

# Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Burnett Inland

## Roadmap to Resilience: Proston



**FRRR**  
Foundation for Rural  
Regional Renewal



**Australian Government**

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# Roadmap to Resilience: Proston

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# Part 1: Summary

## Section A: DR:FR Program Outline and Intent

Disaster Resilient: Future Ready (DR:FR) is a national program that helps remote, rural, and regional communities to be better prepared for future disasters.

FRRR and local lead partner Red Earth Community Foundation are working in collaboration with Minderoo Foundation, leveraging their networks, expertise and adaptable approach towards community resilience planning to support local partner communities in the Burnett Inland region to strengthen their resilience. This work is also supported by the Australian Government, through the National Emergency Management Agency, under the Preparing Australian Communities Program – Local Stream.

The aim of the program is to develop and lead regional and localised community initiatives that strengthen awareness, increase preparedness and enhance capacity of the local community to thrive and be resilient to the impacts of climate, disasters, and other disruptions. This includes building local knowledge of climate risks, catalysing leadership, fostering collaboration and facilitating community-driven innovation processes to develop and activate strategic actions and strategies that:

- Strengthen community capacity to positively adapt and evolve to change and disruption;
- Increase disaster preparedness to better mitigate, avoid, withstand, and/or recover more effectively from the increasing effects of hazards such as bushfires and floods; or
- Improve community wellbeing and enhance resilience, so communities can grow and flourish.

The pace of the program is based on the individual needs of each community and activities may include capacity-building workshops, facilitated community conversations, community building and engagement events, co-design workshops, relationship and network building and activation of priority initiatives.

The partner communities identified by Red Earth in the early phase of the program include Cherbourg, Dallarnil, Kalpowar, Kumbia, Proston and Tansey. These communities will have access to flexible funding for activities that enhance their capacity to thrive and be resilient to the impacts of climate, disasters and other disruptions.

A stream of activities will also be convened to support collaboration across regional agencies and organisations through the development of regional level resilience building initiatives for collective impact.

## Section B: Purpose of Document

The **Roadmap to Resilience: Proston** document has multiple purposes. Firstly, it serves to document the journey and outcomes of the **Disaster Resilient: Future Ready** program in Proston, including community engagement processes, community mapping, and the identification and development of locally-driven initiatives aimed at enhancing disaster preparedness and resilience now and to support development of future initiatives.

It also acts as a vital resource for the Internal Advisory Group (IAG) whose remit is to provide local advice and insights to the overall DR:FR QLD project to ensure it is delivered in alignment with local needs and priorities, within the construct of program donor parameters. By consolidating information, insights, actions and outcomes, the document aims to foster alignment with the broader disaster management ecosystem and captures the unique strengths and needs of the Proston community.

Furthermore, the Roadmap is also a critical element in FRRR's granting due diligence and provides the FRRR Board, which ultimately approves DR:FR grant applications, with information about the development of the initiatives and how they align to program principles, evidence of need and considerations of the broader context.

## Section C: Resilience Statement

Based on community feedback, Proston's Resilience Statement is:

**Proston is a vibrant and diverse community that keeps moving forward with a positive attitude, even in tough times. People in the Proston community have fortitude, knowledge and strength and strive to help others in need. Proston is a self-reliant community that is well-informed locally, nationally and globally and has a focus on thinking past tomorrow. Proston is a place where young people are involved and community members have input into matters that affect them. Proston has good leadership and planning – both formal and informal. Proston has a strong volunteer base that is part of the heart of the community. Proston is a wonderful place to live with a relaxed environment and an involved community.**

## Section D: Summary of Community Engagement

An agile and responsive community engagement approach was adopted. In Proston, engagement commenced by connecting with members of the Proston Roundtable and then activating the program in the community during the Proston Centenary celebrations in September 2023. Since then, community sessions have been held in November and December 2023, as well as January, February, April, June and August 2024. During the community sessions, Proston worked through the program framework, including the Prepare, People, Place and Possibilities topics under Phase 2 – 'Organise for Impact'. Throughout this process, the community co-created a shared vision for resilience and identified and prioritised community-led initiatives. A detailed overview of community engagement is in Part 2 of the Roadmap to Resilience.

***"We're not here to see what we can get, but what we can give."***  
*Proston Community Member, DR:FR Community Session, November 2023*

## Section E: Community Profile Summary

### Desktop Analysis

At the start of the program, desktop analysis was conducted in relation to Proston. The following summary of information was documented. *Please note that further community context is provided below this summary.*

**Township:** Proston is a small community that is located within South Burnett Regional Council LGA.

**First Nations:** Wakka Wakka people

**SEIFA:** 827 with a quintile of 1 (most disadvantaged), percentile of 5

**Population:** 410 (2021)

**Remoteness:** Outer Regional RA3

The Township of Proston includes a hotel, caravan park, chemist, grocery store, department store, tearoom, newsagency, library and 48 free camping grounds. Proston has a row of community-owned shops run by the Proston QLD committee. These shops include a hairdresser, Community Information Centre, Historical Museum, Emma's Coffee Shop, and Shop 44, which boasts new and second-hand wares, art, books and furniture. Tennis, golf, lawn bowls and swimming clubs are active in town, as well as local dances in the Public Hall. Proston also has a medical centre, ambulance service, Proston Rural Fire Brigade, the Proston Transfer Station, and the South Burnett Regional Council operates a library. The town is also serviced by Proston Meals on Wheels, which comes from Kingaroy twice a week. There is also an active Scout group and the Proston branch of the Queensland Country Women's Association.

Proston has been impacted by climatic events including:

- 1895 – 1902: Federation Drought
- May 1914 – March 1915: Drought declared
- January 1965 – June 1966: Drought declared
- April 1982 – February 1983: Drought declared
- 1997 – 2009: Millennium Drought
- February 2003: Ex-Tropical Cyclone Beni
- December 2010 – January 2011: Extreme weather event
- January / February 2013: Ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald - Flood
- February 2015: Ex-Tropical Cyclone Marcia
- March 2017: Ex-Tropical Cyclone Debbie
- April 2017 – September 2019: Drought declared
- October 2018: Tornado
- 2021 – May 2022: Drought declared

Proston falls under the **South Burnett Region Disaster Management Plan**.

## **Link to South Burnett Local Disaster Management Plan (v7 June 2021):**

<https://www.southburnett.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/3048/south-burnett-regional-council-local-disaster-management-plan>

## **Community Context: Further Information**

The following further information was gathered through the DF:DR community mapping process. This information adds further context to the desktop analysis and brings a deeper understanding of the fabric of the community.

### ***Other Impacts***

- 2013: Isolation due to flooding
  - During this event, Proston was isolated for four days, even though it was not inundated.
- Drought:
  - Ongoing and significant drought has had a high impact on many people in the community due to cattle prices being at an extreme low, which affected mental health.

**Full Community Mapping, as undertaken through the DR:FR program is outlined in Part 2 of the Roadmap to Resilience.**

## **Section F: Critical Dimensions in Community Disaster Resilience**

Drawing on research with communities experiencing disasters and other shocks in Australia over time, as well as a growing body of published research, University of Sydney researchers have documented and developed a set of key areas, or dimensions, which are helpful in guiding and supporting community-led work in disaster preparedness and resilience building.

In collaboration with FRRR, these dimensions were seen in action in communities impacted by disasters. This framework is commonly referred to as the Critical Dimensions for Community Resilience.

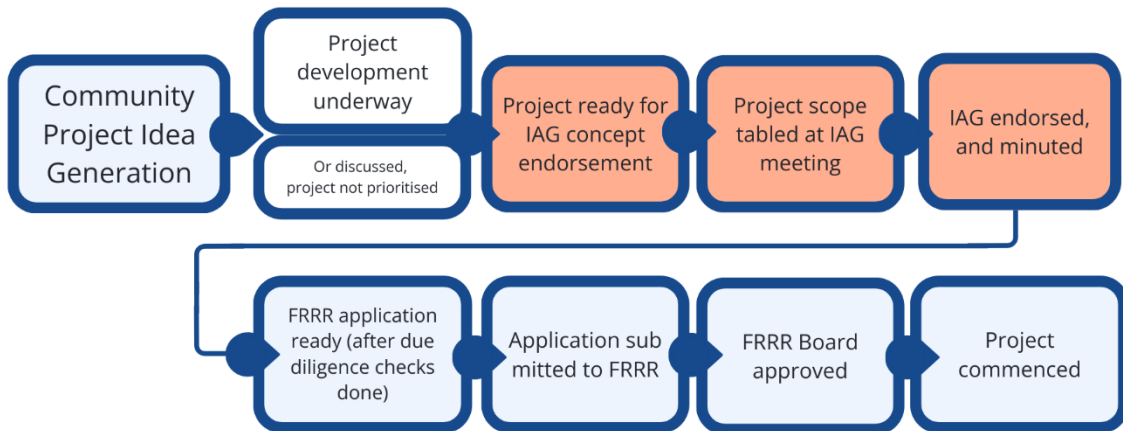
**The seven Resilience Dimensions and how program activities have identified them in relation to Proston are outlined in Part 2 of the Roadmap to Resilience.**

## **Section G: Community Initiatives**

Reflective of the program intent to ‘help remote, rural and regional communities to be better prepared for future disasters’ and to ‘support local people and organisations to develop and fund projects and initiatives that will improve disaster preparedness and community resilience’, each DR:FR community has had an opportunity to design projects in reflection of the Guidelines for ‘Local Community Initiatives’ that have been developed and agreed through the DR:FR Workshops.

The project ideas range in scale, scope, activity, and funding readiness and will move through a multi-stage process to seek funds.

The overall process, and the role of the IAG, is summarised below:



As per the IAG Terms of Reference, the views and feedback from the IAG will be sought for all projects for a high level ‘concept endorsement’ via regular meetings of the IAG. If, endorsed, all project concepts will be minuted. This endorsement acts as evidence of local community support to the FRRR Board. The IAG may choose to decline to endorse the concepts if the majority of members determine that: further development is required; it is not deemed a priority; or it is duplicative of existing local efforts.

Pending endorsement of the project by the IAG, FRRR will undertake full due diligence checks of the project and applicant and provide the IAG with updates where required. Projects may be deferred or declined at any stage of the due diligence process if FRRR is not satisfied the project, or the applicant does not meet the program guidelines or charitability checks. If the project scope, applicant, budget, or stated outcome significantly changes after endorsement, the project will return to the IAG for re-endorsement prior to it being funded.

The IAG does not ‘approve’ projects; this is undertaken by the FRRR Board.

Once FRRR is satisfied the projects are ‘grant ready’, they apply via the FRRR Grants Gateway.

The applications are reviewed by FRRR staff, including the Portfolio Lead and CEO, and then put forward for approval to the FRRR Board.

Pending approval, the applicant is notified, funds are paid and the project commences.

### Proston Community Initiative Status:

As of late November 2024, Proston has one project ‘on the table’: the ‘Preparation and Understanding of Disaster Information Kits’ initiative, which is detailed below. The overall concept is ready for endorsement by the IAG, noting that further refinement will take place prior to the initiative being submitted to FRRR once it is ‘application ready’. Refinements will not impact the concept or intent of the initiative, and if there is any shift in the scope of the initiative, it will be re-presented to the IAG. Next steps in the project development are noted in Appendix A.

## Initiatives Ready for IAG Concept Endorsement

**Project Title:** Preparation and Understanding of Disaster Information Kits

**Lead Organisation:** Proston and District Heritage Association Incorporated

**Project Description:** Development of *Disaster Information Kits* including accessible information flyers for the wider community, to be made available at key places such as the library, local shops and tourist spots. To support wide distribution and inclusion of vulnerable members of the community, this initiative includes collaboration with the local primary school to co-design and host an event, leveraging the school community as a means of distributing resources and information.

**Indicative Cost:** \$25,000

### Expenditure Items:

- Disaster Information Kits
- Information Flyers
- Event Resourcing

**Stakeholders:** South Burnett Regional Council, Proston State School, the DR:FR Working Group (incorporating community members who have been involved in the DR:FR process, and who represent a range of local organisations), and the broader Proston community.

**What has identified the need for this initiative?** Through DR:FR workshops, the Proston community has reflected on incidents of isolation experienced by community members in previous disasters, notably four days of isolation due to flooding in 2013. Telecommunications systems were also noted as a particular issue through DR:FR community mapping.

The South Burnett Regional Council Disaster Management Officer (DMO) has confirmed an increase in vulnerable people in the community. The Proston community identifies its vulnerable people as: those not on social media; the older generation; people who are isolated and only come to town occasionally; those who live off-grid; and those who have low literacy. It is also noted that Coverty is a vulnerable and valued fringe community to the Proston community, who have also noted their isolation during flooding events.

With regard to the Resilience Dimensions this initiative aligns to **Skills, Capacity and Knowledge, Inclusion, Information and Resources, Tools and Support**. A full explanation of how this Initiative meets each of these Resilience Dimensions is in Part 2 of the Roadmap to Resilience.

### **What will the outcome be? i.e. How will this increase disaster preparedness in this community?**

Vulnerable members of the community will be provided with Disaster Information Kits, which are tailored to be accessible, relevant and to remove barriers.

### **How does this initiative fit within the ecosystem of disaster preparedness, response and recovery within the local context?**

Conversations have been initiated with South Burnett Regional Council to ensure the project concept complements Council's planned Person-centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) activities, which are to be delivered regionally in 2025 as part of Council's preparedness with NDIS



participants and other vulnerable community members. Alignment with the local disaster management ecosystem will be ensured through consultation with the South Burnett Regional Council DMO about the information and resources required for inclusion, such as Get Ready QLD resources and other tailored disaster-management-related information. The DMO has confirmed her ability to consult in this regard and has also confirmed that the development and distribution of Disaster Information Kits is not ‘business as usual’ for Council. Therefore, this initiative adds value to the existing local disaster preparedness ecosystem.

**How will this initiative be maintained in the future?** Connections will be brokered between the community, Council, the local school, community members, distribution points and Get Ready QLD so that updated information can be made available into the future.

**Conflict of Interests:**

No noted conflicts of interest to declare in relation to Proston’s initiatives.

Quick DR:FR Program Guideline Alignment Check Proston: Disaster Evacuations Kits Project	
1. Build the skills, knowledge and capacity of local people or organisations to be better prepared for future disasters through new or strengthened:	
a) Skills, capacity, and knowledge;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Networks and self-organising systems;	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Information sharing and communication;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Inclusion and decision making;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Tools, resources, or minor infrastructure; and	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Initiatives that add value to local emergency planning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Involve other key stakeholders, build partnerships and strengthen collaboration that will benefit local people in future disasters; and	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Respond to one or more of the <a href="#">seven critical dimensions for building community resilience, shown below.</a>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Meets FRRR charitability and other granting due diligence. *	<input type="checkbox"/>

\*While the project is ready for IAG endorsement, final charitability checks are yet to be 100% completed before the application is lodged with FRRR. See project development and approval pathway diagram in Appendix B for reference.

# Part 2: Further Detail

## Section H: Detailed Community Engagement Overview

In addition to the summary of community engagement provided in Part 1, please find below a more detailed overview.

Community engagement activities have been held at different venues and at varying times, using various methods to ensure equal access to information and participation opportunities.

In July 2023, Red Earth attended the Proston Roundtable meeting where the 10 people in attendance were informed about the DR:FR program and some initial discussions took place about the fabric of Proston and the local disasters that have had an impact on the community. In September 2023, Red Earth engaged with the community via a stall at the Centenary celebrations. Over 2,500 people attended the event, with 43 direct engagements occurring about the DR:FR program. In October 2023, a small group session was held with four community leaders – including representatives from the Proston Local Ambulance Committee – during which some deep conversations took place about historical climatic events, the resources available during disaster events and the dynamics of the community.

In December 2023, the Proston community started to deep-dive into the program framework. This session took place on the footpath outside of Emma's Coffee Shop on a Saturday morning, using butchers' paper on windows to capture insights about the fabric of Proston (including People and Place), as well as invoking thought about what resilience means to Proston. Possibilities also started to emerge during this session.

In January 2024, five people attended the community session outside of Emma's Coffee Shop. During this session, deep and valuable conversations about climatic impacts and the Resilience Dimensions took place. Possibilities were further explored and mapped to the Resilience Dimensions. In February, a community session was held at the Information Centre with 11 people, plus Nic Vogelpoel and Cameron Willis from the Day Four Projects evaluation team, where the community mapping was presented in order to identify gaps and clarify information. The Resilience Statement was also adopted and Day Four Projects subsequently facilitated an informal evaluation session. In April 2024, a special community session was held to inform the fringe community of Covertly about the program and ask for any Possibilities and solutions that could help to increase their community's disaster preparedness. This session was held at the request of some of the Proston community who participated in the DR:FR program, due to the fact that Covertly was identified as a vulnerable fringe community that is serviced by Proston.

In June, 11 community members attended a session at the Proston Community Hall where all possibilities and solution ideas that had been identified throughout all previous community engagements were presented to the group, mapped against the Resilience Dimensions. An interactive dot democracy activity was facilitated, with some community members in attendance phoning others to add their preferences to the voting. Further responses were received via email after the session ended.

In August, a small group session was held at the Information Centre, where the prioritised community-generated initiatives were further discussed and refined.

## Section I: Full Community Profile

### Desktop Analysis

At the start of the program, desktop analysis was conducted in relation to Proston. The following is a detailed community profile, compiled from the information available. *Please note that further community context is provided in [Part 1](#).*

The beautiful village of Proston is located 280 km north-west of Brisbane and 50 km north-west of Kingaroy. The districts of Proston include Boondooma, Durong and Hivesville. Proston sits within the State electorate of Nanango and the Federal division of Flynn.

Proston was originally part of the historic grazing station 'Wigton,' one of Queensland's earliest squattages. Settlement of the area followed the 1910 Wondai Land Court ballot, with lack of water the paramount issue for early settlers. The town's name is taken from a pastoral run name, which in turn was a corruption of an Aboriginal word (possibly from the Wakka Wakka language), meaning 'Kurrajong tree'.

The township of Proston was founded in 1922, when Mr G.T.M. Boynton (who had selected a farm at Speedwell), built Proston's first commercial building – a café opposite the proposed railway station – in anticipation of the arrival of the first train in February 1923. By the late 1930's, Proston was a bustling centre with a wide array of shops and services.

Annual events of note in Proston include:

- Boondooma Dam Yellowbelly Fishing Comp (February)
- Proston Golden Spurs Campdraft (March)
- Proston Show (March)
- Boondooma Homestead Balladeers & Heritage Muster (April)
- Boondooma Homestead Scots in the Bush, Scottish & Celtic Festival (August)

Proston is the gateway to the Lake Boondooma Camping and Recreation Area. Just 20 km from Proston, the dam was constructed in the 1980s to supply water to Tarong Power Station.

Proston State School is a government primary and secondary school (P-10). Durong South State School is a nearby primary school in the Durong South district, with some students from Durong attending junior secondary school in Proston. The nearest secondary school for Years 11 and 12 is Murgon State High School.

Proston falls under the South Burnett Region Disaster Management Plan. There are currently no sub-plans. The Disaster Management Plan lists Kingaroy as the major regional population centre of the LGA that is surrounded by Crawford, Memerambi, Wooroolin, Taabinga, Kumbia and Coolabunia villages. The plan includes other South Burnett towns: Blackbutt, Murgon, Nanango and Wondai, which are significant in terms of their distinctive country characteristics, strong communities and established facilities.

It also includes the villages of Coolabunia, Crawford, Benarkin, Kumbia, Maidenwell, Memerambi, Wooroolin, Tingoorra, Hivesville, Proston, Moffatdale, Bunya Mountains and Durong as sizeable communities with few local services.

**Link to South Burnett Local Disaster Management Plan (V7 June 2021):**

<https://www.southburnett.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/3048/south-burnett-regional-council-local-disaster-management-plan>

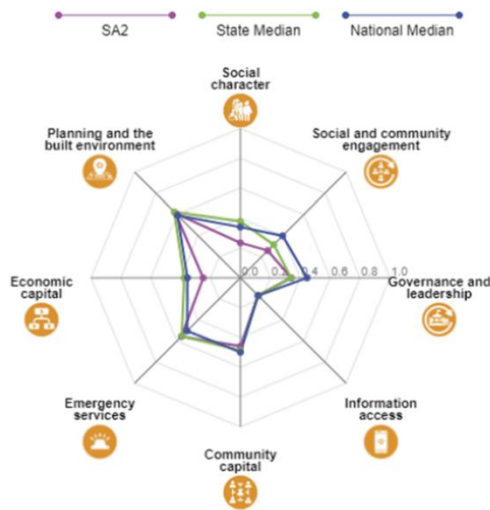
**Disaster Resilience (Australian Disaster Resilience Index Map)**

The Proston area is included in the Kingaroy Region – North on the Australian Disaster Resilience Index map.

**Disaster Resilience** value of 0.2983.

The Proston area is assessed as having low capacity for disaster resilience. Communities in areas of low disaster resilience may be limited in their capacity to use available resources to cope with adverse events and are limited in their capacity to adjust to change through learning, adaptation and transformation. Limitations to disaster resilience may be contributed to by entrenched social and economic disadvantage, less access to or provision of resources and services, lower community cohesion and limited opportunities for adaptive learning and problem solving.

SA2 Name	Kingaroy Region - North
Group	3
Remoteness	Outer regional



**Coping Capacity** value of 0.3297.

Communities in areas of low Coping Capacity may be constrained in their capacity to use available resources to cope with adverse events and to prepare for, absorb and recover from a natural hazard.

**Adaptive Capacity** value of 0.2669.

Communities in areas of low Adaptive Capacity may be constrained in their capacity to adjust to change through learning, adaptation and transformation.

Image 1: Australian Disaster Resilience Index (<https://adri.bnhcrc.com.au/>)

## Community Mapping

As part of the DR:FR program, community mapping took place at a local level. The following data, gathered from community feedback during DR:FR community sessions, outlines the services and gaps that currently exist in the community, provides insight into demographics and culture of Proston, highlights impact not recognised in the desktop analysis and identifies some community concerns.

### **Services, Businesses, Organisations, and Infrastructure**

#### ***Education and Health Care***

- Kindergarten
- Proston State School P-10
- Doctor (one day per week)
- Community Nurse

#### *External, but services Proston:*

- Graham House
- CentaCare
- BlueCare
- Meals on Wheels
- South Burnett Care (NDIS and Aged Care)

#### ***Businesses***

- Pub
- Emma's Coffee Shop
- Pharmacy
- NB's
- Hairdresser
- Laundromat
- Caravan Park
- Post Office
- Hardware Store
- Smithfield Feedlot
- SPAR
- Post Office
- 24-Hour Dog Wash
- Laundromat

#### ***Organisations and groups (formal and informal)***

- Proston Men's Shed
- Ambulance Committee (Largest Local Ambulance Committee in Southern Qld)
- Heritage Society
- Proston Village Group
- Queensland Country Women's Association (QCWA)

- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
- Proston Rally Club
- Golf Club
- RSL
- Lions Club
- Bowls Club
- Pony Club
- Show Society
- Garden Club
- School P&C
- Playgroup
- South Burnett Ministries
- Catholic Church
- Baptist Church
- Proston Mental Health Peer Support Group
- Community Kitchen (once per month)
- Dementia care group FROGS (not currently active)
- Wondai / Proston Junior Rugby League Football Club (based in Wondai)

### ***Emergency Services***

- SES
- Ambulance
- Police
- Rural Fire Brigade
  - Red Truck in Proston; Speedwell and Coverty are both Rural Fire Brigades with yellow trucks; Abbeywood and Hivesville Fire Brigades both have sheds.

### ***Other***

- Skatepark
- Library
- Nearest fuel available is at Hivesville or Boondooma Dam
- A number of public defibrillators, including on the outside of the Ambulance Station

### ***Accommodation***

- Pub
- Air BnB (Old church)
- Air BnB (Ruby's Cottage)
- The Farm @ 276
- Free camp beside Men's shed.
- Free camp at Golf Club
- Caravan Park
- Boondooma Dam

- Showgrounds
- Hivesville hotel rooms
- Hivesville showgrounds for camping

### ***Infrastructure***

- Proston Men's Shed (cyclone rated)
- Proston Community Hall (cyclone rated)
- Police Station (not staffed, as of mid-2024)
- SES Shed
- Ambulance Station
- Golf Club (toilets, showers, camping, and meals every Friday night)
- Cultural Centre in Park (AA meetings + Friday craft group are held at the Cultural Centre)
- Community Information Centre
- Historical Museum
- Proston Community Hall
- Council Depot
- Dog Park
- Labyrinth
- Proston Country Service Bus Depot
- Dump points at public toilets near CWA and at Boondooma Dam Caravan Park
- Public phone outside SPAR
- Pool (now closed)

### ***Events***

- Webbie's Country Muster – Twice a year
- Proston Round Table
- Park Run
- Proston Show
- Golden Spurs Campdraft
- Friday craft group with Brenda J
- Craft & Conversation at The Farm @ 276 every Thursday
- Fishing Competition at Boondooma Dam
- Christmas Carnival

### ***Natural Environment***

- Heritage trail walk
- Reinke scrub with endangered species
- Boondooma Dam
- Rail Trail
- Lookout

### **Community Insights**

- The Heritage Society is locally commended for pulling the whole community together for the Centenary celebrations. It was seen as a fantastic event where every organisation worked well together, but it was noted that this is not always the case with community groups often working in silos.
- There are a lot of committed people and dedicated volunteers in Proston, noting some information for new residents about how they can contribute would be helpful.
- Proston is a very welcoming community. It is diverse and generous, with a great community spirit.
- Proston identifies its vulnerable people as: those not on social media; the older generation; people who are isolated and only come to town occasionally; those who live off-grid; and those who have low literacy.
- Coverty is a vulnerable and valued fringe community, noting their isolation during flooding events.

**“Everyone is someone and they all have a story to tell.”**

*Proston Community Member, DR:FR Community Session, November 2023*

### **Other Impacts**

- 2013: Isolation due to flooding
  - During this event, Proston was isolated for four days.
- Drought:
  - Ongoing and significant drought has had a high impact on many people in the community due to cattle prices being at an extreme low, which affected mental health.
- Non-climatic related impacts that have significantly impacted the Proston community include: the closure of the Smithfield Cattle Company, which had economic impacts on the community; the COVID pandemic; a young person going missing; and suicide.

### **Community Concerns**

- Telecommunications
  - Last around 24 hours then get cut off in a disaster event.
  - If warnings are sent via text, not everyone receives them.
  - Need to drive to Postlethwaite Hill to get reception.
  - Telstra infrastructure to Boondooma Dam is damaged (not able to use landlines).
- Lack of volunteers, particularly for emergency services such as the Rural Fire Brigade.
- Loss of power for extended periods during disaster events.

**“You have brought a different approach and have gathered more information than many others have in the past.”**

*Proston Community Member, DR:FR Community Session, November 2023*



# Part 3: Program Outcomes and the Disaster Management Ecosystem

## Section J: DR:FR Burnett Inland Program Outcomes So Far

The DR:FR Program is supported by agreed guidelines that reflect both the program framework and outcomes sought by program donors.

The program aims to:

- 1) Build the **skills, knowledge and capacity** of local people or organisations to be better prepared for future disasters through new or strengthened approaches that include:
  - a) Skills, capacity, and knowledge;
  - b) Networks and self-organising systems;
  - c) Information sharing and communication;
  - d) Inclusion and decision making;
  - e) Tools, resources, or minor infrastructure; and
  - f) Initiatives that add value to local emergency planning.
- 2) Involve other key **stakeholders, build partnerships, and strengthen collaboration** that will benefit local people in future disasters; and
- 3) Respond to one or more of the seven **critical dimensions** for building community resilience.

As of December 2024, progress includes:

### 1) Skills, Knowledge, and Capacity

#### AIDR - Australian Disaster Resilience Conference 2024

DR:FR program staff and community volunteers from the Burnett Inland attended the AIDR 2024 Disaster Resilience Conference. This offered exposure to disaster mitigation and resilience examples, from government strategies and programs to grassroots approaches. Red Earth and FRRR delivered communications through various channels supporting wider education including a post-conference webinar (<https://www.redearth.org.au/drfr>) with community members profiling insights gained that will inform community initiative development and broader risk reduction.



Key takeaways from participants included:

- Progress "moves at the speed of trust". Without trust – whether it is with farmers, community members, or among colleagues – there is no solid foundation to build on.
- The importance of building homes suited to our environment will mitigate disaster risks.
- Better preparedness – assets, planning, or mental resilience – can help shorten the long recovery journey.

*Two local Proston community leaders, Lenny and Sonia attended the 2024 AIDR conference as part of the DR:FR Burnett Inland delegation. Lenny is a third generation Proston local who is "passionate about his patch" and wants to give back to his local community. He is the Supervisor of Water & Wastewater for South Burnett Regional Council and Captain of the Queensland Fire Department in Proston. Lenny believes that a teaspoon of assistance and preparation now can save a pound of heartache later. His key takeaway from the AIDR conference was that progress can only move at the speed of trust. Sonia's interest in disaster preparedness and response initially started to help her understand what Lenny does as the Fire Captain but has evolved into the understanding that even though she might not be a front-line responder, she can help in diverse ways and bring a new perspective. It is important to Sonia to consider vulnerable people in the community when planning for disasters. Sonia's key takeaways from the AIDR conference were that the themes of community, connection, flexibility and partnership are important across all aspects of disaster preparedness, response and recovery.*

### **The Red Earth Leadership Forum – Resilience as an Ecosystem**

The Red Earth Leadership Forum connected people from across the Burnett Inland region around the theme of 'Resilience as an Ecosystem', fostering conversation around personal resilience and disaster preparedness, response and recovery. Proceedings included keynote by Paul Ryan, Australian Resilience Centre and speaker Melanie Bloor, president Resilient Uki.

A panel discussion reiterated the ecosystem approach with local, regional and national perspectives on resilience building. Over 65 attendees thought big in breakout sessions and captured local opportunities and potential next steps in activating local initiatives.

A report on the Regional Leadership Forum entitled 'Resilience as an Ecosystem' was published.

Below are survey responses from Forum participants evidencing resilience built through their engagement:

- 82% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that they increased their knowledge about disaster recovery and resilience;
- 95% learnt added information;
- 95% are more likely to increase involvement in their local community;
- 90% met new people and developed new networks; and
- 96% were inspired to act on innovative ideas.

## 2) Stakeholders, partnerships, and collaboration

### Disaster Relief Australia – Big Map Events

Using a big floor map spread across the local halls in the Burnett Inland, Disaster Relief Australia facilitated conversations to help key disaster management stakeholders and community members see the bigger picture when preparing for disaster.

The map literally offered a bird’s eye view of the whole catchment. People located where they live on the map and built a better understanding of disaster risks that might impact them. The critical part of this process was about getting community members actually walking on the map to share, build knowledge and contribute their voice to disaster planning.



At these sessions multiple hazards were identified through the process, which offered the opportunity for the Burnett community to share their knowledge and identify gaps, so that they can be ready for future disaster events and engage in a catchment approach, because as was shared through the sessions “in a major flood, the catchment will force communities to work together”.

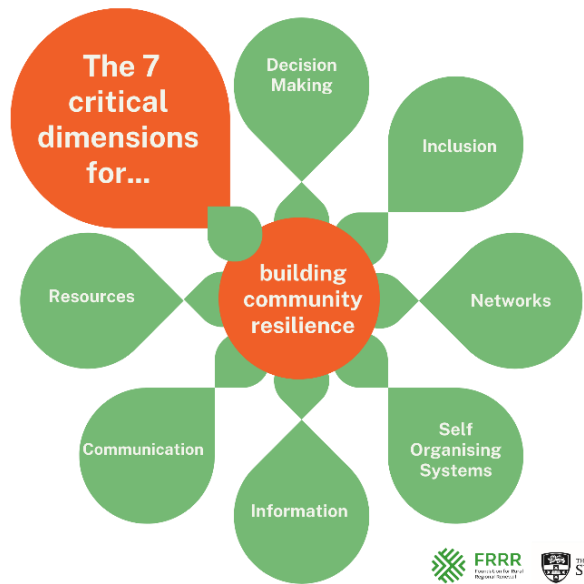
## 3) Resilience Dimensions

Drawing on research with communities experiencing disasters and other shocks in Australia over time, as well as a growing body of published research, University of Sydney researchers have documented and developed a set of key areas, or dimensions, which are helpful in guiding and supporting community led work in disaster preparedness and resilience building.

### Networks

Ideally communities are working on an ongoing process of expanding and connecting networks, both locally and with others outside the community. It is worth mapping the networks that community members participate in, and the ones known about when starting work together and then checking in on how these have changed over the life of activities.

Networks underpin local reciprocal relationships, or social capital which is always drawn upon in times of crisis. These are gold for any community led activity.



Adapted from: Howard, A., Rawsthorne, M. and Joseph, P. (2022) Critical Dimensions in Community Disaster Resilience [Fact Sheet], University of Sydney for the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal

**Local Context:** *Proston has a large number of active community groups with dedicated and involved volunteers. The Heritage Society is locally commended for pulling the whole community together for the Centenary celebrations. It was seen as a fantastic event where every organisation worked well together, but it was noted that this is not always the case with community groups often working in silos. There is a desire for organisations to collaborate and leverage each other's networks.*

## Information

There is a mountain of information available on disaster risk but like communication, locally generated information is important. Drawing on local knowledge to design information and working with information as a discussion rather than a one-way process effectively builds support for community-led work more generally. This enables community members to tailor information to their local context.

**Local Context:** *Drawing on local knowledge has enabled Proston to identify vulnerable members within their community, as well as vulnerable fringe communities. This local knowledge has informed community-generated ideas around increasing disaster preparedness.*

## Self-Organising Systems

People organise themselves in communities all the time outside of (and sometimes in spite of) formal institutions. Looking for where people have informal networks, relationships and ways of organising things and tapping into these is useful. Research has found informal self-organised activities are often invisible but do a lot of heavy lifting both in supporting everyday resilience and in crisis.

**Local Context:** *Proston has strong informal networks, evidenced by the success of the Proston Roundtable, an informal monthly meeting of representatives from local organisations with the goal of staying connected and informed.*

## Inclusion

It is important to be mindful of who is not around the table when a community starts to work together and to actively seek out people who are missing. This means thinking creatively about how different people might be involved and listening closely to groups who will often be impacted by any crisis but who may feel excluded from local decisions.

**Local Context:** *Proston is hyper-aware of being inclusive and goes out of its way to involve those missing from a conversation, or to advocate for them. This can be seen in some of the possibilities and solution ideas generated by this community through Phase 2 of the DR:FR program, as well as the desire to have the vulnerable fringe community of Covertly included in program considerations.*

## Communication

Multi-way communication between equal collaborators is an ongoing feature of successful community-led resilience building. This means keeping all those directly involved in the project in discussion with each other and having a continuing conversation with people in the wider community.

**Local Context:** *Proston values collaboration and communication. This was observed in the planning and hosting of the Proston Centenary in 2023, where all involved volunteers and organisations were treated as equal contributors, while still keeping the wider community informed and invested.*

## Resources, Tools and Support

Trust, community contributions (skills, knowledge, effort and time) and external support (financial, expertise and practical tools) in combination, are a critical foundation for building (and sustaining) successful and inclusive community-led efforts that enhance resilience.

**Local Context:** *Proston community members generously contribute their skills, knowledge, effort and time for the benefit of their community. When combined with external financial support and expertise, unique and locally- driven solutions are found, such as the community ownership of a large number of buildings in the main street of Proston.*

## Decision Making

Local inclusive decision-making is the foundation of community-led resilience building and can be challenging. It means services and government must step back and listen to the voices of community members and that decisions and action reflects community priorities. It is also worth developing some decision-making processes for community and activity groups which include the ideas and views of the wider community.

**Local Context:** *Proston has leaned into its local inclusive decision-making as part of the DR:FR program, ensuring not only that local voices are heard, but also taking into consideration the perspectives of Council representatives, emergency services agencies and health representatives when developing and refining community priorities.*

## How the Eligible Initiative Meets the Resilience Dimensions

**(Full details of this Eligible Initiative are outlined in Part 1 of the Roadmap to Resilience.)**

This initiative aligns with the **Inclusion, Information and Resources, Tools and Support** Resilience Dimensions.

The initiative is founded in **Inclusion** by supporting Proston's most vulnerable community members' need to have access to relevant disaster preparedness and response information, in a way that is contextually appropriate and is tailored to the local environment.

It also amplifies the importance of **Information** through the distribution of critical, locally relevant disaster information in a variety of ways.

The initiative also fits within the **Resources, Tools and Support** Resilience Dimension by providing physical Disaster Information Kits with resources for community members to increase knowledge about how to prepare for a disaster. It also draws on the expertise of Council and other key stakeholders to inform the nature of the information and resources included in the Kits.

## Section K: The Disaster Management Ecosystem

The Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience (AIDR) defines disaster as “a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts. Note, there are jurisdictional legislative variations”.

The DR:FR program recognises, respects and aims to build awareness of the importance of formal disaster management systems and is committed to working within, and adding value to, the local disaster management ecosystem. Part of the program intent is to increase local awareness of current ‘formal’ disaster preparedness efforts, as well as response and recovery roles and responsibilities, particularly by local government. The DR:FR program aims to support, resource and strengthen the ‘informal’ community resilience building and preparedness efforts at the grassroots level while working in collaboration with the formalised support system.

FRRR recognises that nationally, disaster management is a busy and complex space and so takes an inclusive approach through focussing efforts on the Critical Dimensions in Community Disaster Resilience as a supportive framework for affected communities, regardless of the type of climate related impact. While ‘drought’ by national definition and by program donors is not considered a disaster, it is listed in the community profile given its wide ranging local climatic impact, particularly given its history in the region and its close connection to both heatwaves and fire.

A key source of information for the Proston community is South Burnett Regional Council. For information about how to prepare for the next disaster, community members can visit Council’s Emergency Management section on their website: <https://www.southburnett.qld.gov.au/emergency-management> and for up-to-date information during a disaster, can go directly to Council’s Disaster Dashboard: <https://dashboard.southburnett.qld.gov.au/>.

## Appendix A: Status of Initiatives

Initiative	Status	Resilience Dimension/s	Further Context	Next Steps
Preparation and Distribution of Disaster Information Kits	<b>RICE</b>	Inclusion, Information and Resources, Tools and Support.	Consultation has been undertaken with the South Burnett Regional Council's Disaster Management Officer regarding their previous experience and ongoing role in the delivery of Evacuation Kits. This was confirmed as not a Council initiative, and that Council delivers education as part of Get Ready QLD messaging. It was also clarified that many organisations use this initiative in response, emergency management and preparedness.	<p>Charitability check of auspice organisation and developing understanding of the project governance and support required.</p> <p>Clarify nature of extending support for Covertly community and eligibility constraints considering donor obligations.</p> <p>Support collaboration between the South Burnett Regional Council and the Proston Working Group to leverage existing resources such as Get Ready QLD in project development.</p>
Medical Assistance During a Disaster	<b>PDU</b>	Inclusion and Resources, Tools and Support	<p>The need for battery backups for CPAP machines and wheelchairs plus drone capability to deliver essential medical supplies during emergency were raised by the community and a local NDIS worker.</p> <p>Clarification received from the South Burnett Regional Council that this activity is the function of the Local Disaster Management Group and/or Emergency Services.</p> <p>Initial conversations have also occurred with South Burnett Contributing to Community (CTC) regarding the capacity of Regional Initiatives to support Proston with PCEP planning.</p>	<p>South Burnett CTC to gauge service capacity of Graham House to support Proston with emergency preparedness for vulnerable members of the community.</p> <p>FRRR &amp; Red Earth to discuss opportunities and gaps identified with the Proston Working Group to refine project concept.</p> <p>FRRR to determine charitability of auspicing body. If deemed charitable, build understanding of project governance between auspice and the Working Group and what capacity building supports are required.</p>

Initiative	Status	Resilience Dimension/s	Further Context	Next Steps
Community Food Pantry	<b>PDU</b>	Self-Organising Systems	The potential establishment of a Community Food Pantry, to be coordinated by the QCWA or similar local organisation, is being explored as a response to the isolation for extended periods due to flooding, and the potential for hundreds of tourists / travellers to seek refuge in Proston in the event of a flood (as happened in 2013).	FRRR & Red Earth to discuss the eligibility and charitability of this initiative.
Solar Panels on Community Buildings	<b>PDU</b>	Resources, Tools and Support	This initiative was highly prioritised by the community, then downgraded during a following small group session due to concern about the structural ability of some of the community-owned buildings to manage the weight of solar panels.	FRRR & Red Earth to further discuss this initiative with the Proston Working Group
Generator/s	<b>DNP</b>	Resources, Tools and Support	This initiative was highly prioritised by the community, however upon discussions with Council and emergency services representatives, it was identified that there is a generator at the fire station which is available for community use, as well as a generator on a trailer, which has been donated by the Council and stored at the Council Depot, to be available for use by the hall and community during emergencies. The Ambulance Station also has its own generator.	Nil

**Project Developments Steps**

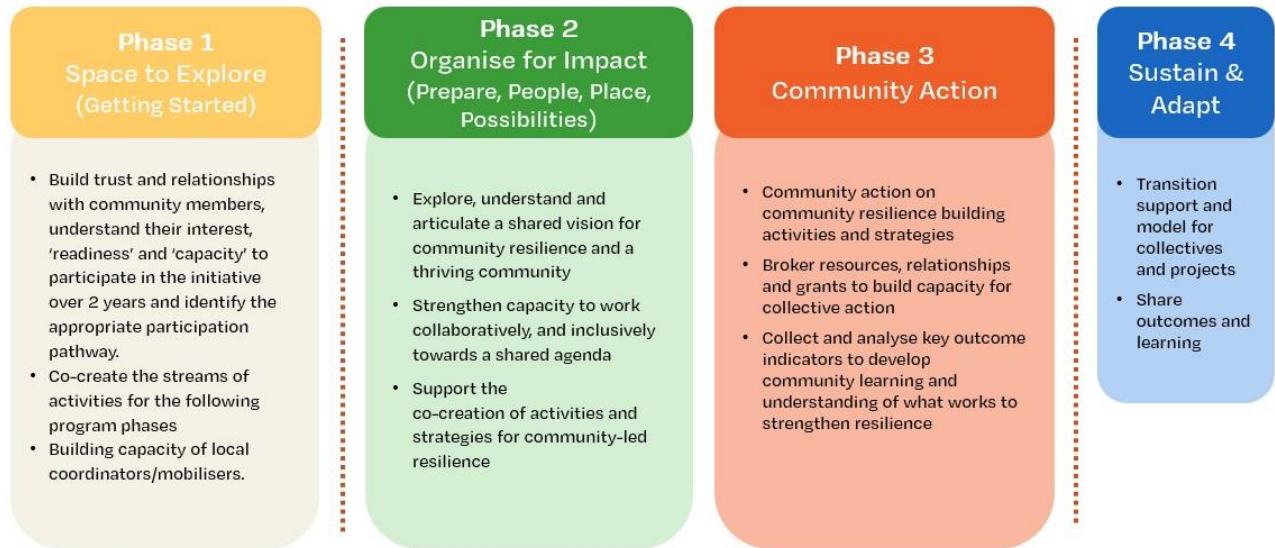
<b>DNP</b>	<b>Discussed, Not Progressing</b>
<b>PDU</b>	<b>Project Development Underway</b>
<b>RICE</b>	<b>Ready for IAG Concept Endorsement</b>
<b>FAR</b>	<b>FRRR Application Ready</b>
<b>ASF</b>	<b>Application Submitted to FRRR</b>
<b>FBA</b>	<b>FRRR Board Approved</b>
<b>PC</b>	<b>Project Commenced</b>



# Appendix B: DR:FR Program Framework

## Disaster Resilient : Future Ready

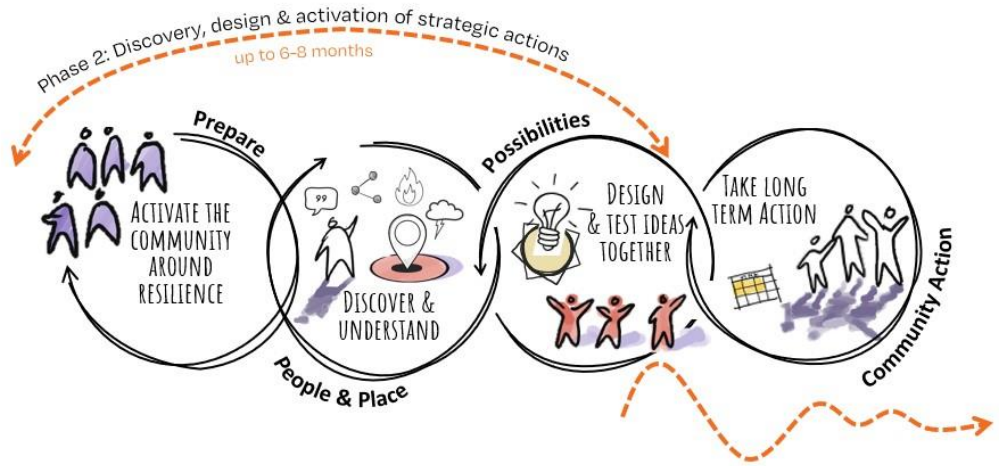
### Where do communities start and how does it work? (The Phases)



## Phase 2. Organise for Impact and Phase 3. Community Action Community Engagement and Activity

Throughout the project and more intensively through these phases, FRRR works directly or through partners/facilitators with community members and local organisations, supporting them to develop and activate strategic initiatives that enhance community resilience and disaster preparedness by:

- connecting people and organisations, understanding their community and building local capacity to work together.
- building awareness of climate risks, disaster impacts and vulnerabilities.
- Increasing knowledge of resilience principles and how they are applied.
- identifying opportunities and developing ideas for community-led action.
- making decisions and implementing actions prioritized by the community.



Phase 3: Implementation of priority actions  
12-18 months

