

2024

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

TENTH ASSEMBLY

ACT Social Recovery Framework

**Presented by
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Minister for Community Services, Seniors and Veterans
June 2024**

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ACT
Government
Community Services



ACT Social Recovery Framework

June 2024

**Promoting and supporting stronger,
thriving and connected communities.**

Accessibility

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Acknowledgements

This Framework has been developed through a co-design process with the ACT community and social recovery community partners. The co-design process brought together people with lived experience, key stakeholders and government, to examine the challenges around successful social recovery and develop a Framework to achieve improvement.

The ACT Government thanks all participants in the co-design process for their contributions, dedication and time committed to this Framework. This Framework would not have been made possible without these contributions.

Publication

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

Foreword



It is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I introduce the ACT Social Recovery Framework.

The ACT is a prosperous and diverse region. We have one of the fastest growing populations in Australia with a rich and diverse community in terms of culture, language, religion, age, gender and ability. We are committed to ensuring that while we continue to grow, we remain an inclusive and welcoming place to live where everyone has a sense of wellbeing and belonging.

At the same time, the ACT, like the rest of Australia, is experiencing the impact of climate change with more frequent and larger disasters impacting more people. As we have witnessed, each person, family, and community experiences a disaster differently. This means that there is no one size fits all approach to social recovery due to our unique situations and experiences with disasters. We also acknowledge the cross cutting impacts of disasters, and their ability to unravel social and economic progress.

With all of this in mind, we have developed a Social Recovery Framework that has been co-designed with community. The ACT Government has collaborated with social recovery community partners and community representatives to understand how everyone in our community needs to be supported following disaster. Through the engagement of a rich co-design process and inclusion of community voices, this Framework considers the impacts of disaster on individuals' health and wellbeing, including safety, security, shelter and physical and psychological wellbeing.

This Framework is a living document: as our community and the disasters we face evolve, so will our approaches to social recovery to make sure no one is left behind in their social recovery journey. Just as importantly, this Framework is more than a document; it is a manifestation of our values, attitude and commitment to supporting each other during times of need.

We are committed to ensuring social recovery services assist communities affected by a disaster whilst recognising that people, households and communities are best placed to understand their own needs. As such, this Framework is built on the principles of accessibility, inclusivity and community empowerment. It prioritises clear communication, transparent governance, and flexible service delivery, adapting to support those in need.

The Framework will guide and underpin social recovery planning and preparedness work in the ACT and ensure social recovery approaches operate under consistently agreed and applied social recovery principles. We hope that the ACT will be recognised as a national leader for our efforts in acknowledging and prioritising the social impacts of disasters on our people.

Finally, the Framework aims to improve the ACT's social wellbeing beyond pre-disaster conditions, by providing a tailored approach to social recovery and supporting resilient communities.

I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all those who have contributed to the development of the ACT Social Recovery Framework. The path towards social recovery is one we walk together. Let this Framework be our guide, ensuring that every step we take is one in the right direction to a future where our communities can continue to thrive.

Emma Davidson

Minister for Community Services, Seniors and Veterans

Contents

Foreword	4
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01 Introduction	6
1.1 What is social recovery?.....	6
1.2 Why the ACT needs a Social Recovery Framework.....	8

02 Framework overview	10
2.1 Our shared vision for social recovery.....	12
2.2 The social recovery outcomes we will work towards.....	12

03 How we will work together to achieve our vision and outcomes	16
3.1 The key recovery principles we will apply to guide our social recovery efforts	16
3.2 Our key recovery priorities	17
3.3 Our roles and responsibilities for social recovery	21

04 How we will monitor and evaluate our progress.....	24
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Appendix.....	25
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01 Introduction

1.1 What is social recovery?

Social recovery focuses on the human aspects of recovery. This includes health and wellbeing, safety and security, and community connection and cohesion of people and communities following a disaster. It is about providing integrated and coordinated support and services that restores the basic functions across society, to a point that helps individuals and communities recover from psychosocial, health and wellbeing impacts of a disaster. Social recovery after disaster supports individuals to lead a life they value living, even if it looks different from before. Social recovery is the fundamental building block to supporting and re-establishing strong, thriving and resilient communities. Importantly, social recovery supports people throughout their recovery journey from immediate relief to long term recovery to achieve a sense of sustained wellbeing and the ability to thrive.

In this way, the Social Recovery Framework provides the Vision, Principles, Priorities and Outcomes we will work towards to guide our social recovery from disasters.

As Canberrans, we are all too familiar with disasters and their devastating impacts, which can be profound and life changing.

Recovering from disasters takes time. It often requires individuals, community, business and government to come together and provide support and services to those who are impacted so they can rebuild, reconnect and recover.

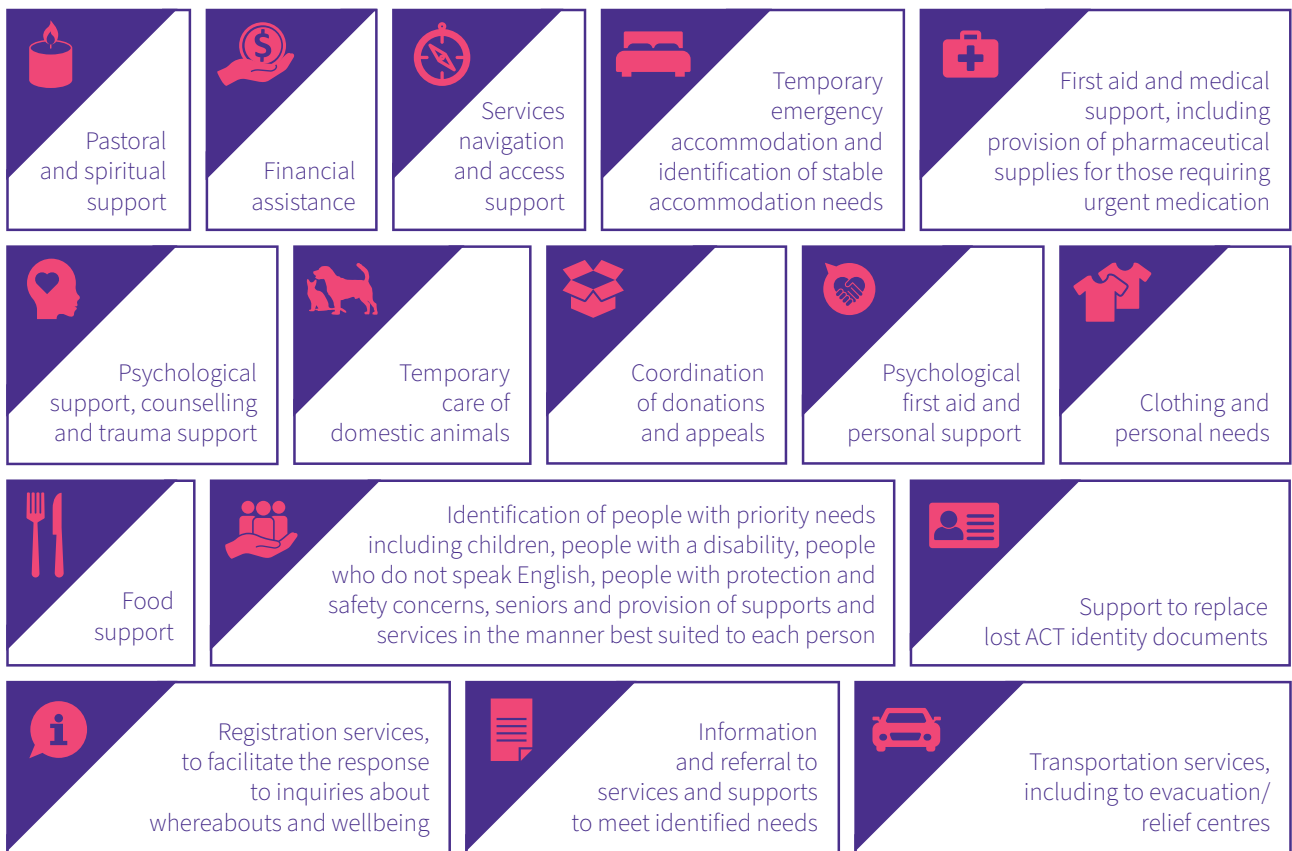
We acknowledge that different people experience disasters differently and therefore require different supports and services throughout their recovery journey. We also understand that many community members have multiple or interrelated needs that need to be understood holistically.

To be successful, Social Recovery needs to be person as well as community centred. We look to provide the greatest support to those of greatest need. We do this by identifying community members with priority needs and addressing these needs in an informed way. This could be relating to trauma, gender, protection needs, people living with a disability, children, age, culture, language, gender identity and anyone requiring specific assistance.

The ACT is committed to continuously drawing on evidence and learnings from disasters here and in other jurisdictions to support our community members with specific needs as effectively as possible. This is why we have adopted an inclusive approach to social recovery which has shaped each of our Principles and Priorities.

Social recovery requires a range of services and supports to meet people’s different needs at different times.

FIGURE 1: SOCIAL RECOVERY SERVICES



Reference: ACT Recovery Sub-Plan

Social recovery is one part of a community’s recovery from disaster. There are four core domains of recovery. These are social, economic, infrastructure and environmental. Social recovery doesn’t happen in isolation. It is a critical part of broader and inter-related recovery efforts that help revitalise our economies, rehabilitate our natural environment following a disaster, and rebuild in a way that makes us safer, more resilient, and better able to withstand future disasters.

When done well, social recovery can help us to improve our social structures and systems so that everyone can thrive in ways they couldn’t before, and our communities grow strong, more sustainable and more equitable.

FIGURE 2: RECOVERY DOMAINS



1.2 Why the ACT needs a Social Recovery Framework

The ACT, like the rest of Australia, is experiencing the impacts of climate change with more frequent and larger disasters impacting more people. Climate change multiplies existing risks which is increasing our community's exposure and vulnerability to more extreme weather events facing the Territory. This means more Canberrans suffering from more extreme heatwaves, bushfires, storms and droughts.^{1,2} The recent 2019/20 bushfires was the worst bushfire season the ACT faced since the devastating 2003 Canberra bushfires. These fires were compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, which further underscored the complexity of meeting community psychosocial and health-related recovery needs in a timely, culturally-appropriate and effective way.

The ACT has well established emergency management arrangements. *The Emergencies Act 2004*, supported by the ACT Emergency Plan, sets out all of the ACT Government's obligations, from preventing emergencies from happening in the first place, right through to our responsibilities for recovery, across the key hazards facing the Territory.

Our ACT Recovery Sub-Plan guides the operational arrangements and functions for relief and recovery from impacts of emergencies in the ACT. It outlines key recovery roles and functions of different individuals, directorates and bodies with formal lead and support responsibilities for emergency management.

Individual communities may also form their own community-level recovery plans, reflecting their community's needs, priorities and aspirations for recovery.

The ACT Social Recovery Framework (the Framework) guides and directs social recovery efforts in line with existing community and territory wide arrangements. The Framework will also inform and shape future emergency planning from preparedness through to response and recovery. The Framework reflects the voice of Canberrans and our social recovery community partners, and what they have told us are their social recovery priorities following a disaster. It is part of our commitment to ensuring our communities remain at the centre of everything we do.

This is a critical time for the ACT Government to prepare and plan for social recovery and, in doing so, prepare communities for the future. The ACT is one of the fast-growing cities in Australia, growing by 14.4% since the 2016 Census and is set to reach 500,000 in 2027.³ Its diverse demographics will impact the population's awareness and susceptibility to ACT's disaster risks; and criticality in the preparedness of the social services and healthcare system to offer person-centred, safe and effective care before, during and after disasters.

In addition, the ACT has relatively limited health sector resources and capacity during an emergency response. As we have seen elsewhere (2019/20 fires and 2022 NSW/QLD floods), this capacity may become easily stretched by cumulative disaster effects which also create longer-term mental health impacts on disaster-impacted communities and health and recovery workers who report experiencing burnout and fatigue where resourcing is overwhelmed.

The combined effect of these climate and social challenges is more communities being left exposed and vulnerable now and in the future. This is why it is imperative that the ACT's approach to social recovery factors in our unique context to meet these challenges. This Framework provides the principles and guidance the ACT needs to effectively plan recovery that meets community needs, wellbeing and supports them to thrive.

The Framework provides a consistent, whole-of-society and future-focused approach to guide social recovery efforts in the ACT. The Framework does this by outlining:

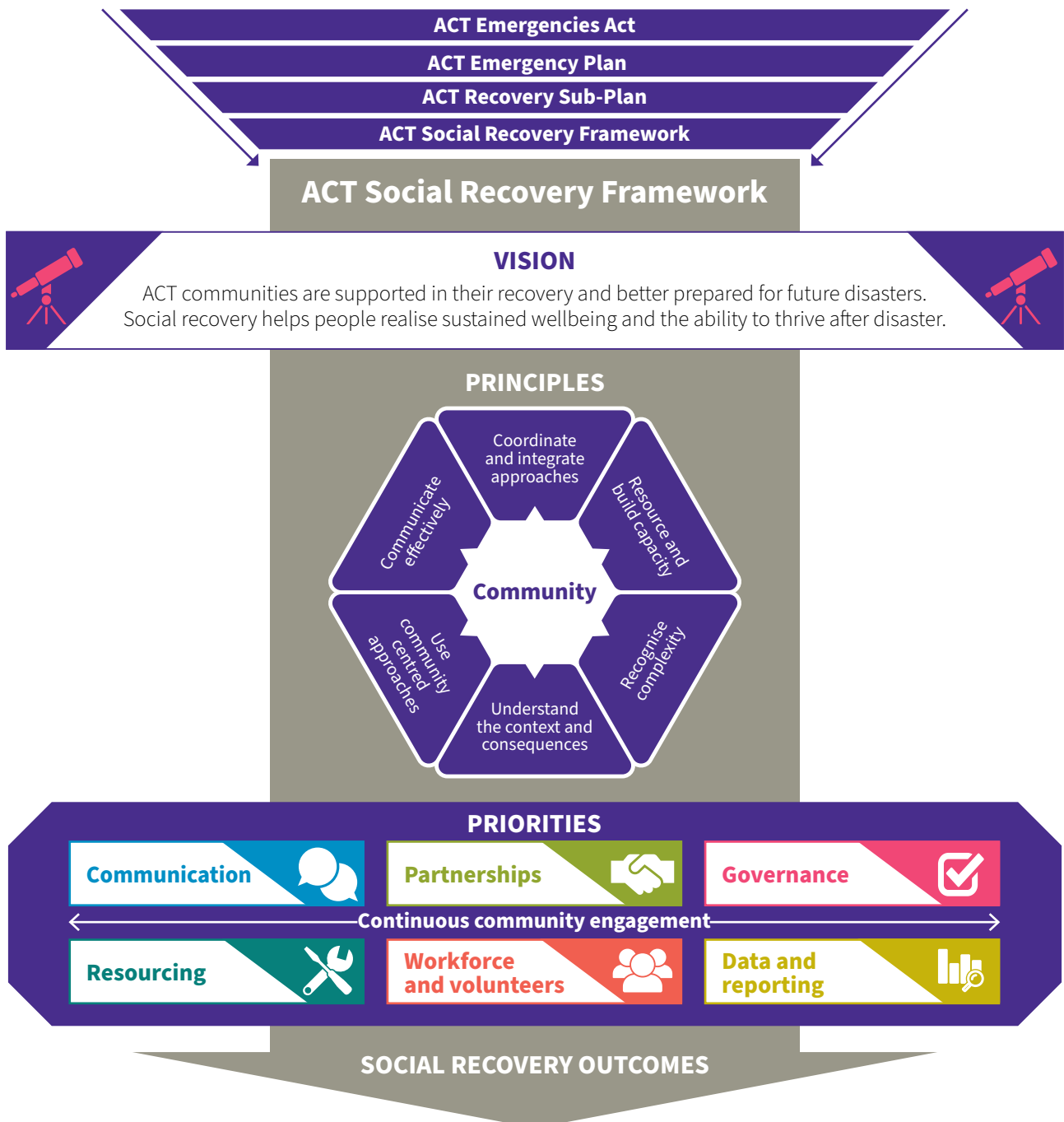
- Our shared vision, principles, priorities and outcomes for social recovery; and
- Our roles and responsibilities for social recovery, including how we partner and collaborate with community and across government and the community sector to enhance readiness and sustainability of our recovery system.

1 https://www.environment.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1414641/ACT-Climate-Change-Strategy-2019-2025.pdf

2 [22-00220_OA_REPORT_StateoftheClimate2022_WEB_221115.pdf](https://www.environment.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0002/1414641/22-00220_OA_REPORT_StateoftheClimate2022_WEB_221115.pdf)

3 https://www.treasury.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/2050854/Budget-at-a-glance-2022-23.pdf

How the Framework fits into the broader emergency management arrangements in the ACT



Community-based outcomes



- 01** People and communities are heard, informed and empowered in their recovery.
- 02** People and communities are connected, healthy and well.
- 03** People and communities are safe and secure
- 04** Communities are sustainable.

System-based outcomes



- 01** Social recovery promotes and strengthens organisational and community disaster preparedness and resilience.
- 02** Social recovery supports are timely, appropriate and equitable.
- 03** Social recovery delivery is effective, efficient and sustainable.
- 04** Social recovery supports and services are trusted and transparent.

02 Framework overview

Vision

ACT communities are supported in their recovery and better prepared for future disasters. Social recovery helps people realise sustained wellbeing & the ability to thrive after disaster.



Overview of the ACT Social Recovery Framework

This Framework guides a whole-of-society approach to social recovery which aims to enable a thriving ACT for individuals and communities.

A whole-of-society approach recognises social recovery to be a shared responsibility for community, social recovery partners and Government.



Recovery phases



Principles of Social Recovery

Recovery requires a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach that spans the entire disaster cycle, encompassing preparedness, the disaster event itself, and the subsequent recovery. Engaging the right people at the right time through clear roles and responsibilities, is essential to this process.

Social recovery needs appropriate resourcing and funding to support government and social recovery community partners delivering recovery efforts. Ongoing resourcing between disasters to maintain their engagement, partnerships and preparedness is critical.

Build trusted, timely and effective communication between all layers of society, including the affected community, businesses, social recovery partners and government.



No two disasters are the same. Each disaster will be felt differently by different members of our communities. Recovery is responsive to the complex and dynamic nature of disasters across all hazard types and recovery responses are tailored to the diverse needs of community.

Recovery places community at the core of social recovery efforts, ensuring that all approaches and activities are reflective, responsive and flexible to their diverse needs. This involves partnering with and empowering ACT communities to lead their recovery efforts if they so choose, without burdening them. Central to this is the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to exercise self-determination and have the ability and resources to provide their own solutions to meet their social, cultural and economic needs.

Understand and base recovery decisions on the community context which impacts the pace of recovery, the type and length of supports needed, and the degree to which communities can lead their recovery. This involves providing the right supports and services at the right time, for as long as is needed, and in a way that is easy for all impacted individuals and communities to navigate and access. This also involves acknowledging that not all communities are the same and therefore, different approaches may be required for individuals or communities with specific needs.

Our Principles inform how the ACT approaches all social recovery efforts.

Priorities

Communication

Ensuring communications are accessible, inclusive, transparent and consistent.

Use communication as a tool to engage, connect and empower community members who want to be involved in recovery efforts.

Partnerships

Proactively developing social capital, building and maintaining diverse and collaborative partnerships between community groups, businesses, social recovery partners, government agencies and other jurisdictions (with particular focus on NSW).

Governance

Ensuring effective, timely and inclusive governance practices in recovery efforts, involving various stakeholders and ensuring clear roles, accountability and resource allocation.

Continuous community engagement

Resourcing

Ensuring social recovery is appropriately resourced, including financial resources, personnel, infrastructure, and support.

Adopt approaches that recognise and empower complementary resourcing, including from community and businesses.

















Workforce and volunteers

Ensuring there is sufficient capacity, capability and resourcing for the recovery workforce and volunteers. Ensuring well-being of the recovery workforce and volunteers is prioritised.

Data and reporting

Utilising a trauma informed approach to identify, collect and report on data and evidence for needs assessments and planning. This pillar contributes to the achievement of the community's desired recovery outcomes and aids in identifying pathways to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

Our Priorities provide the structure and guidance for how our **Social Recovery supports and services** are delivered to ACT communities.

 Pastoral and spiritual support	 Financial assistance	 Services navigation and access support	 Temporary emergency accommodation and identification of stable accommodation needs	 First aid and medical support, including provision of pharmaceutical supplies for those requiring urgent medication
 Psychological support, counselling and trauma support	 Temporary care of domestic animals	 Coordination of donations and appeals	 Psychological first aid and personal support	 Clothing and personal needs
 Food support	 Identification of people with priority needs including children, people with a disability, people who do not speak English, people with protection and safety concerns, seniors and provision of supports and services in the manner best suited to each person			 Support to replace lost ACT identity documents
 Registration services, to facilitate the response to inquiries about whereabouts and wellbeing	 Information and referral to services and supports to meet identified needs	 Transportation services, including to evacuation/ relief centres		

2.1 Our shared vision for social recovery



ACT communities are supported in their recovery and better prepared for future disasters. Social recovery helps people realise sustained wellbeing & the ability to thrive after disaster.

2.2 The social recovery outcomes we will work towards

Social recovery outcomes are informed by nationally agreed recovery outcomes⁴ and what our community and recovery partners have told us success looks like for social recovery. They guide us in how we will integrate our approaches across different recovery domains, and deliver the right social support services at the right time, for as long as needed.

This is why our Framework includes both community and system-wide outcomes that we will collectively be aspiring towards to achieve our vision.



Community-based outcomes

Community-based outcomes deliver at the individual and community level and are foundational to supporting health and wellbeing of people and communities. Community-based outcomes are driven by community centred and led approaches which put people and community at the centre of recovery efforts and empowers self-determination. Depending on the individual circumstances of the community, these outcomes and their timeframes can be adapted to support community-level recovery plans, and community-centred and led approaches to recovery.

01 People and communities are heard, informed and empowered in their recovery.

Communities are empowered to lead their own recovery, actively participate in recovery activities and have input into key decision making. Communities are meaningfully engaged in shaping their recovery and increasing their resilience to future disasters.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- The community is aware of the disaster recovery processes.
- Households, families, and individuals have tailored information needed to make decisions.
- Communities are involved in identifying their own social recovery priorities.
- Communities can express their changing disaster recovery needs.
- Services are delivered at the time and in the way that people and communities need.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and other communities exercise their right to self-determination to achieve social, cultural and economic outcomes for their communities as part of the recovery process.

⁴ Australian Disaster Recovery Framework. Version 3.0 Endorsed by the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee October 2022. URL: https://nema.gov.au/sites/default/files/inline-files/Australian%20Disaster%20Recovery%20Framework%20V3_0.pdf

02 People and communities are connected, healthy and well.

There is an equitable and inclusive approach to recovery which accounts for the diverse and nuanced needs of individuals and communities to support their sustained health and wellbeing. Communities remain connected throughout the recovery or, connection is strengthened through the recovery process.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- People and communities are provided with psychosocial supports and services in line with identified disaster impacts and recovery needs.
- People can access and meet health needs (including mental health) arising from the disaster.
- People and communities, including displaced populations, are reconnected with essential health and social services.
- People receive appropriate social services to meet priority needs.
- Health and wellbeing supports are extended to the disaster recovery workforce, including service providers, and fatigue is managed appropriately.
- Communities feel better connected and cohesive.

03 People and communities are safe and secure.

All members of the community, including service providers, are and feel physically and psychologically safe.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- Displaced populations are supported and can return to the community if they prefer to return.
- Adequate housing is available to community members and transitory populations at appropriate times and to an appropriate level in the recovery process.
- Community members feel sufficiently safe and secure following a disaster to engage in social activities and interactions with other members of the community.

04 Communities are sustainable and resilient.

Community members feel well prepared and equipped to deal with future disasters, having identified and acted upon lessons learnt.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- Households, families, and individuals can act autonomously to contribute to the recovery process.
- The community has improved capacity and capability to respond to future disasters.



System-based outcomes⁵

ACT Social Recovery system-based outcomes are set at whole-of-society and recovery system level. They are intended to show how we will work together across all sections of society to prepare for recovery, continually improve how we deliver our recovery services and activities, and help achieve our social recovery outcomes.

These outcomes require holistic, coordinated and integrated approaches throughout all emergency management phases (including transition) and across all domains of recovery.

01 Social recovery promotes and strengthens organisational and community disaster preparedness and resilience.

Organisations and communities are cohesive and resilient capable of responding to and recovering from disasters through effectively leveraging resources lessons learnt.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- Recovery arrangements, roles and responsibilities are well communicated and understood ahead of recovery.
- Recovery agencies and delivery partners are well integrated into disaster management arrangements.
- Recovery is actively prepared for ahead of a disaster, and prior to transition to recovery.
- Stronger partnerships are formed between community, sectors and government.
- Recovery responses are flexible and adaptive to organic community-based participation and contribution to recovery.
- Recovery responses strengthen community capability to manage their own recovery and resilience.
- Mutual assistance systems, social networks and support mechanisms can adapt to emergencies when these occur.
- Recovery responses actively reduce the risks and impacts of future disasters on community.

02 Social recovery supports are timely, appropriate and equitable.

Communities receive timely provision of services as needed to support their recovery. Flexible, tailored responses are provided at every point of planning, implementation and delivery to reach all people in need. A focus on equity ensures that cycles of disadvantage are not perpetuated and no one is left behind.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- The limited understanding of the social impacts of a disaster to begin with is overcome through recovery needs assessments.
- The differing recovery needs of community over time are recognised and addressed.
- Community members have access to culturally safe and appropriate supports that are tailored to their needs.
- Transient and mobile populations are accounted for and appropriately serviced.
- Funding is sought and directed to ongoing and emerging areas of need identified through recovery needs assessments and input from community.
- Recovery activities, communications and actions are undertaken in a trauma-informed way that is sensitive to the conditions, needs and aspirations of impacted communities.
- Recovery activities across recovery domains benefit communities and community members equitably.
- Recovery services are provided in a fair, equitable and flexible manner.
- The needs of people with priority needs are addressed in disaster recovery, and are appropriately prioritised to increase their ability to access and participate in social and economic systems.

5 Stakeholder consultation, ACT Recovery Sub-Plan and Australian Disaster Recovery Framework

03 Social recovery delivery is effective, efficient and sustainable.

Recovery delivery is enabled by the coordination and clear guidelines and arrangements between Government and social recovery service providers.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- Recovery service delivery and assistance across recovery domains and providers are integrated, connected and sequenced in line with agreed recovery priorities and needs.
- Recovery supports are easy, accessible and seamless to navigate by community.
- Recovery delivery supports seamless transition between immediate (relief and immediate recovery, intermediate and long-term (12 months or more) recovery outcomes.
- Recovery delivery across recovery domains and providers avoids duplication of effort and inefficiencies in funding.
- Recovery service providers are appropriately funded, resourced and enabled to support provision of recovery assistance in line with identified disaster impacts and community recovery needs.

04 Social recovery supports and services are trusted and transparent.

Decisions are transparently shared with communities, and everyone has improved trust and confidence in disaster recovery arrangements in the ACT.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- Effective communication of timely and accurate information in line with community expectations and operational sensitivities.
- Recovery decisions are evidence-informed and evidence-based.
- Recovery plans are publicly available, and appropriately reflect community priorities and the shared decision-making roles and responsibilities for recovery across society.
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are put in place to support active actioning of identified improvement opportunities to the delivery of recovery assistance.
- Progress against recovery outcomes and agreed actions to enhance recovery delivery is communicated publicly, transparently and consistently, in line with community expectations and operational sensitivities.

03 How we will work together to achieve our vision and outcomes

3.1 The key recovery principles we will apply to guide our social recovery efforts

Our social recovery community partners have told us that we need to engage with them to prepare for recovery ahead of time and right through to long term recovery efforts. This involves partnering with them at each stage of the recovery journey, involving them in decisions that shape recovery efforts, and empowering them to lead and sustain these efforts for as long as is required for recovery.

Our approach to social recovery is based on the six National Principles for Disaster Recovery, which have been adapted to the ACT context and support the achievement of our vision and outcomes.

Understand the context and consequences

Understand and base recovery decisions on the community context which impacts the pace of recovery, the type and length of supports needed, and the degree to which communities can lead their recovery. This involves providing the right supports and services at the right time, for as long as is needed, and in a way that is easy for all impacted individuals and communities to navigate and access.

Recognise complexity

No two disasters are the same. Each disaster will be felt differently by different members of our communities. Recovery is responsive to the complex and dynamic nature of disasters across all hazard types and recovery responses are tailored to the diverse needs of community.

Use community centred approaches

Recovery places community at the core of social recovery efforts, ensuring that all approaches and activities are reflective, responsive and flexible to their diverse needs. This involves partnering with and empowering ACT communities to lead their recovery efforts if they so choose, without burdening them. Central to this is the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to exercise self-determination and have the ability and resources to provide their own solutions to meet their social, cultural and economic needs.

Communicate effectively

Build trusted, timely and effective communication between all layers of society, including the affected community, businesses, social recovery community partners and government.

Plan, coordinate and integrate approaches

Social Recovery requires a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach that spans the entire disaster cycle, encompassing preparedness, the disaster event itself, and the subsequent recovery and transition phases. Engaging the right people at the right time, is essential to this process.

Resource and build capacity

Social recovery needs appropriate resourcing and funding to support government and social recovery community partners delivering recovery efforts. Ongoing resourcing between disasters to maintain their engagement, partnerships and preparedness is critical.

3.2 Our key recovery priorities

These core priorities provide structure that will support achievement of social recovery outcomes in the ACT and alignment with the key recovery principles. These priorities are to be considered on an ongoing basis and will drive operational planning and implementation of social recovery efforts.

Community engagement is central to all priorities and will drive activities across the whole social recovery continuum. Community engagement acknowledges that there are different kinds of communities, including communities of place, interest, belief and circumstance. Communities are also dynamic as they change overtime and communicate and interact in different ways. Community engagement is the process of bringing stakeholders together and connecting with communities though strong relationships built on mutual trust and respect and collaborative action.⁶

Communities are best placed to understand their unique recovery needs. This makes communities a wealth of knowledge and understanding for how each recovery connects with and serves community need.

Priorities

Governance



Our governance arrangements are legally appropriate, mitigate against potential risks and are clearly communicated and understood. They actively support community voice, agency and input into decisions that affect their recovery. They ensure effective and inclusive governance practices in recovery efforts, involving various stakeholders and ensuring clear roles, accountability and resource allocation. At a minimum, this includes:

- Embedding the community's real-life experiences and circumstances into how recovery services and supports are designed and delivered.
- Enabling self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Reflecting the principle of “nothing about us, without us” for people with disability to ensure they are specifically involved in planning for disasters, and that recovery facilities, services and supports are accessible, suitable and meet their recovery needs.
- Recognising the repercussions of actions (or inactions) on recovery. Including community and partners in formal recovery planning and decision-making processes, to help identify recovery objectives and prioritise what recovery supports and services are needed, when and for how long.
- Challenging biases that prevent recovery.

KEY ACTION AREAS

- Define clear roles and responsibilities for short, medium and long-term recovery.
- Expanding governance scope to span across disaster continuum (including preparedness).
- Planning a structured process for recovery such that communities are informed and supported at each stage of the recovery process.

Communication



Effective communication is essential across all social recovery elements. We will collectively maintain proactive, transparent and ongoing engagement so our community is prepared ahead of time, and our recovery supports and services work for them. Our communications are accessible, inclusive, transparent and consistent. We will connect and communicate with individuals within our communities in mediums and modes that they are accessible and used by them. We will use communication across government, community and social recovery partners as a tool to engage, connect and empower community members who want to support recovery efforts. At a minimum, this includes:

- Planning ahead, considering potential communication failures and mitigation strategies.
- Adopt accessible and simple language in messages, careful message crafting, and inclusive messaging.
- Promoting the use of interpreter services where appropriate whilst also acknowledging that for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities, communication does not always mean translation in isolation.
- Fostering complementary communication approaches across government to minimise confusion and duplication.

KEY ACTION AREAS

- Community engagement strategies.
- Language accessibility supports.
- Pre-planning messaging.
- Using traditional non-digital and digital communication channels.

Partnerships



We will adopt a partnerships-based approach to social recovery. These partnerships serve not only to facilitate the incorporation of social recovery into routine operations but also help to identify the diverse community needs and to strengthen support for at-risk community members. Our partnerships will draw on existing community strengths, capacities and capabilities, and build upon and strengthen existing social networks and assets. At a minimum this includes:

- Nurturing existing networks and community social cohesion points.
- Establish and nurture relationships between community, social recovery partners and government ahead of time, including during the prevention and preparedness phases.
- Including social recovery community partners in formal recovery planning and decision-making processes, to help identify recovery objectives and prioritise what recovery support and services are needed, when and for how long.
- Building on community strengths, community capabilities, social networks and social capital in all recovery activities.
- Utilising innovative approaches to partner with community leaders and support communication and engagement with diverse community groups.

KEY ACTION AREAS

- Allocate sufficient time and resources for building and maintaining partnerships.
- Joint planning and preparedness for recovery.
- Formal data and information sharing.
- Supportive agreements and funding arrangements.
- Allocating resources to develop and maintain partnerships outside of response and recovery periods.

Data and reporting



We will be evidence-based and informed in our decisions and provide the right services and supports for recovery. We will identify, collect and report on data and evidence for needs assessments, planning, evaluation and continuous improvement. We will ensure all data and information is collected in a timely and sensitive way, and is used across recovery services and supports in a way that reduces duplication, minimises potential for additional trauma and protect personal safety and privacy. At a minimum this includes:

- Using data for planning, learning, and identifying community strengths, demographics, services, and risks for the different groups within our community.
- Undertaking service mapping and scenario planning in advance of a disaster, to improve coordination and service provision.
- Collecting disaster information from official sources, communities and social recovery partners to identify recovery impacts and assess recovery needs on an ongoing basis.
- Capture and act on lessons learnt to improve community, organisational and system resilience to future disasters.

KEY ACTION AREAS

- Establishing mechanisms to share /collate data between sector and government for holistic view and allows communities to self-identify risks and required supports, and only having to do so once.
- Developing a framework for lessons learned and evaluation.

Resourcing



We will ensure that social recovery is appropriately resourced for the long-term, include financial resources, personnel, infrastructure, and support. We will adopt models and approaches that recognise and empower complementary resourcing, including from community. At a minimum, this includes:

- Recognise, support, and build on individual, community and organisational capacity and resilience.
- Ensure services, supports and resources are effective, efficient and sustainable to support long-term recovery needs.
- Adapt and adjust service delivery arrangements so they support sustainable resourcing of workforces and activities for recovery.
- Adopting place based approaches where possible which make services more accessible.

KEY ACTION AREAS

- Resourcing for planning and preparedness.
- Review current funding streams and arrangements for social recovery community partners to include provisions for social recovery.

Workforce and volunteers



Our recovery workforce and volunteers are adequately trained, funded, managed and supported to deliver assistance and services that have been set up to support community recovery. Our recovery workforce and volunteers are valued and their wellbeing is prioritised and supported. At a minimum, this includes:

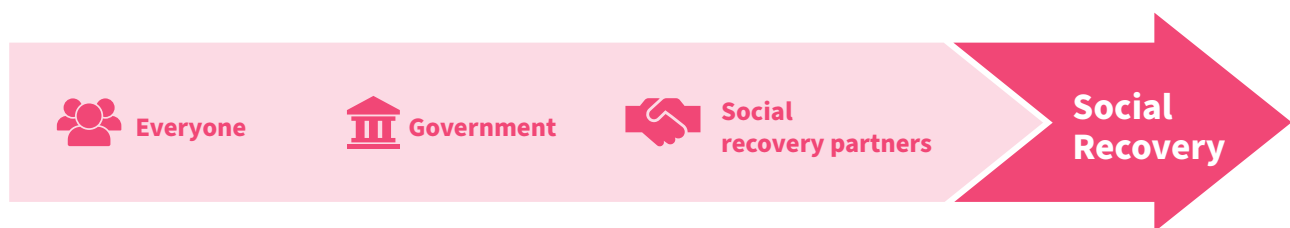
- Individuals and communities are supported and empowered to be part of and lead community-based recovery efforts.
- Recovery workforce and volunteers have access to relevant training and supports to assist them in delivering supports in a person-centred way.
- The mental health and wellbeing needs of our recovery workforce and volunteers is recognised and prioritised throughout the recovery process.

KEY ACTION AREAS

- Develop strategies for wellbeing, mental health supports and fatigue management.
- Ensuring the workforce and volunteer workforce is trauma informed and that they are supported through any trauma experienced throughout the recovery period
- Promoting inclusive volunteering practices and diversifying the workforce.
- Allocating resources for volunteer management.

3.3 Our roles and responsibilities for social recovery

Social recovery from disasters takes time and involves everyone. We can't do this alone which is why Canberrans, community organisations, institutions and businesses all have a role to support social recovery, each with different responsibilities.



Community

You are best placed to identify your own recovery priorities and needs, and seek out information that will help you make informed decisions to best prepare for disasters and support your recovery. You can also, if you choose to, actively participate in the recovery decision-making process and broader recovery efforts within your community. This includes through:

- Participating in the development of community level recovery plans and advocating on behalf of community to make sure you are best supported in your recovery.
- Volunteering your time, skills and effort to help with social recovery (either formally with an organisation or independently).
- Assisting in running community activities to promote social connection and recovery.
- Developing and maintaining your own emergency plan for when disasters present, whilst understanding your own risks to inform your planning.
- Providing accommodation and supports to their family and friends.



Government

The ACT Government is responsible for coordinating recovery services for affected individuals and communities in the Territory, bringing agencies and resources together so recovery efforts across society are well-coordinated, timely and tailored to the needs of affected communities. These arrangements are outlined in the ACT Emergency Plan and detailed in the ACT Recovery Sub-Plan.

The ACT Community Services Directorate has primary responsibility for social recovery and delivery of psychosocial recovery functions under emergency management arrangements. Beyond these prescribed functions, collaboration between community, social recovery partners and across different parts of government is essential to achieve holistic and sustainable recovery.

TABLE 1: ACT GOVERNMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SOCIAL RECOVERY

Recovery governance and alignment with broader priorities, arrangements, and obligations

- Ensure all recovery arrangements, roles, responsibilities and activities are conducted in alignment with the Emergencies Act 2004, supporting plans, and other relevant legislation, policies and frameworks. A list of key arrangements, frameworks and plans is provided in the Appendix C.
- Establish effective partnerships with community and social recovery partners that empower and facilitate local-based community decision making, and enhance community capacity and capability for resilience.
- Make decisions about relief and recovery activities based on clear, relevant, timely and accurate information about the risk and needs of affected individuals, families and communities.

Service design and delivery

- Secure appropriate ACT and national recovery funding and resources in line with disaster scale, impacts and longer-term recovery needs.
- Ensure all services and supports are designed, tailored and delivered in a trauma-informed way to meet the health and wellbeing needs of individuals and communities.
- Where possible provide additional support by augmenting existing and well-established services. This maximises community trust in, and engagement with, services and maintains long-term continuity of care.
- Identify and implement service design and delivery improvements.
- Ensure that the longer-term recovery process leads to ongoing and sustainable community development, that meets the community's needs.

Social recovery outcomes

- Implement actions and undertake monitoring, reporting and evaluation activities to assess progress and performance against social recovery outcomes outlined in this Framework.
- Work with Australian Government to develop strategies to improve collecting and sharing of consistent data across governments and agencies to support mental health disaster responses and resilience.

Service coordination and integration

- Ensure all services and supports across recovery domains and partners put community at the centre, and are appropriately sequenced, integrated, coordinated and transitioned to deliver on recovery needs over the length of the recovery duration.
- Integrate mental health considerations into preparation, relief and recovery planning including in emergency management frameworks, ensuring proactive outreach to first responders, volunteers and their families.
- Coordinate information and data collection and sharing across recovery supports for accessible, efficient and streamlined service delivery, in line with privacy and other legislative requirements.

Service information and navigation

- Work with social recovery partners to plan which services will conduct proactive outreach and navigation assistance, and implement service navigation supports to ensure that recovery activities are locally relevant, accessible and are calibrated to each community's unique needs.
- Clarify and communicate in advance the primary communication strategy to be used for social recovery information to the public and what material will be available on it.

Workforce planning, development, and support

- Ensure that partners and services are adequately resourced to deliver social recovery services, and appropriately engaged in planning and governance structures to fulfil roles and responsibilities for service delivery.
- Ensure volunteers are appropriately managed and trained, and there is flexibility across the recovery system to integrate spontaneous community volunteering into recovery operations and arrangements.
- Contribute to disaster mental health workforce arrangements and planning including agreements to provide additional workers where needed.



Social recovery partners

Our social recovery community partners – including not-for-profit organisations, service delivery providers, and primary health networks – play an essential role in providing the recovery workforce and delivering social recovery services to our communities before, during and after disasters.

Their insights and expertise also help us understand who is at risk or impacted by disasters within our communities, so we can best target and tailor our recovery efforts to areas of need.

While their contribution varies, key social recovery roles and responsibilities include:

- Ensure their delivered services put community at the centre, and are designed, tailored and delivered in a trauma-informed way to meet the health and wellbeing needs of individuals and communities.
- Where possible, ensure communications are in line with the Governments communication guidance, to support one source of truth across the response.
- Facilitate information and data sharing across recovery supports for accessible, efficient and streamlined service delivery, in line with privacy and other legislative requirements.
- Participate in formal recovery governance structures and emergency response planning and disaster social recovery coordination.
- Contribute to social recovery workforce planning for the region that considers the capability and capacity of current services; where surge workforces will be needed; and how these will ‘fade in’ and ‘fade out’ to ensure local capability is developed; and training, including orientation to local conditions.
- Facilitate regional social recovery-related intelligence from multiple sources during disasters and share widely with social recovery partners.
- Contribute to government monitoring, reporting and evaluation activities to assess progress and performance against social recovery outcomes outlined in this Framework.

For primary health network (PHN) organisations, additional roles and responsibilities include:

- PHNs undertake comprehensive and integrated primary health response plans for emergencies and ensure that joint regional mental health plans include disaster mental health and social recovery measures needed before, during and after disasters. Consider social and cultural factors and geography.
- PHN’s put in place or consolidate regional disaster mental health coordination and agree on a plan for community upskilling in mental health awareness, in collaboration with other levels of government and key social recovery partners.
- Contribute to a disaster mental health workforce plan for the region that considers the capability and capacity of current services; where surge workforces will be needed; and how these will ‘fade in’ and ‘fade out’ to ensure local capability is developed; and training, including orientation to local conditions.
- Facilitate regional mental health-related intelligence from multiple sources during disasters and share widely with social recovery partners.

04 How we will monitor and evaluate our progress

The ACT is committed to the continuous evaluation and ongoing effectiveness of the Framework. The outcomes and objectives of the Framework will be monitored and evaluated on short, medium and long term recovery timeframes.

Monitoring and evaluation activities will assess progress against key performance indicators based on feedback from implementation and government partners and the community. The responsibility and accountability for continuous monitoring and the commitment to lessons learnt is held by CSD. Continuous monitoring activities will require input from the other Directorates to ensure broader recovery impacts are made visible for assessment.

An application of the Social Recovery Principles throughout pre, during and post disaster activities, will support communities to be more resilient to meet the social, economic, built and natural recovery needs after a disaster. This systems approach to social recovery recognises the connection between the recovery domains and the cross cutting impact that improved social recovery arrangements has on infrastructure and environmental recovery.

Following the implementation of ACT's Social Recovery Framework, improvement against objectives and priorities are expected, with progress towards the goal of working together, using data and evidence, to ensure that the ACT community is supported across the across the short, medium and long-term.

Appendix

Glossary

Community

A group with a commonality of association and generally defined by location, shared experience or function. It is important to note that for certain types of hazards, such as acts of extreme violence – victims may not be part of the geographical community in which the event occurred. Recovery needs to be flexible to these differences in the definition of community.

SOURCE: ACT Recovery Sub-Plan

National Principles for Disaster Recovery

A series of key concepts, accompanied by a complementary phrase and a series of key considerations for successful recovery (Source: Australian Emergency Manual, Disaster Recovery EMA 2004).

SOURCE: ACT Recovery Sub Plan

Social Recovery

The process of providing coordinated support and services targeted towards the recovery, to an appropriate level of short, medium and long-term functioning, of psycho-social and health impacts on individuals and the community within the ACT.

SOURCE: ACT Recovery Sub-Plan

Recovery Management

Disaster recovery is most effective when:

- Management arrangements recognise that recovery from disaster is a complex, dynamic and protracted process.
- Agreed plans and management arrangements are well understood by the community and all disaster management agencies.
- Recovery agencies are properly integrated into disaster management arrangements.
- Community service and reconstruction agencies have input to key decision making.
- Conducted with the active participation of the affected community.
- Recovery managers are involved from initial briefings onwards.
- Recovery services are provided in a timely, fair, equitable and flexible manner

SOURCE: ACT Recovery Sub-Plan

Sustainable Community

A **sustainable** community is one that can continue to recover from a disaster even after government assistance is withdrawn.

SOURCE: National Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Disaster Recovery Programs

Resilient Community

A **resilient** community is one that is better able to withstand a future disaster because it has taken steps to minimise its risk and strengthen its ability to recover.

SOURCE: National Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Disaster Recovery Programs

Consultation summary

Community and community sector organisations and partners who participated in the ACT Social Recovery Framework development:

- ACT Community Services Directorate (CSD)
- ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)
- ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service (ADACAS)
- ACT Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network
- ACT Education Directorate
- ACT Justice and Community Safety Directorate
- ACT Multi Hazard Advisory Council
- ACT Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing (OFMHW)
- ACT Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Association
- Anglicare
- Australian Red Cross
- Canberra Health Services (CHS)
- Canberra Police Citizen's Youth Club (PCYC)
- Capital Region Community Services
- Carers ACT
- Communities at Work
- Companion House
- Disaster Relief Australia
- Food Relief Network
- GIVIT
- Hands Across Canberra
- Health Care
- Consumers Association
- Migrant And Refugee Settlement Services
- Multicultural Hub Canberra
- National Disability Services
- Northside Community Service
- Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
- St John Ambulance
- St Vincent de Paul Society
- The Salvation Army
- Transport Canberra and City Services
- Volunteering ACT
- Yerrabi Yurwang

How was the Framework developed?

The Framework has been co-designed and developed with the public and community organisations that represent key recovery services delivered during disasters.

Our social recovery community partners include not-for-profit organisations, service delivery providers, and primary health networks. Each play an essential role in providing the recovery workforce and delivering social recovery services to our communities before, during and after disasters.

Public consultations with communities took place through the ACT Government's YourSay website from September through to November 2023. Between August and November 2023, a series of workshops and subsequent consultations were held with over 30 peak bodies, government agencies and social recovery partners across the ACT. See Appendix B for the full list of community sector representatives engaged with as part of the development of this framework.

These consultations helped us to better understand the social recovery priorities for individuals, the community sector and the broader community.

Key priorities and themes we heard from **individuals in our community** were:

- Looking after immediate individual needs, including financial supports, temporary housing and psychosocial supports that are tailored to their circumstances.
- Social relationships and connections, including support for relationship challenges or family violence.

Key priorities and themes we heard from our **social recovery partners** were:

- Preparing for recovery ahead of time, including having partnerships in place and undertaking joint preparedness and planning activities.
- Coordinated, integrated and connected service delivery provision across the recovery system tailored to the needs of communities.
- Sustainable, efficient and effective resourcing to support longer-term recovery.
- Connected ecosystems, networks and places are essential.
- Promoting the health and wellbeing of recovery workforces is paramount to support sustainable recovery efforts.
- Clear roles and responsibilities between government and the community sector and ensuring that the community sector has a seat at the table with governance matters.

Key emergency management legislation, arrangements and frameworks

- ACT Recovery Sub-Plan
- The Emergencies Act 2004
- ACT Emergency Plan
- National Principles for Disaster Recovery
- Australian Disaster Recovery Framework
- National Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Disaster Recovery Programs



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