



Rockhampton Community Engagement Report

Understanding readiness in Rockhampton in regard to participation in the Stronger Places, Stronger People initiative

December 2022

Prepared by Collaboration for Impact



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Executive Summary

This report contains a summary of an engagement process conducted in Rockhampton by Collaboration for Impact in November 2022. The engagement sought to understand community appetite and readiness in relation to participation in the Stronger Places, Stronger People initiative following earlier conversations and involvement in 2021.

There was a collective recognition that a lot of conditions have shifted since 2021, and much has been learned since the last Stronger Places, Stronger People engagement. There was a recognised need for additional foundational support and interest in pursuing a whole of community approach, including important collaboration across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (First Nations) and other multicultural Australian community members.

The Rockhampton community was supportive throughout the engagement and expressed a willingness and readiness to continue conversations about a partnership with the Commonwealth and Queensland government as part of the Stronger Places, Stronger People initiative.



Abbreviations

DSS	Department of Social Services
SPSP	Stronger People, Stronger Places
CFI	Collaboration for Impact
PEP	Partnership Exploration Process
ECCQ	Every Child Central Queensland
DCYSI	Darumbal Community Youth Services Incorporated
CBCAC	Community Based Crime Action Committee
ACCO	Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations
DPAC RNTB	Darumbal People Aboriginal Corporation Registered Native Title Body
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
AICRA	Aboriginal and Islander Community Resource Agency
CQID	Queensland Indigenous Development
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CQ	Central Queensland
QPS	Queensland Police Service
PCYC	Police Citizens Youth Club Welfare Association
MA	Multicultural Australia
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
CAP	Community Assistance Program
LLA	Local Level Alliance
RPG	Referral Pathway Group
MHAOD	Mental Health and Other Drugs
NFP	Not-for-profit
AEDC	Australian Early Development Census
CfC	Communities for Children
CQU	Central Queensland University



Acknowledgement

Collaboration for Impact would like to acknowledge the Darumbal people as the Traditional Owners on whose lands this work was conducted. We thank them for their blessing and support of the work and ongoing collaboration in the Rockhampton community.

We also acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (First Nations) Elders, past, present and emerging, who call Rockhampton home and steward a vision of better lives for all Rockhampton families.

Preamble

This report has been prepared at the request of the Commonwealth Department of Social Services to support decision-making around the future of the Stronger Places, Stronger People initiative in Rockhampton.

The information and examples in this report belong to the community that produced them. We recognise and acknowledge the generosity of community members and partners who shared their time, experiences and insights to contribute to developing this report.

The report is qualitative and does not attempt to provide a comprehensive overview of all community activities and their impact on Rockhampton. Owing to the time-limited nature of the engagement, the report has some gaps. These are described in the section *Limitations*.

The author(s) assumes fault for any error made in the content of this report, interpretation of conversations or representation of the relevant parties. We ask the report reader to assume goodwill on the part of the author(s) and that any error made is unintentional.



Report

Purpose

In September 2022, the Department of Social Services (DSS), as part of the Stronger People, Stronger Places (SPSP) initiative, requested Collaboration for Impact (CFI) facilitate a community engagement process in Rockhampton.

The purpose of the engagement was to determine community readiness to engage with the SPSP model or a broader government partnership to support community-led change efforts in Rockhampton.

Between the 14th and 25th of November 2022, the Collaboration for Impact team travelled to Rockhampton and conducted a two-week engagement with various community members and stakeholders to understand the following:

1. Is there interest in community-led systems change, using collective impact practice, and in partnership with the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments?
2. What strengths already exist in the community to support this way of working and what would need to be built?
3. If a partnership as part of SPSP is not desired in Rockhampton, what key priorities, areas of focus or other opportunities could support local families and children's well-being?

This report summarises the engagement and centres on critical narratives and themes that emerged from engagement activities.

Background Context

In 2019, the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments approached the Rockhampton community regarding the Stronger Places, Stronger People (SPSP) initiative. Through the Partnership Exploration Process (PEP), two organisations received funding to support further development activities: Every Child Central Queensland (ECCQ) and Darumbal Community Youth Services (DCYSI).

Following these initial activities, the Rockhampton community declined further participation in the SPSP initiative.

As part of our engagement with stakeholders in Rockhampton, we heard that the process of this initial engagement exacerbated tensions within the community, contributing to the decision to decline further participation. Since then, we heard that a process of healing has occurred amongst the community and there are strong foundations for the work.



Methodology

Context and lessons from historical engagement in Rockhampton informed our engagement methodology. It was identified that the process should be community-informed and community-led. Attempts were made to recruit a local team but were unsuccessful.

Preliminary conversations with Rockhampton stakeholders revealed a perception amongst the community that there has been a long history of consultation, often with limited action and output. This pattern identified that funders and the government are frequently engaging in consultations about how best to do work in Rockhampton. Still, that engagement seldom translates to funding or resources to make a real difference in the lives of community members. As a result, there exists a level of consultation 'fatigue.' Care has been taken to ensure that the engagement process does not overburden community members and create false expectations that may hinder further collaborative efforts in the community.

The engagement process used various consultation methods, including online interviews, community meetings, unstructured interviews and small group consultation. Approximately 50 organisations and 70 individuals were consulted in 33 interviews and discussions.

Principles underpinning the approach included transparency, collaboration and respect.

The engagement methodology was conducted in the following stages:

1. Agree on Scope and Timeline.

Collaboration for Impact and DSS with the Queensland Government determined the boundary criteria for the engagement and required report output. It was determined that a time-limited engagement should meet the requirements of a 15th December submission deadline.

2. Recruitment of Local Engagement Team.

To support a community-led engagement, CFI conducted a recruitment process to assemble a local team. A position description was developed, distributed amongst community contacts, and advertised on Ethical Jobs. A candidate was interviewed for the role. However, the recruitment process did not result in a local candidate being brought on to support the process.

3. The decision to Proceed.

A decision was made to proceed with the CFI team conducting the engagement without a local engagement team.

4. Online Engagement.

Before commencing work in Rockhampton, CFI engaged contacts previously involved in the SPSP conversation to understand the current context in Rockhampton and devise an engagement strategy accordingly. An invitation to participate in the engagement was distributed through CFI and Government networks.



5. Community Engagement Process.

a. Interviews and Networking

The CFI team met with and interviewed community members during the first week of engagement. Efforts were focussed on individuals engaged in community social change and work to improve lives for families and children.

Individuals that we connected with recommended additional people that should be consulted. As a result, those who were engaged throughout the process reflected existing community networks and collaboration.

b. Stakeholder Meeting

A special meeting was hosted by the Community Based Crime Action Committee (CBCAC) with approximately 40 attendees representing community leaders, mainstream service providers and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCO).

c. Small Group Consultation

In response to community leadership, CFI was engaged with several small group collaborations where we had the opportunity to hear about the collaborations from multiple perspectives.

6. Draft Summary Report.

A findings report was drafted by CFI, and a summary was distributed to community members who had been engaged throughout the process.

7. Community Engagement Feedback Loop.

A feedback loop session was conducted, giving engagement stakeholders the opportunity to reflect on the summary report.

8. Submit Final Report.

The report was finalised and submitted to DSS and Queensland Government for consideration, concluding CFI's role in the engagement process.

A list of the organisations and groups contacted as part of the process is listed in *Annex – Stakeholder Matrix*.

Limitations

We recognise that there are limitations within the scope of the engagement , including:

Restricted Time-Bound Nature. The engagement process is time bound and, as a result, only expects to canvas some perspectives amongst all community members. An attempt was made to canvas a cross-section of representative community members and organisations. The initiatives listed in this report are not an exhaustive list of efforts occurring in the community. Those listed here are chosen as examples that exemplify the culture of community-led change efforts in Rockhampton.

Limited Community Representation. The organisations and community members consulted as part of the engagement had significant first-degree links to a broad cross-section of the community. These links included representation of constituents, reference groups, leadership tables, Elder groups, parents' and citizens' groups, student groups, service clients and governance groups. These groups were not consulted directly owing to: (1) the time-bound nature of the engagement, (2) the context of consultation 'fatigue' outlined in the *Methodology*, and (3) significant challenges and the history of trauma amongst community.



Summary of Findings

The summary of findings is presented in three sections:

1. Emerging Themes,
2. Networks and Collaboration, and
3. Governance, Voice and Data.

Emerging Themes

Culture of Community-led Change in Rockhampton

Amongst all stakeholders we spoke to we noted a common desire to come together for the benefit of the community, families and children. In conversation, we noted some common themes described below.

“It’s about people... people are the centre of the work.”

A common intention. We heard overwhelmingly that stakeholders desired what was best for the community. Organisations were willing to be at the collaborative table if it meant better outcomes for community members. Where previously we heard a history of competition for funding and resources, there has been a shift in the environment toward collaborating around a common purpose beyond organisational imperatives.

“It’s not just about people who need services... it’s about bringing everyone along.”

A readiness to work together. All people we engaged with spoke to the importance of working across silos and in collaboration and noted examples where this is happening well. These are described in the section *Collaborative*

Examples. There is a common understanding that community-level change cannot be driven by one organisation alone and that there is a strong foundation of trust to support people in coming together.

“If there’s a way this office can make things better for the community, we’ll do it!”

A service-led approach. Many collaboration efforts are driven by service providers as they are connected to and work in service of some of the community’s most disadvantaged and underserved members. In many cases, service providers are the channel that gets leveraged to bring community members’ voices to the table. Service providers indicated a willingness to invest in more mechanisms for community voice in the design and delivery of programs and services.

“If we could learn from other communities doing this well, it could help shift our mindset.”

A mental model of learning forward. We heard that past experiences, including previous SPSP engagement, have provided valuable lessons. A standout was collective learning that the work of systems change cannot be done in a fragmented way. Lessons included a need for transparency, clarity and accountability around process and the need for a shared purpose. People acknowledged the tensions of the past yet noted a common intention to focus on the future and the bigger picture. People were aware of the challenges posed by collaborative change work but unanimously expressed readiness to show up and lean in. People spoke of the need to invest in healing and repair,



welcoming alternative points of view, leveraging dissenting voices and having difficult conversations.

“There is more healing for us when we work with the community.”

Defining the Community

The Rockhampton community can be defined through multiple lenses. The following may be considered in defining the scope for collaborative change efforts in Rockhampton and its surrounds.

Council boundaries. In the process of de-amalgamation between the local councils (Livingstone Shire Council and Rockhampton Regional Council) a consultation process was conducted to determine boundaries. We heard that future collaboration efforts would need to consider how to work between these two constituents.

Regional Rockhampton. We heard of the many people who reside outside urban Rockhampton. Gracemere, Mt Morgan, Woorabinda and Yeppoon were regularly mentioned as areas serviced by Rockhampton but often underrepresented in community consultation processes.

Community members. We commonly heard people occupying multiple roles in the community and often beyond their paid employment. While many of the people we spoke to are employed in the service sector, people used their discretionary time to contribute to change efforts in Rockhampton. People identified strongly with the role of Rockhampton community member, volunteer, committee member, parent and others. Those directly with lived experience of disadvantage have been represented in the process by these

frontline workers connected to and dedicated to supporting the most disadvantaged in their community.

First Nations communities and their connections. People we spoke to recognised Darumbal People Aboriginal Corporation Registered Native Title Body (DPAC RNTBC) as the Traditional Owners of the Rockhampton area and should be consulted around cultural protocols.

Additionally, we heard of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (First Nations) people living on Darumbal land and the need to ensure that collaboration includes all historical First Nations people and their Elders.

We also heard of the importance of understanding historical family and cultural connections between Aboriginal people, Torres Strait Islander people living on the mainland and Australian South Sea Islander people.



Networks and Collaboration

Foundational Collaborative Networks

Murri Binda Consortium. The Murri Binda Consortium, established in 2017, comprises the Chief Executive Officers (CEO) of seven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled services in and around the Rockhampton region in central Queensland, working to support First Nations community members and families. Organisations include Aboriginal and Islander Community Resource Agency (AICRA), Bidgerdii Community Health Service, Central Queensland Indigenous Development (CQID), Darumbal Community Youth Services Inc (DCYSI), Gumbi Gumbi Drug and Alcohol Awareness Centre, Helem Yumba Healing Place and Juwarki Kapu-Lug.

“Elders have a big vision in this community ... When we get it right for our mob, we get it right for everyone.”

The name Murri Binda was gifted by Elders and has roots in both Darumbal and Gangulu languages. Murri Binda means ‘people sitting and yarning’, expressed as, ‘people sitting - yarning and healing’.

Community-Based Crime Action Committee (CBCAC). CBCAC are working to address complex and intertwined youth issues, including but not limited to crime, disengagement from education and employment, family breakdown and domestic violence, lack of family role models, social and emotional well-being, and undiagnosed health issues. Following the withdrawal of SPSP in 2021, work continued in collaboration between CBCAC and Communities for Children, auspiced by

Every Child Central Queensland (ECCQ). Notable work funded by the CBCAC progressing community change efforts include:

- Co-design of the Connecting the Dots Community Change Model and capacity-building workshops attracting 72 attendees.
- Central Queensland (CQ) Youth Interagency Health Forum (described in *Collaborative Examples*) and Youth Opportunity days with CQ Youth Connect and Rockhampton Boxing.
- Certificate II in Self-Awareness for 80 disadvantaged and disengaged young people in partnership with Carinity Education.
- Our Space (described in *Collaborative Examples*) and associated youth-focused projects, including Skills for Life by CQ Youth Connect.
- Darderrhi Music Group and Walali Bili mentoring by DCYSI, as well as Ngudyu Yadaba Cultural Therapy by CQID.

Multicultural organisations. We heard of a shift in the collaborative relationship between Multicultural Australia and the other multicultural organisations in Rockhampton. We heard that acknowledging the strengths of each organisation had resulted in a reduction in competition for funding, a greater sharing of resources and alignment of efforts to better meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

“We’re stronger together.”



Rockhampton Interagency Meetings and Forums. Regular and ongoing collaboration between services providers, ACCO's, government departments and members, council and community members.

Collaborative Examples

Highschool Engagement Pathways Initiative. Several high schools that service lower socio-economic areas collaborate to provide alternative education pathways for disengaged youth. Each school is providing a specific trade training and apprenticeship pathway to ensure that otherwise disengaged young people are skilled and educated leaving school.

Youth Referral Committee. Hosted by the CBCAC is a partnership between 22 organisations collaborating to share confidential information and collaborate across domains and diversity to ensure better outcomes for at-risk youth.

Community Youth Project. Carinity Education received money from a funding source and asked students how they would invest it. They asked, 'what can we do to support community?'. The students invested in projects that changed perceptions and instilled a sense of pride, as well as upskill people. They have created and invested in a community service dog and public arts projects.

Project Booyah. A 16-week community inclusive providing mentoring and vocational scholarships to support disconnected young people to regain a sense of their self-worth, build resilience and enable them to connect with their local community. Project Booyah is a partnership between the Queensland Police Service (QPS), Police Citizens Youth Club Welfare Association (PCYC),

and various government and business partners.

Our Space. A community-driven initiative and connection point within Stockland Rockhampton Shopping Centre for at-risk and disengaged youth. It is a partnership between Stockland Rockhampton, Queensland Police Service, CQ Health and Hospital Service, CQ Youth Connect, Darumbal Community Youth Services, CQID and Headspace and ECCQ.

The Shelter Collective. Providing safe shelter for all and addressing the urgent need for accessible housing while addressing the intersectional issues that lead to homelessness. A collaborative group of volunteers representing housing providers, social enterprise groups, construction and training industries, with expertise in project management, engineering, government policy and investment.

Community Hubs. Multicultural Australia (MA) is the oversight body for community hubs in Rockhampton which operate in 3 primary schools. They are welcoming places where families from diverse backgrounds, particularly mothers with preschool children, come to connect, share, learn and access valuable services. MA note that here they have strengthened their relationships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, as well as the broader community.

"When we facilitate those relationships, it builds our network and connections."

NAIDOC Celebrations. The NAIDOC week events and celebrations hosted by DPAC RNTBC have brought the community together and promoted



healing. Many people we spoke to noted that these events had brought together the community and inspired collaboration across difference in new ways.

Romp in the Park. Romp in the Park is primarily funded by business and corporate sponsorship. Central Queensland University are a vital supporter of the event through the Associate Vice-President's office and the community assistance program (CAP). Romp in the Park is a regional event held annually and is a free, family-friendly event that provides enriching and educational experiences that supports early childhood development and children's well-being.

Rockhampton Youth Interagency Health Forum. Supported by CQ Youth Connect and in collaboration with Darumbul, services providers, ACCO's and PCYC, amongst others. It is an annual learning event for those involved in the provision of youth services and an ongoing network of collaboration.

Cultural School. Plans for an Indigenous school focusing on education with a cultural lens have been developed in collaboration between CQID, Central Queensland University (CQU) and DPAC. The school aims to fill a need for cultural based learning whilst promoting cultural connection, a sense of identity and belonging.

Local Level Alliance (LLA) Meetings and Referral Pathways Groups (RPG). The Local Level Alliance (LLA) aims to establish or strengthen connections and networks between local services involved with working with vulnerable families to ensure they receive the right service/s at the right time. Responsibilities include mapping the needs of their local communities and

planning regional services to respond to those needs, and encouraging innovative responses to improve the effectiveness of service delivery.



Governance, Voice and Data

Community Governance and Community Voice

Murri Binda Consortium. Considerable work has been conducted to design a governance model alongside Elders groups that are appropriate for the close-knit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Murri Binda Consortium and the seven-member organisations all have existing and appropriate governance mechanisms which involve Elders. There are five Elders groups connected to the seven ACCO's that represent the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

The CEOs meet regularly as the Consortium Leaderships Group in accordance with a Statement of Cooperation. Murri Binda Consortium are currently looking, with the involvement of our Elders, to expand the consortium to include other services. Other services have expressed an interest in joining the Consortium.

Darumbal People Aboriginal Corporation Registered Native Title Body (DPAC RNTBC). The governing body of Darumbal Enterprises and is represented by a board of six Elders.

Every Child Central Queensland. Governed by a board consisting of community representatives and holds an official partnership with DPAC RNTBC to ensure Indigenous representation in ECCQ's governance.

We heard clear examples of where community voice is informing the development of activities and services in the Rockhampton Region:

- **Various lived experience advisory groups.** In service sectors such as mental health and other drugs

(MHAOD) there are different lived experience advisory groups. Many noted they could not do their work without these groups and were pivotal to the success of service interventions.

- **Youth Reference Group.** Youth with lived experience in youth services are consulted around direction and needs at the interagency health forum.
- **Uniting Effort Mindhive Project.** Canvassing community voice in addressing the complex issues underlying the emergence of youth crime.
- **Rockhampton Regional Council.** In 2020, the Council advertised its first identified position *First Nations Programs Officer*. Darumbal woman Dr Melinda Mann holds the position. DPAC RNTBC and historical Aboriginal people are represented on their Reconciliation Action Plan committee.
- **Parents and Citizens Groups.** Connected with schools across the region and involve parents and carers in conversations around education and well-being for young people.
- **Youth Leadership.** Examples of youth driven initiatives at Carinity Education and interschool captain meetings.
- **Rockhampton Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Forum Report.** Conducted in 2019, this was a platform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth to share their goals, hopes and interests, their challenges, and their ideas for change.



- **Community Tables.** Facilitated by ECCQ, bringing together community members, social sector not-for-profits (NFP), including Indigenous NFPs and community-controlled organisations, Native Title Owners, private sector businesses, service clubs, government departments and members.
- **Rockhampton Museum First Nations reference group.** A reference group of Elders and First Nations community members contributes to the curation of cultural exhibits such as Reimagining Representation.
- **Community Events.** Such as the Interagency Health Forum, NAIDOC week celebrations and Romp in the Park are important avenues for informally connecting with community voice.

Data and Research

There are a number of examples where data is referenced, and research is being conducted to inform collaborative action and community change efforts.

Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) Data¹. AEDC data was continually referenced as a source of concern and informed action by Initiatives like Communities for Children (CfC) and organisations such as the CBCAC. Data for Rockhampton within the 2021 AEDC has indicated an increase in the percentage of developmentally vulnerable children on 2018 values. Within the region Rockhampton local government area (LGA) has the largest percentage of developmentally vulnerable children in

two or more domains and is significantly higher than the state average.

Communities for Children. The CfC initiative draws on multiple information sources to ensure that strategic priorities, approach and activities are data driven and data informed. This includes AEDC data, a health needs analysis conducted by the Primary Health Network, Australian Bureau of Statistic Census data and the DSS data exchange system.

Central Queensland University (CQU) Research Projects. CQU conducted an initiative called 'No Dramas' to investigate the effectiveness of using drama to improve educational and health programs for youth. Part of the initiative was conducted in collaboration with DCSYI to develop a resource to help young people in interactions with Police².

Connecting the Dots. Many reference previous work conducted by ECCQ that references 'the big five' priority areas for intervention to improve wellbeing for children and families. Priority areas of focus include: early life; school readiness; community participation and inclusion; youth connectedness, employment and transition to adulthood; and, family nurturing. From those we spoke to these areas of focus remain a priority.

Murri Binda Consortium. Murri Binda Consortium are working in collaboration with Yulang Indigenous Evaluation to co-design a monitoring and evaluation framework for the seven services that will allow for monitoring and evaluation at both an individual and service level and consortium.

¹ <https://www.aedc.gov.au/>

² <https://cqtoday.com.au/news/2022/06/10/forum-for-young-people/>



Challenges

A number of key themes surfaced around the challenges and barriers to community change.

Pocketed collaboration. The majority of the people we spoke to noted great collaboration is happening but that it is not coordinated. For example, it was noted that within the youth justice space there are 35 organisations running 99 programs. People acknowledged the need for greater coordination and attributed funding silos, resource constraints and lack of a dedicated entity for this work as the main barriers.

Funding Silos and Cycles. Funding structures were noted as a major barrier to more extensive collaborative efforts. Funding silos were attributed with the creation of work silos, competition for funding and ultimate dilution of success of funded programs. Funding cycles were noted to keep organisations in immediate program and service delivery in short-term planning modes. Initiatives like Communities for Children have enjoyed greater ability to coordinate across the field and engage with medium-term strategic planning.

“We’re siloed because funding mechanisms are siloed.”

In spite of funding mechanisms that don’t incentivise community and service collaboration, there are examples of collaboration between ACCO’s, multicultural organisations, youth and health and services.

CFI shared examples about Government is working with other SPSP communities, like Mildura and Bourke, to address funding silos. The community expressed

interest in working with Government to address these systemic barriers.

Case management. School Principals that we spoke to noted the need for better approaches to case management across the education and youth sector. Schools felt frustrated at the lack of support while students were still attending school to prevent further disengagement and student attrition. One school Principals noted that parents have expressed their need for trusted people to help them navigate services. All school Principals we spoke to noted the need for prioritising support around social issues before they can deal with learning and achieve improvement in educational outcomes.

Consultation fatigue. Many of the people we spoke to described cycles of consultation, talk and no action. We heard that people are weary and experience disappointment when a process starts and then stops again. While there is fatigue around consultation there is desire to come together around action-oriented work with a clear purpose.

“People say, ‘Didn’t we do this last year? Didn’t we do this before?’”

Resource constraints. Following the COVID period we heard that many organisations have experienced a drop in volunteer rates and are having more challenges attracting talent. As a result, there is a higher workload on fewer people resulting in increased burnout.

Shifting from service delivery to community-led. There are early signs of organisations shifting their mindset from service delivery to doing collective work with community. We noted an interest in shifting the way organisations worked



for greater community benefit and a desire to learn from other communities who do this well.

“How do we change the way we view our work? We can’t keep doing what we’re doing and expect a different result.”

First Nations authorisation. Many mainstream organisations noted the challenges, yet importance, of working with First Nations groups. Historical challenges these organisations noted:

- The time required to appropriately engage was often in conflict with demands of other work,
- Feeling of confusion or frustration in attempts to understand cultural protocols,
- Not knowing who the appropriate groups are to engage with,
- Sensitivity around colonising dynamics and ‘getting it wrong.’

“If you don’t work with the First Nations folks you’re enlarging the inequalities not reducing them.”

All organisations we spoke to, mainstream and ACCOs, expressed openness in coming together to find a pathway forward around a common agenda. We heard no example of any organisations who would not be willing to collaborate for the benefit of Rockhampton children and families.

All ACCOs we spoke to noted that there is good collaboration amongst ACCOs and with DPAC RNTBC.



Looking Forward Together

Community Priorities for Future Work.

Instilling a sense of identity, belonging and pride. Many spoke to the need to cultivate amongst the community, a ‘sense of identity and belonging to this place.’

Hearing community voice. Many we spoke to expressed concerns about those voices that aren’t being heard and noted further work required in establishing a mechanism for hearing community voice well across the whole community.

“We need to design it in a way that works for this community... giving everyone a voice.”

Embedding governance for future generations. Murri Binda Consortium expressed a strategic focus of work around establishing an embedded governance structure and process for community voice. The work would be embedded in foundation documents so that the process for voice is not vulnerable to shifts in direction with changing boards and CEOs.

A Backbone entity. There was a lot of need expressed for a dedicated entity, with funding support, that could coordinate work at a whole of community level. Some consideration around the requirements of this entity is that they are impartial to the work of service delivery add value to all organisations. Some of the functions people expressed this entity could play include: advocacy, coordination, align people toward a common agenda, build trust, share data, identify community needs and evaluation.

First Nations authorisation. Murri Binda Consortium expressed further work on developing a formal mechanism for Traditional Owner authorisation, ensuring cultural protocols are respected and adhered to.

Measuring impact. There was alignment around the need for initiatives to be evidence based and data driven.

“With all our effort, are we having impact?”

People identified the benefit of broad scale collaboration and the ability to measure across sectors, silos and data sets.

“If we got that collaboration where there’s no wrong door – we could measure across that. The data we could gather is incredible.”

“We need to find the evidence base for our community – not just for service delivery.”

Youth disengagement. The education sector expressed a strong need for collaboration between youth services and schools. They noted that unless social challenges are addressed, schools are unable to achieve educational outcomes.

Joined up services. A phrase that gained traction during the engagement was the idea of a ‘no wrong door’ approach to service access. Many noted that the transition between services providers could be improved and resulted in people falling through the gaps, failing to access the support they needed.



Sharing Knowledge and Data. ACCOs and multicultural organisations are working to share knowledge and data so that clients do not have to repeat their stories and experience joined-up services. People we spoke to in the health, education and youth sectors expressed a need for more knowledge and data sharing.

“We worked really hard to have an information sharing protocol.”

Considerations for Partnering with Government

While there had been previous challenges in the process of engaging with SPSP, we heard a unified willingness to revisit a partnership with the Queensland and Commonwealth government. The following should be considered as key ingredients in establishing a productive partnership:

- **Shared investment and vulnerability.** We heard a call for all three levels of Government to be at the table in negotiations and sharing accountability for planning, decision-making, and results; acknowledging government as part of the solution to challenges in the community.
- **Clarity around expectations.** People spoke of the need for clear and specific outcomes of the SPSP offer, agreement around how the partnership will come together to create the conditions outlined in the SPSP model, and clear accountability for realising those shifts and communicating progress.

- **A spirit of partnership and being community-led.** The community called for a partnership process with three levels of Government that was collaborative and conversational. A partnership model should consider what conditions would enable community-led change and work for the Rockhampton context. Partnership principles would be co-developed with community and may include:

- Consistently showing up regardless of the pace of change and challenges during implementation,
- Practice guidance in implementing the Stronger Places, Stronger People model,
- Investing time in building and extending relationships and actively working to build trust,
- Willingness to let communities take the lead and work collaboratively; sharing power and decision making with the local community,
- Showcasing the benefits and lessons learned in other communities,
- Co-design with community throughout.



Community Feedback Loop

In early December CFI circulated a draft of the findings report to those engaged throughout the process. On December 7th 2022 CFI returned to Rockhampton to deliver a presentation on the outputs of the process and solicit feedback on the report.

Feedback was solicited through two mechanisms:

1. Request via email for feedback and errors, and
2. A two-hour community feedback session.

The report was well received, and minor suggestions for edits were incorporated into the final report. Approximately 30 people attended the final session, and 20 noted apologies. Among those who attended included representatives from Murri Binda Consortium, CQU, Gumbi Gumbi, CQID, Helem Yumba CQ Healing, Bidgerdii Community Health Service, ECCQ, CBCAC, Rockhampton Regional Council Mayor's office and TAFE Queensland, amongst others.

"Inspiring document and a great guide (for our work)."

Conversation themes that emerged from the feedback session included:

- **A sense of déjà vu.** Some noted a feeling that this type of process has occurred before and outcomes have not always been clear.
- **Understanding mindsets.** Conversation around differing mindsets amongst the community and how to bring others along in the work.

- **Model for collaboration and Backbone support.** There was discussion amongst all groups around what model for collaboration would be suitable for the Rockhampton community and the work going forward. Many noted the urgency and importance of establishing a backbone entity.
- **A long history of collaboration.** It was noted that Rockhampton has a long history of collaboration building on 12 years of work. The work in this report comments on current collaborations rather than historical collaborations.
- **Validation of report.** It was noted that the variety and breadth of participants engaged throughout the process was good, and this constituted a sound representative sample of the community. Others noted some perspectives missing like those experiencing homelessness.
- **Prioritising work ahead.** Groups noted the need to identify priority areas for work collectively. While there was convergence around similar themes people stressed the need to prioritise further for action.
- **Time-constrained outcomes.** It was noted that the time constraints for the research period limited the outputs and people engaged.

"What would it take for people to come together with no hidden agenda to have a collective impact?"

A unanimous willingness to come together to work out a pathway forward for this work in Rockhampton was expressed.



Conclusion

Based on the engagement and feedback loop in Rockhampton CFI has identified a number of promising indicators that signal readiness to engage with a collective impact approach and the Stronger Places, Stronger People initiative, including:

- An understanding that significant progress requires systems change and greater alignment and connection between many organisations, including agreement on a shared vision,
- An emerging sense of urgency and possibility for change,
- A culture of collaboration - pockets of activity are emerging, focused on making a small difference on a part of the puzzle,
- Existing relationships that enable a broad, cross-sector group of actors to lead the change agenda,
- An expressed commitment to using data to set the agenda and improve work over time,
- Community members want to learn about how to change and what is required,
- Increased willingness to take risks, come together and work in new and different ways,

- A recognition of the importance of partnering with people from across the community in setting priorities for change.

Further foundational support was requested to enable the work in the community. Opportunities to progress the work in the short term for long-term community benefit include:

- **Investing in a mechanism for community voice.** Expanding on the work being done by multiple organisations to ensure community voice drives the change agenda. Alongside this, there is a further need to define the bounds of 'community' in relationship to SPSP funding.
- **Building shared governance.** Building a governance model appropriate for a whole-of-community approach to systems change efforts. The model should consider how governance is connected across ACCOs, mainstream service providers and the broader community.
- **Collaborative planning process.** A process for determining what a community-led strategy and shared vision look like for Rockhampton. There is early interest in the intersecting themes of thriving families, pathways for youth, and redefining education, health, and wellbeing.



Annex

Stakeholder Matrix

The following is a list of organisations involved in some way throughout the engagement process.

Organisation / Initiative	Website
Advance Rockhampton – Rockhampton Regional Council	https://www.advancerockhampton.com.au/Home
Anglicare CQ	https://anglicarecq.org.au/
Bidgerdii Community Health Services	https://www.bidgerdii.com.au/
Big Dog Support services	https://bigdogsupport.com.au/
Capricornia Community Policing Board	https://mypolice.qld.gov.au/rockhampton/2016/07/15/community-policing-board-rockhampton/
Carinity Education Rockhampton	https://carinity.qld.edu.au/rockhampton/
CQ Hospital and Health Service	https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cq
CQ Hospital Foundation (CQShines)	https://www.cqshines.org.au/
CQ Indigenous Development (CQID)	https://cqjd.com.au/
CQ Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs Service (MHAOD)	https://www.health.qld.gov.au/services/central-queensland/mental-health
Central Queensland University (CQU) - Office of Associate Vice President	https://www.cqu.edu.au/about-us/locations/rockhampton/engage
Central Queensland University (CQU) - School of Education and the Arts	https://staff-profiles.cqu.edu.au/home/view/1906
CQ Youth Connect	https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cq/cq-youth-connect
Community Based Crime Action Committee (CBCAC)	https://cqtoday.com.au/news/2022/04/11/community-collective-action/
CQ Healthy Families (CQHF)	https://www.facebook.com/cqhealthyfamilies/
CQ Youth Connect	https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cq/cq-youth-connect
Darumbal Peoples Aboriginal Corporation (DPAC)	https://darumbal.com.au/
Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA)	https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/contact-us/department-contacts/youth-justice-contacts

Organisation / Initiative	Website
Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (SDSATSIP)	https://www.dsdsatsip.qld.gov.au/
Depot State Hill School	https://depothillss.eq.edu.au/
Durumbal Community and Youth Services Inc. (DCYSI)	https://darumbal.org.au/
Education Queensland (EQ)	https://education.qld.gov.au/
Every Child Central Queensland (ECCQ)	https://www.everychildcq.org/
Family and Child Connect - UnitingCare	https://www.familychildconnect.org.au/
Glenmore State High School	https://glenmoreshs.eq.edu.au/
Gumbi Gumbi Drug and Alcohol Awareness Centre	https://www.gumbigumbirockhampton.com/
Headspace Consortium	https://headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/rockhampton/
Helem Yumba CQ Healing Place	https://www.cqhealing.com.au/
IntoWork - Construction Training Centre, EMRAEL	https://intowork.com.au/
Legal Aid Queensland	https://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au/About-us/Contact-us/Office-locations/Rockhampton
Lifes Lived Well	https://www.liveslivedwell.org.au/
Live Better - Community Services	https://livebetter.org.au/
Livingstone Shire Services - Youth Services	https://www.livingstone.qld.gov.au/living-here/my-community/youth-services
Multicultural Australia - Central Queensland (MA)	https://www.multiculturalaustralia.org.au/
Murri Binda Consortium	https://yulang.com.au/indigenous-evaluation-projects/murri-binda-governance-and-evaluation/
National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)	https://www.niaa.gov.au/
OurSpace Rockhampton	https://www.facebook.com/OurSpaceRockhampton/
Performance People	https://performancepeople.com.au/
Queensland Police, Youth Mentoring Program (Project Booyah)	https://projectbooyah.com.au/
Rockhampton Boxing Club	https://www.facebook.com/rockhamptonboxingandSPORTpromotionsclub/



Organisation / Initiative	Website
Rockhampton Flexible Learning Centre	https://www.ereafsn.edu.au/rockhampton-flc/
Rockhampton Regional Council - Community Services and Mayor's Office	https://www.rockhamptonregion.qld.gov.au/Home
Roseberry Queensland	https://www.roseberry.org.au/
Rotary Club of Rockhampton	https://www.rockhamptonregion.qld.gov.au/ForBusiness/Local-Business-Directory/Rotary-Club-of-Rockhampton-1
Scouts Queensland	https://www.cap.ccrscoutsqld.com.au/gracemere/
TAFE Queensland Rockhampton	https://tafeqld.edu.au/
The Shelter Collective	https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-11-01/shelter-collective-rockhampton-solution-to-housing-crisi/101571148
The Smith Family - Communities for Children (CfC)	https://www.thesmithfamily.com.au/programs/community/communities-for-children/capricorn
Uniting Care Queensland	https://www.unitingcareqld.com.au/
ZONTA Club of Rockhampton	https://zontadistrict22.org/district-22-clubs/zonta-club-of-rockhampton-inc/

