

# Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Burnett Inland

## Roadmap to Resilience: Kumbia



**FRRR**  
Foundation for Rural  
Regional Renewal



**Australian Government**

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# Roadmap to Resilience: Kumbia

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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: Kumbia** document has multiple purposes. Firstly, it serves to document the journey and outcomes of the **Disaster Resilient: Future Ready (DR:FR)** program in Kumbia, 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 Kumbia 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, Kumbia's Resilience Statement is:

**Our resilience is evident in the way we support our neighbours during times of crisis. We extend a helping hand, offer shelter and provide comfort to those in need. Our community stands united, reinforcing the bonds that hold us together. We carry on, no matter what happens, and have the ability to bounce back.**

## Section D: Summary of Community Engagement

An agile and responsive community engagement approach was adopted. In Kumbia, initial 'kitchen table' conversations were held with 10 local residents in December 2023, followed by community sessions in January, February, April, June, August and November. During the community sessions, Kumbia worked through the program framework (see Appendix B), 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, as well as prioritised, community-led initiatives. A detailed overview of community engagement is in Part 2 of the Roadmap to Resilience.

**"Individually strong is good but collectively strong is better, especially in a disaster."**

*Kumbia Community Member, DR:FR Community Session, February 2024*

## Section E: Community Profile Summary

### Desktop Analysis

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

**Township:** Kumbia is a small community located within the South Burnett Regional Council LGA.

**First Nations:** Wakka Wakka people

**SEIFA:** 854 with a quintile of 1 (most disadvantaged), percentile of 8

**Population:** 301 (2021)

**Proximity to Regional Centre:** It is 29 km south-west of Kingaroy.

### **Remoteness:** Outer Regional (RA3)

Kumbia has many small street-front shops including a fuel station with post office, store and caravan park, a mechanic, a general store, a butcher's shop, tennis court, golf club, a pub, CWA hall, the Kumbia Memorial School of Arts and numerous church facilities.

There are three emergency services based in Kumbia: Kumbia Police Station, Kumbia SES facility and Kumbia Fire Station.

Kumbia 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
- February 2015: Ex-Tropical Cyclone Marcia
- March 2017: Ex-Tropical Cyclone Debbie
- December 2017: Tornado
- April 2017 – September 2019: Drought declared
- October 2018: Tornado
- 2021 – May 2022: Drought declared

Kumbia 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 DR:FR community mapping process. This information adds further context to the desktop analysis and brings a deeper understanding of the fabric of the community.

Due to a lack of volunteers, the SES has ceased operations and, due to a lack of sufficient numbers to man the Kumbia Fire Service (paid positions are available), it has also ceased being operational. The SES building was sold in 2014 and the Fire Service has a building, but no active service people.

The Kumbia fire truck is now at the Stuart River Rural Fire Service. The Kumbia community feels strongly about the Kumbia Fire Service becoming a Rural Fire Service, in order for volunteers to be able to respond to local fire risks, without the requirement to attend vehicle accidents.

The Kumbia Police Station remains, with a resident Police Officer (Senior Constable).

### Other Impacts

- 2013: Isolation due to flooding
  - Heavy rainfall, occurred during the 2013 weather event, cutting access to Kumbia and leaving it isolated, but only for a short period of time.
- Boxing Day 2017: Tornado
  - Perceived as the worst local impact for 50 years, with loss of power in some areas for three days, power lines ripped from the ground, significant damage to properties, community facilities and crops.

**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](#).

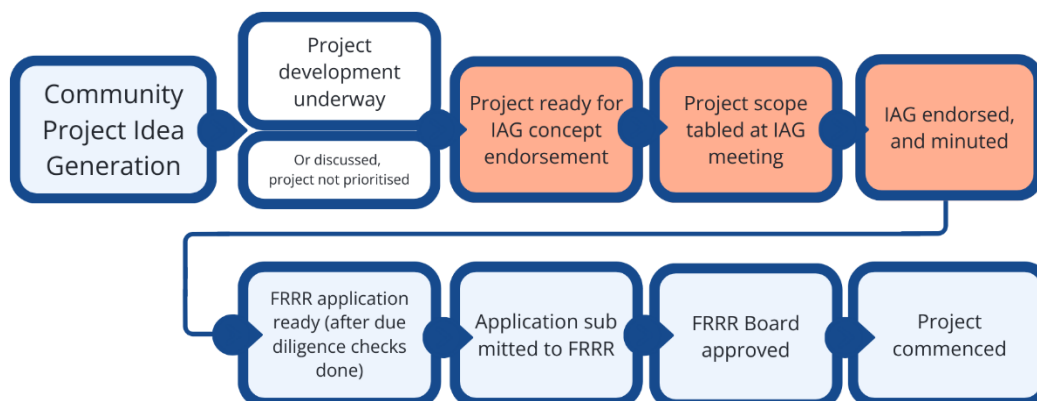
**The seven Resilience Dimensions and how program activities have identified them in relation to Kumbia are outlined in Part 2 of the Roadmap to Resilience.**

## 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 meeting 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 by the majority of members.

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 applicant meets 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', applicants 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 paid and the project commences.

#### **Kumbia Community Initiative Status:**

As of late November 2024, Kumbia has one project 'on the table'. The 'Kumbia Hall Prepare and Connect' initiative is detailed below. The overall concept is ready for endorsement by the IAG, noting that further eligibility checks will take place as the project is refined and prior to submission of an application to FRRR, when it is 'application ready'. If there is a significant 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:** Kumbia Hall Prepare and Connect

**Lead Organisation:** Kumbia Memorial School of Arts Inc.

**Project Description:** Kumbia Memorial Hall is seeking to strengthen the resilience of their community through infrastructure improvements and social connection opportunities.

This will occur through upgrades to the Kumbia Memorial Hall that aim to future-proof an accessible community facility for years to come, including partial restumping, solar panels and a battery, as well as a First Aid kit and defibrillator.

Additionally, the committee is seeking to host information and resource sharing events and activities that build resilience in the community, create opportunity for connection with community members, organisations, Council and other key stakeholders, as well as increase understanding of the role the Kumbia Memorial Hall plays before, during and after disaster.

Examples of events and activities that build resilience include: first aid training; a long table lunch for members of local organisations, with an emergency services representative as the guest speaker, i.e. District Fire Chief; a trivia night with a round on disaster preparedness; bush poetry night; and a 'Grab 'n' Go' Bag workshop.

**Indicative Cost:** \$100,000 in total

- Partial restumping of 40 stumps: \$31,000
- Solar panels with battery: \$50,000
- Schedule of community events and activities: \$10,000
- First Aid kit and defibrillator \$9,000

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

**What has identified the need for this initiative?** The Kumbia community has long recognised the importance of coming together to strengthen connections and share knowledge. While the hall upgrades remain a vital project, the community has identified through the DR:FR program that hosting a schedule of community events – particularly those that foster disaster preparedness – will provide an invaluable opportunity to enhance resilience and ensure the hall continues to serve as a hub for connection and information.

This aligns with the **Network, Communication, Inclusion, Information, Self-Organising Systems and Resources, Tools and Support** Resilience Dimensions. 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?** The outcome will be increased community connection, further networking and relationship building between individuals, organisations and key stakeholders, as well as disaster-related information-sharing with / from Council and other emergency services agencies. These outcomes will result in a better-connected community (both internal and external connections), which in turn results in a community that is better equipped to prepare for and recover from disasters.

It will also result in a sound, useable and well-resourced community facility that can act as a central community gathering point before, or after disasters.

Local government has confirmed that the venue is not, and will not, be designated as a 'Place of Refuge'. To support the development of this community initiative they have also shared their perspectives on the role of the Kumbia Memorial Hall throughout the disaster cycle (Preparedness, Response and Recovery).

**Preparedness:** Kumbia Hall could be used to:

- Hold information sessions with the community on Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements, the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG), understanding where they can source information during disasters and how they can find active evacuation centres.
- Build community cohesion by running community events or social activities as desired by the community to create relationships (like lawn bowls / inside activities).



- Exhibit whiteboard for community info. This could be for social events / contacts / emergency app with GPS locations / dashboard / media releases etc.
- Phone tree for community updates and information – managed by the community.

**Response:** The Kumbia Hall is not an evacuation centre, nor a place of refuge. The Kumbia community can utilise the hall during a disaster event to come together and charge phones / receive information together / boil kettles etc. This hall will not be advertised by the Kumbia community to the public as an open evacuation centre or place of refuge. Emergency Services determine the need for evacuations and will work with the LDMG at the time of the event to determine the best place for evacuation location.

**Recovery:** Kumbia Hall could be used as a recovery hub after an event. For example, required agencies could attend and provide information and support to the community.

**How does this initiative fit within the ecosystem of disaster preparedness, response and recovery within the local context?** Brings value by increasing community connection and providing avenues and strengthens networks for disaster preparedness information to be shared.

**How will this initiative be maintained in the future?** Kumbia Hall has a committee of volunteers who are committed to the upkeep and maintenance of the Hall.

Additionally, the events are a natural extension of the community’s commitment to hosting regular events. Regular community events hosted at the Kumbia Hall will remain part of the essential fabric of the community. Additional capacity building needs to support this activity post-program will be investigated through further project development.

**Conflict of Interests:** No noted conflicts of interest to declare in relation to Kumbia’s initiatives.

Quick DR:FR Program Guideline Alignment Check	
Kumbia Hall: Prepare and Connect 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Information sharing and communication;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Inclusion and decision making;	<input 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 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.

All community sessions throughout 2024 have been held at the Kumbia Memorial Hall, with nine community members attending the January session where local impacts and community concerns were explored, as well as some initial community mapping around the People and Place topics within the program framework. In February, 14 local residents attended, as well as Nic Vogelpoel and Cameron Willis from program evaluation partner Day Four Projects. During the February session, some deeper community mapping occurred, initial Possibilities were broached and Day Four Projects sought community feedback about the program so far.

In April, 14 Kumbia residents, as well as six representatives from QFES and Rural Fire Service attended the community session, which focused on ideas to help build resilience in the event of a climatic disaster and provided opportunity for the community to explore the possibility and process of converting the existing QFES facility to a Rural Fire Service. In June, seven members of the Kumbia community were present and actively participated in a discussion around the Resilience Dimensions and how they could be amplified in Kumbia to increase disaster preparedness.

The format of the August session was a drop-in event where Red Earth staff were available at the Kumbia Memorial Hall for four hours to allow community members the opportunity to prioritise the community initiatives identified to that point via a digital survey. Five community members attended in person during the drop-in session, with a further 18 completing the online survey within the following week.

In November, nine community members attended the community session, which focused on refining the prioritised community initiative of 'Schedule of Community Events and Kumbia Memorial Hall Upgrade' in readiness to move into Phase 3 of the program, 'Community Action'. The 'next steps' of the granting workflow were presented and nominations for the Kumbia DR:FR Working Group were put forward.

## Section I: Full Community Profile

### Desktop Analysis

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

Kumbia (pronounced “come-bia”) is a small town nestled into the foothills of the Bunya Mountains National Park, on the Bunya Highway, between the mountains and Kingaroy. This picturesque little town offers a great opportunity to stop and stock up on groceries and fuel before you head up into the Bunyas. Other National Parks and state forests near Kumbia include Tarong National Park, Tarong State Forest and Archookoora State Forest.

Kumbia is 29 km south-west of Kingaroy, 149 km north of Toowoomba and 222 km north-west of Brisbane. Localities around Kumbia include Haly Creek, Alice Creek, Boyneside, Maannuem, Benair, Highfield, Dovedale, Springhill, Elli, Kumbia Vineyards, Round-a-bout, Voneilden and Bonnie Doon.

Known for its stone-fruit plantations and heritage signposts, Kumbia is well worth a stop on your trip through the South Burnett region. The name Kumbia is from the Wakka language, but its meaning is uncertain, possibly referring to white ant nests or smile scrub vine.

On 30 July 1912, the Queensland Government auctioned 44 land parcels in the new town of Kumbia, each about 1 rood (11,000 sq ft; 1,000m<sup>2</sup>). A Postal Receiving Office opened in 1913, being replaced by the Kumbia Post Office on 19 July 1915.

The Kumbia State School opened on 2 February 1914 and celebrated its 100-year anniversary in 2014. Kumbia State School is a government primary (Prep-6) school for boys and girls. In 2023, the school had an enrolment of 41 students with fewer than 5 teachers (3 full-time equivalent) and 5 non-teaching staff (3 full-time equivalent). There is no secondary school in Kumbia. The nearest secondary school is Kingaroy State High School.

Kumbia's most notable resident is Warren Truss, Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, who used to live in Kumbia. Kumbia sits within the State electorate of Nanango and the Federal division of Maranoa.

Kumbia falls under the South Burnett Region Disaster Management Plan, however there are no sub-plans currently connected to other communities. 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. The villages of Coolabunia, Crawford, Benarkin, Kumbia, Maidenwell, Memerambi, Wooroolin, Tingoorra, Hivesville, Proston, Moffatdale, Bunya Mountains and Durong are also noted 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>

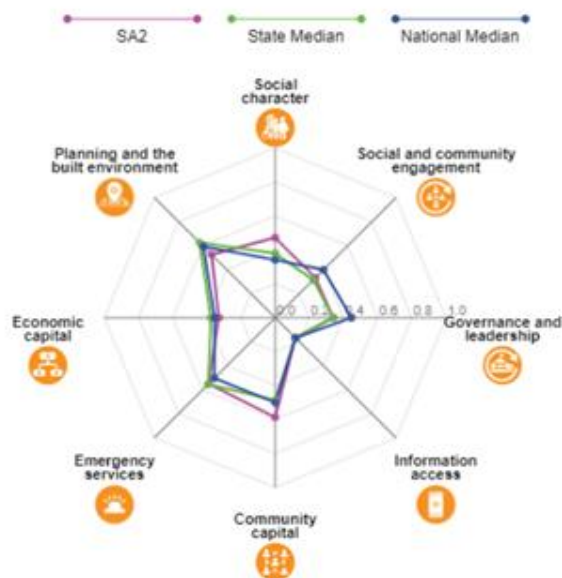
**Disaster Resilience (Australian Disaster Resilience Index Map)**

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

**Disaster Resilience** value of 0.2983.

The Kumbia 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 - South
Group	3
Remoteness	Inner 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 Context

Local context in relation to the above Community Profile can be found in [Part 1 of the Roadmap to Resilience](#).

## 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 the demographics and culture of Kumbia; highlights impacts not recognised in the desktop analysis and identifies some community concerns.

### Services, Businesses, Organisations and Gaps

#### Education

- Kumbia School (est. 1914), P-6 with active Kindergarten which was incorporated into the school in recent years
  - Fire Siren is located at the school
- Private Day Care

#### Businesses

- Kumbia Hotel (est. 1914), with entertainment area, basic accommodation and limited hours restaurant
- Ryke Fuel Service Station, including post office / mail service, groceries, take-away, dine-in meals and caravan park
- Lenihan's Butchery
- G Musical Instruments
- 6 x Bed and Breakfast businesses, plus a farmstay

- A number of new businesses have opened in recent years:
  - Cup 'n' Saucer Air B'n'B
  - Craft shop, open limited hours with coffee
  - Pop-up Christmas shop
- Coopers Gap Wind Farm
  - Opened in 2018. Their community grants program has provided funds to Bell, Jandowae and Kumbia each year since.
- Two large fruit farms (Dugdells and Francis) employ a number of casual staff during picking seasons
- Agricultural enterprises including grazing, cropping (peanuts and corn), hay, orchards (stone fruit, avocados, capers)
- Function Centres in the district include:
  - Mulanah Gardens
  - Taabinga Homestead
  - Washpool Function Center

### **Organisations**

- Active CWA, with small CWA hall
- Active Kumbia Memorial School of Arts (Kumbia Hall) and committee
- Active Kumbia & District Historical Society and committee with historical photo display
- Kumbia Garden Club
- Kumbia Race Club (Racecourse)
  - Annual Melbourne Cup race day, known as “Flemington of the Bush”
  - Also has a Golf Course, plus kitchen and bar facilities
  - A strong Pony Club is also based at the Racecourse, which has a popular annual Easter Campdraft
  - Tai Chi classes held regularly
- New Sports & Recreation committee
  - Management of Cricket Club and Tennis Courts
- Active Neighbourhood Watch group in the wider region
- Catholic Church and Lutheran Church

### **Emergency Services**

- Police Station, with local Senior Constable

### **Other**

- Kumbia Party Line (hard copy newsletter plus Facebook page)

### **Gaps**

- No SES and building sold off
- No Fire Service
- No bus service, other than school buses
- Some locals do not have their own transport
- No local health services (the community would welcome access to a community nurse)
  - Centacare and South Burnett Care service the area
- No town sewerage system, with Kumbia relying on septic systems

## ***Community Insights***

The Bunya Highway goes through the main street of Kumbia.

A number of people work in Kingaroy but live in Kumbia.

The 1990s drought affected the farming community, with many farming families encouraging their children out of the industry. This has resulted in a decline in the numbers of the younger demographic in the region. However, there is a recent influx of younger families that are moving to, or moving back to, the area.

Kumbia is a welcoming community that will get out and help in a disaster event and will bond together, including farmers and volunteers with resources such as generators, tarps etc that would be made available if needed.

Kingaroy services have traditionally come to the aid of Kumbia in times of need.

Community would like a stronger connection to Council and the South Burnett Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG).

Excitement within the community that a new Sports & Recreation organisation has formed, with a younger demographic in the executive and as volunteers.

Increase in windfarms in the area has increased access to community grants, but still raises some discomfort within community.

The Kumbia Hall is seen as an essential connection point / hub by community, noting it is the only major hall in the area and that the ageing facility is in need of restumping and toilet upgrades to continue to operate as the main community meeting place.

## ***Other Impacts***

- 2013: Isolation due to flooding
  - Heavy rainfall, like occurred during the 2013 weather event, can cut access to Kumbia leaving it isolated, but usually only for a short period of time.
- Boxing Day 2017: Tornado
  - Perceived as the worst local impact for 50 years, with loss of power in some areas for three days, power lines ripped from the ground, significant damage to properties, community facilities and crops.

## ***Community Concerns***

- Volunteers being of the older generation.
- There is no Kumbia Fire Service, with QFES struggling to fill the paid roles available. The community is actively advocating for the current QFES station to convert to a Rural Fire Station, as there are locals willing to volunteer for an RFS. The nearest response would currently come from Kingaroy QFES or Stuart River RFS.
- Bushfire is potentially the biggest disaster threat, as flooding is highly unlikely and heavy rainfall usually only creates isolation.
- Concern raised for those living in adjoining rural areas who may be more vulnerable to bushfires.

- Concern about increase in numbers of vulnerable people living locally, with a desire to ensure systems are in place to check on their welfare during disasters or disruptions.
- Power outage during storms or other disaster events.
- Town water is non-potable and is pumped from the Manneum Creek bore to a small reservoir in town, however the local reservoir has low capacity and low pressure.



# 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 at December 2024, progress includes:

### 1) Skills, Knowledge and Capacity

#### **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 new 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 new ideas.

## 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/drrf>) 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's with farmers, community members, or among colleagues – there's 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.

## 2) Stakeholders, Partnerships and Collaboration

### Brokering Connections to QFES and RFS

Through community engagement, it was strongly identified that the Kumbia community would like to advocate for the unmanned QFES Kumbia Fire Station to be converted to a Rural Fire Service for the reasons mentioned above in this document. Red Earth brokered connection with QFES and RFS, with six representatives attending the April community session in Kumbia to discuss the possibility and process of transitioning the current facility to a local Rural Fire Service.

### 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.

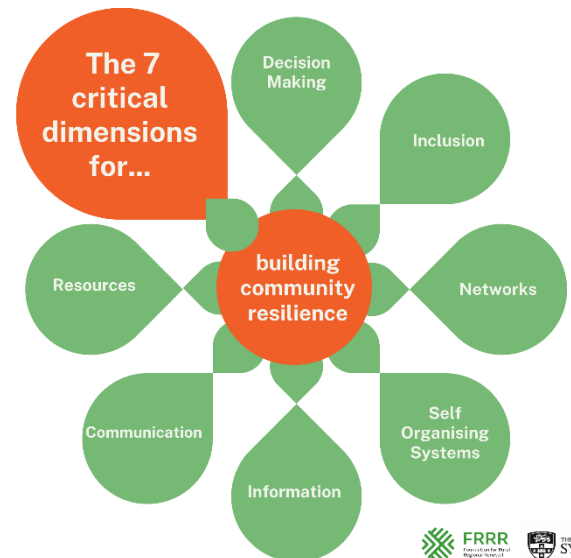
The map literally offered a bird's eye view of the whole catchment. People located where they live on the map and built a better understanding of disaster risks that might impact them. The critical part of this process was about getting community members actually walking on the map to share, build knowledge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



At these sessions, multiple hazards were identified through the process, which offered the opportunity for the Burnett Inland 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.



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

#### 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 are involved in and the ones known about when starting work together, 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.

**Local Context:** *Kumbia has strong networks and active community organisations with passionate and involved volunteers. While everyone pulls together in times of crisis, there is a desire for volunteers and community organisations to network and collaborate more regularly.*

#### 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:** *Some information about Kumbia’s disaster risk and ability to respond on a local level is not up-to-date for those undertaking desktop analysis. Drawing on local knowledge to ascertain the current status of emergency services is important to work with accurate information.*

#### 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:** *Informal networks and strong relationships are visible in Kumbia, evidenced by the collective participation in the DR:FR program and the shared priorities from different sectors of the community, including from representatives of a number of different community organisations.*

## 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 most by any crisis but who may feel excluded from local decisions.

**Local Context:** *Kumbia is aware of those in the community who are vulnerable or not connected to an organisation or project and actively seeks to involve them or advocate for their needs.*

## 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:** *Kumbia has strong communication, both within organisations and within the community in general. One example of this is the Kumbia Party Line, a local, volunteer-organised weekly newsletter that is distributed throughout the community in print and online. This is complimented by an active Facebook group of the same name.*

## 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:** *One of Kumbia's greatest strengths is its ability to draw on local knowledge, effort and time to activate community-led initiatives through collaboration and collective action to provide needed resources. This was evidenced by Kumbia's 'Buy a Stump' appeal, which raised over \$60,000 for stage one of critical restumping of the Kumbia Hall.*

## 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:** *Kumbia values and advocates for their community voice to be heard and for that voice to influence decision making at a local and state level. This is evidenced by Kumbia's consultations with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, advocating for their urban Fire Station to be converted to a Rural Fire Station due to community consensus.*

## How the DR:FR QLD Concept Ready Initiative Meets the Resilience Dimensions

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

This initiative, particularly the schedule of community events, strongly aligns with the **Network** Resilience Dimension because it fosters opportunities for people to connect and strengthen their relationships, thereby building social capital, encouraging interaction across diverse groups, deepening community connection, fostering collaboration between individuals and organisations, and encouraging community participation.

The community events also meet the **Communication** Resilience Dimension because they harness one of the core purposes of the Communication Resilience Dimension, being “continuing conversation with people in the wider community”.

The schedule of events will incorporate disaster preparedness messaging and representation of Council and/or other emergency services, facilitating critical information sharing, communication, reinforcement of key messaging and an opportunity to build trust and transparency.

First Aid training being provided as part of the schedule of events aligns with the **Inclusion** Resilience Dimension by ensuring that any community member has the opportunity to gain confidence in providing assistance during a disaster or emergency.

Offering the training locally at the Kumbia Memorial Hall, ensures accessibility and with the training being available to the wider community regardless of background or age, barriers to participation are reduced.

The ‘Grab ‘n’ Go’ Bag workshops fit the **Information** Resilience Dimension by providing community members with clear, practical knowledge about what items to include in a grab bag (and potentially some essential resources to go in the grab bag), so they will be better equipped to act decisively in a disaster or emergency and to ensure essential documents are on hand.

The inclusion of a First Aid Kit and Defibrillator at the Kumbia Memorial Hall meets the **Self-Organising Systems** Resilience Dimension by providing resources that empower individuals to take initiative and respond when professional assistance is delayed or unavailable, enhancing the community’s ability to manage and mitigate crisis at a local level, when necessary.

The upgrades to the Kumbia Memorial Hall, including partial restumping and solar panels with battery, meet the **Resources, Tools and Support** Resilience Dimension by ensuring the hall, which is an essential community meeting place, remains accessible, structurally sound and operational for years to come. While the hall is unlikely to be activated as an Evacuation Centre or Place of Refuge by the South Burnett Regional Council during a disaster, the hall does play a role in both the preparedness and recovery phases of a local disaster. The inclusion of solar panels with battery ensures a reliable, sustainable energy source during power outages and supports the hall’s role as a resilient community hub.

## 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 focusing 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 and social impact, particularly given its history in the region and its close connection to both heatwaves and fire.

A key source of information for the Kumbia 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 Community Initiatives

APPENDIX A: KUMBIA COMMUNITY INITIATIVES: Project Overview				
Initiative	Status	Resilience Dimension/s	Further Context	Next Steps
<b>1. Kumbia Hall Prepare and Connect</b>	<b>RICE</b>	Networks, Communication, Inclusion, Information, Self-Organising Systems, Resources, Tools and Support	<p>Consultation has been undertaken with South Burnett Regional Council’s Disaster Management Officer regarding the role of the Kumbia Memorial Hall before, during and after a disaster and how to ensure alignment between formal disaster management planning and this initiative.</p> <p>Initial discussions took place during the scoping of this initiative to ensure the schedule of events fostered disaster preparedness and amplified the Resilience Dimensions.</p>	<p>Establishment of 'Kumbia DR:FR Working Group' to refine the project concept with FRRR and Red Earth.</p> <p>This will include budget clarification in relation to how the hall is recognised in the disaster cycle. Updates will be provided to the broader community and there will be opportunities for community feedback where appropriate.</p> <p>Connect the 'Kumbia DR:FR Working Group' with South Burnett Regional Council Disaster Management Officer to inform the project development with regards to the role of the hall in formal disaster management and a list of recovery agencies that may be able to support networking events and information sessions with useful resources.</p> <p>The Working Group, Red Earth and FRRR to refine project concept, including complimentary activities that respond to the Resilience Dimensions including budget considerations relating to capacity building needs to ensure sustainability and communications resourcing.</p>
<b>2. Fridge Magnets</b>	<b>DNP</b>	Information, Inclusion	This initiative was not prioritised by community.	Nil

Initiative	Status	Resilience Dimension/s	Further Context	Next Steps
<b>3. Generator</b>	<b>DNP</b>	Resources, Tools and Support	The community did not want to obtain assets that need to be maintained and noted that with the hall wired for a generator, there are farmers and community members who would provide generators as a community resource if needed during a disaster	Nil
<b>4. Disaster Response Resources, i.e. tarps and blankets to be stored at Kumbia Hall</b>	<b>DNP</b>	Resources, Tools and Support, Self-Organising Systems, Decision Making	Through consultation with Council and other key stakeholders, it was identified the hall is unlikely to be activated as an Evacuation Center or Place of Refuge and, in the event that Council activated the hall as such, necessary resources would be provided by Council or emergency services.	Nil
<b>5. Volunteer Petrol Cards</b>	<b>DNP</b>	Self-Organising Systems, Inclusion	This initiative was not prioritised by community, noting it would need long-term management given the seldom nature of climatic disasters in Kumbia.	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.

