



Australian Government  
National Emergency Management Agency

Australian Institute for  
Disaster Resilience 



# National Recovery Forum: Participant Harvest Report

AUGUST 2022

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## About the forum

The National Recovery Forum was held on the 26 August 2022 at the Adelaide Convention Centre, as part of the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference professional development program. The Forum hosted 228 attendees and received much positive feedback.

The National Recovery Forum was conceived to bring people involved in disaster recovery together to develop connections and share knowledge, ideas, inspiration, and good practice for communities to recover well from disasters and build a resilient future.

The day was underpinned by principles for 'being together' which included: listening well, allowing space for all voices to be heard, bringing an open mind and heart, sharing wisdom, being aware of your impact on the group and taking responsibility for your needs.

## Forum program

<b>8:30am</b>	<b>Registrations open – tea/coffee</b>
9:00am	Welcome to Country Welcome to Forum Framing of the day
9:20am	Check-in – in pairs Question: Why is it important for you to be here today?
9:30am	Stories of Recovery
9:45am	Multiple Perspectives Recovery Conversations (World Café) Question 1: What is your experience of what's worked well in recovery within communities? Question 2: What does this mean for preparedness and recovery into the future?
<b>10:45am</b>	<b>Morning tea</b>
11:15am	Collective Wisdom Circle: Lived and learned experience – panel discussion
11:45am	Pecha Kucha presentations
12:40pm	Small group reflection session
<b>1:00pm</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
1:45pm	Open Space (Conversations that Matter) Question: what are the most important conversations to have now, for us to best support and enable communities in recovery?
<b>3:10pm</b>	<b>Afternoon tea</b>
3:20pm	Meta Harvest Reflection – Graphic Harvest Report Back
3:30pm	Next steps – where to from here?
3:40pm	Check-out Question: How are you leaving
4:00pm	Close

## Participant Harvest

During the National Recovery Forum 2022 participant contributions to the various exercises run were harvested and compiled. Exercises included: check-in and check-out, world café: recovery conversations, reflections on presentations, and conversations that matter. Participants contributed to these exercises through templates designed to capture conversations and ideas; these have been typed and compiled.

# Check-in statements

## Context:

Attendees were asked to turn to the person next to them, introduce themselves and explore why it was important for them to be at the Forum. The purpose of this exercise was to bring participant voices into the room.

## Question:

Why is it important for you to be here today?

## Format:

Post-it notes

- 
- Share ideas and listen and learn
  - Building community capacity, through out local champions, to have long term impact
  - Listening to others – opening up in different ways of seeing and doing things
    - Being surrounded by people, not process, for one day at least
  - How people on the ground will need/access legal services
  - How can we prevent a survivor from dealing with 30 organisations?
  - Building relationships
    - Listen to disruptors
    - National understanding of recovery
    - Learn
  - Connection, collaboration, listening and learning
  - To listen to differences and similarities in experiences and ideas
  - Listen and learn from the expertise around
    - Interaction with perspectives from others at the table
  - Sharing what has worked as in a community and learn more
  - Inclusivity is key
  - Rejuvenate the battery
  - Express community views and see what other communities are doing
    - How to navigate the complexity of agency support
  - First opportunity to come together post COVID, flood and bushfires – different ecosystem and perspective for recovery
    - Networking
  - Recovery as a process (ongoing) not an endpoint
    - Process of challenging terms and assumptions
    - This day is an opportunity to ‘breathe in’ and energise and learn
  - Multiple voices and perspectives
  - Look for ideas about what activities would be useful for communities to engage in recovery
  - Reconnect and reinspire
  - Bringing together diverse views and experiences
  - Learning and listening
  - Diverse backgrounds
  - Greater recognition of the importance of community partner agencies to support capacity building (training etc)
    - Knowledge and connections
  - It is important to reflect on approaches used in the past and discuss what we can do different in the future together

- Figuring out the best way to tell stories, share knowledge and remember together
- Climate change is a justice and humanitarian issue that affects the population disproportionately
- Bringing lived experiences of climate change to the table for discussion
- Networking
  - Professional interest – share and influence
- Regional approach, community and national focus
  - Have advocacy for First Nations input for disaster recovery, and learn
- Meet people and learn
- Looking for opportunities to connect with partners
- Interested in further development of recovery work as a profession
- New relationships and understanding of what is happening/synergies in the recovery space
- Immersion of the sector
- Curiosity
- To learn as much as possible to prepare
- Inspired by Tiahna – walker together in ‘harmony’, lets bring that here today
- Everybody wants to belong
- Acknowledgement and validation of work
  - Listen deeply and learn, share, connect
- Listen and learn from policy level to what is happening/how this translates on the ground
  - Build trust
- Listening
- Affirming
- Consolidation – ‘slower pace’
- Listening, insights, networking, connection, perspectives, currency of knowledge
- Explore – how can we RE-design the ‘system’ to understand and respond to what is ahead
- Role of arts in recovery – how it can help everyone
- Connect across agencies
- Connection, sharing stories – what is happening in your region
- Focus on learning together and hear stories of others
- Building networks in recovery
- Ensure ‘community-led’ is done well – communities supported and cared for in recovery process
- Grounding – orient and local myself in the field
- Networking – getting to know people for context and collaboration
- Ensure the beauty of the creative sector is included
- Understanding more about disaster resilience to bring back to my work
- Working with practitioners to solve real-life community issues
  - Live evaluation feeding back into practice
- Lived experience
  - Understanding the big disaster and recovery picture
  - Children in disasters
- Lived experience in collective knowledge
  - See if on the right track
  - Get some ideas – new/other
  - Make a difference in my community
- Learn from others
- Climate change
  - Custodian to the lands
  - Represent the First Peoples
  - Looking to encourage local economies
- Get the latest approaches, tips and tricks of doing it well
  - Reconnect with colleagues
- Listening to others experiences and reconnecting
- Learn, observe and connect
- Listening, learn and gain experience from lived lessons
- Showing collective action
  - Having a greater understanding of experiences to know how we can better support customers
- Gather and share information
  - Not repeat mistakes
  - Build recovery better into operations
- Understand community – what it needs
  - Shared knowledge before a disaster to help people prepare
- Meet people, share experiences
- Learn ways of being more effective for my community



- To learn how to effectively and sensitively engage with other recovering communities and individuals
- Connection – knowing what’s happening in the space
- Time to chat and digest what we’ve learn over previous days of the conference
- To listen and collaborate because this isn’t going anywhere quick
  - Share knowledge across communities
- Coming together to share ideas, experiences, challenges etc.
- Listening to different perspectives
- New in the journey
  - Be part of the future of recovery
  - Knowledge
- Connections and perspectives
  - Learning and listening
- Hope that there’s some good stuff already happening and desire to learn about it
- Community engagement in post-disaster recovery
  - We had twenty people wanting to study our recovery in the immediate aftermath – we wanted to welcome them but people felt overwhelmed and unable to share at the time
- Better community outcome
  - Experience exchange
- Do recovery better
- Learning how to can support each other
- Sharing and learning from each other
- Awareness of important questions and current priorities
  - Connections, collaboration, information
  - Reflect and consolidate
  - Refresh
- Share ideas, listen and learn, better understanding
  - Recharge to take back to work
- Support colleagues working in recovery
  - Keep up to speed – learn and listen
  - Interaction between health, disaster, climate to reform planning for disaster
- Uncovering the overlaps and connecting the dots
- Exploring and understanding different perspectives on recovery
  - Enhance cross-sectorial collaboration to address the challenges of a multi-disaster environment
- Restore connection
  - Share ideas
  - Listen and learn
  - Better understanding
  - Recharge and motivate
  - Take away ideas
- Motivation, collaboration and encouragement to better support communities
- To get connected with people
  - To listen to how people are improving resilience
  - Experience sharing
- To expand your knowledge of what is happening in recovery in Australia
- Find new tools to add to my kit bag
  - Further exploring the term ‘recovery’
- Need to help others, as many people as possible
  - Ties that bind the community together
- The need to walk the talk with community-led recovery
  - The importance of connection to sustain us
- How do we empower people in government organisations to become recovery practitioners in quick time?
- Better coordinating and collaborating how we do recovery
  - Coordinating our priorities
    - » Is that in tech? case management?
- Recovery as business as usual
  - All people, all ages, all cultures
    - » Providing response according to the cohorts views and needs
- Information sharing, listening
- Share what is happening in our area, collaborate and take information
  - Connections
- To embed ‘non-human’ into our recovery conversations and planning
- Learning

# World Café: Multiple Perspectives Recovery Conversations

## Context:

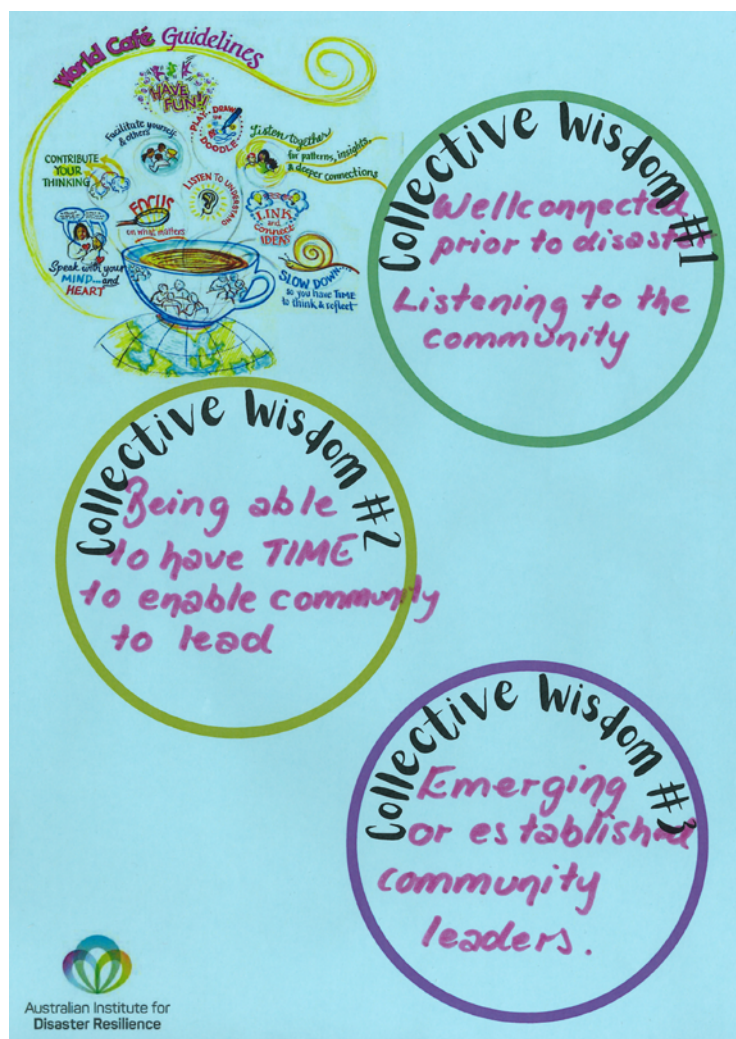
Attendees were asked to form groups of four and discuss question 1, followed by 'popcorn share back'. Attendees were then asked to move and create new groups for question 2, again followed by 'popcorn share back'.

The purpose of this exercise was to connect people in the room, and to open up a dialogue to share practices that have worked well in question one, then to look to the future in question 2. The aim is to surface participants knowledge and experience, sharing collective wisdom.

## Question 1:

In your experience, what has worked well in recovery within communities?

## Format:



**GROUP 1**

- Understanding context and ecosystem of the community
- Community-led with authenticity
- Allowing time for recovery and building connections within the community
- Constraints of timelines
- Opportunity for conversations
- Long term funding

**GROUP 2**

- Draw on local leadership, but allow the 'recovery dance' (people to step back when they need a break) – requires trust and permission
- Local community organisations are gold – resource and listen to them

**GROUP 3**

- Community connectedness was fundamental
- Strengthening communities all the time not just after a disaster
- 'power'
  - Empowered communities
  - Changing over time
  - Tension between community and formal

**GROUP 4**

- Enabling communities
- Have a local champion
- A grab bag of identification and key information – including medication

**GROUP 5**

- Rebuild social assets first – that sets the foundation for the rest to come (built, environment, economic etc.)
- Enable people to stay connected to place and community in a way that meets their needs at that time
- Spend money to create opportunity rather than 'cash people out'
  - Child care
  - Community events
  - Time out of disaster zone

**GROUP 6**

- Infrastructure and services recovery is completed rapidly and well by agency i.e. LGA

**GROUP 7**

- Social events/fun/creativity/physical activity – with food!
- Integrate creativity and fun into recovery
- Focus on psychologically/mental health recovery, not just rebuilding physical environment
- Value of GIVIT/Good360

**GROUP 8**

- Context is everything
- Continued collaboration
- Community security

**GROUP 9**

- Community led and comfortable with discomfort
- Early communication points for gathering and connecting
- Be flexible, it is not a one size fits all approach



- GROUP 10**
- Collaboration with other services
  - Agility to change and adjust ops
  - Long term funding
  - Acknowledgement of length of recovery
  - Listening, empathy and self-care of practitioners
  - Meet physical needs
  - Importance of social networks

- GROUP 11**
- Engage mental health support services early
  - Get in and at the right place straight away
    - Strategic locations
    - Build the trust
  - Know the community before the disaster
    - Know community leaders

- GROUP 12**
- Creating social environment for people to come together to support, share and make social connections
  - Opportunities out of destruction
    - Reuse, recycle e.g. Mt Macedon valuable wood
  - Ability to work and connect across recovery agencies to enable support for impacted individuals/communities

- GROUP 13**
- Agencies allowing communities to lead
  - Flexibility
  - Working together

- GROUP 14**
- Recognising where then community is at
  - Making sure people have a voice
  - Building from strengths and structures that already (still) exist

- GROUP 15**
- Timeless of collaboration
  - Community mental health – it is okay not to be okay
  - Proactive relations

- GROUP 16**
- Establish what councils role was in disaster recovery through media channels
  - Engagement and building capacity
  - Engaged recovery expects to help CRC connect community leaders, community champions and community to take control of their recovery journey

- GROUP 17**
- Embedding arts and culture in recovery

- GROUP 18**
- Strong support of local leadership
  - “all hands on deck”
  - Community connection
  - Establish relationship
  - Benefits of social media
  - One stop shops
  - Recovery hubs
  - Out reach model for disadvantaged
  - Established plan/timeline to want
  - Following up on the community

- GROUP 19**
- Community led response and connections
  - Check on the neighbours you don't like
  - Give people purpose

- GROUP 20**
- Local people, local knowledge, locally embedded services
  - Listen, respect, validate and build trust
    - Not necessarily transactional interaction – connection
  - Relationships
    - Building on existing trusted relationships

- GROUP 21**
- Early outreach
  - Out reach where having conversations initially can lead to asking for help later
  - Finding community leaders
  - Bring it back to what is important and reinforce to community that recovery support is above politics
  - Slow relationship building with LGA's over 2 years that eventually pays off
  - Regular sharing of information between NRRA/local of what is happening on the ground
  - Bringing in agencies to work with community members e.g. inviting them to lunch as part of workshop days
  - Connecting over something that is not the event e.g. gardening days

- GROUP 22**
- Keep families together, no matter the size
  - Look after the elders (cultural competence)
  - Understand the community (leadership, culture, context etc.)

- GROUP 23**
- Working with not for
  - Community ownership - owning their own recovery

- GROUP 24**
- Long term community development approach to recovery
  - Create space for community to speak and be heard
  - Have decision makers who can act there to listen
  - Humanity of agencies comes through dropping defences, and shapes how support is received
  - In peace time build capacity of community to negotiate with agencies

- GROUP 25**
- Social connection
  - Gathering
  - BBQ

- GROUP 26**
- Building on existing foundations and connections first in familiar/existing contexts
  - Mindful of being prepared for more disasters while in recovery
  - Need to work with school leaders to support families through trauma

- GROUP 27**
- Good will from community and supporting each other through recovery
  - Emerging leadership
    - Community stepping up as leaders – information leadership roles
    - Local knowledge and expertise
  - Strengths of communities that had pre-existing plans and community representative group

- GROUP 28**
- Be a plotted plant for community and people
  - Children need and want to tell their stories
  - Support to people along varying timelines

- GROUP 29**
- Agency
  - Community led-including all voices (children, young people, disability LGBTIQ+)
  - Shut up and listen – trauma informed recovery workforce
  - Recovery takes its own time
    - Recovery workforces and funding cycles need to follow

- GROUP 30**
- Regeneration of natural environment
  - Outreach to isolated communities – don't expect everyone to go to local town
  - Case management critical to recovery (e.g. RSS)

- GROUP 31**
- People who listen
  - Trauma informed approach
  - Shining lights
  - Flexibility of grants and access to support – simple guidelines
  - Case management
    - Knowledge of system and how to navigate it

- GROUP 32**
- Well connected prior to disaster
  - Listening to the community
  - Being able to have TIME to enable community to lead
  - Emerging or established community leaders

- GROUP 33**
- Longevity of funding and support is vital
    - Based on needs when it is needed, even 10 years on
  - Take the time to ask, listen, share and empower the community to recover
  - Realise that the recovery process is not linear and you are dealing with human beings, who are complex, emotional and powerful creatures

- GROUP 34**
- Simplicity, finding routine and bringing 'fun' back into everyday life
  - Regenerating the landscape through art and nature connection
  - Don't underestimate the power of a cup of tea

- GROUP 35**
- Building relationships and partnerships
  - Listening to the voice of the community
  - Embedding arts and culture through recovery

- GROUP 36**
- Speedy collaboration – agencies knowing each other in ‘peace-time’ helps
  - Getting in earlier than you think
    - Support services like financial and rebuilding advice are needed early when people lose everything
  - People who have the capability and confidence to cut through the bullshit – leadership and confidence
  - Speed of different types of support
    - some needed quicker than you think – financial is one of these
    - local people working here
    - business hub/rebuilding centre
  - Utilising confident leaders who are able to stand up and call meetings etc when others aren’t ready to

- GROUP 37**
- Giving people the space and time
  - Ability of information

- GROUP 38**
- Walking with community – allowing them to set the pace
  - Contexts for natural connections and mutual support
  - Human qualities and interactions of being curious, open, supporting and non-judgemental

- GROUP 39**
- Courage and confidence
  - Supportive networks

- GROUP 40**
- Progress by community on selves
    - Self-organise
    - Views and concepts of what they need
  - Planning and resilience
    - Can plan for community recovery
    - Able to name priorities and values of communities previous to event
  - Collaboration between recovery agencies that enabled reflection and adaptation to ideas that come up
  - Reduction in siloed responses, enables creativity
    - Opens up options
    - Allows wider views of what is possible
  - Need to recognise social capital to empower and build own plans – when recovery practitioners let go of their power
  - Recognise the cohort ahead of you, everyone has their life experience

# World Café: Multiple Perspectives Recovery Conversations

## Question 2:

What does this mean for preparedness and recovery into the future?

## Format:





**GROUP 1**

- Doing things differently
- Funding cycle?
- Community led/driven

**GROUP 2**

- Recovery planning needs to be developed by individual communities. Agencies/organisations shouldn't come into communities and tell them how they will recover/what to do. We need to sit down with the communities and ask them where we sit in their plans and how we can help
- Ownership = community leaders
- Community driven, agency supported
- Improve our education and messaging on preparedness. Use lived experiences and locals, not govt organisations. Again, community led – personalise it
- Think about language and labels we use. 'recovery', 'houses lost', 'impacted' is it helpful or doing more damage? Should 'recovery' be renewal'?

**GROUP 3**

- Using learnings to inform plans and implement best practice
- Emphasis on the 'social' space and time for community led
- Using data/experience to plan in other areas

**GROUP 4**

- Recognise that communities have the capacity to rescue to recover themselves to a large degree and need the right external supports at the right time – even 10 years on
- Government, support and recovery agencies need understand and embrace that recovery needs to be fluid and adaptable
- Recognise it's not a one size fits all approach

**GROUP 5**

- Lessons learnt improve how we do recovery next time
- Enough resources to undertake preparedness and resilience work
- Recovery systems mature/evolve to reflect more frequent disasters

**GROUP 6**

- The more we can support building 'social capital' the better
- Be alert to 'disaster capitalise' and regulate/use governance
  - Be humble in your collaborations
  - Remember who your serving
- Listening, good relationships and X in planning X the hard questions
  - Leverage Red Cross prep work

**GROUP 7**

- Flexibility and adaptability
- Knowledge of network and support available
- Collaboration

**GROUP 8**

- Plans need to be flexible to respond to difference
- Need to build trust in 'peace time'
- Need to build capacity and capability – empower/fund community

**GROUP 9**

- Options!
- Equity
  - Planning and awareness etc.
- Community led disaster plans

- GROUP 10**
- Matching needs and support beyond traditional thinking
  - Flexibility
    - Flexible approaches that allow for difference expenses, needs, timeframes, journeys and peoples
  - Maintaining connections
    - Community isn't a noun, it is about collections of people that identify with each other or make up collective groups
    - To understating context and connections

- GROUP 11**
- Mitigation instead of/as well as recovery
  - Collaboration, sharing, gathering
  - People in early times after disaster may not be ready/able to do community led recovery

- GROUP 12**
- Is PPRR contemporary?
  - Create open safe places to enable unpacking of power, roles and responsibilities between communities, partners, government

- GROUP 13**
- How government views community
    - Need to see them as equal partner
    - Recognise community skills and capacity, recognise context and culture
  - New disaster landscape need to be more strategic in approach to whole PPRR at all levels of government
  - Finding models need to change – not event based, longer term – disaster recovery and resilience building need to be more mainstream

- GROUP 14**
- Effective, meaningful/timeless allocation of grants and resources
    - Outcomes based, place based systems – rather than output based
  - Invest in 'trust'
  - Translate wisdom and policy to action on the ground
  - Genuine relationships between recovery practitioners and communities in recovery
  - Long term investment in recovery/resilience
  - Place based approaches
  - Invest in bridging between government and community
  - Transfer knowledge, experience resources
  - Take a 'systems approach' – integrate and learn from other sectors

- GROUP 15**
- Understanding existing structures in the community
    - Building social connections and capital
    - Build capital of community leaders
  - Improve pre-disaster planning
    - Personalisation of risks and hazard vulnerability to multi-hazards and rules
  - Innovation and social
    - Adaptive resilience of organisations
    - Unlearn, relearning
    - Integrate resilience

- GROUP 16**
- Central data base – inequality to access
  - No one should slip through tracks
  - Remember that EM workers are people/trauma effected too
  - Stop competing and collaborate
  - Lost knowledge/reinventing the wheel
    - Never forget the community are why we are here

- GROUP 17**
- Listening, evaluation and adjusting into the future according to the needs to the community
    - Community led approach
  - Building resilience in the community to empower them into preparing and recovering – building up wellbeing to increase resilience
  - Increasing childhood inclusivity in developing resilience
    - Listening to the voices and messages of children
      - » Storm birds? Pillowcase, emerging minds, birdies tree

- GROUP 18**
- Recovery is not an end point
  - Change the paradigm
  - Acceptance of the risk
  - Sendai not PPRR

- GROUP 19**
- Build strong local communities and social capital before events – requires changes to funding
  - Human centred (social capital) focus (balance with infrastructure)
  - Culture and systemic change in disaster recovery – learn from lessons, steps out of comfort zone

- GROUP 20**
- Foundational human connection/collaboration before and after a disaster
  - Establishing baseline preparation, empowerment and understanding pre-disaster – through experience sharing
    - Across all disaster types and communities
  - Rejigging recovery 'authority' and priority
    - Top down v bottom up
    - Horizontal?
    - Priorities – health and wellbeing
  - Rehumanise

- GROUP 21**
- Collaborative agencies working together to complement each other, understanding who does what
  - Each agency understanding their lane and how they work together for a positive, results driven outcome
  - Flexible grant guidelines
  - Commonwealth and state governments making clear decisions in regards to declaring a 'disaster'

- GROUP 22**
- Risk mitigation, plan, prepare, education, constant awareness
  - Recognition that disaster and emergency events are normal
  - Increase promotion that everyone needs a plan and prepared for location of where people live
    - To allow access information on how/what is X for events
    - Real estate obligation to disclose
    - Obligation on peak bodies
  - Funding
    - Increase short term model to recovery BAU
    - Not attached to major activation, instead to the length of recovery with ability to increase with compounding events

- GROUP 23**
- Embedding services i.e. mental health/Centrelink in community as business as usual rather than purely in response to disaster
  - Building on existing networks and frameworks (SFDRR) instead of creating new ones

- GROUP 24**
- Relationships and community connections
  - Funding models need to change (3-5 year minimum and go to local community orgs/groups)

- GROUP 25**
- Key community members can be identified to help liaise with services who are coming into the community to provide support
  - Education before disaster helps build resilience and can change outcomes during disaster

- GROUP 26**
- Disaster fatigue – we need to implement ways of working that acknowledge cascading disasters
  - Capacity – informed community is an empowered community. Everyone wants to know what capacity/resources are available
  - Impact of repetitive events – programs and response needs to embed the assumption that more disasters are on the horizon

- GROUP 27**
- Coordinated approach for connecting community with services
  - Listening to community and being prepared for differences

- GROUP 28**
- More planning with community – capacity building and education
    - Response and recovery becomes business as usual
  - Outcomes focused (not too many KPI's based on money, timeframes, numbers etc) more ESG
  - Evaluation on processes and outcomes – community's criteria
  - PCEP – starting from a place of strength empower people to be responsible for self
  - Radical transformation

- GROUP 29**
- Long term funding for place-based community-led organisations
  - Rapid funding allocation
  - Community-led focus – money into community development (general)
  - Provision of off the shelf community organising platforms/systems and processes

- GROUP 30**
- Encourage people and communities to 'plan for recovery' in the same way they plan for disasters – not just government and recovery actors
  - How do we collectivise the experience and knowledge so that it might be shared and applied universally?
    - So that every disaster builds on the last, not just a 'cold start'
  - Establish a 'recovery mentor' network to bring previous disaster survivors into impacted communities to 'show the path forward'

- GROUP 31**
- Resource and build community capacity (people)
  - Resource planning and prep to stand-up local experts to coordinate recovery – be flexible
    - System to transition from response – recovery
  - System to identify and resource emerging long-tail recovery needs

- GROUP 32**
- Relationships - 'come together' – listen/work together
    - All communities – aged, children, LGBTQIA+
  - Communication/information with communities (before, during and after) – community led
    - Flexible and adaptive
    - Different ways
  - Preparedness planning - community to have own plan
    - Where to go, relevant info, accessible = less complacency
    - Individual plan – and back up, what ifs

- GROUP 33**
- Community connections greater recovery
  - Getting kids to work in the donation centres helps empower kids – engage the kids to help
  - Recognising the needs of the individuals with each community, not group and homogenising – adults/kids etc.
  - Not a one size fits all
  - Draw on services that already exist
  - No time frame for recovery
  - Pyramid approach to needs/care/resources
  - How do we think about community?
  - Do communities have a say in who is invited to help?

- GROUP 34**
- Cultivate trust (based on personal connection and time)
  - Learn lesson but insight needs to be rooted in context
  - Let community define what a 'happy, healthy' community is
    - 'Co-benefit'

- GROUP 35**
- People who listened
    - Trauma informed
    - Connect on own level
  - Flexibility
    - Easy access to support
  - Case management
    - Ability to adapt



# Open space: Conversations that matter

## Context:

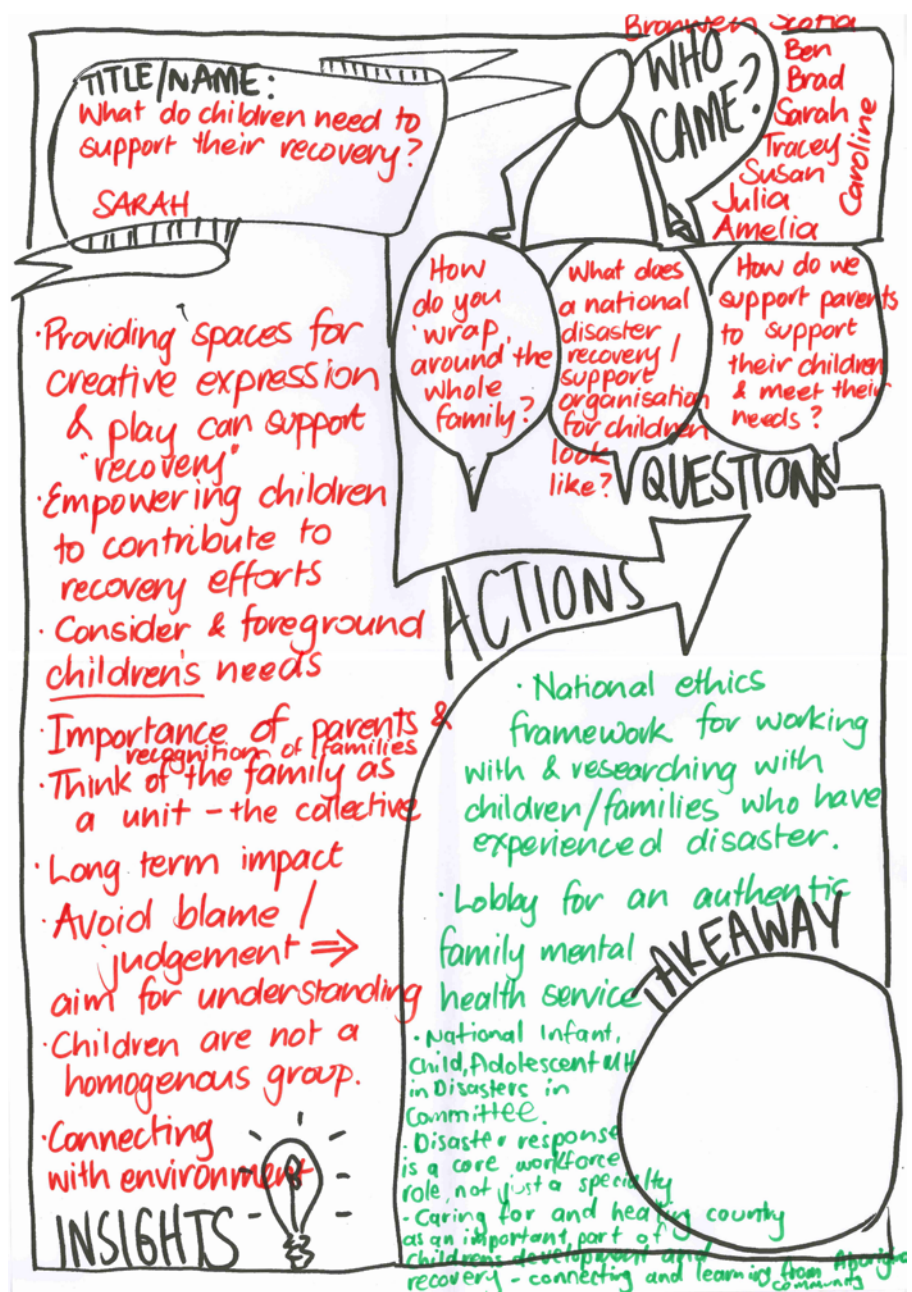
Attendees were invited to host or contribute to disaster recovery conversations on a range of topics. They were asked what are the important conversations to have now, for us to best support and enable communities in recovery? So that we can all recover well from disasters and build resilient futures? Attendees were then able to nominate topics they were interested in and wanted to discuss.

The principles that underpinned the activity were: whoever comes are the right people, whenever it starts is the right time, whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened and when it's over, it's over. Attendees were also encouraged to move elsewhere if they felt they were not learning or contributing.

The facilitators outlined 'roles' that participants could take on, including:

- Host: call and host a conversation
- Participant: participate in one conversation
- Bumble bee: participate in several conversations
- Butterfly: take time out

The purpose of this exercise was to open up the conversations that people had energy for on the day, at the Forum, given their experience and understanding. It was used as an opportunity for attendees to hear each other's stories, lessons and experiences.



# Discussion:

Below is a harvest of what participants discussed during the open space session

<b>TITLE/NAME:</b>	<b>Research ethics and considerations</b>
<b>QUESTIONS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Should researchers have lived experience?</li><li>• Who does the research serve/assist?</li><li>• How do researchers build trust in communities?</li></ul>
<b>INSIGHTS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where is the need?</li><li>• PFA training for researchers – alongside HEAG, aus research council grants</li><li>• Trust building avenues?</li><li>• What are the benefits for participants?</li><li>• Partnerships with organisations</li><li>• What are the underlying motivations behind your research? Is it self-gratification? Who's agenda?</li><li>• Co-design – methods and ethics, compromise</li><li>• Do not harm</li></ul>
<b>ACTIONS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Resources: PFA training, co design options</li><li>• Kvale and Brinkman (researchers?)</li><li>• Stefanie Milan (2014) Ethics of social movement research</li><li>• Adam Gaudry (2011) insurgent research</li></ul>
<b>TITLE/NAME:</b>	<b>Across government collaboration – making recovery easier for communities</b>

- INSIGHTS:**
- Mapping who does what/how can help community
  - 'No wrong door' e.g. if this tree is not your problem, stay involved and connect with the right person
  - 1 form/1 system shared
  - Empower communities and government staff supporting them – trust to make decisions
  - 'Well and confidential in professional identify'
  - Business as usual rules v recovery 'rules' - leaders don't know either
  - Duplicate/resource wastage
  - Engage and problem solve with community even if its 'not your job/in your scope'

**TITLE/NAME:** Fresh think: post disaster housing

- INSIGHTS:**
- What might be fantastic?
    - Unified national approach
    - Fast
    - Options – different homes
    - Build-on-able options
    - Flexible
    - Could be come permanent (and loved)
    - Safe – in future disasters

- ACTIONS:**
- Train local people to build houses = capacity building
  - No mandated timeframes on temporary housing
  - Pod – little add to in future become permanent
  - Shed Plus

- TAKEAWAY:**
- Flexible building regulations

**TITLE/NAME:** Greater availability of accessible housing

- INSIGHTS:**
- Relocation flat pack housing with flexible buy, rent, keep, build on to homes
  - Programs to train and upskill locals as tradies while they get people into accommodation
  - Change language to small homes (not shed or mot or STMH)
  - Online platform nationally to share existing stock
  - Goes further that first wave displacement

- TAKEAWAY:**
- Universal design standards for accessibility and also \$ efficiency

**TITLE/NAME:** What do we want government to know

- INSIGHTS:**
- York peninsular – did things right – follow that
    - Right recovery coord in place – listened to different voices, part of community
  - Government working with community before – upskilling community
  - Know when to step in at the right time on the right topic
  - Funding based on needs – not time frame
    - Need long term focus
    - Funding flexibility
  - Know the differences in the community
  - Local government – one person doing multiple roles – go to the person on the ground – the connector
  - Need to share stories – see the humanity, this helps the recovery process
  - Don't politicise the 'announcements'
  - Inconsistencies are divisive – trust relationships
    - Funding of people programs
  - Housing provision
    - Patient finance
    - More creative and flexible STM housing
  - We need NEW (not more) thinking around \$, employment contracts, ways to support the rebuilding
  - Longer term contracts for recovery employment
  - Grants provision
  - The manner in which organisations leave a recovering community is just as important as how you arrive. Please include departing protocols in future plans

- ACTIONS:**
- Certain level of support needed to be give – mental health etc.
  - Strategic discussions
  - Recovery is important for improved resilience
  - What does 'better' look like?
  - Needs focus
  - Simplify information (onus off individual)
  - Case management

- TAKEAWAY:**
- Local knowledge is critical – connect to on the ground
  - Flexibility

**TITLE/NAME: How do we focus and have influence on disaster prevention**

- INSIGHTS:**
- Cost benefits (resilience dividend), Harder – easier
  - Soft – more difficult
  - Think about all disasters
  - Climate change language and understanding improve
  - Whose responsibility is it?
  - Change codes for building
  - Natural hazards intersect with humans = disasters
  - Knowledge of hazards for communities
  - What hazards are likely to affect what areas?

- ACTIONS:**
- Stop building in high-risk areas
  - New climate change projections
  - Communicate clearly to community about risk and prevention strategies
  - Adaptive dynamic policy pathways (in NZ)
  - Change natural disaster definition to include fauna and flora, not just when humans are affected)

**TITLE/NAME: Lets talk more about Lismore and the Northern Rivers**

- INSIGHTS:**
- Challenges for communities
    - Governance
    - Grants
  - Children
    - Many, trauma
    - Single point of contact for schools
  - Families
    - Long term \$\$ impact
  - On the shelf organising systems

- ACTIONS:**
- NR case regional organisations – community collaboratiOn
  - Relationships and networks

- TAKEAWAY:**
- it is massive and we have a lot of work to do



**TITLE/NAME: What comes after PRR or disaster management cycle thinking**

- QUESTIONS:**
- Are there better models that centre community?
  - What do community actually need in this?

- INSIGHTS:**
- Trauma response frameworks – From Lisa Gibbs
    - Professor Kath
    - Chamberlain on TRF
  - The cycle is an illustration and time to separate agency operational roles
  - Instead centre community need to experience
  - Relationships | information/action | care-gaps/action
  - DRR implications that allows a community to thrive
  - Disaster declaration is a challenge to accessing disaster funding
  - Emerging leaders
  - Sendai Framework – acceptance
  - ‘Manage’ shift from community
  - Communities need info, resources

- TAKEAWAY:**
- Investigating the options for identifying support needed in other sectors like trauma, indigenous rights, community development

**TITLE/NAME: What do children need to support their recovery**

- QUESTIONS:**
- How do you ‘wrap around’ the whole family?
  - What does a national disaster/recovery support organisation for children look like?
  - How do we support parents to support her children and meet their needs?

- INSIGHTS:**
- Providing spaces for creative expression and play can support ‘recovery’
  - Empowering children to contribute to recovery efforts
  - Consider and foreground children’s needs
  - Importance of parents and recognition of families
  - Thing of the family as a unit – the collective
  - Long term impact
  - Avoid blame/judgement – aim for understanding
  - Children are not a homogenous group
  - Connecting with environment

- ACTIONS:**
- National ethics framework for working with and researching with children/families who have experience disaster
  - Lobby for an authentic family mental health service
  - National infant, child, adolescent MH in disasters Committee
  - Disaster response is a core workforce role, not just a specialty
  - Caring for and healing country as an important part of children’s development and recovery – connecting and learning from Aboriginal community

**TITLE/NAME: Is it fair to talk about 'resilience'?**

- QUESTIONS:**
- How do we know whether communities are resilient? Who measures it?
  - Where do we draw the balance between supporting community recovery and expecting community to recovery on their own
  - What are the legacy issues that are making us vulnerable?

- INSIGHTS:**
- What do we call resilience?
    - Usually urban, predominantly white framing
    - Poverty, social and system discrimination is already eroding resilience
    - Not all communities will or should be expected to self-organise
  - AND, how are we defining 'community'?
    - Geographic delineations are not (always) useful
    - Differences in cultural groups e.g. collectivist vs individual societal make-ups
    - Language and education needs to change
  - Emergency management sector needs to be able to be vulnerable
  - Importance of government also being resilient to keep responding and supporting

- ACTIONS:**
- We need inclusive governance
  - Need to address systemic root causes of vulnerability – politicians need to be held accountable
  - Resilience is highly contextual and can be good and bad
  - We're asking too much of communities to deal with systemic issues, we cant transfer all risk to individual who don't have the decision-making power
  - Ongoing inclusive governances with community leaders

- TAKEAWAY:**
- Resilience is a co-benefit

**TITLE/NAME: Rolling recovery**

- INSIGHTS:**
- Still stigma around 'walking through the door'
  - Weave preparedness wellbeing into recovery
  - Fatigue is real
  - COVID is a 3 year disaster
  - Red cross have a huge amount of services and resources
  - Risk losing good experience
  - Mandala is a EAP Service specialising in disaster

- ACTIONS:**
- 'Women's pamper days' – proactive 'indirect' day-out days
  - A good gin bar
  - Investing into wellbeing early – respite funding
  - Roster structures for response and recovery
  - Workplaces need to support adequate leave
  - Institute a 'buddy program' to support staff during events

**TITLE/NAME:** Coordination of programs for infants, children and young people in recovery landscape

- INSIGHTS:**
- A lot of schools have resilience programs within curriculum
  - Potentially local government registration for providers when entering an area
  - Create a checklist of priorities for your school to assist principals in decision making programs
  - Use data collected in outreach to influence program design and priorities
    - Pay particular attention to people already in community e.g. sport clubs, scouts, cultural clubs and church youth groups
  - Need database of providers

- ACTIONS:**
- We need a framework for effective co-ord of preparedness, response and recovery program programs for infants, children and young people

**TITLE/NAME:** Hearing the quietest voices – ensuring they are heard

- QUESTIONS:**
- Who are the people who didn't have a voice?
  - Can we use technology to assist?

- INSIGHTS:**
- Some grounds don't have access or can access tech – some do
    - There's not one solution
  - Language we use needs consideration
  - Meeting with small community grounds – CWA, Rotary, scouts
  - Meet with vulnerable groups – elderly disabled, womens, youth, LGBTQ, first nations, CALD
    - Or not part of a 'labelled group
  - Strategic partnerships
  - Hold events/BBQ's with more staff available so not just loudest voices are heard
  - Create safe spaces
  - Talking whilst doing activities, walks, art
  - Involve people in a part of the recovery
  - Impartial facilitators – possibly invaluable
    - Or skill workers in facilitation

- ACTIONS:**
- Loudest community – greater focus – more opportunity = inequity

- TAKEAWAY:**
- Recognise that the 'louder' voices and/or agency don't represent everybody

**TITLE/NAME:** Inclusive and holistic action plans

**INSIGHTS:**

- York Peninsular Community
  - Commencement plan
  - Blending traditional and newer processes
  - Acceptance of real needs
- Who are the leaders (local) who spread the word?
- QLD experience
- Mapping of sacred sights - pre and post event
  - Information not shared with community – assimilation
  - Willingness to share
- Need to re-educate in cultural knowledge
- Royal Commission recs
- Tick box initiatives

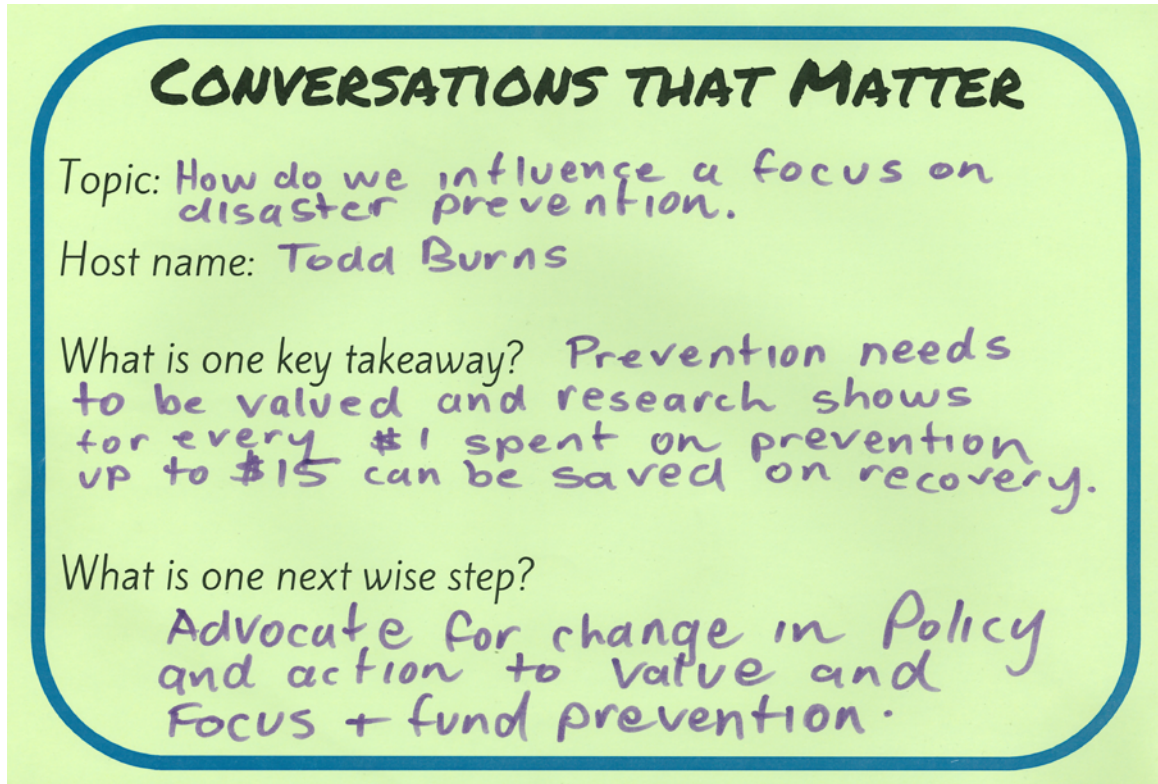
**ACTIONS:**

- Changing behaviours
- Walk together
- Bridge the gap
- Build back better consultations to include cultural sites and local traditions

## Presentation:

Participants synthesised their open space discussions for presentations

## Format:



### CONVERSATION 1

**Topic:** Rolling Recovery – supporting supporters and communities in compounding events

**Host name:** Heidi Pegg

**What is one key takeaway?** Utilising existing resources to develop 'mental health preparedness' is needed as a proactive step (industry and community)

**What is one next wise step?** Raise the profile of services such as Red Cross programs that integrate

### CONVERSATION 2

**Topic:** Hearing the quietest voices – ensuring they are heard

**What is one key takeaway?** The schmickest and loudest voices/profiles etc. in society to not necessarily represent all

**What is one next wise step?** Understand and utilise varied communications strategies not just one



### CONVERSATION 3

**Topic:** Academic research ethics/consideration in post-disaster contexts

**Host name:** Kate Douglas

**What is one key takeaway?** Need for deep reflection, training, trust building and transparency – rehumanise, remember who you’re serving

**What is one next wise step?** Connect with organisations, community and resources before beginning research – do no harm

### CONVERSATION 4

**Topic:** Insurance

**Host name:** Joey Mason

**What is one key takeaway?** Systemic change – creating a positive obligation on insurers/agencies/government to change legislation and practices

**What is one next wise step?** Education for customers on risk and insurance (why/how/financial position) – grants for preparation

### CONVERSATION 5

**Topic:** Moving from timeframe based, to outcome-based funding

**Host name:** Shane

**What is one key takeaway?** Change the focus from guidelines and program deliverables to think about who the recipients are, what their needs are and the outcomes they need

**What is one next wise step?** Incorporate timeframe flexibility to deliver longer solutions that will be bigger than just recovery

### CONVERSATION 6

**Topic:** Conflict resolution

**Host name:** Ippei

**What is one key takeaway?** Need to consider unresolved pre-existing conflict

**What is one next wise step?** Avoid siloing

## CONVERSATION 7

**Topic:** Across government collaboration

**Host name:** Rebecca Whellum

**What is one key takeaway?** Mapping who does what in all agencies and sharing with everybody – no wrong door if community approach government with a question – government workers stays involved until solved

**What is one next wise step?** Empowering/trusting government staff – what decisions can they make/approve to help communities quickly. Federal, state and local government resolve conflict without involving community

## CONVERSATION 8

**Topic:** How do we influence a focus on disaster prevention

**Host name:** Todd Burns

**What is one key takeaway?** Prevention needs to be valued and research shows for every \$1 spend on prevention \$15 can be saved on recovery

**What is one next wise step?** Advocate for change in policy and action to value and focus/fund prevention

## CONVERSATION 9

**Topic:** What do you want government to know?

**Host name:** Jacqui

**What is one key takeaway?** Connect to local knowledge – it is critical

**What is one next wise step?** Visualise who is doing what and who is missing

## CONVERSATION 10

**Topic:** Fresh thinking about post disaster housing

**Host name:** Carol Hopkins

**What is one key takeaway?** Governments don't seem to be doing anything in the face of this crisis. Nice, quality flatpack home units that can be completed locally in a program that trains up new people in the relevant trades – TAFE supported (encourage women and others)

**What is one next wise step?** National conversation feed into locally based, needs based supply chain – must be flexible, adaptable and accessible

## CONVERSATION 11

**Topic:** Lismore and northern rivers

**Host name:** Elly Bird

**What is one key takeaway?** Relationships and networks, funding support

**What is one next wise step?** Communications and collaboration

## CONVERSATION 12

**Topic:** Community development in recovery – principles, practice

**Host name:** Michelle D

**What is one key takeaway?** Language, C.D principles matter

**What is one next wise step?** Government needs education

## CONVERSATION 13

**Topic:** What do children need to support their recovery

**Host name:** Sarah

**What is one key takeaway?** Family should be treated as a separate unit, rather than the current focus on treating each family member individually. It is important to repair fractures within the family unit, not just focusing on each individuals fractures.

**What is one next wise step?** Focus training clinicians to use family-based interventions alongside individual therapy. Organisational focus on treating family units. Learning from First Nations about caring and healing country.

## CONVERSATION 14

**Topic:** Inclusiveness

**Host name:** Eddie Marbuck

**What is one key takeaway?** Walking together

**What is one next wise step?** Start!

# Check-out statements

## Context:

Attendees were asked to turn to the person next to them and tell them how they were leaving (in one word) and why. Attendees then reported back to the group what they had written in a 'game' of check-out bingo.

The purpose of the check-out was to support attendees to leave well, and to harvest peoples experience of the forum.

## Question:

How are you leaving (one word)?

- Fresh – thinking about post-disaster housing
- Reflective, energised
- Better informed
- Connected, reflective
- Bit tuckered out to be honest
- Leaving in awe or an incredible community of practice
- Encouraged, inspired
- Connected
- Restless
- Brain full, heart full
- Inspired, reflective
- Inspired and energised
- With clarity
- Excited, energised
- Enriched
- Thoughtful
- Confident
- Curious
- (Re)motivated
- Encouraged and overwhelmed

## Format:

Post-it notes

- Processing (all the thought bubbles)
  - Prioritising (all the thought bubbles)
- Inspired
- Exhausted and satisfied
- Awesome, great people
- Curious
  - What's next??
  - How to we collaborate more efficiently and more effectively?
  - How do we action all the amazing ideas we've canvased?
  - How can we do things differently?
- Awe struck
- My tribe
- Glad I came
- Enlightened and overwhelmed
- Proud
- Knowledgeable, empowered, connected
- Buzzing, hopeful
- Determined
  - Want to do something similar in WA
- Hopeful, energised

- Belonging
- Refilled
- Value in bringing recovery peeps together
- Lots to percolate
- Better connected
- Inspired to re-think
- Encourage, supported
- Juggling thought bubbles
- Invigorated, tasked
- With gratitude
- Paradigm shift
- High expectations
- Thirsty
- Encouraged and connected
- Satisfied, grateful
- Grateful
- A bit wiser and grateful
- Proud of this tribe, hopeful, inspired and grateful
- A wonderful experience thank you
- Leaving with a lot of relevant information, thank you
- First time attending – way above expectations
- Rewarded
- Encouraged
- Curious to learn more
- Invigorated
- More connected
- Satiated
- More confident
- Inspired and motivated
- Invigorated
- Connected/less alone
- Hopeful, motivated, inspired
- Positive
- Inspired and tired
- Curious
- Grateful
- Fresh eyes
- Pondering
- Better informed
- Gratitude



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