

Project Brief

North East Victoria – Ovens Murray



Community Resilience for Dry Conditions 2019–2020

Purpose

To build on the current capacity of farming communities in the Ovens Murray area to respond and adapt to the impacts of, and complex issues associated with, dry conditions. The project aims to strengthen the wellbeing and resilience of farming communities.

How

This is a collaborative capacity building project undertaken by Central Hume and Upper Hume PCPs. It will start community-led conversations to explore collective solutions to local or emerging issues associated with changing weather conditions. The project coordinators will consult and engage with farmers, farming communities and people working within the agriculture community.

The project will:

- use the principles of place-based planning, co-design, and community engagement to explore local solutions to complex issues.
- provide coordination support for the design, implementation and evaluation of capacity building activities;
- identify support pathways for farmers and their families experiencing financial stress and emotional or psychological distress associate with the impact of changing weather conditions.

Outcomes

- Build on existing partnerships and relationships to enable stronger connections, leading to more tailored responses to local needs and issues.
- Strengthen social and community connections and build on existing assets in the farming communities.
- Improved understanding and knowledge of pathways for emotional and financial support.
- Localised supports for members of farming communities impacted by dry weather events.

The Current Situation

Below average rainfall across the 2018 growing season has meant that Northern Victoria is facing drier than average weather conditions. In response to this and in accordance with the Victorian Drought Preparedness and Response Framework, the Victorian Government released a \$30 million Drought Preparedness and Support Package. This package aims to enable information sharing and support for farming communities to increase their resilience through the current dry conditions.

In Northern Victoria, the package targeted mental health and supporting farming communities to prepare for drought. It included:

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Central Hume
Primary Care Partnership



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- More than \$2 million for mental health and wellbeing services, with \$180,000 of this funding dedicated to the National Centre for Farmer Health to deliver health checks to farmers.
- Northern Victorian farmers will now be able to apply to the Drought Infrastructure Grant Program
- \$1 million to make sure wild pest and animal control programs are better coordinated regionally.
- \$1 million to provide expert technical and business support to help them make good, early decisions around farm management, including animal health, feed budgeting and land management.

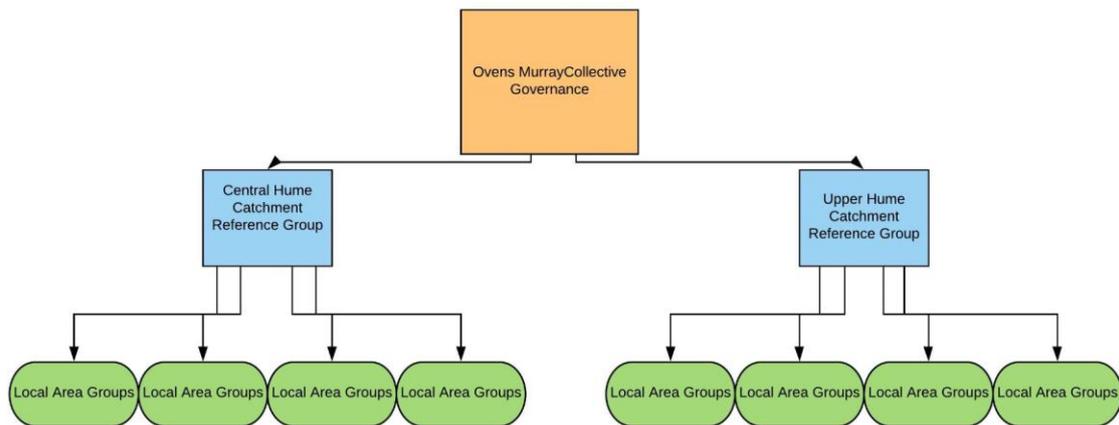
Timelines

This project will be delivered across 18 months, from April 2019 – September 2020

Project organisation, governance, roles and responsibilities

Central Hume and Upper Hume PCPs will provide backbone support, undertaking the contracted role based on principles of place based, co-design and community consultation.

Governance Structure



Stakeholders and partnerships

The key service providers and stakeholders* in this project include, but are not limited to:

State Government: Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Environment Lands Water and Planning, Agriculture Victoria, Regional Development Victoria Hume

Local Government: Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Mansfield, Towong, Wangaratta and Wodonga

Agencies: North East CMA, , Goulburn Broken CMA, RFCS North East, North East Water, Goulburn–Murray Water, Landcare Facilitators Networks and groups, AgBiz, Community Fire Authority and State Emergency Service.

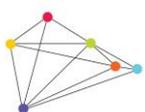
Industry: Murray Dairy, Stock and Feed business, etc.

Community: Landcare, Young Farmers, VFF, etc.

Aboriginal: LAN, Victorian Registered Aboriginal Parties.

*Stakeholders will be identified through the project based on community consultation

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