



Tool 03:

Collaboration framework

03

Collaboration framework summary sheet

This section of the Toolkit provides a hands-on guide to collaboration with remote communities, including the logistics of identifying key-collaborators, and important information regarding emergency management and risk management.

Collaboration checklist development

The collaboration checklist is specifically designed for those going out to work with remote and very remote communities for the first time. It provides a quick reference for the elements to be considered and gives examples of how these impacted the Project and led to their inclusion.

Collaboration is the act or process of working together or cooperating on a project. For the project, collaboration functioned as a mechanism to share information and support informed decision making.

Undertaking collaboration fosters a partnership approach, to facilitate linkages relating to key reforms in remote aged care and Indigenous health.

In the Project, collaboration was undertaken using various methods. This included phone calls, emails, face-to-face interviews, videoconferencing, meetings, Yarning Circles, focus groups and community discussions. The DHDA also participated in reform discussions and forums.

The following checklist (Table 1) provides assistance and guidance to those wanting to undertake collaborative initiatives, in varying forms, throughout remote localities across Australia.

Table 1. Collaboration elements to be considered and addressed for remote project management

Purpose	→ Clearly define the purpose of the collaboration – TORs or a memorandum of understanding (MoUs) are useful tools.
Scope	→ Clearly outline what is relevant to discussions and what is not.
Language	→ Understand use and frequency of community language. Do you need additional support to interpret discussions?
Key Stakeholders	→ This takes a large amount of time in remote areas to ascertain key people for engagement. Recommended to do research prior to engagement.
Medium	→ Understand how best to undertake ongoing engagement based on the available resources, for example face to face, videoconferencing, etc.
Timeframes and duration	→ Allocate longer than anticipated timeframes for initial discussions due to remoteness and the availability of people. → Note that Australia has differing time zones so ensure that the duration of any engagement activities is within normal business hours for all involved.
Responsibilities	→ Clearly identify who has what responsibilities, such as chair, minute taker, action items, etc.
Timing	→ Cultural requirements in each community need to be understood prior to entry. For example, you may not enter a community if sorry business or men's business is being undertaken. Consult with Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) or council for confirmation prior to travel and for safety precautions.
Review	→ Ensure a process for regular review of key stakeholders is in place.

Travel

- Research – understand where you are going to appropriately allocate time and resources for travel.
- Distance – Allocate longer than anticipated travel times due to the vastness of remote communities
- Vehicle – 4WD vehicles are recommended to cater for the terrain and road conditions in some locations.
- Fuel – load additional fuel/diesel.
- Water – ensure adequate amounts and storage of water.
- Food – enough supplies to cater for the number travelling.
- Clothing – include both warm and cold weather items.
- Satellite phone – internet is sparse in some remote localities.
- First Aid Kit – for unforeseen medical requirements.
- Spare tyre and tools – for breakdowns.
- Advise work colleagues of travel dates and times – expected departures, arrivals, accommodation, and contact details at all locations.

**Environmental
Conditions**

- Seasonal weather plays a large role in ascertaining when to travel. For example, the wet season in the Kimberley restricts/prohibits road travel for months. Review weather reports and contact local council and police for information prior to, and during travel. Abide by all road closure signage and warnings.

Frequency

- Due to high work volumes in remote locations, it is important not to unnecessarily add additional requirements to stakeholders. The frequency of meetings should be as required and needed.
-

Collaboration framework

This section of the Toolkit provides a hands-on guide to collaboration with remote communities, including the logistics of identifying key collaborators, and important information regarding emergency management and risk management. It includes a collaboration checklist, emergency management plan template and risk management plan template.

Collaboration checklist development

The collaboration checklist is specifically designed for those going out to work with remote and very remote communities for the first time. It provides a quick reference for the elements to be considered and gives examples of how these impacted the Project and led to their inclusion.

Collaboration is the act or process of working together or cooperating on a project. For the Project, collaboration functioned as a mechanism to share information and support informed decision making. Undertaking collaboration fosters a partnership approach, to facilitate linkages relating to key reforms in remote aged care and Indigenous health.

This framework was developed through experiences during the Project and through the extensive knowledge of the Project Team

members regarding working with remote and very remote communities across Australia.

In the Project, collaboration was undertaken using various methods. This included phone calls, emails, face-to-face interviews, videoconferencing, meetings, Yarning Circles, focus groups and community discussions. The DHDA also participated in reform discussions and forums.

Table 1 provides assistance and guidance to those wanting to undertake collaborative initiatives, in varying forms, throughout remote localities across Australia. The experiences of the Project Team in developing the Collaboration Checklist are shown in Table 2.

Table 1. Collaboration elements to be considered and addressed for remote project management

Purpose	→ Clearly define the purpose of the collaboration – TORs or MoUs are useful tools.
Scope	→ Clearly outline what is relevant to discussions and what is not.
Language	→ Understand use and frequency of community language. Do you need additional support to interpret discussions?
Key Stakeholders	→ This takes a large amount of time in remote areas to ascertain key people for engagement. Recommended to do research prior to engagement. → Be prepared to adapt over the course of the engagement as key personnel may change.
Medium	→ Understand how best to undertake ongoing engagement based on the available resources, for example face to face, videoconferencing, etc.
Timeframes and duration	→ Allocate longer than anticipated timeframes for initial discussions due to remoteness and the availability of people. → Note that Australia has differing time zones so ensure that the duration of any engagement activities is within normal business hours for all involved. This demonstrates your respect for people working across different states and time zones.
Responsibilities	→ Clearly identify who has what responsibilities, such as chair, minute taker, action items, etc.
Timing	→ Cultural requirements in each community need to be understood prior to entry. For example, you may not enter a community if sorry business or men's business is being undertaken. Consult with LALC or council for confirmation prior to travel and for safety precautions.
Review	→ Ensure a process for regular review of key stakeholders is in place.

Travel

- Research – understand where you are going to appropriately allocate time and resources for travel.
- Distance – Allocate longer than anticipated travel times due to the vastness of remote communities
- Vehicle – 4WD vehicles are recommended to cater for the terrain and road conditions in some locations.
- Fuel – load additional fuel/diesel.
- Water – ensure adequate amounts and storage of water.
- Food – enough supplies to cater for the number travelling.
- Clothing – include both warm and cold weather items.
- Satellite phone – internet is sparse in some remote localities.
- First Aid Kit – for unforeseen medical requirements.
- Spare tyre and tools – for breakdowns.
- Advise work colleagues of travel dates and times – expected departures, arrivals, accommodation, and contact details at all locations.

**Environmental
Conditions**

- Seasonal weather plays a large role in ascertaining when to travel. For example, the wet season in the Kimberley restricts/prohibits road travel for months. Review weather reports and contact local council and police for information prior to, and during travel. Abide by all road closure signage and warnings.

Frequency

- Due to high work volumes in remote locations, it is important not to unnecessarily add additional requirements to stakeholders. The frequency of meetings should be as required and needed, with a focus on minimising the number of repeat engagements. Ensure you cover all your points at the opportunities you do get.
-

Table 2. Project collaboration experiences

Element	Remote Accord Project example
Purpose	<i>A template for terms of reference was developed, which could be used across all the projects, with adjustments made following stakeholder feedback.</i>
Scope	<i>The Project Team were clear from the outset that they could not 'promise the world.' Communities came to them with what they saw as solutions to issues, based on infrastructure they already had. If this turned out to be unfeasible, stakeholders were immediately and honestly informed.</i>
Language	<i>The Project Team made sure all resources used language appropriate to the stakeholders.</i>
Key stakeholders	<i>The Project Team had initial contacts within each of the communities through the Remote Accord Leadership Group. Unfortunately, throughout the Project, key personnel left positions, resulting in the Project Team needing to refresh and reorientate stakeholders to the Project.</i>
Medium	<i>The preferred methods of stakeholder communication were varied, thus requiring the Project Team to be agile and prepared to communicate at any time of day.</i>
Timeframes and duration	<i>The Project Team found that a significant number of stakeholders 'lived' their role, thus requiring the Project Team to be prepared to make contacts and communications at any time of day. The Project needed to be of a longer duration due to regular hold-ups in communications and actions.</i>
Responsibilities	<i>Due to the high turnover of stakeholders, allocating responsibilities within the community was difficult at times, and the Project Team needed to be prepared to assume many of the responsibilities.</i>
Timing	<i>The Project Team had to be prepared to be flexible – in one of the communities 'sorry business' was occurring and the Project Team were allowed to drive through the area, but not allowed to stop, requiring planned visits and meetings to be rescheduled.</i>
Review	<i>The importance of regularly reviewing the key stakeholders and the stakeholder register was highlighted for the Project Team given the high turnover in key personnel and thus stakeholders.</i>
Travel	<i>Assessing the travel requirements for each of the communities was vital in ensuring the Project Team's safety whenever travelling into remote and very remote communities.</i>
Environmental conditions	<i>Prior to each trip into a community, the Project Team would contact local authorities to determine the weather and state of roads. Several times travel plans required adjustment or rescheduling to ensure the Project Team's safety.</i>
Frequency	<i>While the frequency of meetings was governed by stakeholder preferences, the Project Team were very aware of consultation fatigue on the part of stakeholders. Meetings were difficult to organise due to participants' competing priorities and at times resulted in delays in the Project.</i>

A template for assessing and recording all the elements of collaboration has been developed for future use as a collaborative checklist (Table 3). This should be completed at the commencement of a project. This checklist, combined with local emergency plans and a project risk management plan, can form the basis of a sound foundation for initiating a project in remote and very remote Australia.

Table 3

Collaboration checklist template



This checklist is designed for those going out to work collaboratively with remote and very remote communities for the first time.

Date commenced:

Date completed:

Element	Component item	In place	Actions to be taken	Responsibility	Date completed	Outline of initiative/ control in place
<i>Topic of checklist item</i>	<i>Item/ documents that need to be considered or be in place.</i>	<i>Mark check box if in place</i>	<i>Note any actions that need to be implemented to ensure component is completed or in place e.g. interpreter/s to be sought.</i>	<i>Name, designation and organisation</i>	<i>Date component is in place</i>	<i>Brief dot point/s outlining what has been put in place to address the component e.g. Two local language interpreters confirmed.</i>
Purpose	Terms of reference					
	Memorandum of understanding					
Scope	Document clearly outlining scope parameters					
	Items out of scope clearly documented					
Language	Frequency of community language use is understood					
	Additional interpreter requirements considered					
Key Stakeholders	Contact made with relevant local organisations					
	Adequate cross-section of external stakeholders identified					
Medium	Best mode of engagement is determined e.g. face-to-face, online etc.					
Timeframes and Duration	Adequate timeframe for initial discussions established					
	Differing time zones considered in planning and confirmation of meeting schedules					

Element	Component item	In place	Actions to be taken	Responsibility	Date completed	Outline of initiative/ control in place
<i>Topic of checklist item</i>	<i>Item/documents that need to be considered or be in place.</i>	<i>Mark check box if in place</i>	<i>Note any actions that need to be implemented to ensure component is completed or in place e.g. interpreter/s to be sought.</i>	<i>Name, designation and organisation</i>	<i>Date component is in place</i>	<i>Brief dot point/s outlining what has been put in place to address the component e.g. Two local language interpreters confirmed.</i>
Frequency	Frequency of meeting schedule determined based on local stakeholder availability					
Responsibilities	Responsibilities for meeting actions clearly documented					
	Responsibility for initiative elements clearly documented					
Timing	Liaison with Local Aboriginal Land Council or council re. cultural requirements					
Review	Process for regular review of key stakeholders in place					
Medium	Best mode of engagement is determined e.g. face-to-face, online etc.					
Timeframes and Duration	Adequate timeframe for initial discussions established					
	Differing time zones considered in planning and confirmation of meeting schedules					
Travel	Location researched and itinerary documented, including available fuel and food stops					
	Accommodation organised					
	Appropriate vehicle available i.e. 4WD					
	Additional fuel allocated					

Element	Component item	In place	Actions to be taken	Responsibility	Date completed	Outline of initiative/ control in place
<i>Topic of checklist item</i>	<i>Item/documents that need to be considered or be in place.</i>	<i>Mark check box if in place</i>	<i>Note any actions that need to be implemented to ensure component is completed or in place e.g. interpreter/s to be sought.</i>	<i>Name, designation and organisation</i>	<i>Date component is in place</i>	<i>Brief dot point/s outlining what has been put in place to address the component e.g. Two local language interpreters confirmed.</i>
Travel	Water storage in vehicle	☐				
	Appropriate amount of food	☐				
	List of appropriate clothing items for all participants	☐				
	Satellite phone	☐				
	First Aid kit in vehicle	☐				
	Spare tyre and tools in vehicle	☐				
	Non-travelling work colleagues advised and sent itinerary	☐				
	Daily check-in with non-travelling work colleagues organised	☐				
Environmental Conditions	Local weather reports reviewed	☐				
	Contact made with local council for weather and travel advice	☐				
	Contact made with local police for travel advice and to notify of trip	☐				

Emergency management in remote Australia

This tool aims to assist external stakeholders in effectively navigating and integrating with the community's existing emergency management plans. The tool provides a comprehensive framework to help external parties understand and align with the various overlapping strategies in place, ensuring a coordinated and responsive approach during emergencies.

Emergency events occur all too often in remote and very remote communities throughout Australia. All aged care service providers that are regulated by the DHDA are subject to the Aged Care Quality Standards and are required to have an internal emergency management plan in place.¹ The requirement of a plan in remote and very remote communities takes on even more importance during hazardous events, given that emergency management amenities are less common-place.²

Each Australian state and territory has generic emergency and disaster response legislation which authorises officials to declare emergencies in a variety of circumstances and make orders to deal with an emergency. The Australian Government does not have specific legislative power to deal with emergencies and has not enacted equivalent generic legislation. For specific information related to the jurisdiction in which you are operating, you can access the relevant disaster management or emergency legislation.

Local Government is primarily responsible for managing events in their Local Government Area (LGA) through their respective local disaster management groups. Local Councils play a critical role in emergency management as they are the closest tier of government to community and possess an intricate understanding of local requirements.

Many aged care organisations in remote and very remote communities are part of larger external organisation therefore they may have a generic plan but there may be limited knowledge of it in the remote community itself.

It is important for any project team regularly accessing and working within a community to have a general knowledge of that community's emergency management plan and processes. Refer to the LGA website in the relevant region to obtain further information regarding community disaster management.

While it is beyond the scope of external stakeholders such as workforce project teams to contribute to the planning for crises within a community, it is important to have an understanding of the issues, knowledge of the relevant organisation/s emergency management plan/s and have a project risk management plan that considers such eventualities.

Content of emergency management plans

An emergency management plan ensures safe service delivery continues during an emergency. The emergency management plan allows consideration of risks to residents, clients and staff, and the steps required to reduce those risks at all stages of an emergency.

The emergency management plan must consider and document the following:

- Planning for staff shortages – staff travel to and from work is likely to change because of an emergency event.
- The immediate, medium, and long-term implications of an emergency, with a focus on those at highest risk.
- Planning for power failures and other critical infrastructure issues – this includes road access, internet, phone services, and water and sewerage systems.
- Processes for identifying, supporting, and monitoring affected people and situations. Be aware how an emergency event continues to affect older people.
- How service delivery may be adapted to accommodate restricted access to essential supply chains.
- The impact on continuity of services and the actions to minimise that impact.
- The impact and process of emergency evacuation if this is required.

The DHDA website contains excellent guides and checklists to assist with the development and review of emergency management plans.

For residential aged care:

[Preparing for an Emergency Event – Residential Aged Care.](#)

For home care services:

[Preparing for an Emergency Event – Home Care.](#)

Emergency management impact on projects

Before conducting longer term work within a community, the following steps should be taken:

- Access the LGA disaster or emergency management plan or plans.
- Access any specific organisations' emergency management plan.
- Complete the collaboration checklist (included in this Toolkit).
- Create a risk management plan using the risk management template (included in this Toolkit), ensuring the issues considered in the collaboration checklist and any local plans are covered, and contingencies have been considered.

Risk management plan template for crisis management

A basic risk management plan is included at Figure 1, along with examples of risk management treatment and action plans. As per the Plan, these risks should be reviewed by the project team on a regular basis and in the event of a potential major event e.g. flood or fire.

Figure 1. Risk management plan template and example

[Enter Name of your Organisation]
[Enter Australian Business Number (ABN) of your Organisation]

Risk Management Plan

[Month, Year]

Introduction

This risk management plan has been developed by [Insert your Organisation's name] specifically to address issues related to the risks affecting [Insert name of the project].

Out of scope of this risk management plan are:

- The day-to-day risks and internal process of [Your Organisation's] partner organisations; and
- External contractors and partners, and the way their operational delivery is conducted.

This risk management plan has been prepared and updated in accordance with Australian Risk Management Standard: Australian Standard (AS) International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) 31000:2018.

Background

[Add background information about your organisation]

Risk appetite statement

[Include a risk appetite statement]

According to AS ISO 31000:2018, risk appetite is defined as "the amount and type of risk that an organisation is prepared to pursue, retain or take." It is important to link risk appetite to business decisions, since the level of exposure that an organisation views as acceptable, is intrinsically related to business objectives and resources. It is pertinent to collect the appropriate metrics to measure the risk appetite.

Plan outline

This risk management plan is structured to:

- Identify potential risks and threats that may occur in the project (untreated risks);
- Analyse risks considering the probability of a specific event occurring and the consequences of such an occurrence;
- Evaluate and quantify each identified risk assessing the level of acceptability;
- Implement strategies and control measures to reduce all risks considered to be unacceptable;
- Re-rate each identified risk post control measure or treatment (treated risks);
- Monitor, review and report on the effectiveness of these strategies and measures on a quarterly basis; and
- Provide adequate contingency arrangements (control measures) to minimise risks.

Identifying risks

This plan was completed by:

- Conducting an initial scan of the elements of the project to develop a key group of risks;
- Reviewing the risk management plans of similar organisations; and
- Discussing identified risks within [Your Organisation] and incorporating identified risks and controls.

Internal and external risks

Risks can be internal or external. Internal risks describe potential problems that could happen within [Your Organisation]. Examples include cost risks (project costs exceeded due to inaccurate estimates or scope creep), schedule changes (an activity takes longer than expected), and performance and quality risks (the project fails to deliver the planned results with the promised performance and quality). These are associated with project execution and relate to the project itself and the factors within the control of the project.

External risks describe the risks related to the environment in which [Your Organisation] operates. These can include political (changes in government or government policies), financial (competition risks, costing risks), legislative (arise from changes in regulatory requirements) and environmental risks (related to pandemics, storms, flooding etc.).

Categories of risk

[Describe the categories of risk and define each category e.g. strategic, operational, financial, compliance, other].

Likelihood and consequence

In measuring risk, criteria were defined that allowed the risk event to be quantified in terms of likelihood of occurrence and consequence of the event to [Your Organisation]. Tables 4–6 define these criteria.

Table 4. Likelihood of risks

Category	Likelihood and example of measures
Almost certain	Very likely. The event is expected to occur in most circumstances as there is a history of regular occurrence in similar projects.
Likely	There is a strong possibility the event will occur as there is a history of frequent occurrence in similar projects.
Occasionally	The event might occur at some time as there is a history of casual occurrence in similar projects.
Unlikely	Not expected, but there is a slight possibility it may occur at some time.
Rare	Highly unlikely, but it may occur in exceptional circumstances. It could happen but probably never will.

Table 5. Consequence of risk

[Examples only – populate with information relevant to Your Organisation – include additional columns as relevant e.g. environment]

Descriptor	Consequence
	People Services Reputation Financial
Insignificant	
Minor	
Moderate	
Major	
Extreme	

Identifying significant risks

Once the risk events were identified and assigned values for likelihood, and consequence determined, analysis was undertaken to determine the level of risk involved. This risk level implies a priority order from which the risk management plan has been developed.

Table 3 shows the Resultant Risk Analysis Matrix that was used to assign the level of risk to each event. For each risk, a value from low to extreme was assigned according to the table, using the resulting values from the previous likelihood and consequence tables.

Table 6. Resultant risk analysis matrix

		Consequence				
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Likelihood	Almost certain	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High
	Likely	Low	Low	Medium	High	High
	Occasionally	Low	Medium	High	High	Extreme
	Unlikely	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Rare	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme

The following general guidelines are presented to explain how risk associated with each level is managed:

- Low risk – Possibly no action is required for this level of risk. It may simply require awareness of the issue and at the most, monitoring of the activity through routine procedures.
- Medium risk – Activity of this level may require assignment of resources to manage the risk. Mitigation activities may be applied to reduce the risk. This risk should be reported to the project working group for consideration.
- High risk – Regular management and monitoring of a high-risk activity is required. Additional processes and procedures may be instigated to mitigate or manage the risk. Close, detailed management of the activity will be required to ensure a successful conclusion. The [insert name of the group that will oversee high risk activities e.g. your leadership group/Board] to be consulted and reported to regularly on the effectiveness of controls for this risk.
- Extreme risk – Immediate action by [insert name of the group that will oversee high risk activities e.g. your leadership group/Board] is required to lower the risk.

Treatment of risks

Once the risk events are quantified, an appropriate action plan is developed to manage each risk. Responsibility for management of each risk is also assigned to individuals to ensure accountability for outcomes.

The treatment of risks fall into one of the following categories:

- Avoid the risk – In some instances risk can be avoided and the associated activity not performed.
- Accept the risk – It may be possible to vary out the activity, or it may need to be modified. In this instance, a management plan is required to support the risk.
- Reduce likelihood of the risk occurring – Develop a treatment that would reduce the impact the event has on the project.
- Reduce consequence of the risk – Develop a treatment that would reduce the impact the event has on the project.
- Transfer the risk – Involve another party in taking on, or sharing part or all, of the risk.

The post risk rating is based on assessment of the effectiveness of the described treatments. During regular reviews, the post risk rating may be adjusted down or up, depending on the effectiveness or adequacy of the controls. The project working group meetings should include any decisions around adjustments.

Risk management measures

For each risk identified in the risk analysis table, an action plan (mitigation strategy) is developed. The action plan:

- Describes the risk;
- Identifies the actions required to alleviate the risk;
- Identifies the management strategy for each triggering activity; and
- Identifies resources and responsibility for managing the action plan.

Re-rating risks post treatment

The likelihood and consequence of each risk is reassessed post treatment (the treated risk). The treated risk rating assumes that:

- The treatment activities identified in the action plan are successful in reducing the risk; and
- The people assigned responsibility for management of each untreated risk implement the appropriate action plan.

It is noted that for some risks, treatment does not reduce likelihood or consequence, but serves to alert us to the existence of the risk, which can then be monitored.

Risk monitoring and review

Regular monitoring and review of risks is required at all levels within [Your Organisation] and the project. The [Add title of risk management process holder, e.g. project manager], who is the risk management process holder, should schedule regular review meetings with the project working group and update the risk management plan accordingly.

Table 7 details the risk management and treatment action plan.

Table 7. Risk management and treatment action plan.

Note: all risks are initially assessed at untreated levels. Post action plan (treated) risk is also included. [Examples provided]

					Untreated Risk						Treated Risk		
Risk No.	Category	Risk Event	Cause – how would it occur?	Impact	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Level	Action	Action Plan	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Level	
Staff/ Workplace health and safety													
1	Operational	Staff injury/ accident	Accident during travel; or in workplace Manual handling	Service/ project discontinued or suspended	Occasionally	Major	High	Reduce likelihood and consequence	Staff training and documented processes Tracking system for staff Adopt lead provider's policies and procedures	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	
Stakeholder engagement													
2	Strategic	No stakeholders engaged	Community members or organisations unwilling to participate	May affect outcome of project	Occasionally	Moderate	High	Reduce likelihood and consequence	Immersion in community Attend local industry meetings Face-to-face meetings Focus groups Always ensure genuine feedback and communication	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	
Timelines													
3	Strategic	Unable to meet timelines	Timelines unrealistic Environmental impacts	Project delayed or funding withdrawn	Likely	Moderate	High	Reduce consequence	Regular meetings and feedback with stakeholders Regular reports to funders Contingency plans for environmental impacts	Likely	Minor	Medium	

					Untreated Risk					Treated Risk		
Risk No.	Category	Risk Event	Cause – how would it occur?	Impact	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Level	Action	Action Plan	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Level
Financial operations												
4	Strategic	Inadequate funds for project	Project taking longer than anticipated Inadequate budget in first instance	Project scaled back or ceased before completion	Occasionally	Moderate	High	Reduce likelihood	Contract with funding body Monitor hours/budget Regular financial reporting	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium
Communications												
5	Operational	Lack of stakeholder engagement	Competing priorities for stakeholders Poor communication or inaction by project team	Project unable to progress Results/ information invalid or incomplete	Occasionally	Moderate	High	Reduce likelihood and consequence	Create strong collaborative environment Regular meetings and communication Develop champions in community	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium
Environmental												
6	Operational	Natural event	Flood, fire etc.	Project impeded due to emergency response or lack of access to community	Occasionally	Major	High	Reduce consequence	Be aware of regional/area and any organisational emergency plans Have own emergency plan and processes in place Communication with local authorities	Occasionally	Minor	Medium

Emergency management experiences of the Project Team

During the period of the Project there were two major crises that occurred with the Project Communities: a flood and an episode of traditional indigenous business. The Project Team provided the following advice as a result of these.

Flood-related events

- Prior to traveling in remote areas, always check up-to-date weather conditions close to your departure time.
- Contact the local community you plan to visit to confirm there have been no recent localised weather events and that all access routes remain open.
- Nominate a reliable contact person who will be notified upon your safe arrival at your destination.
- When using a hire or company vehicle, ensure it is suitable for the terrain (e.g., 4WD) and is equipped with a spare tyre and other essential tools.
- In flood-prone or high-risk weather areas, especially during storm season, book accommodation with well-established providers who are prepared for extended stays and maintain backup communication systems.
- Be prepared for unexpected delays due to sudden weather changes. It is advisable to carry essential supplies such as regular medications, a power bank for mobile devices, and sufficient provisions for extended isolation.

Traditional Indigenous business

- When planning travel to an Indigenous community, confirm with the community beforehand whether the scheduled meeting is still proceeding. Do not rely on the community to notify you of changes; updates may occur while you are in transit.
- In the event of a death in the community, "sorry business" may be taking place. Community members may be engaged in mourning practices or have left the area to attend "sorry camp." If this occurs, consult with the meeting organiser, if possible, to reschedule. Activities are unlikely to proceed, and it may take several weeks before communications or alternative arrangements can be re-established.
- From September to November, many Northern Australian Indigenous communities observe "Lore" or "Business" time, involving traditional men's or women's ceremonies in sacred areas. During this period:
 - Confirm all meetings and travel arrangements prior to departure.
 - Inquire whether your intended route traverses areas used for traditional ceremonies. Entry into these areas, particularly by individuals of the opposite gender, is highly inappropriate and may be deeply offensive.
 - Solo travel during this period is discouraged. Where possible, travel with others and ensure your presence and movements are communicated and culturally appropriate.

References

1. Department of Health DaA. Service continuity and emergency events in aged care. https://www.health.gov.au/topics/aged-care/____providing-aged-care-services/training-and-guidance/service-continuity-and-emergency-events-in-aged-care. Published 2025 Accessed 30/05/2025.
2. Sangha KK, Edwards A, Russell-Smith J. Long-term solutions to improve emergency management services in remote communities in northern Australia. Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience. *Australian Journal of Emergency Management*. 2019;34(2):23–31.