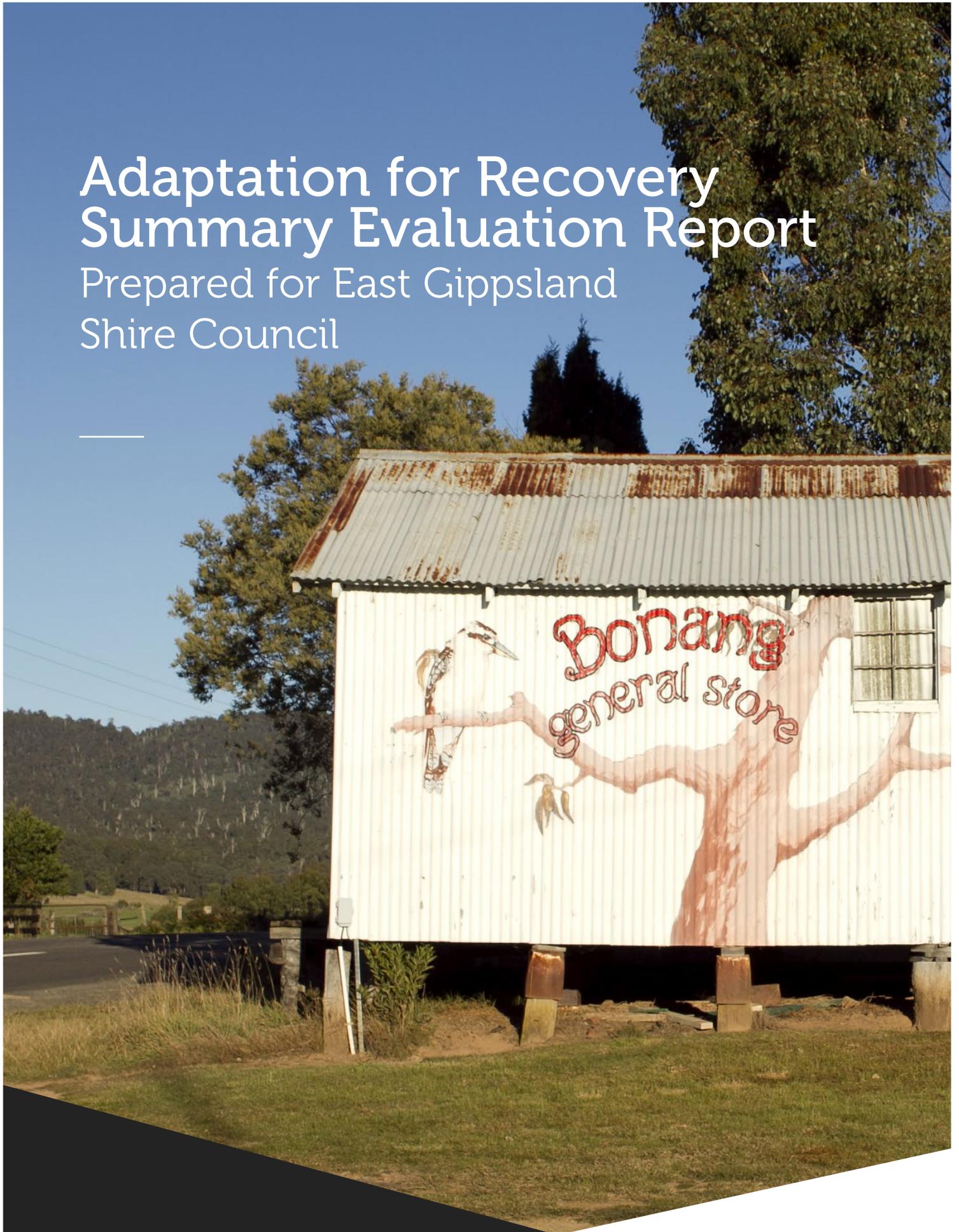


Adaptation for Recovery Summary Evaluation Report

Prepared for East Gippsland
Shire Council



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Helen Scott

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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 sustainably outcomes.

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1. Introduction

In early 2014 several communities in East Gippsland were severely impacted by bushfires. The Goongerah-Deddick Trail fire impacted the communities of Goongerah, Bonang, Tubbut and Bendoc, while the Mt Ray Boundary Track fire impacted the Glenaladale, Fernbank, Walpa and Iguana Creek communities. The two areas will be referred to through this report as the Mountain Rivers¹ region for the former and Glenaladale area for the latter.

After the fires, East Gippsland Shire Council (EGSC) implemented the Adaptation for Recovery Project (the Project). This project used a new approach to disaster recovery based on a modified “strengths-based” or “asset-based-community development” approach.

RMIT was engaged to undertake the evaluation of the project. The approach was developed collaboratively with EGSC, key stakeholders and community representatives. It involved reviewing

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

This report provides a summary of the evaluation of the Project. It presents key findings and recommendations to inform implementation of similar models in future fire-affected communities. Further detail and information can be found in the full evaluation report, the “Adaptation for Recovery Evaluation Report for East Gippsland Shire Council”. 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 A single facilitator was employed for the Mountain Rivers region, however, the project evolved in different ways in Goongerah compared with Bonang/Tubbut. Therefore in the report, these different communities will be referred to separately where relevant.

² Future Creation (2016)

2. What was the context for the Project?

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.

Table 1: Community context for the Project

Element	Glenaladale	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 census) 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 A)	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

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 required.

East Gippsland regularly experiences disasters caused by natural hazards. However, EGSC were concerned

that their recovery practices were not adequately addressing both immediate and cumulative impacts of disasters, nor helping impacted communities prepare for future hazards. EGSC, in its role as Recovery Manager, therefore wanted to try a different approach to recovery that addressed these concerns.

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

3. 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.

4. 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.

Significant and diverse activity was generated in each area: A broad array of initiatives were undertaken that targeted individual capacity needs, as well as broader community preparedness concerns (refer Appendix B for a list of activities in each community). These can be categorised as:

- Community events – incorporating practical and social activities, such as the Glenaladale Emergency Services Day.
- Capacity building/training – conference attendance, workshops and skills development, such as the Bolder Bush Beats workshops for school children in the Mountain Rivers region.
- Infrastructure projects – contributing a lasting, tangible legacy for the communities, such as the static water supply in Bonang and Emergency Assembly Area signage.
- Tangible outputs – such as the Local Incident Management Plans (LIMPs), or the replacement property numbering in Glenaladale.

In Bonang/Tubbut and Glenaladale, the initiatives focused on emergency management and preparedness, while in Goongerah, the focus was on developing the Goongerah Community Hall to be a more attractive, active centre for the community, to encourage greater engagement with community activities.

These activities attracted participation from across the affected communities, and involved many people. For example, over 150 people attended the Glenaladale Emergency Services Day held in October 2015 (see Figure 1).

“[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)

Community response to these activities was generally positive – although room for improvement in some activities was noted.

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. These highly engaged individuals noted that they had benefitted from the Project.



Figure 1: Glenaladale Emergency Services Day, Oct 2015

“There was a huge turnout to the Emergency Services Day, lots of enthusiastic volunteers and people. It was all good.”
 (Community member, Glenaladale, Sept 2016)

Further community activity was leveraged in addition to that funded by the Project, for example, the Mt Taylor community has followed the Glenaladale example and held an Emergency Services Day.

Resilience, as defined by each of the communities, was believed to have improved through the Project: Each community’s Project working group reflected on what helps a community recover from a natural hazard disaster, and to be able to respond and more easily recover the next time. Thus the ingredients for resilience proposed by the communities 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, noted that not all of these would persist after the Project had finished.

For those individuals who did not participate in the Project, changes in these ingredients were less evident.

Active participants in the Project felt that it helped them gain more positive attitudes and behaviours. In particular:

- More positive, confident outlooks
- Feeling empowered and a sense of pride in their achievements
- Feeling more connected to their community
- Taking greater responsibility
- More active participation in community activities – and a greater willingness to participate

“I’ve really grown as a person, I feel more educated, more empowered, I’m better at handling difficulties”

(Community member, Glenaladale, March 2016).

However, these attitudes and behaviours were not felt universally across the communities. Some community members expressed frustration and anger towards government agencies, and feelings of isolation and fear in the lead up to summer. While many of these people were less active, or did not engage with the Project at all, there was not enough evidence to suggest that participation would have altered these emotions for these particular individuals.

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. This resulted in prioritised infrastructure improvements (such as a static water supply in Bonang, Emergency Assembly Areas and signage in both areas), LIMPs, negotiated improvements in roadside clearing and communications activities such as establishing an emergency phone tree or the “intentions” book in Bonang. Additionally, community members felt that many of the Project activities enhanced the sense of connection between community members, and improved awareness of what steps should be taken in an emergency.

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. This sense of greater preparedness was reportedly due to their impression of stronger community connections, knowing who to contact in Government Agencies, having discussed emergency preparedness and response with friends and neighbours, and having a better understanding of the Emergency Services.

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, including better two-way communication between the community and the department. This was particularly evident in Glenaladale (and was due not only to the Project but a change of management focus in DELWP Bairnsdale). Some stakeholders noted there were signs of the relationship improving in the Mountain Rivers region also.

EGSC’s emergency management team’s relationship with the community was reported to have improved with regular contact and greater visibility through the Project. However, community members did not feel their relationship with the broader EGSC organisation had changed.

Although not a government agency, Hancock Victoria Plantations (HVP) had engaged more openly with the community as part of the Project, according to GDEMG members. HVP provided a tour of their facilities, plantation maps and an emergency fire response tracking application.

GDEMG members expressed more confidence engaging with government departments. This was generally through the development of personal connections with individuals in departments, but also through increased personal skills and a better appreciation of agency processes, limitations and opportunities.

“we have the management skills of how to deal with an organisation, ...to find common ground which the Project has given all of us”

(Community member, Glenaladale, June 2016)

5. How was this achieved?

Both the existing context and the way the Project was delivered influenced achievements across the fire-affected areas. Key Project influences included the overarching Project model, Recovery Facilitators, different delivery approaches depending on context, and the coordination and leveraging of other recovery projects.

Project model: Key elements of the Project delivery model worked together to enable the achievements indicated above.

- Recovery Facilitator role – the Facilitator was crucial in directing communities’ attention on the future and moving them forward (more detail provided below)
- Flexible Project delivery – the Project design did not prescribe activities or outcomes. This allowed the Project to evolve according to local conditions and requirements, and also enabled collaboration with concurrent recovery projects (especially in the Mountain Rivers region).
- Tangible, short-term outputs – the provision of immediate results made the work of the Project visible, and provided motivation for the Project working group members.
- Community-directed recovery – this allowed community members to identify their priority issues, and how they could be addressed. This enabled a sense of ownership and achievement.
- Untied Project funds – this supported the community-directed approach, allowing the community to identify where funds were

spent, rather than having pre-allocated budget requirements.

- Duration of Project – the extended two-year time frame allowed the Project working groups in each area enough time to form, move through issues of anger and hurt, and to focus on future-oriented, positive activities. It provided the time to implement activities in a planned and considered way.

Recovery Facilitator was critical: The Recovery Facilitators were central to the achievement of outcomes and were highly valued by the Project working groups in each community. They developed strong relationships and trust in each community, actively motivating the groups. The Recovery Facilitators provided a vital link to government agencies, helping to establish contacts between the agencies and the community.

“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)

Facilitation skills were important, as were coordination skills, and personal qualities of active listening and working in a participatory manner. In the more remote Mountain Rivers region, it was considered important to have a Recovery Facilitator perceived to be a “local”,

who understood the community's particular needs. Even though the Recovery Facilitator in Glenaladale was not a local to the area, he was still a local to the Bairnsdale¹⁰ region, which was important for making connections in the community.

Implementation differed in different locations:

The model enabled the Project to be delivered differently in each community, according to the Recovery Facilitator skills and the community needs. The different approaches that evolved allowed for locally specific achievements. For example, in Glenaladale, the Recovery Facilitator was housed with the emergency management team at EGSC in Bairnsdale. This allowed for access to other areas in EGSC when required, but also facilitated a close working relationship between the Recovery Facilitator and the emergency management team that benefited the emergency management focus of the Glenaladale community. In the Mountain Rivers region, the Recovery Facilitator was based at Orbost Regional Health, next door to the East Gippsland Mental Health Initiative (EGMHI) project coordinator. This enabled

close collaboration between these two projects, facilitating a greater integration of emotional support elements for the communities in the Mountain Rivers region.

The focus of the communities in each region differed, contributing to different achievements. In both Bonang/Tubbut and Glenaladale, the focus was emergency management and preparedness. In Goongerah, however, the project focused more on developing an attractive, active community hub.

Coordination and leveraging other projects: In the Mountain Rivers region where numerous recovery projects were delivered concurrently (refer Appendix A), coordination between several of the projects enabled each to leverage from the other. For example, the Project partnered with the EGMHI to deliver two "men's nights" which were very well attended, and the Project provided funds for a community BBQ event to launch the Goongerah Hall sign which was developed as part of the Streetscapes Project, refer to Figure 2.



Figure 2: Give Me A Sign, installation BBQ and community day 2015

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Glenaladale is 30 minutes from the regional town of Bairnsdale

6. What challenges were encountered?

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 stopped 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, many of whom held on to their anger.

“...[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)

To mitigate the impact of anger and frustration on future 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.

Existing community bonds and divisions: As in most communities, there were existing bonds and divisions between individuals. Existing bonds helped to create Project working groups and connections across

the broader community. However, it was noted that existing community divisions may have stopped some people from joining the Project working groups and participating more actively in the Project.

In Bonang/Tubbut this challenge began to be addressed later in the Project, by collaborating with the EGMHI to bring isolated members back towards the community and 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 BADEG meetings be open to the broader community.

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. However, the mineral sand mine¹¹ planned for Glenaladale has created divisions that have affected the operation of the group. (See below for further detail)

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 have been suggested. Further research into how community divisions can be negotiated for 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 that were to be 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, easily explained 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 perhaps were 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.

To address this need, the Recovery Facilitator in Glenaladale introduced the EGMHI project coordinator to particular individuals, invited her to attend particular group meetings, and community events. However, the lack of a local activity hub such as a Neighbourhood House hampered access to the community by the EGMHI project coordinator in a more informal manner. Integration of the EGMHI needed to be stronger to be able to provide the support required. Resourcing the project out of a more proximate location (e.g. Bairnsdale) may have helped with this integration, if appropriate staff were locally available.

11 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.

In the Mountain Rivers region, the Project Recovery Facilitator coordinated closely with the EGMHI project, including partnering on activities and initiatives, inviting the EGMHI project coordinator to attend group meetings and community events. This enabled the EGMHI project coordinator to be active across the community in multiple ways, allowing more vulnerable people to be identified and explicitly helped. Access through the local Neighbourhood House activities was also perceived to have facilitated informal connections in the community.

Additional external shocks: In Glenaladale, an additional shock was applied to the community by the mineral sand mine proposal for the area. Although the area had been studied for mineral sands potential for many years, approval of the mine progressing was uncertain. The mine issue was raised 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. The facilitator can then 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 participatory and community-led intent of the Project amongst relevant 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.

7. What are the recommendations for future recovery projects, using an ABCD approach?

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 3 presents a diagrammatic model for a modified ABCD approach in a disaster recovery situation.

Table 1: 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 3: Modified ABCD approach in a disaster recovery situation

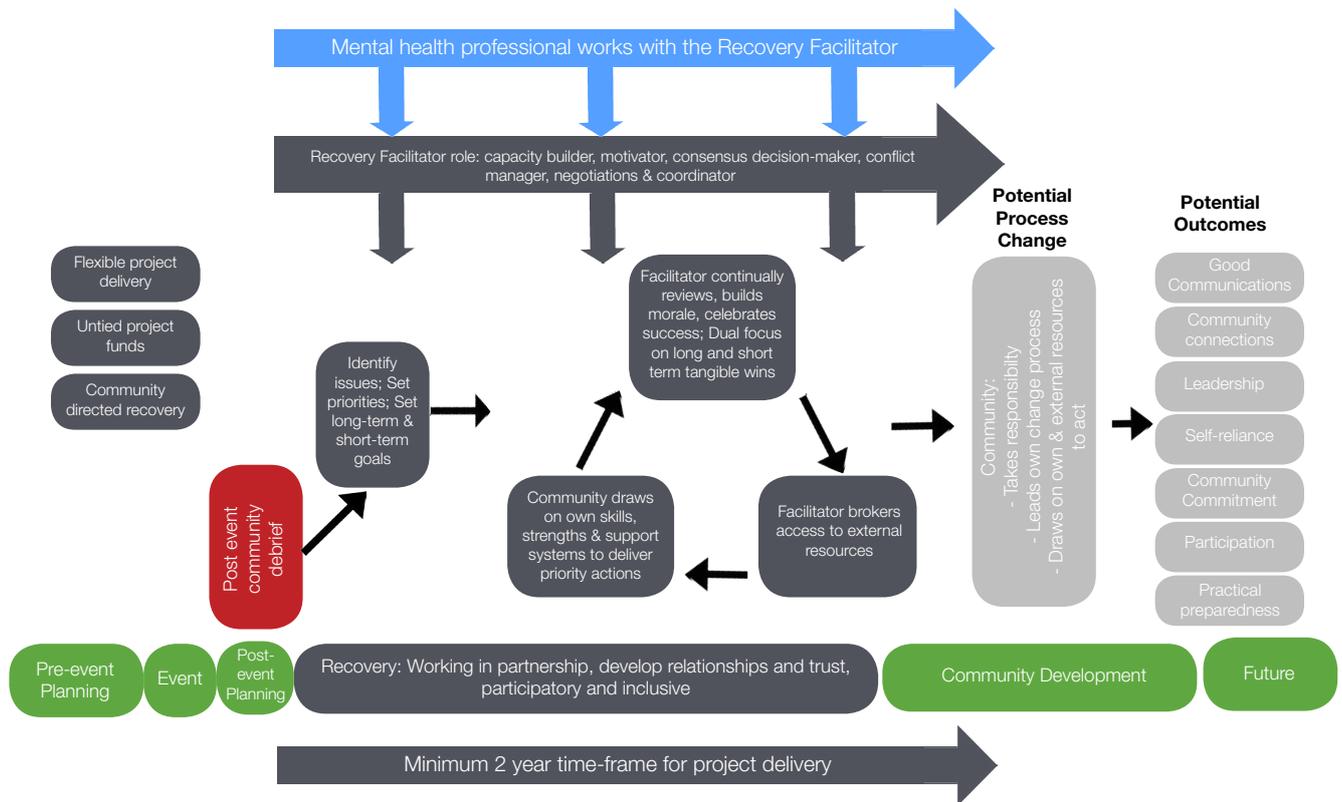


Figure 3 outlines the key elements to guide a modified ABCD approach to a disaster recovery project.

The model shows that a modified ABCD approach should be delivered over a minimum two-year time-frame, enabled by key elements of a 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 includes localised post-event planning. The model 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 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.

8. 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 helping keep 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.

Appendix A

Recovery projects 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		
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	x	These projects were merged.	These projects were merged.
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 in kind from Orbost District Community Development Group	EGSC	x	✓	✓
Gippsland Tourism Incident Management – Resilient Community Program A series of workshops across Gippsland to tourism business proprietors.	RDV	Destination Gippsland	x	x	x
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	x	✓	✓
East Gippsland Mental Health Initiative - Community and Spiritual Wellbeing capacity Building, Youth and Koori Youth Intensive Care Coordination	DHHS	SNAP (now Within Australia)	✓	✓	✓

Appendix B

Glenaladale initiatives/activities

(provided by the Glenaladale Recovery Facilitator)

Meetings

1 x Project launch community meeting

Regular (mostly monthly) GDEMG 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)

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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