



## Performance and Reporting Framework Project

**Queensland Communities & Families Association**

in partnership with

Queensland Government - Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors

August 2020

## The Performance and Reporting Framework Project

The Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (DCDSS) and Queensland Communities and Families Association (QFCA) partnered to deliver the Performance and Reporting Framework Project in 2020.

The objective of the project was to evaluate the existing performance and reporting framework of the DCDSS Neighbourhood Centre Funding Program and identify improvement opportunities. The intent of a new framework is to further demonstrate the value of Neighbourhood and Community Centres (NCCs) and the outcomes they achieve for individuals and communities, in the most effective and efficient way.

### Project Scope

The scope of the project was to develop a contemporary performance and reporting framework that:

- demonstrates value proposition
- is evidence-based, robust and applicable to different operating environments
- strikes a balance between meeting the government's needs without creating a burden for NCCs

### Project Methodology

1. Desktop Research – existing system, previous research, other models used across Australia
2. Stakeholder consultation
3. Development of recommendations to improve the reporting framework

The project assessed the success of the current framework including:

- what is being measured and reported (inputs)
- the appropriateness of the measures being used
- the format and process by which the data is being captured
- the reporting objectives in relation to the needs of the individual stakeholders
- the effectiveness of the system to achieve the reporting objectives (outputs)
- the efficiency of the system including the input to output ratio

Assessment of project findings aimed to identify the mix of systematic, process and behavioural improvement opportunities to achieve increased effectiveness and efficiency.

### Project Voices

50 individual stakeholders provided feedback through over 30 consultations. Evidence-based, best-practice examples were sought within the sector, nationally and from other contexts.

Neighbourhood and Community Centres were invited to participate in the voluntary consultations throughout June, with 20 Centres from across Queensland contributing valuable feedback.

Insights were sought from Neighbourhood House Peak Bodies around Australia including the Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association (ANCHA), sharing learnings from similar works in other states and providing examples of practical resources and tools used.

Research bodies within Queensland contributed examples of performance frameworks from other community-based programs. These consultations informed the evaluation of varying social outcomes measures, data collection methodologies and theory applications.

Desktop research considered previous studies and reports that examined Neighbourhood Centres and identified change opportunities or recommended application of specific models or theories for adoption.



## Project Findings

A focus of the project was to identify appropriate social outcome indicators and measures. A key finding was the appropriateness of the existing measures being used for reporting within the existing reporting framework. In particular, the more recently added OM2.1.04, 'improved quality of life' outcomes measure.

The appropriateness of the existing measures was determined by both consultation and research identifying the core grass roots value of NCCs to be the significant change outcomes enabled in the lives of individuals.

Despite the diverse values, lifestyles and interests of individuals, every person primarily seeks to be happy and healthy. Happy, healthy individuals are the key to thriving communities. This is at the heart of NCC work, enabling community members to access what they need, when they need it, to achieve these two key goals. The challenge is how to define and measure indicators of health and happiness.

The existing 'quality of life' measure, is defined in the *Outputs and Performance Measure Catalogue* (DCDSS), includes: well-being (the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy); belonging to culture/community; independence; resilience; education and training opportunities; access to employment; and access to accommodation. These measures correlate with sector, national and international examples reviewed.

Consultation identified themes for improvement opportunity to be mostly within the system, process and behavioural elements of the reporting mechanism. These include:

- inconsistency in reporting methods and varying familiarity with counting rules
- onerous data collection methods that are incommensurate with the value and use of data
- extensive narrative in reporting formats creating challenges for effective extraction of data
- cases of excessive volumes of reporting that add no additional value to end reporting outcomes
- lack of consistency in use of reporting tool prompts designed to enable program success

Both consultation and research identified two key traits of the NCC Funding Program compared to other more structured, case-management style programs. These were recognised as core NCC values to be protected:

- the value of soft entry access in the early identification of place-based issues and needs
- the unique flexibility of NCCs to act as a 'first responder' for rapid and effective early intervention at both the individual and community level

## Project Recommendations

Proposed changes to the reporting framework are responsive to stakeholder feedback and address identified areas of inefficiency in the existing reporting framework. Recommendations include:

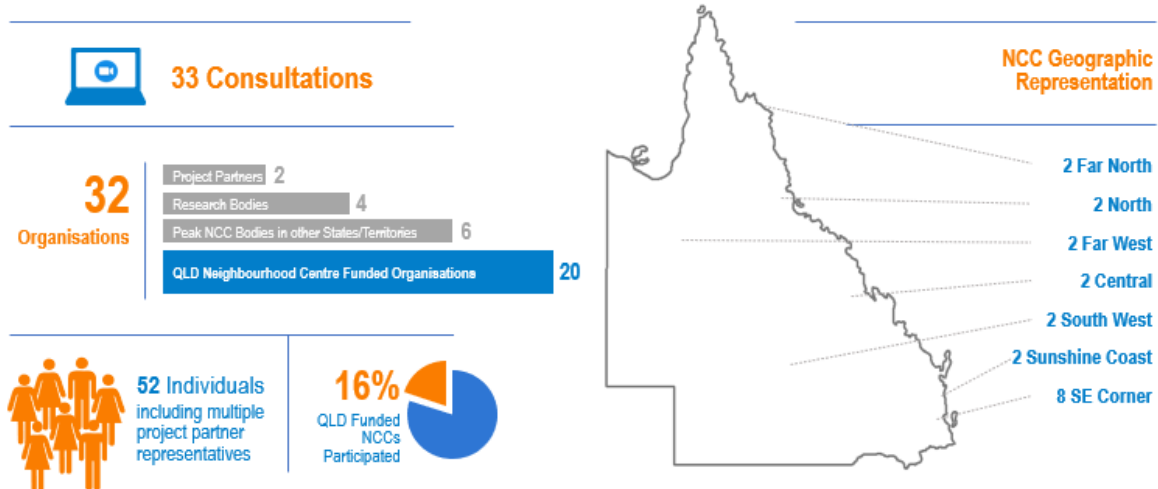
- fit-for-purpose, streamlined reporting and an increased focus on high value data
- system design improvements for increased categorisation of statistical data, previously 'hidden' in narrative, to increase the value and capacity of quantitative reporting
- improvement in the clarity and communication of program expectations, and enhancement of stakeholder relationships and engagement
- the external use of qualitative reporting be enhanced, by increasing the opportunity and capacity to share the NCC 'story' for improved program exposure

## Next Steps

A project report and recommendations for a new framework and its implementation were submitted for consideration by the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors on 31 August 2020. The project commenced in 2019 with intent for implementation to commence in 2021. However, at time of submission of the project report, timeframes for progression were unknown due to the new environment engendered by the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. Further updates will be provided as information becomes available.



## Program Stakeholders Working Together for Success



The Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors and Queensland Communities and Families Association would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following organisations:

### Neighbourhood and Community Centres

- Acacia Ridge Community Support Service
- Benarrawa Community Development Association
- Caloundra Community Centre
- Chinchilla Community Centre
- Cloncurry Neighbourhood Centre
- Cloncurry Community Support Service
- Collinsville Community Association
- Community Plus West End
- Cooktown District Community Centre
- Hambledon House Community Centre
- Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre
- Kingston East Neighbourhood Group
- Laidley Community Centre
- Logan East Community Neighbourhood Centre
- Millmerran Community Support Service
- Miriam Vale Community Development Service
- New Farm Neighbourhood Centre
- North Townsville Community Hub
- Shakespeare Street Hub
- St David's Neighbourhood Centre
- Winton Neighbourhood Centre

### Neighbourhood House Peak Bodies

- Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association
- Linkwest (Western Australia)
- Local Community Services Association (New South Wales)
- Neighbourhood Houses South Australia
- Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania
- Neighbourhood Houses Victoria

### Research and Peak Bodies

- Community Services Industry Alliance
- Griffith University, Community Practice Unit, School of Human Services & Social Work
- Griffith University, Regional Innovation Data Lab, Logan Campus
- Logan Together
- Queensland Council of Social Service

For further information about this project please contact Em James,  
 Queensland Communities and Families Association General Manager  
 Ph 0422 888 059 Email: [gm@qfca.org.au](mailto:gm@qfca.org.au)

Queensland Communities and Families Association thank the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors for the ongoing acknowledgement and support of the valued outcomes achieved by Neighbourhood and Community Centres.

