This corresponds with the notion proposed earlier in the report regarding the spheres of participation in the Project. Community members who were not reached by the Project or did not participate (for whatever reason), did not perceive benefit from the Project.

Table 6: Perceived contribution of the project to resilience, as identified by BADEG

Ingredient	Perceived influence	Comment
Resourcing – facilitator, counselling	Positive	The facilitator was universally recognised as vital to the Project, providing structure and motivation. Emotional support was recognised to stem from the EGMHI. It was noted that the act of coming together as a group to work together and advance activities also provided emotional support.
Responsiveness of the EGSC	Positive	Community appreciated the attitude of and efforts of the Emergency Management & Recovery team. “Shire was sympathetic to our cause” “Shire was listening and responsive” – Bonang March 2016 Non-BADEG members did not recognise this responsiveness as positively.
Organisations (other than EGSC) – agencies who listen --> continuing communications	Neutral	Organisations such as DELWP were perceived to not be communicating positively with the community. Non-BADEG members expressed anger and frustration with CFA and DELWP
Community Commitment	Positive	BADEG members felt the Project helped pull them together, and helped them channel their efforts for their community’s resilience. It was acknowledged that many people felt excluded, who might otherwise have participated in the Project.
Responsiveness of insurance companies	No influence	This ingredient was added at the October meeting, but was acknowledged to be variable depending on chosen insurance providers, and that the Project had no remit to influence insurance companies.
Active fire preparation	No to little influence	Even though the Project focused on emergency management, it was acknowledged that individuals were not undertaking additional fire preparation activities around their properties. Community scale preparation activities – water tank, intentions book etc. had yet to be tested.

Goongerah

Goongerah's ingredients for resilience were derived from one community meeting in October 2016, and a series of interviews (phone and face-to-face) with community members that had participated to different degrees in the Project.

Table 7: Perceived contribution of the project to resilience, as defined by Goongerah residents

Ingredient	Perceived influence	Comment
Self-reliance	Neutral	Goongerah residents expressed a general sense of existing self-reliance prior to the fires. Activities such as developing the LIMP possibly reinforced self-reliance, but otherwise, it was felt the Project did not actually contribute to this ingredient.
Communications infrastructure in times of emergency	Positive	Although this issue related specifically to during an emergency, it was believed to contribute to the resilience of the community. Progress had been made as a result of the Project.
Person to approach in agencies/shire	Positive	This was related to the 'linkage' role played by the Recovery Facilitator.
Self-directed recovery	Positive	The Project was perceived to provide the opportunity for the community to draw on and develop their strengths.
Balance of practical and social activities	Positive	The Project provided opportunities for practical skill development (through several conferences and workshops) as well as a space to come together.
Heard and respected by agencies	Neutral	It was perceived this element had not been influenced by the Project.
Strong communities	Positive	There was a perception that the community was relatively strong before the fires, and that the experience of the fires brought them together. The Project provided opportunities for working together.

6.5 To what extent has the Project contributed to individual and collective adaptive capacity to prepare for and recover from disasters in the Project regions?

Key findings for this KEQ

- Like resilience, adaptive capacity was not defined for the Project. The terms were not common language for community members. Hence the elements of collective adaptive capacity were not differentiated from the ingredients of resilience (Refer section 6.4).
- Individual adaptive capacity included a combination of psychological and emotional elements, skills and knowledge as well as externally focused elements.

What are the elements of individual and collective adaptive capacity in the context of disaster preparedness and recovery, as defined by the community through the Project?

Individual adaptive capacity was often intertwined with collective adaptive capacity. For example, coming together as a group regularly provided individual support, but also contributed to collective capacity.

Particular elements related to individual adaptive capacity and resilience identified by community members included a mix of internal psychological and

emotional elements, skills and knowledge, as well as externally focused elements:

- understanding and accepting community dynamics,
- being caring,
- emotional support,
- a willingness to participate,
- to be open to new, crazy ideas for change,

- a sense of connection to the broader community,
- feeling emotionally supported,
- individualised support and follow-up from agencies,
- incident management training and skills,
- individual preparedness,
- a sense of humour,
- the ability to accept one's situation and determine a path forward for oneself,
- being heard and respected – by agencies and by one's community,
- being able to communicate well – with agencies and one's community,
- a sense of empowerment,
- taking responsibility for being aware, and being alert to what's happening.

For elements of collective adaptive capacity, refer to the discussion of community resilience in Section 6.4.

How has the Project helped generate changed attitudes, behaviours and actions to enhance longer-term adaptive capacity in the region?

Key findings for this KEQ

- The Project was perceived to have helped generate changes in both attitudes and behaviours, at the individual and collective levels, particularly amongst core working group members.
- Attitudes perceived to have been influenced by the project:
 - More positive, confident outlooks
 - Greater willingness to participate
 - Feeling empowered and a sense of pride in their achievements
 - Feeling more connected to their community
- For members of the community who did not consider themselves active participants in the Project, the attitudinal changes were not evident at the individual level. Feelings of anger and frustration, particularly with government agencies, were expressed.

Community members reported having more positive, confident outlooks and greater willingness to participate.

However, this sense of confidence was not universal, and was also considered a 'false' sense of confidence by some, which was perceived to reduce adaptive capacity.

"I'm feeling more positive"
 (Community member, Bonang, March 2016)
There was a "greater air of confidence they'd be able to handle a fire, 'cos lots more plans in place"
 (Stakeholder, March 2016)

"I've really grown as a person, I feel more educated, more empowered, I'm better at handling difficulties"
 (Community member, Glenaladale, March 2016).
"I'm more community minded, prepared to go to meetings"
 (Community member, Bonang, March 2016)
"people have taken more responsibility, both as a result of the Project and going through a fire"
 (Community member, Goongerah, Oct 2016)

Community members noted feeling empowered, prepared to take responsibility, and felt more connected to their community because of participating in the Project. Bonang BADEG and Glenaladale GDEMG members showed a sense of ownership of the different activities and ideas they generated, and expressed a sense of achievement and pride.

Many community members expressed a greater sense of inclusion with their community.

However, this sense of inclusion was not universal across the communities, with some community members indicating *“there isn’t any community – I’m pretty much on my own”* (Bonang, Oct 2016) and *“I’m feeling very unsafe, feel we’ll be on our own”* (Community member, Glenaladale, Oct 2016)

Some members of the broader community, who were less active in the Project, expressed helplessness and continued frustration and anger. These attitudes were particularly directed at fire-fighting agencies. This highlights the opportunity for future projects to incorporate targeted activities to reach the broader community through the Project.

In Goongerah there was a sense that the changed attitudes will endure past the life of the Project. This was attributed to much of the activity being directed towards enhancing their local community hub and developing better community engagement skills. However, in Glenaladale, although positive attitudes were evident and expressed, there was concern amongst GDEMG members that the divisive nature of the mineral sand mine was already eroding the positive, community-minded attitudes that were enhanced during the Project.

The Project has also helped to generate many actions at the individual and community level. Many of these could be expected to contribute to longer-term adaptive capacity. Changed behaviours, influenced by the Project included:

- Active participation in community activities – from meeting regularly as a group to attending community events
- Taking greater responsibility
- Community level emergency preparedness

One behaviour attributed to the Project was the participation in group and community activities. BADEG and GDEMG members noted that the process of regularly meeting as a group, and undertaking activities for the broader community, had strengthened connections between group members. Connections to

the broader community were perceived to have been enhanced as well.

A key adaptive capacity behaviour includes taking actions to prepare for the fire season, to reduce individual and community level risks. At the community level, the Project facilitated many actions – from increased levels of roadside slashing by agencies, preparation of LIMPs, distribution of the Emergency Management Booklet (Glenaladale), installation of the static water supply and introduction of the intentions book (Bonang) just to name a few. However, some concern was expressed over individual preparedness, particularly in the Bonang region, and a perceived lack of individuals with incident management training and skills across both Bonang/Tubbut and Glenaladale (refer Section 6.4). Although it was acknowledged that some community members already prepared annually, there were repeated comments that there was no evidence of additional preparation being undertaken by individuals in the Bonang/Tubbut area. This contrasted with Goongerah and Glenaladale, where there was evidence of additional preparation activities such as general clearing of properties and roadside slashing by individuals.

The behaviours of external agencies were also perceived to have an impact on the adaptive capacity of the areas, and there were mixed results in this regard. As noted previously, the behaviour and attitude of DELWP in Glenaladale had changed. Increased activity and engagement by EGSC Emergency Management and Recovery team members was recognised in all areas. However, no change was identified for the CFA across all regions, although CFA representatives noted they had been more active, for example, more regular CFA meetings held in the Glenaladale region.

What is the extent of confidence in the community to engage with agencies and to understand government programs and processes?

Key findings for this KEQ

- Overall, confidence to engage with agencies was perceived to have improved. This had emerged through personal contact and relationship building.
- For BADEG and GDEMG members there was an expressed improvement in awareness of agency processes, limitations and opportunities.

Confidence to engage with agencies emerged through personal contact and relationship building, and a general improvement in awareness of agency processes, limitations and opportunities. This particularly relates to BADEG and GDEMG members, who formed new relationships with agency personnel as a direct result of the Project.

In Glenaladale for example, GDEMG members expressed confidence to approach agencies now, and to engage better. They were in direct contact with staff at DELWP, and do not hesitate to contact VicRoads or EGSC if they have a query or issue. They also felt the response from across these agencies was slightly more positive than prior to the Project. Members have also attended the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee meetings. However, with greater awareness of the complexity of bureaucratic

processes can also come increased frustration. One GDEMG member noted that the insight into how the agencies operated gave them a negative opinion of the agencies.

In the Mountain Rivers region, they can put a name and a face to the Emergency Management and Recovery team. This has increased their connection to EGSC and their confidence to engage.

In Goongerah, it was noted that the Project had increased awareness of the availability of different government programs. Engagement was often funnelled through the Recovery Facilitator, who was perceived as the link to external agencies. Some community members, however, were already actively engaged with agencies and the Project had not altered that.

6.6 In what way have the quality of relationships between individuals, community and government agencies altered as a result of the Project

Key findings for this KEQ

- Where relationships had improved with agencies, it was attributed to improved personal connections within the agencies.
- The Recovery Facilitator in each area was recognised as facilitating contacts and improved relationships in many of the agencies.

This outcome was specific to each community and the different agencies operating there, as the quality of relationships varied extensively. When exploring the concept of quality in relationships between

individuals, community and government agencies, several characteristics were nominated by community members and stakeholders for a 'good quality' relationship. These characteristics included:

- Empathy
- Trust
- Flexibility
- Approachability
- Care
- Communication - listening
- Personal connection (in relation to organisations)
- Honesty
- Reliability

The Project was perceived to have helped facilitate improved community relationships with DELWP

(Bairnsdale) and the EGSC Emergency Management and Recovery team, as well as improved internal community relationships.

In all cases where relationships had improved with or between agencies, it was attributed to improved personal connections within the agencies, which facilitated the qualities identified above. In both Bonang/Tubbut and Glenaladale, it was felt individual relationships with organisations were aided by the authority the Project gave to the respective community groups – BADEG and GDEMG.

To what extent has the attitude of the community changed towards agencies and itself as a result of the Project, in the context of disaster preparedness and recovery? And To what extent has the attitude of agencies changed towards community as a result of the Project, in the context of disaster preparedness and recovery?

Glenaladale

The relationship between the Glenaladale community and DELWP, and the Emergency Management and Recovery Team in EGSC had improved through the project. However, it was felt the relationship with the rest of EGSC had not significantly changed.

There was perceived to be no change in the relationship between CFA and the community, although it was noted the CFA were holding more regular meetings to become more accessible and approachable for the community.

The relationship of the community with itself in Glenaladale had become fraught due to the uncertainty created by the sand mine. During the Project, a positive attitude was expressed within the community towards one-another.

Bonang/Tubbut

In the Bonang/Tubbut region, the relationship with the Emergency Management and Recovery team was perceived to have strengthened significantly as a result of the Project. The community was also engaging more positively and respectfully with the EGSC.

“DELWP vastly more responsive full stop. And Bairnsdale DELWP communicated much better with local brigades”

(Glenaladale, March 2016)

One Glenaladale community member noted of a community event: *“the atmosphere is friendly – and real – not fake”*

(Glenaladale, Sept 2016)

The relationship with other organisations such as DELWP and CFA was not perceived to have measurably changed, although it was noted there may be small improvements in the relationship with DELWP. However, it was expressed that some of the continued community anger and frustration with DELWP was harming future relationship potential

There appeared to be an improved attitude of the community towards each other, although this was perceived as small steps at the moment.

Existing tensions were evident between community members in the Bonang/Tubbut region, however, there was a perceived softening and understanding of each other's view. BADEG have expressed a desire to help their neighbours in Cabanandra with such things as accessing a standing water supply, communications etc.

It should be noted that the cooperation between the EGMHI and Project in this area was actively working to draw isolated individuals back into the community. This was not assessed as part of this evaluation, however, the attempt to be more inclusive was noted.

Goongerah

Relationships between the Goongerah community members and organisations were not perceived to have changed. The Recovery Facilitator, however has created new and improved relationships across organisations (EGSC, CFA and DELWP) on behalf of the community.

Within the Goongerah community, there was a perceived re-energising of relationships through the many recovery projects implemented there (the Project was thus not the sole influence).

6.7 To what extent were networks and collaborations developed and supported as a result of the Project?

Key findings for this KEQ

- Existing networks and connections had been supported and strengthened as a result of the Project, however there was little evidence to suggest **new** collaborations were developed.

There was repeated comment that networks and connections had expanded as a result of the Project – both personally and professionally. This related to the Recovery Facilitators, to community members, to the Tubbut Neighbourhood House and to agency personnel. These new networks and connections were viewed very positively, and could possibly lead to future collaboration, but this was yet to be determined.

Collaboration between participating agencies was notably strengthened (particularly Within Australia,

Orbost Regional Health and EGSC), but also between the emergency agencies. Some cross-agency conversations around recovery and cross-border service delivery were noted, but would not yet be called 'collaborations'. There was also the expectation that for those agencies on the Reference Group, there would be the possibility of future conversations and collaboration, but as yet nothing was identified.

7. Impacts of Delivery Model

7.1 In what way has the Project delivery model influenced the achievement of outcomes?

Key findings for this KEQ

- Several elements of the Project delivery model were recognised as having positively influenced the outcomes. These were:
 - a. Facilitator role
 - b. Community directed recovery
 - c. Flexibility of Project delivery
 - d. Tangible outputs
 - e. Untied project funds
 - f. Length of time spent in the community
 - e. Cooperative approach with other projects

a) Recovery Facilitator role

In both communities, the Recovery Facilitator was central to the achievement of outcomes and highly valued by the core working groups. Organisational stakeholders considered the selection of appropriate facilitators for each community as a key element in achieving outcomes, but recognised that different communities had different needs and requirements: a blanket 'one-size-fits-all' approach to facilitator selection would not have been appropriate.

“funding for facilitation – created a hub and central source of energy”
(Community member, Goongerah, Oct 2016)

“If Lorelee wasn't there, there wouldn't be an impact on anything.”
(Community member, Bonang, Oct 2016)

“Without Dave, it wouldn't have gone near where it got.”
(Community member, Glenaladale, Oct 2016)

Each facilitator was motivated to develop strong relationships and trust in the respective communities. Additionally, each community felt they had the right facilitator for their situation.

Of value to community members was the link the Recovery Facilitator provided to agencies, to help smooth over obstacles and connect communities to agency staff and information.

The facilitators were seen as active participants, keeping the communities motivated to continue. Both facilitators exhibited high levels of energy and enthusiasm for the work being done in their respective locations.

Additionally, the Mountain Rivers community members highlighted the importance of having the facilitator role go to a local, that an external facilitator would not have been accepted. However, there was concern that the role had not been advertised in the affected Mountain Rivers' communities. The role was only advertised in Orbost, and this created a level of frustration about due process among some community members.

b) Community directed

The Project was framed around the community directing their own recovery process, based on the hypothesis that government departments telling communities what they needed to recover from a major event had not always been successful in the past. This element was considered important by both organisational stakeholders and community members. In all areas, there was a sense of ownership and achievement which was influenced by the community selecting the issues they wished to focus on.

c) Flexibility of Project delivery

The flexible delivery of the Project, which allowed the Project to evolve according to local conditions and requirements, with no prescribed activities or outcomes, was seen as a positive contributor to Project achievements. Flexibility in program delivery contributed to the collaboration between different projects in the Mountain Rivers region,

“Back then it was very negative, because I didn’t know how to contact anyone, any agency...but now that Lol does know, and she can...she knows all these people, she’s made the contacts. That’s a massive difference. I know there is an avenue.”

(Community member, Goongerah, Oct 2016)

“Dave was a linchpin in the Shire- was able to instigate things. Don’t think we could have done stuff without that.”

(Community member, Glenaladale, Oct 2016)

and enabled different elements to evolve in each of the communities, for example, the community hub concept in Goongerah, compared with the emergency preparedness perspective of Bonang and Glenaladale.

However, it also contributed to initial confusion, particularly in the Mountain Rivers region. Community members were uncertain at first what their role was, and what the Project could or should deliver for them. As they came to understand the approach and to feel comfortable with establishing their own agendas, this confusion subsided.

In both areas, the flexibility and non-predetermined outcomes meant that those who were not part of the core working groups were not able to grasp as easily what the approach was, and what the benefit to them may be. In Glenaladale, those external to the GDEMG thought that guidelines for the group should have been provided. In Bonang/Tubbut, those who were less engaged could not see how the Project could help them. In both areas, improved communication with the broader community could have alleviated this ongoing confusion.

d) Tangible outputs

The Project model allowed for short-term, immediate outputs, while continuing to work on longer-term outcomes. The provision of tangible, immediate results was considered important. It made visible the work of the Project, and the local core working groups, it

provided motivation and a rallying point for community events. For example, in Glenaladale, the roadside numbering for properties whose street numbers had been burnt during the fire and the assembly area fence and signage were cited as important, 'quick wins'. In all areas, the launch of the LIMP provided a vehicle for a community gathering and celebration.

e) Untied Project funds

The budget for the Project allowed for general activities such as training and seminars, catering for events, and materials, but was not prescriptive about how funds were directed between these elements. The untied Project funds thus allowed for flexibility and tailoring to local needs.

While untied funds were considered an overall positive of the project model, it did lead to some consternation in the communities. Some community members would have preferred to know the budget to inform the priority actions, some were confused about how much money was available, and how it should be spent, others thought that not knowing the budget represented a lack of transparency and accountability.

f) Length of time spent in the community

One of the underpinning elements of the Project was that it was a two-year time frame (2.5 years in the Mountain Rivers district). This allowed BADEG and GDEMG enough time to form, move through issues of anger and hurt, and to focus on positive activities. It provided the time to implement activities in a planned and unrushed way. The extended time frame recognised that community members have other things happening in their lives, rather than having to rush through a government program.

g) Cooperative, partnership approach with other projects

Section 7.3 outlines how the Project coordinated with the other recovery projects in each of the areas. Particularly in Goongerah and Bonang/Tubbut, coordination and collaboration with other recovery projects has positively influenced the outcomes.

Additional considerations

A recommended addition to the standard ABCD model is to undertake a separate step that specifically explores the emergency and response, allowing fears and hurts to be voiced in a facilitated process that moves people forward. This was not formally undertaken in Glenaladale, due to the work the community-formed Mt Ray Fire Committee had already done (see p.25 for detail). The process in Bonang/Tubbut emerged out of a community meeting explaining the Project, so was also not a planned, formal process to move the community past anger (it evolved this way however).

An element of the standard ABCD community development model that was not implemented was the process of mapping individual community skills and interests, along with capacities of existing community organisations or groups. This mapping exercise helps expose strengths to make people explicitly aware of them – not just their own but also those of the broader community and institutions. In contrast, in both Project areas, strengths were encouraged to emerge and then further developed. Future applications of the ABCD approach to recovery situations may wish to explore using a mapping exercise.

7.2 To what extent has Project delivery adapted to local contexts?

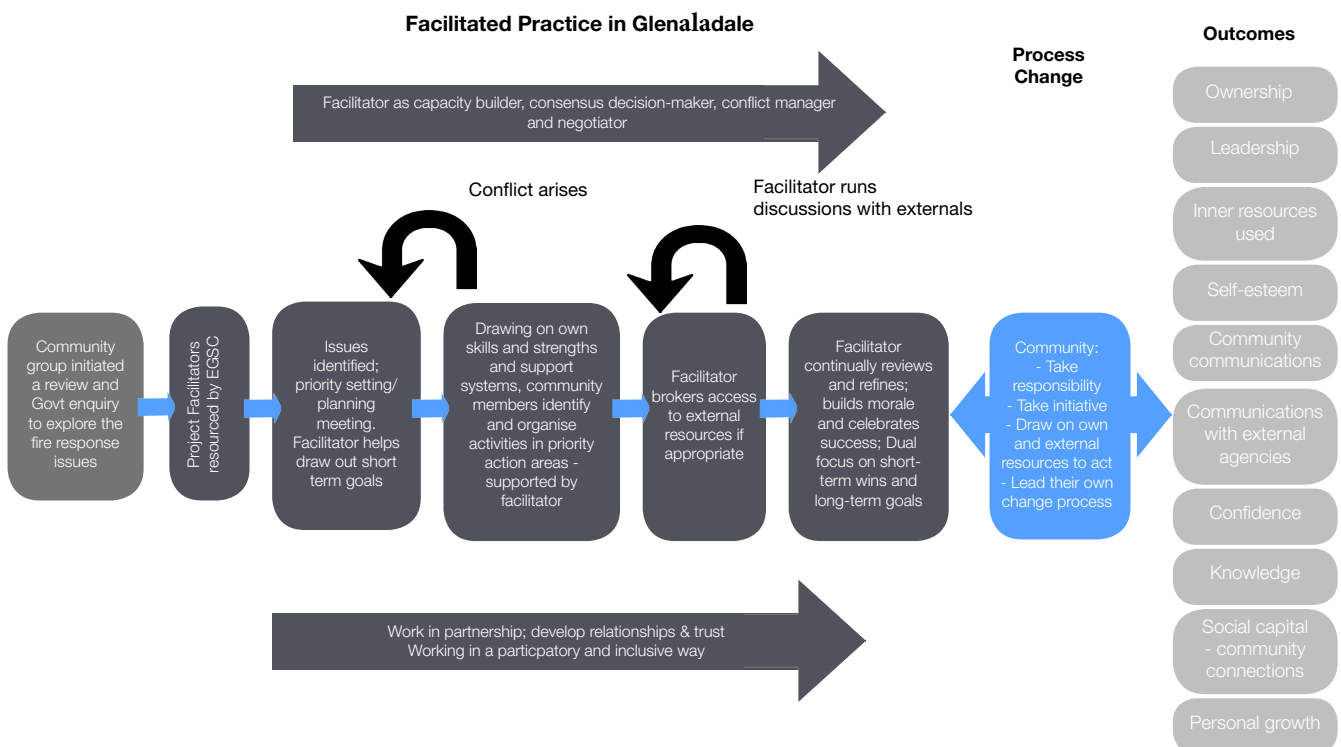
Key findings for this KEQ

- The Project was delivered differently in each area. There were two main components contributing to local Project adaptation:
 - Project delivery model (relating to the facilitator role, support structure and the process undertaken), and
 - the direction that the community took the Project.
- There were two practical elements that underpinned delivery in all areas, that were not adapted to local contexts.
 - Untied, flexible budget: Budget for the Project was considered flexible, in that there were no predetermined requirements to spend specific amounts on specific activities. It was also deemed sufficient in each area.
 - Flexible project management: The EGSC project manager was flexible about how the Project was delivered in each area, allowing each Recovery Facilitator to bring their own skills to the Project, and for each community to determine the direction of the Project.

Glenaladale

In Glenaladale, the delivery model for the Project can be represented by Figure 4:

Figure 4: Project approach in Glenaladale



→ Recovery Facilitator role

In Glenaladale, the Recovery Facilitator was external to the community, but worked swiftly to develop a professional relationship of trust with community members. He brought well-established facilitation skills, and direct experience of working with communities. This skill was evident and recognised by the community, engendering a level of trust in the Facilitator, and hence the Project process. He also brought prior contacts in a range of relevant Government agencies to the Project, which facilitated connections and engagement with these departments. Personal skills of enthusiasm, empathy and humour were also evident.

The Recovery Facilitator saw their role as capacity builder, conflict manager, negotiator and decision facilitator. There was a pronounced emphasis by the facilitator on drawing out the latent skills from the group, and building their capacity, by placing responsibility on their shoulders and assisting their efforts, rather than taking on tasks for them.

→ Support structure

The Recovery Facilitator was based at EGSC with access to Council resources such as a car, workshop materials etc. As he was physically located in the emergency management area, he had direct access to the EGSC Emergency Management and Recovery staff to bounce ideas off, as well as to be part of their LIMP planning conversations. This created an informal information exchange forum for both EGSC and the Recovery Facilitator, and a focal point of communication between the EGSC and the community, which was perceived as beneficial by EGSC, the Recovery Facilitator and the community.

Being based at EGSC also enabled direct contact with other areas of the Shire, such as road maintenance, which was perceived as valuable by both the Recovery Facilitator and the community.

→ Process

The community in Glenaladale established the Mt Ray Fire Committee soon after the fire. This group

formed through an expressed concern about how the Mt Ray Boundary fire was managed. It had a specific focus of calling for a review of the response to and management of the fire, and to bring about change.

As this process was already underway by the time the Project was launched, a separate process to express fears, frustrations and hurts was not undertaken with the broader Glenaladale community. On reflection, several interviewees felt a session of this nature could have benefitted the community and contributed to the Project.

The Project working group, the GDEMG, met at least once a month but did not have a formal committee structure. Notes of meetings were taken, but not formal minutes.

A community priority-setting meeting was held in April 2015. GDEMG members then selected the priority areas they each wished to work on (see below for priority areas). The Recovery Facilitator provided encouragement, support and contacts to draw out and develop individual and group capacity, but it was the GDEMG members that identified the activities, undertook and organised them.

To enable payment for activities, funding passed through the Recreation Reserve Committee's established account and books. This proved troublesome during the Project and added to questions of accountability for some community members who were not privy to complete accounting information.

It was acknowledged that the GDEMG could have communicated better with the broader community, perhaps through regular updates or invitations to attend meetings.

→ Community direction

Emergency management was the focus from the beginning, using the LIMP as something tangible to work on through the Project.

The chosen priority focus areas were:

- Community communications: local contact numbers, phone tree, perhaps digital/social media
- Roadside management: slash/remove wattle regrowth from priority roads, contact councillors, negotiate with VicRoads regarding vegetation management of key roads.
- Assist residents to develop their own emergency

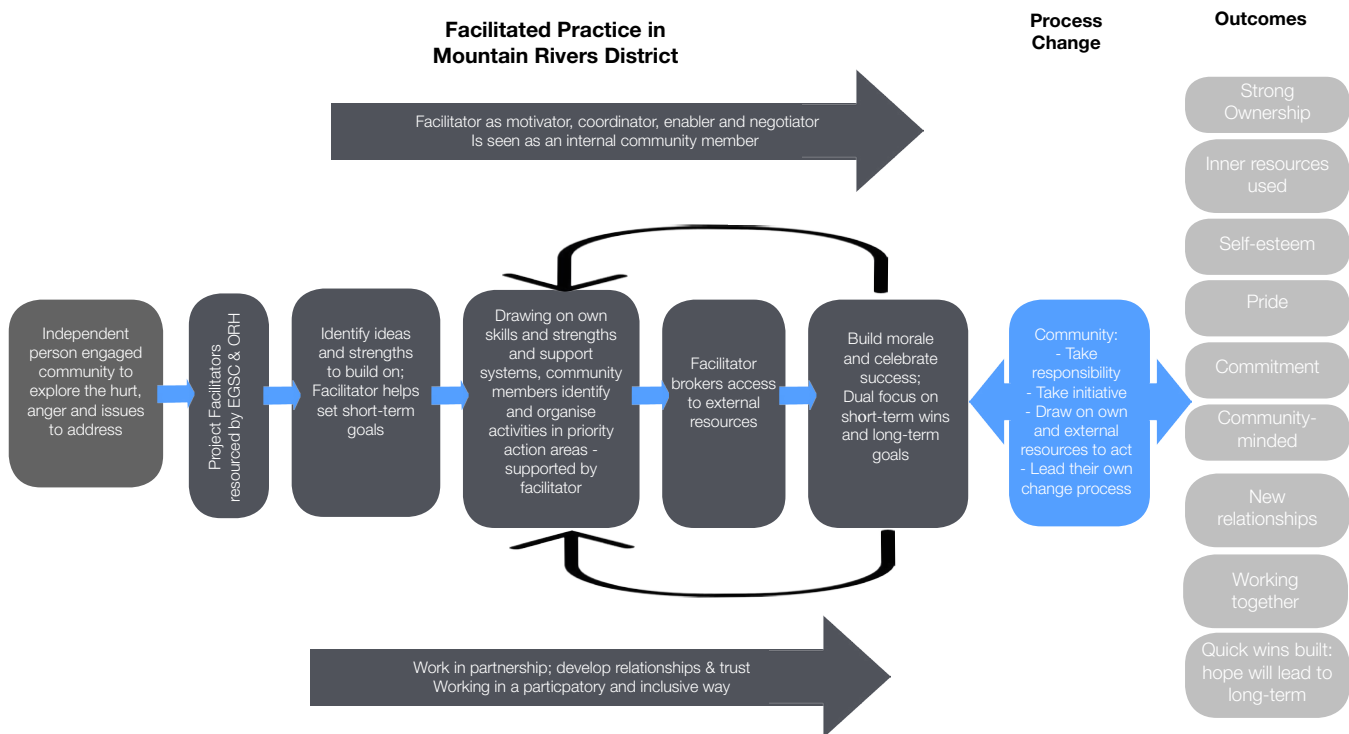
plan: facilitate a training day

- Community wellbeing /community involvement: community support events, perhaps luncheon for women BBQ for men, mental health awareness and support
- Erect appropriate emergency signage: develop assembly area and sign for Recreation Reserve
(Source: Glenaladale Project update report)

Mountain Rivers region

In the Mountain Rivers region, the model was slightly different, as displayed in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Project approach in Mountain Rivers region



→ Recovery Facilitator role

The Recovery Facilitator was a member of the Goongerah community, thus well-known and perceived as 'internal' to that community area. Although Goongerah is close to Bonang /Tubbut, the areas are quite different and the Recovery Facilitator was not immediately considered 'internal' to the Bonang/Tubbut community. She had to work hard to build relationships and trust with the Bonang/Tubbut

community. BADEG now consider the facilitator a 'local' – even if not 'internal' to their community, and maintain that an 'external' facilitator could not have worked in their community, as they would not have understood them and their concerns.

The Recovery Facilitator brought good coordination and motivation skills, and experience with community groups to the role; skills which were already known

and recognised by the Goongerah community. For Goongerah, this therefore established a level of trust and confidence in the Project being offered. The Recovery Facilitator did not have strong facilitation skills prior to commencing the role, and this was perceived as influencing the Project process, and perhaps constrained initial efforts. Facilitation training before the Project commenced could have given more skills and confidence to the Facilitator. Personal traits of passion, honesty, trustworthiness and being connected, both within and outside the communities, were considered useful for the Project.

The Recovery Facilitator saw their role as motivator, coordinator, enabler and negotiator. She was perceived by the community as a “valuable link” to external agencies. She was also involved in other projects in the area, so was seen by the community to be very active.

The Recovery Facilitator role changed during the Project. Although community members keenly identified projects and accepted responsibility, progress was initially slow in both areas. To ensure the Project kept progressing, and to motivate the community, the Recovery Facilitator made the decision to play a more functional role in the Project activities, taking on tasks particularly concerned with liaison with external agencies.

→ Support structure

The Recovery Facilitator was based at ORH in Orbost (over an hour from Goongerah, and 1.5 hours from Bonang), and had access to ORH resources such as a car, workshop materials and catering services. She was physically located in shared office space near the EGMHI project coordinator. This enabled informal information sharing, which contributed to the good coordination of these two projects. This informal collaboration between the Recovery Facilitator and the EGMHI project coordinator also increased the access to the Mountain Rivers area by Within Australia.

The EGSC Emergency Management and Recovery staff also provided a high level of support to the

Recovery Facilitator, visiting the communities frequently and responding to queries and assistance requests promptly.

→ Process

The Project was delivered differently in the two Project areas of the Mountain Rivers region. In Goongerah, the community embraced the concurrent recovery projects delivered in the area, particularly the Creative Arts/ Streetscapes and the Resilient Community projects. This enabled the Recovery Facilitator to focus early Project efforts on the Bonang/Tubbut community.

At an initial community meeting to describe the Project, where a lot of anger was expressed, an external facilitator helped the community draw out some initial areas to address this anger. At a second community meeting, the Recovery Facilitator was able to start building the relationship with the Bonang/Tubbut community, and begin to identify priority issues and areas of interest.

A group of predominantly Bonang residents formed a group that met monthly, which later became known as the BADEG. Meeting minutes were taken and distributed and BADEG members took responsibility for identifying and coordinating activities, assisted by the Recovery Facilitator. There was an expressed sense of pride and ownership in the activities and achievements of this group.

In Goongerah, no single group or committee was formed to advance the Project. Meetings were held semi-regularly and were open to all members of the community to be involved. This approach required effort on behalf of the Recovery Facilitator to keep people keen and interested to attend meetings. On many occasions, especially early in the Project, the meetings were joint meetings with the other recovery projects operating in the area. Individuals (or small groups) nominated to progress particular activities, assisted by the Recovery Facilitator.

To enable payment for activities, funding was processed through the Goongerah and Bonang Hall

Committees, and the Tubbut Neighbourhood House. This created quite a bit of administrative work for the respective committees. It was noted that additional training in accounting for community groups would have been a benefit.

To build local skills and capacity, the Recovery Facilitator identified relevant conference and workshop opportunities for the communities. She sometimes worked in partnership with local community groups (like Landcare) or the other recovery projects (such as EGMHI) to bring workshops to the area.

→ Community direction

In Bonang/Tubbut there was a strong focus on emergency preparation. The priority areas for Bonang/Tubbut included:

- Mobile phone communications: advocating for a local tower
- Static water supply: standpipe or tank, local water availability during a fire
- Maintenance of the Bonang Hall: clearing of the area to be a safe assembly area, including

signage.

- Emergency planning: including LIMP and individual plans, phone tree, intentions book
(Source: BADEG meeting minutes)

Goongerah, however, focused more on creating a community hub to build ongoing community activity. *“Lots of meetings held by Lol, community brainstorming, ways to improve function of the community, members’ sense of participation, inclusion, viability and sustainability”* (Community member, Goongerah, Oct 2016).

Thus, most activities focused on how best to utilise the Goongerah Hall as a central community hub. This alternate focus could be a factor of the type of community in Goongerah, that the Project started a little later in their community, or that they had also engaged quite deeply in the previous arts-based activities; the specific influence can’t be extrapolated from the data, however, is likely to be a combination of all these influences.

7.3 How effectively has the Project coordinated with other initiatives being delivered in the specified geographic locations of East Gippsland?

Key findings for this KEQ

- Informal coordination between projects was enabled and enhanced by:
 - Co-location of the Recovery Facilitators with other project staff (in the offices of EGSC and ORH),
 - Flexibility in the respective project delivery models,
 - Personal commitment and relationship development between the personnel across the different projects.
- This informal coordination was particularly evident between the Project, EGMHI and Creative Arts/ Streetscapes projects in the Mountain Rivers region, which worked together in an almost integrated way.
- Barriers to coordination included:
 - A lack of strategic, high-level coordination prior to funding distribution
 - The Bairnsdale location of the Coordination Group meetings was somewhat of a barrier to those working in the Mountain Rivers region.

Apart from the Project, eight other recovery-related projects were offered in the different geographic locations. Table 8 provides an overview of the different projects,

where they were offered and also if they were active in the area during the time of the Adaptation for Recovery Project. More detail is presented in Appendix D.

Table 8: Recovery projects in East Gippsland

Project	Glenaladale	Bonang/Tubbut	Goongerah
Creative Arts Recovery Facilitators Focus on the professional development of local artists and arts workers, community leadership development, and stimulating creative recovery activities.	Offered, but not taken up by community	These projects were merged.	These projects were merged.
Creative Tourism Streetscapes in Bushfire Affected Communities – Putting Locals First Program Install a minimum of four creative public installations to serve as cultural signposts and a unique tourism marker.	✘	✓	✓
Business Capacity building Provide business mentoring for a minimum 10 businesses in Orbost and district and Bonang, Goongerah and Tubbut.	✘	✓	✓
Gippsland Tourism Incident Management – Resilient Community Program A series of workshops across Gippsland to tourism business proprietors.	Not available	Not available	Not available
East Gippsland Building Community Resilience – Resilient Community Program Engage with communities and agencies to map the current situation in each locality. Increase resilience using a study circle approach, undertaking an activity and evaluating the impact. Develop an on-line resource.	Offered, but not taken up by community	Offered, but not taken up by community (except for the mapping exercise)	✓
Community Recovery Events Community gatherings providing social and interactive connections for community members	✓	✓	✓
ATAP- Therapeutic Intervention for Extreme Climatic Events	Not available	✓	✓
East Gippsland Mental Health Initiative - Community and Spiritual Wellbeing capacity Building.	✓	✓	✓

✓ = active in the area, ✘ = not offered

Coordination between the Project and the eight other projects was varied, consisting of both formal and informal mechanisms.

Formal coordination was established through two committees:

- Reference Group – acted as the governing body for the collection of projects. It consisted of senior staff of funding organisations for the different projects and government departments. Refer Appendix C for membership of this group.
- Coordination group – was the operational committee. It consisted of project facilitators representing the different delivery agencies. Refer Appendix C for membership of this group.

The Reference Group facilitated high-level reporting into different government departments and

organisations about the Project, helping to encourage organisational understanding of the Project's collaborative approach. This group was formed after funding had been distributed so could not influence funding decisions. The lack of a strategic approach to funding, however, was cited as a barrier to cooperation between the projects.

The main formal inter-project coordination was the Coordination Group. While this group facilitated regular contact between the different project coordinators, thus enabling cooperation and reducing duplication of effort in the communities, opportunities for improvement were identified. The location of the meetings in Bairnsdale was perceived as a barrier to participation for those working predominantly further East, beyond Orbost. Additionally, the format used of reporting activities was perceived to be quite time

intensive, and could potentially have been shared in a short email format prior to the meeting, leaving the meeting for more focused discussion of collaboration opportunities. Finally, as all project personnel were generally employed on a part time basis, the time taken to attend these meetings was seen to directly impact the time spent in the communities. Allowing extra time and budget for meetings may have reduced this conflict for the project personnel.

Informal mechanisms differed slightly between Glenaladale and the Mountain Rivers region. However, in both areas, coordination was enhanced by co-location of the Recovery Facilitator with other project staff, flexibility in the respective project delivery models, personal commitment and relationship development between the personnel across the different projects.

Glenaladale

Only two other projects were delivered in Glenaladale at the same time as the Project; the Community Recovery Events and the East Gippsland Mental Health Initiative (EGMHI). The Community Recovery Events were managed by the EGSC Emergency Management and Recovery team. Most had been delivered before the Project commenced. However, the Project Recovery Facilitator, based in the EGSC Emergency Management and Recovery office, had weekly contact and liaison with the staff. Informal coordination was therefore strong with Project updates regularly passing between the staff.

It was acknowledged that the EGMHI did not coordinate as successfully with the Project in Glenaladale as it did in the Mountain Rivers region. The project coordinator for the EGMHI and the Recovery Facilitator discussed opportunities to coordinate efforts, and the EGMHI project coordinator attended some GDEMG meetings and activities. The Project Recovery Facilitator and EGMHI coordinator also jointly visited community members on several occasions, providing a one-on-one opportunity. However, the lack of opportunities for the EGMHI project coordinator to be visible and engage with the community informally, such as through a Neighbourhood House, or as part

of other projects, was suggested as one reason for the lack of integration. Additionally, EGMHI resources were seen as stretched across all fire-affected communities.

Mountain Rivers region

In the Mountain Rivers region there was some initial confusion about how the many recovery projects would operate, what the benefits were, and also general community confusion with the number of different projects being delivered in the area *“there’s been heaps of stuff going on...we discussed them, trying to distinguish which one was which”* (Community member, Mountain Rivers, March 2016).

This initial confusion was also expressed by the different project facilitators, as they identified how their projects offered different opportunities and how they could coordinate and support each other.

Over time, three of the projects in the Mountain Rivers region coordinated and supported each other exceptionally well: the Project, EGMHI and the combined Creative Arts/Streetscapes projects. This exceptional coordination was attributed to the flexibility allowed within the individual project delivery models, the flexibility of the respective project facilitators to work together, to communicate regularly, and a personal commitment to making the projects work for the communities of the Mountain Rivers region. The schedule of activities was coordinated between the three projects, where possible the Project provided assistance (time, resources, support) to the other projects, and this was reciprocated. For example, the Creative Arts/Streetscapes project in Goongerah produced a community hall sign. The launch event for the hanging of this sign was a BBQ, funded through the Project, to bring the broad community together (Refer Figure 6).

The EGMHI was almost ‘integrated’ with the Project in the Mountain Rivers region, offering opportunities for community members’ wellbeing alongside the Project. The two facilitators designed event schedules, cross-promoted events and supported each other by attending each other’s events where possible.

Figure 6: Goongerah Give Me a Sign installation BBQ



For example, two Men's Health nights were held in partnership with Within Australia (EGMHI). Both the EGMHI facilitator and the Project Recovery Facilitator promoted the activity to attract participation.

Coordination with the other projects in the Mountain Rivers was less successful. The other projects

were perceived to have either a less flexible delivery structure (so were unable to make as many accommodations for other projects), or the facilitators were restricted in their travel to the communities to the Mountain Rivers. The Community Recovery Events had been delivered prior to the Project commencing in the Mountain Rivers region.

8. Challenges

Several challenges emerged throughout the Project that were perceived to impact achievement of outcomes. Many of these were addressed locally by the Recovery Facilitator and the Project participants, however some challenges were not able to be addressed in this way.

Community anger and frustration: After the fires, both communities expressed frustration and anger with the fire response and management. Although a State level enquiry into the fire response was underway, this anger was still present when the Project commenced. In Bonang/Tubbut, the expression of anger in community meetings was perceived to have deterred some people from participating in the Project.

In each community, the Recovery Facilitator worked with the Project working group members to help move past the anger. However, this did not reach all community members.

To mitigate the impact of anger and frustration on future potential projects, several stakeholders and community members suggested a separate community meeting should be held. This meeting would provide a forum for community members to engage in a facilitated discussion with representatives from responsible fire management agencies. It should aim to address community concerns and begin the process of moving the community down the recovery pathway.

"...[you] need time to explore the negatives really. ...If you don't deal with these negative things...if you're just trying to go straight in to the positives... it'll all keep surfacing again."

(Stakeholder, June 2016)

Existing community divisions: As in most communities, there were existing bonds and divisions between individuals. While existing bonds helped to create Project working groups and connections across the broader community, it was noted that existing community divisions may have prevented some people from joining the Project working groups and participating more actively in the Project.

In Bonang/Tubbut this challenge was tackled later in the Project by collaborating with the EGMHI to bring isolated individuals back to the community and to be accepted by the community. This was supported by the Recovery Facilitator working in a deliberately inclusive manner, organising a conflict management and negotiation workshop and suggesting inviting the wider community to BADEG meetings.

In Glenaladale, the Recovery Facilitator worked with the GDEMG to build their skills to question their assumptions about others and resolve issues in a structured way.

Overcoming long-held community divisions is a difficult task for a broad, community-driven project. Different approaches such as specifically targeting project initiatives to different community groups, and engaging mental health professionals alongside Recovery Facilitators were suggested. Further research into how community divisions can be negotiated for recovery and resilience after a traumatic event is needed.

The Project approach and aims were not initially understood: The Project was launched at community meetings in both Glenaladale and the Mountain Rivers regions. It was a new concept for both the EGSC and the communities. The Project was designed to be flexible, with open-ended outcomes directed by the respective communities. However, this was not initially understood by communities. This led to confusion about the aims of the Project, uncertainty about the role of community members and what benefits the Project could or should deliver. For example, in Glenaladale, some community members recognised the Project was about building a range of community skills for resilience,

while others thought it was more narrowly focused on community “safety” in a very practical sense.

To address this challenge, the Recovery Facilitators worked with the respective Project working groups to explain the Project in plain language relevant to the communities. They used mechanisms to identify local issues and ways to address these to help focus the community efforts and move forward.

However, a more cohesive, simple message to take to the broader community at the beginning of the Project would have removed a lot of this confusion.

The Recovery Facilitators did not have specialist mental health skills to engage with the most emotionally vulnerable in the community: For those who were already isolated in the respective communities (for a variety of reasons), or those severely emotionally impacted by the fires, specialist mental health skills were required to assist their recovery, enhance their wellbeing and their adaptive capacity. While neither of the Recovery Facilitators had these skills, they were aware there were people that needed this assistance.

As outlined in Section 7.3, each of the Recovery Facilitators addressed this need through the EGMHI. To ensure this element is adequately addressed in future projects, it’s recommended to incorporate specific mental health expertise into program design, and resource it appropriately.

Additional external shocks: In Glenaladale, an additional shock was applied to the community by the mineral sand mine proposal for the area (refer footnote 10 on p.23). Although the area had been studied for mineral sands potential for many years, the issue emerged again during the Project, and proved to be a large, divisive shock for the GDEMG members and the broader community.

[The mine] “derailed the group and divided the community”
(Community member, Glenaladale, Oct 2016).

The Project concluded before this challenge was addressed. However, it highlighted an important learning for future projects, that is, the requirement to identify the point when the recovery project needs to transition to community development. This process may not happen automatically, so the Recovery Facilitator can assist the community to recognise that the skills they have developed through the project can be applied to different shocks and hazards.

Varied agency interaction: Most government organisations work in silos and it is difficult for different departments to know about individual projects being implemented in the community. However, the lack of understanding of the collaborative and community-led intent of the Project amongst different EGSC departments and some of the other relevant

government agencies was perceived to have created barriers for parts of the Project.

In each area, the Recovery Facilitator was required to negotiate negative interactions and work to improve the understanding of the organisational personnel involved.

In the future, an accepted understanding of the ABCD approach to recovery, and what that means for associated agencies, as well as a cohesive communication strategy targeting different parts of relevant organisations would assist to alleviate this issue.

9. Other important highlights

Existing Context: Unsurprisingly, the existing context in each area played a significant role in how the Project was delivered and the outcomes it achieved. Some of these context elements that impacted the Project included:

- Remote area: This mainly relates to the lack of proximity and ease of access to a range of services (Government and non-government), on an ongoing basis. The lack of regular contact with government agencies in remote areas reduced the opportunity for strengthening relationships and developing communication channels. This contributed to an “us and them” attitude which was not helpful in building community resilience, and required significant effort to change.
- Existing community bonds and divisions: discussed in section 8.

Recovery is only one part of the resilience puzzle:

The Project was perceived to build community resources and confidence to recover from and deal with future fire emergencies, however, this is only part of the complex concept called ‘resilience’. As outlined in Section 8, transference of the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired through the Project to other situations is not automatic. This suggests that a step needs to be incorporated that transitions the community from “recovery” to “community

development”, explicitly encompassing broader issues other than emergency preparedness and management.

Practical and emotional support: The issues and activities identified by the community members tended towards the very practical; many even stated that is what they wanted, practical, useful activities. However, the evaluation discovered that individuals often found it hard to express their need for emotional support, and even harder to make the step to seek it out. Additionally, in some areas, those most affected by the fires did not realise emotional support was available, so did not even try to seek it out. Future project designs need to be cognisant that although an approach directed by the community can help provide some level of emotional support, specialist, medically trained staff should be integrated into the project to approach community members in need.

Process matters: In each of the communities, comments arose around ‘due process’. This related to a variety of things, including advertising the facilitator role in the local communities, accountability for budget expenditure and communication of the Project. Although the Project’s flexibility was one of its strengths, ensuring a clear plan of action, and appropriate, visible processes would have decreased some negative perceptions.

10. Recommendations

The evaluation identified several opportunities for implementing a modified ABCD model to aid recovery and build resilience that is sustained much longer than in the immediate 12 months after an emergency event. The following identifies key recommendations, along

with suggestions for the stakeholder best placed to take responsibility for enacting the recommendation. Figure 7 presents a diagrammatic model for a modified ABCD approach in a disaster recovery situation.

Table 9: Key recommendations for implementing a similar recovery approach in the future

	Recommendation	Stakeholder(s)
Pre-event Planning: Foundation Building	Establish a coordinated and strategic approach to recovery assistance and funding: This requires prior agreement and collaboration between funding agencies. It is recommended this is coordinated through a single entity such as Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) or the relevant local government. Administrative and governance procedures for working collaboratively can be established in advance.	State Government – possibly DHHS which has responsibility for regional relief and recovery planning and coordination
	Incorporate a modified ABCD approach within recovery plans: The decision to deliver emergency recovery through an ABCD approach should be made prior to any event, and be incorporated into pre-event recovery planning. Broad program goals can be developed, but allowing flexibility for locally-relevant refinement, addition or change. Such an approach would incorporate elements that contributed to success in the Adaptation for Recovery Project such as untied project finances, a two-year time frame and community-led recovery.	Local Government – together with State Government and local health providers
	Establish a recovery partnership with local mental health professionals: Wellbeing outcomes and psychosocial support would be enhanced by an explicit partnership or inclusion of mental health professionals in the project design.	Local Government – together with State Government and local health providers

Post-event Planning	<p>Community assessment: A coordinated approach would include time immediately after an emergency to rapidly assess and prioritise local community needs, working with affected communities, State government agencies and the local government.</p>	State Government coordinating entity – or Local Government
	<p>Multiple projects can meet multiple community needs: It is recommended that multiple projects have a single coordinating entity to avoid confusion and overload in affected communities. Differing but aligned project aims can potentially target different members in the community, enabling greater impact.</p>	
	<p>Develop clear, concise project communications: Messaging for the project should be consistent as well as relevant to the local communities. It needs to incorporate a clear, concise overview of the next steps for the community, which would detail how the project operates and its potential benefits. Some communication planning and message development can be undertaken during pre-event planning. Multiple methods for communication are recommended, including visual materials, even video commentary case studies.</p>	Local Government – with recovery partner organisations
	<p>Recruit appropriate facilitators: Selection of facilitators appropriate for the context is vital. Consideration should be paid to technical skills, as well as personal attributes and connection to the community. If skills are lacking, fast-track training for the appropriate person. Mental health community outreach professionals should be explicitly included in the project design. This may mean a co-facilitation role with recovery facilitators, to help embed this element in the project from the beginning.</p>	Local Government – with recovery partner organisations
Delivery	<p>Undertake a structured, post-event debrief with impacted communities: Undertaking a post-event debrief soon after an event has occurred, to allow fear, anger and pain to be processed was recommended by many community members.</p>	State Government – Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning with CFA and Local Government
	<p>Recognise different levels of participation: Although the project focus should be determined by the community, a skilled facilitator should be aware of the different levels of participation, and alert the community to this. Project activities can then be identified and targeted with particular sections of the community in mind, with awareness to include those less likely to participate.</p>	Local Government – with Recovery Facilitator
	<p>Local employment: Where possible, particularly in remote areas, providing opportunities for local employment through the project keeps recovery money 'in the community'.</p>	Recovery Facilitator – with Local Government
	<p>Look for early, tangible outputs: Facilitators need to enable some 'quick wins' while also working with the community to establish longer term goals and initiatives.</p>	Recovery Facilitator
	<p>Formal skills and capacity development: Although the particular activities will be identified by community members, formal skills training and capacity development should be offered as part of the project.</p>	Recovery Facilitator – with Local Government
Conclusion/ Exit	<p>Transition from emergency management to community development: The natural instinct for a community that has been impacted by an emergency event is to focus on emergency preparedness and management. However, the Facilitator needs to be alert to opportunities to refocus efforts on community development as the project progresses. This will assist with transitioning at the end of the project.</p>	Recovery Facilitator – with Local Government
	<p>Transition of recovery groups: A planned process to share responsibility with existing community groups and members, particularly if a new recovery group was formed for the delivery of the project. This will help maintain relationships established with agencies throughout the project.</p>	Local government
	<p>Transition of the facilitator: Locally-based facilitators will have a weight of expectation on their shoulders at the end of a project. A strategy to reduce the community reliance on the facilitator helps to transition the Facilitator out of the role.</p>	Local government

Figure 7: Modified ABCD approach in a disaster recovery situation

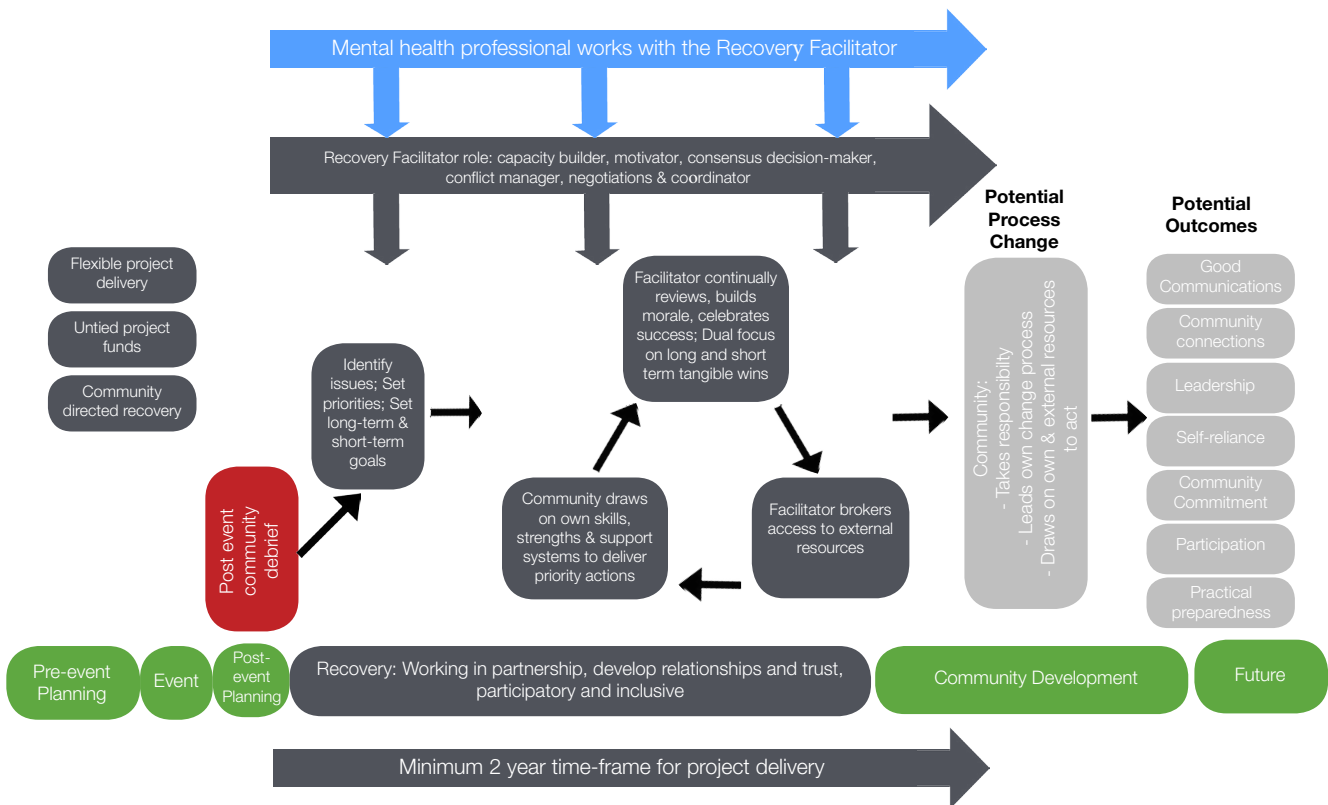


Figure 7 outlines the key elements to guide a future modified ABCD approach to a disaster recovery project.

The model shows that a modified ABCD approach should be delivered over a minimum two-year time-frame, enabled by key elements of flexible project delivery, untied project funds and informed by a community-directed philosophy. The model advocates working in partnership, developing relationships and trust, in a participatory and inclusive manner.

Planning for recovery begins before an event and continues after with localised post-event planning. The project recognises a transition from a recovery project to a broader community development focus towards the end of the two-year time frame, helping to prepare and support communities in the future.

The Recovery Facilitator is crucial to the model. Their role is multi-faceted, incorporating capacity

builder, motivator, consensus decision-maker, conflict manager, negotiator and coordinator. This requires a mix of both professional skills and personal characteristics.

A mental health professional works alongside and in partnership with the Recovery Facilitator, to assist address emotional wellbeing and psychosocial issues.

The process itself requires a separate post-event community debrief to allow issues of hurt and anger related to the event to be aired and addressed. It then works through identifying issues to be addressed and setting long term goals as well as short-term tangible wins. The community then draws on their own strengths, skills and support systems, supported by the Recovery Facilitator, to deliver priority actions. The Recovery Facilitator brokers access to external resources and connects the community to agencies as required. An ongoing process of reflexive review is undertaken, with the Recovery Facilitator maintaining

motivation and morale, and keeping the group focused on both long-term goals and short-term wins, celebrating success along the way.

Potential process change and outcomes will ultimately depend on each community.

SUPPLEMENTARY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Mapping of individual skills, community groups and institutions:

As discussed in Section 7.1, the Project did not undertake a mapping exercise (of individual skills, community groups and institutions) which is a standard step in the ABCD approach. Future projects may want to trial a mapping exercise to determine local strengths and assets.

Personal recovery case managers: Those drastically impacted by the fires highlighted the need for a personal recovery manager to help guide them through financial, emotional and business planning issues. This individual could be part of, or just connected to a larger recovery project. Their role would be to work with affected individuals or families, connecting them to services as needed, providing guidance on everything from insurance claims, bridging finance, business

planning to trauma counselling and emotional support. The personal recovery case manager would also help connect these people into the recovery project, to get the community support they need.

Further research opportunities: The evaluation identified opportunities for further research, including:

- How can community divisions be negotiated for recovery and resilience after a traumatic event?
- What is the extent of emotional impact and psychological trauma caused by events such as bushfires?
- How can emotional and psychological trauma be alleviated through community recovery and resilience building projects?
- How can participatory evaluation of recovery and resilience building projects develop community capacity and learning to improve outcomes?

11. Conclusion

The Adaptation for Recovery Project sought to test the principles of an ABCD approach in a recovery situation. It aimed to use this approach to build community resilience and adaptive capacity in the context of natural disasters.

The evaluation found that those who had been actively involved in the Project could reflect upon their individual and community situation and note how it had changed since the fires. They attributed changes in such things as their sense of self-reliance, and their community commitment and participation (amongst other things) to their participation in the Project.

The Project reached broadly across the affected communities, however not all community members participated in the range of activities offered.

Underpinning elements of the Project model that both community members and stakeholders feel were important in bringing about these changes, were that appropriate facilitators had been identified for the different communities, the project was community-led,

funds were not pre-allocated to activities and it had a multi-year time frame. 'Quick wins' were considered important in keeping the community motivated, and the Project visible.

Challenges included addressing community anger and frustration, working with existing divisions in the community, and responding to additional external shocks.

Future recovery efforts could be structured using a modified ABCD approach, which incorporates the additional step of a formal debrief with the community post the event, but prior to the Project starting. Such efforts would benefit from a strategic, coordinated funding model, and pre-event planning to establish potential partnerships and agreements.

Recognising that supporting those who have experienced significant trauma requires specialist mental health skills, these skills should be a feature of recovery project designs – working alongside the recovery facilitators.

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Appendix A – Evaluation Approach Detail

The evaluation framework for the Project was developed between September and November 2015. Workshops were held with the Project Reference Group, community representatives from the participating areas and the Project Recovery Facilitators. These workshops developed a program logic to inform the Project evaluation (refer Appendix C), identified stakeholders, the main aims of the evaluation, and key evaluation questions.

The aims of the evaluation are:

1. To engage the community in measuring changes in individual and collective adaptive capacity.
2. To support community learning and improvement.
3. To determine the efficiency of the Project.
4. To measure the effectiveness of the Project in achieving Project outcomes.
5. To determine and describe the local, context-specific outcomes of the Project.
6. To assess the impact of the delivery model on the Project.

Key Evaluation Questions

The Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) evaluated the process for the Project and the outcomes.

1. What level of community activity has the Project generated/leveraged?
2. Who participated in the Project activities and to what extent?
3. How do participants perceive the quality of the activities organised by the agency, and by community members within the Project?
4. To what extent has the Project contributed to community resilience, as defined by the communities and agencies of the Project regions, in the context of disaster preparedness and recovery?
5. To what extent has the Project contributed to individual and collective adaptive capacity to prepare for and recover from disasters in the Project regions?
 - a. What are the elements of individual and collective adaptive capacity in the context of disaster preparedness and recovery as defined by the community through the Project?
 - b. How has the Project helped generate changed attitudes, behaviours and actions to enhance longer-term adaptive capacity of the region?
 - c. What is the extent of confidence in the community to engage with agencies and to understand government programs and processes?
6. In what way have the quality of relationships between individuals, community and government agencies altered as a result of the Project?
 - a. To what extent has the attitude of the community changed towards agencies and itself as a result of the Project, in the context of disaster preparedness and recovery?
 - b. To what extent has the attitude of agencies changed towards community as a result of the Project, in the context of disaster preparedness and recovery?
7. To what extent were networks and collaborations developed and supported as a result of the Project?
8. In what way has the Project delivery model influenced the achievement of outcomes?
9. To what extent has Project delivery adapted to different local contexts?

10. How effectively has the Project coordinated with other initiatives being delivered in the specified geographic locations of East Gippsland?

Methods

Several complementary qualitative methods were used to capture the data for the evaluation.

Information for the Project context was drawn from government documents and initial Project documentation.

To address several of the KEQs, reflective, participatory methods were selected.

- Rich Pictures - provided individuals in small group meetings with a chance to reflect on and interrogate their current situation.
- Most Significant Change – was used in small group meetings in each community. Each member told one story of a significant change they had experienced as a result of the Project. Participants reflected on why the change was significant.
- Combined Trend and Influence Matrix – assisted community members to determine the most important criteria for resilience in their particular community. They then determined how these criteria were rated at key points in time. Participants also reflected on whether observed changes were influenced by the Project.

Other methods included:

- Key stakeholder interviews – 14 interviews were undertaken with 12 organisational stakeholders.
- Community member interviews – 10 interviews were undertaken with community members
- Vox pop community interviews – 6 vox pop style interviews were undertaken at a community event in Glenaladale
- Project records – such as Recovery Facilitator event reports, meeting notes and minutes were appraised.

Interviews, vox pop and community meeting notes were coded and analysed against the KEQ using nVivo software.

Timing of the evaluation

The evaluation was conducted in stages from March 2016 to November 2016. The original timeline for the evaluation was March – June 2016; however with the extension of the Project, it was suitable to also alter the timing of evaluation activities.

March 2016:	Evaluation meetings with community groups established through the Project in Glenaladale and Bonang-Tubbut
	Organisational stakeholder interviews (round 1)
June 2016:	Organisational stakeholder interviews (round 2)
September 2016:	Vox Pop style community interviews (undertaken at a community recovery activity in Glenaladale)
October 2016:	Evaluation meetings with community groups established through the Project in Glenaladale, Bonang-Tubbut and Goongerah
October 2016 – November 2016:	Community member interviews (Mountain Rivers only)

Limitations

The chosen approach engaged community members in participatory, reflective activities, rather than ask the community to undertake independent monitoring or evaluation themselves (normally present in a participatory

approach). Community representatives contributed to the development of the evaluation framework, and selection of methods.

Media was not reviewed for the evaluation, although local media was generated during the course of the Project.

Existing context for the Project was determined using selected IGEM and EGSC reports, however, a baseline social assessment of the context of each of the communities before the fires and after the fires but before the Project started was not conducted.

Some effort was made to reach community members who did not actively participate in the Project to understand reasons for “non-participation”. However, this element relied on community member referral and non-participant interest, so was limited in the number of people it reached.

All techniques (apart from document analysis) relied on the perception of stakeholders and community members. Therefore, where perceptions differ between groups of people, or even individuals, a conclusive view was not able to be presented, if triangulation of the data did not support a single view.

Stakeholder Interview Schedule

East Gippsland Stakeholder Questions – Semi-structured

These first questions are focused on aspects of the delivery of the Adaptation for Recovery project.

Quest 1

Please describe your involvement in the Adaptation for Recovery (AfR) project.

Quest 2

a. Please indicate which (if any) of the following projects you have been involved with:

- i. Creative Arts Recovery Project
- ii. Creative Tourism Streetscapes
- iii. Business Capacity Building
- iv. Gippsland Tourism Incident Management – Resilient Community Program
- v. Resilient Community Program
- vi. Community Recovery Events
- vii. East Gippsland Mental Health Initiative

2b. Explain your involvement.

2c. Please describe any interaction between the AfR project and (as indicated per list above) project that you observed or were aware of.

(this may be shared workshops...shared facilitator etc)

2d. Are you aware of any specific occasions when the AfR proactively coordinated its activities with (as indicated per list above) project? Please describe.

2e. Are you aware of occasions when the AfR could have coordinated better with (as indicated per list above) project? Please describe.

Quest 3.

3a. Please describe what stands out to you as the main features of the way the AfR project has been delivered?

3b. In your opinion, what has worked particularly well in the delivery of this project?

3c. What do you think could be improved?

3d. From the following list of the AfR project delivery features, please identify what you think are the **3 most important** features, and explain why you think they are the most important.

Features

- a. Skilled project facilitators
- b. Broad program outcomes (rather than very specifically detailed outcomes and outputs)
- c. Concept of community generated program goals and outcomes
- d. Flexibility in program delivery
- e. Partnership approach to delivery (between organisations, and with community)
- f. Untied financial Resources
- g. Collaborative attitude of organisational personnel
- h. Two-year time frame for the project
- i. Facilitated process revealing and building on existing strengths in the community
- j. Dual focus on short term gains and longer term outcomes
- k. Other...?

Looking more at the outcomes of the project now...

Quest 4.

4a. Looking at the following ingredients of community resilience, please rate on a scale of -2 to +2, the type of influence you perceive the project has had on each of the ingredients. Where

-2 = Very negative influence

-1 = Negative influence

0 = No influence

1 = Positive influence

2 = Very positive influence

Ingredients:

Potential ingredients of community resilience
*organisations represents government departments, agencies and volunteer organisations such as CFA and SES
Clear leadership from responsible organisations*
Clear leadership from within the community
Clear processes and procedures to follow in times of emergency
Clear processes and procedures to follow AFTER an emergency
Clarity about roles and responsibilities (community and organisations)
Knowledge (for all phases of a disaster event)
Skills (for all phases of a disaster event)
Resources (money, physical resources)
Connections to/relationships with others in the community
Connections to/relationships across different communities
Connections to/relationships between the community and organisations
Connections/relationships between organisations
Cultural norms in the community (eg: its ok to ask for help)
Clear, respectful communications/information
Trust between community members
Trust between agency staff and community members
"Can do" attitude
Shared sense of purpose
Other (explain)

4b. Why did you rate these in this way? (focus on top 3 highest, and bottom 3 lowest)

Quest 5.

5a. What (if anything) have you observed the community doing differently this year (eg: specific actions or activities) in relation to preparation for the fire season? Floods?

5b. Can you connect these actions to the project? (How?)

Quest 6

6a. Would you say government agencies and organisations are doing anything differently this year (eg: specific actions or activities) in relation to preparation for the fire season (floods? and recovery)? Feel free to just talk about your own organisation, or what you have seen in other organisations if you wish.

6b. How would you describe the changes? (Explore whether this is just bushfire related or also flood)

6c. Can you connect these to the project? (How?)

Quest 7

7a. Can you describe any collaborations that have emerged in the last 12 months between your organisation and other organisations, or between your organisation and the community?

7b. Can you connect these to the project?

Quest 8.

8a. Thinking of the qualities of good relationships. What would you expect to see if you saw a good relationship between an organisation and the community?

Allow for x y z.

Following only asked of some people, depending on response to above

8b. On a scale of 1 – 5 (where 1 = very poor and 5 = very strong), please rate your organisation's relationship with the community, based on identified elements of a good relationship.

Of the community in your organisation

Of your organisation in the community

8c. How do you think this changed in the last 12 months?

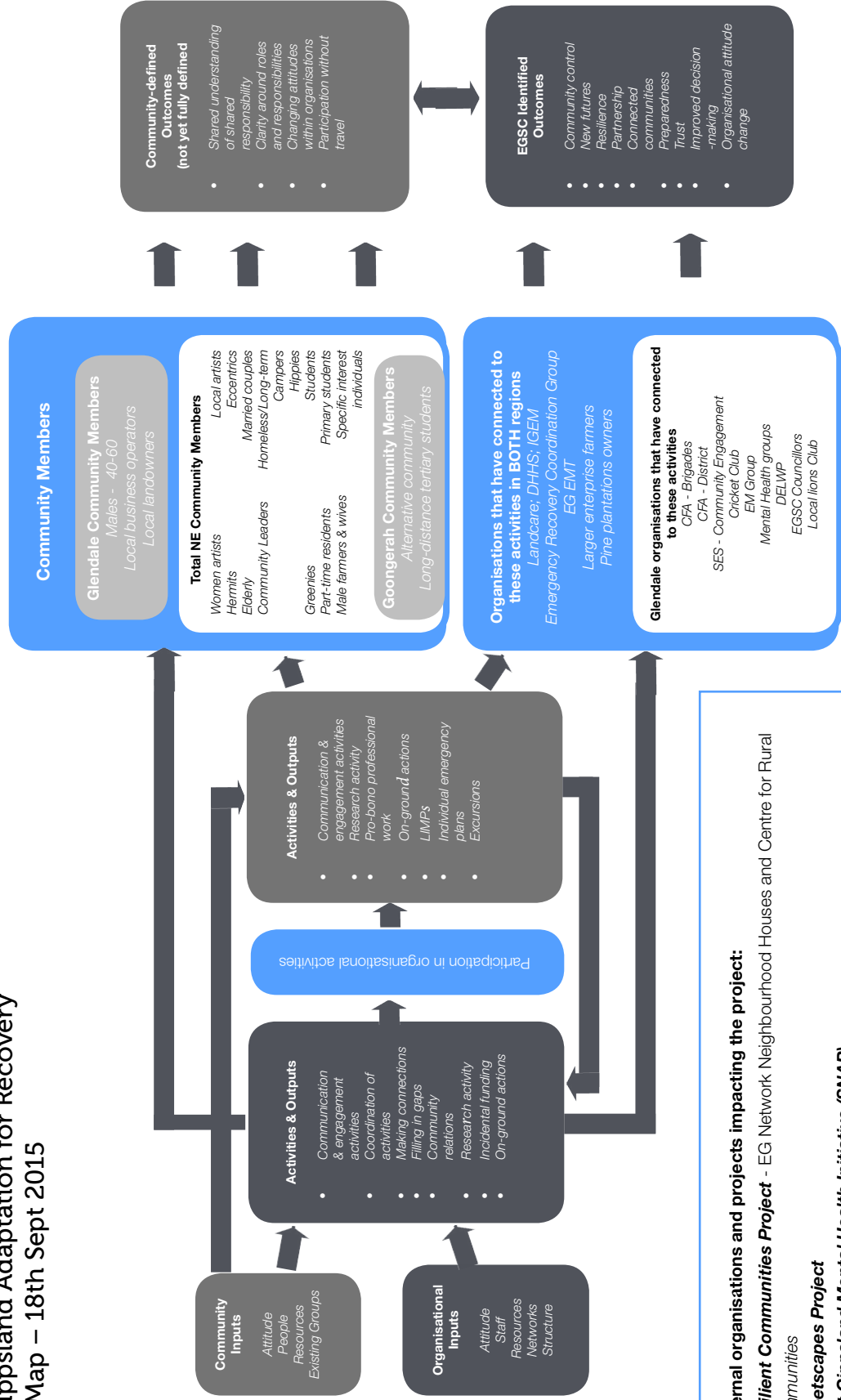
Quest 9.

In relation to the sense of preparedness heading into this year's fire season, on a scale of 1 – 5 (where 1 = very low and 5 = very high), please rate:

Your perception of the community's optimism about their preparedness

Appendix B – Project Logic Map

East Gippsland Adaptation for Recovery
Logic Map – 18th Sept 2015



External organisations and projects impacting the project:
Resilient Communities Project - EG Network Neighbourhood Houses and Centre for Rural Communities
Streetscapes Project
East Gippsland Mental Health Initiative (SNAP)
Business Mentoring Project
Gippsland Tourism Incident Management

Appendix C – Project Committee Membership

Reference Group Membership

Chaired by the East Gippsland Shire Council

Regional Development Victoria

Department of Human and Health Services (formerly Dept of Human Services)

East Gippsland Network of Neighbourhood Houses

Orbost Regional Health

Regional Arts Victoria

SNAP

East Gippsland Primary Care Partnership

Coordination Group Membership

Chaired by Department of Human and Health Services (formerly Dept of Human Services)

Facilitators from each of the projects

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

East Gippsland Shire Council

Appendix D – Recovery projects delivered in East Gippsland

Project†	Funding Agency	Recipient	Glenaladale	Bonang-Tubbut	Goongerah
Creative Arts Recovery Facilitators Focus on the professional development of local artists and arts workers, community leadership development, and stimulating creative recovery activities.	DHHS	RAV	Offered, but community did not take up the opportunity	These projects were merged. The Creative Arts Recovery Facilitator worked with the budget provided by the Streetscapes project	These projects were merged. The Creative Arts Recovery Facilitator worked with the budget provided by the Streetscapes project
Creative Tourism Streetscapes in Bushfire Affected Communities – Putting Locals First Program Install a minimum of four creative public installations within Tubbut, Bendoc, Goongerah and Bonang to serve as cultural signposts and a unique tourism marker.	RDV	EGSC	✘		
Business Capacity building Provide business mentoring for a minimum 10 businesses in Orbost and district and Bonang, Goongerah and Tubbut regions. Deliver a minimum of four business workshops or training programs, a minimum of two networking events and advocate for local business with large scale projects within the district.	EGSC and RDV and Orbost District Community Development Group	EGSC	✘	✓	✓
Gippsland Tourism Incident Management – Resilient Community Program A series of workshops across Gippsland to tourism business proprietors.	RDV	Destination Gippsland	✘	✘	✘
East Gippsland Building Community Resilience – Resilient Community Program Engage with communities and agencies to map the current situation in each locality. Increase resilience using a study circle approach, undertaking an activity and evaluating the impact. Develop an on-line resource - sharing experiences, resources and strategies for engagement.	RDV	East Gippsland Network of Neighbourhood Houses	Offered, but community did not take up the opportunity	Offered, but community did not take up the opportunity	✓
Community Recovery Events Community gatherings providing social and interactive connections for community members	RDV	EGSC	✓	✓	✓
ATAP- Therapeutic Intervention for Extreme Climatic Events	Gippsland Medicare Local	Relationships Australia	✘	✓	✓
East Gippsland Mental Health Initiative - Community and Spiritual Wellbeing capacity Building, Youth and Koori Youth Intensive Care Coordination	DHHS	SNAP (now Within Australia)	✓	✓	✓

Appendix E – Project Initiatives/Activities

Glenaladale initiatives/activities

(provided by the Glenaladale Recovery Facilitator)

Meetings

1 x Project launch community meeting
 Regular (mostly monthly) GADEMG meetings
 1 x LIMP explanation meeting with EGSC
 2 x Inspector General of Emergency Management (IGEM) – Tony Pearce – update on actions and recommendations from 2013-2014 Fire Season Compliance Report

Workshops/Training/Information

Individual emergency management planning day with CFA
 2 x DELWP information and feedback sessions on proposed risk based targets for fuel management (one meeting to explain what might happen and one to confirm the way forward for communities)
 180 x Emergency Management booklets distributed

Community Days/Events

March 2015 – Community Day with EGSC Community Recovery Events
 April 2015 – Community priority planning day
 October 2015 – Emergency Services Day
 September 2016 – Fingerboards Information shelter and Emergency Management Booklet launch and BBQ

Glenaladale and District Emergency Management Group (GDEMG) liaisons with agencies and other activity etc.

EGSC – development of LIMP, roadside slashing and

vegetation management, involvement and contribution to the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee

CFA – ongoing engagement

DELWP – development of stronger relationship and contacts, including community members listed for contact during times of fire, ongoing involvement with DELWP fire planning

VicRoads – roadside slashing and vegetation management

Hancock Victoria Plantations (HVP) – site visit, discussions around emergency response capability, sharing of HVP planned fire app,

Other – community survey, emergency management booklet, Emergency Assembly area, signage for Hall and roadsides directing to Assembly Area, Assembly area boundary fence, replacing property number signs, one-on-one visits with representative from Within to community members.

Other community activity:

Mental health visits by EGMHI project coordinator and facilitator to community members 18 months after fire. Planning meeting with shire representatives to plan long term roadside management.

Mountain Rivers region initiatives/activities

(provided by the Mountain Rivers Recovery Facilitator)

Meetings

3 x Project launch community meeting (Bonang, Bendoc, Goongerah)

Monthly BADEG meetings (including before they were

called BADEG)

2 x LIMP explanation meeting (Bonang & Goongerah)

1 x VicRoads meeting (initiated by BADEG)

7 x meetings with Goongerah community (about Streetscapes, LIMP and AfR initiatives)

Workshops/Training/Information

Communities in Control – 3 people funded to participate in the conference

Local Lives – Global Matters – 2 people funded to participate in the conference

Living with Bushfires – 1 person funded to participate in the conference

The Art of Creating Resilient Local Economies & Communities Putting People First

2 x Men's Stress Free Night (partnership activity with EGMHI – Within Australia)

Grant writing workshop

Financial information / Succession planning workshop (partnership with Landcare facilitators)

iFarm workshops

Conflict management and negotiation workshop (partnership activity with EGMHI – Within Australia)

Bolder Bush Beats workshops (for school children)

Advanced Wilderness first aid

Sprinkler system information & CFA Bushfire Planning workshop

Community Days/Events

BADEG – LIMP launch and community day

Give Me a Sign – sign installation BBQ and community day (Goongerah)

Bonang and District Emergency Group (BADEG) liaisons with agencies and other activity etc.

EGSC – LIMP, hall land and shed use and reducing hazards around Emergency Assembly Area, static water supply, roadside slashing, new roads included in EGSC/contractor slashing contract

CFA – campaigning for truck or slip-on unit at Bonang, more locals signed up as members, allocating CFA map books at Tubbut and Bonang Halls,

DELWP – community map, creation of an Intentions book

VicRoads – initiated 2 x meetings

Telstra – hall communications, battery backup and exchange, mobile tower,

Other – welcome pack for new residents, utilising unused community notice board, phone tree, signage, grant application for funding a trailer for a slip-on unit. Farmers built and installed a standpipe on fence line next to main road near the new static water tank and they tripled dam capacity to support static water and stand pipe supplies.

Other community activity:

Expansion of the Big Bonang Arvo: included DELWP, Parks Victoria and community market

Campsite Conversations with community and stakeholders: has led to key sites added to shire slashing contracts, EGSC re-developing a site with community members, Tubbut Neighbourhood House exploring with DELWP and Snowy River Interstate Landcare regarding a new toilet and rockwall fireplaces.

Fibre optic internet connection for Goongerah Hall: satellite internet installed early December 2016

Certification of Goongerah Hall kitchen

Grant submission for an insulated shed for the local food co-op “Goongerah Good Foods”

Successful grants for equipment and storage for Goongerah Hall and Good Foods

Exploration of a Voluntary Neighbourhood House in Goongerah (supported by Tubbut Neighbourhood House),

Extension of Goongerah Hall deck,

Supporting community and individual activities – Mountain Bike Track, Tourist App, bike festival,

amphitheatre, exploring social enterprises at Goongerah Hall to maximise the facility, “Healing through Narrative – Fire Stories Documentary” –

proposal to produce a film of stories from the fires that includes media skill building workshops and healing through narrative with Dr Lewis Mehl-Madrona.

Proposal still in the planning stages.

Collaboration with EGMHI and EGSC to develop a Health Service Emergency Response Plan with local health services.




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