



FRRR

Foundation for Rural
& Regional Renewal

Impact Report 2000-2016

October 2017

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This Report

This Report, which has been compiled with the generous support of the Sidney Myer Fund, provides an overview of the grant making activity that FRRR undertook from the time of its establishment until December 2016. It outlines the level of funding that has been provided, the parties that have contributed to that funding and the types of organisations and activities to which it has been distributed. The Report also looks at the outcomes that FRRR's funding has supported.

However, this is not an impact report in the traditional sense. It is a retrospective review of FRRR's work, in an attempt to understand what was done and how it was done, with a view to informing the design of an effective, consistent and coherent evaluation framework to allow the Foundation to monitor and map the focus and impact of its future activity.

The information presented in this Report draws on information from various sources, with the basis being the information recorded in the DIGITS database. FRRR has reviewed and categorised its historical funding activity based on the type and intention of the grants it has funded, the role played by the Foundation in supporting social change and the mechanisms applied to do that, the types of organisations that have been funded and the geographical locations to which funds have been distributed. In choosing how to describe FRRR's areas of focus and the outcomes, we have deliberately sought to align them to the Foundation Centre's taxonomy; enabling FRRR's grants data to contribute to broader insights.

Focus groups and surveys have also been conducted with communities to understand the impact that FRRR funding and support has had. The Foundation is grateful to all of the community members and organisations that participated in those activities to provide feedback on the role that FRRR funding and support has played in their communities.

Unless otherwise indicated, the data presented in this Report refers to activity conducted between the establishment of the Foundation in 2000 to the end of the first half of 2016/17 financial year. Every effort has been made to reflect the work that has been undertaken by FRRR since 2000 as accurately as possible, taking into account challenges posed by variations in how data has been collected, collated and stored over time. Learnings from the work undertaken to prepare this Report will be used to continue to develop and strengthen the work of the Foundation.

Finally, it is important to note that in the analysis that follows that FRRR deliberately chose to classify each project against one primary goal, role, approach, focus or activity and outcome. FRRR's experience confirms that most projects have a number of things they seek to address and certainly a multiplicity of outcomes. However, for the purposes of analysis, we have chosen a primary categorisation.

Note too that FRRR decided not to classify natural disasters, which includes drought for analysis purposes, as a separate category, as we recognise that there are a wide range of projects that occur in both disaster-affected and non-affected contexts. This allows FRRR to understand the approaches that communities are taking in their recovery and preparedness within the broader categorisation framework whilst recognising the influences of that context. However, we are tracking where activities have occurred, so that FRRR can report separately on funds invested in disaster recovery, as well as disaster preparedness.

Glossary

- **FRRR:** Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal.
- **Donation or Fundraising Account:** a formal partnership between FRRR and a not-for-profit organisation or community foundation, whereby FRRR accepts donations and grants for agreed specified charitable purposes or specific regional benefit, provides a tax benefit to the donor, and grants those funds on to the partnering not-for-profit organisation or Community Foundation for the agreed purposes.
- **Natural disasters:** FRRR has provided funds for declared natural disasters as well as preparedness for any disasters. Our disaster recovery and preparedness data set includes drought. While drought is not considered a natural disaster, FRRR considers the impacts on communities of drought to be comparable to catastrophic natural disasters.
- **Community Resilience:** FRRR draws upon the concept of community resilience as being related to the sustained ability of a community to utilise available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations¹.
- **Adaptive Capacity:** linked to resilience, adaptive capacity is a system-level concept, increasingly referenced in climate change and economic adjustment contexts. It is the ability to adapt to external needs and conditions, to prevent potential damages, take advantage of opportunities and/or cope with consequences.
- **Community Capacity building:** Investing in and developing leadership, skills and capacity of individuals and organisations, enhancing inclusion and strengthening culture.
- **Community Infrastructure:** Typically refers to places or facilities that enable communities to connect and grow their identity.



¹ RAND Corporation, 2017: www.rand.org/topics/community-resilience.html

Introduction and context

History and approach

The Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR) has been connecting rural, regional and remote Australia and philanthropy since 2000. FRRR seeks to enable communities to build their social capital and economic resilience by providing resources for projects that create the change that communities aspire to achieve. The Foundation works to:

- Empower rural, regional and remote Australian's to reduce their social, economic and educational disadvantage;
- Engage with government, business and philanthropy to fund grant programs that meet the needs of rural, regional and remote Australian communities;
- Learn from reflection and process improvement to maintain best practice, community-led initiatives;
- Encourage innovation and creativity, and provide a voice for rural, regional and remote Australians; and
- Achieve best practice in our grant making.

The establishment of FRRR arose out of concern about the economic and social decline that was taking place in many rural areas during what was a period of extended drought. The creation of the Foundation recognised the inherent resilience and importance of our regional and rural communities and their critical role in the Australian economy as agricultural and resource centres. It also recognised the specific needs that they have associated with issues of declining population, remoteness and equitable access to services, and the social and economic stresses associated with natural disaster and drought.

The factors that led to the establishment of FRRR in 2000 remain unchanged, as does the need for fit for purpose funding support to meet the unique needs of those communities. It is imperative that the Foundation continues to support rural, regional and remote communities to address issues of remoteness, population and liveability.

The Foundation's objective is to promote, for the public benefit, rural and regional renewal, regeneration and development in Australia in social, economic, environment and cultural areas.

This is predicated on the fundamental belief in the important role of rural, regional and remote communities in the prosperity of Australia, as a whole. FRRR's approach is rooted in the tenet that local people are best-placed to know what will make the greatest difference in their community.

For this reason, the Foundation's focus is on helping communities meet the needs and aspirations of their **people, place and prosperity**.



Operating model

FRRR harnesses the collective investment of government, business and philanthropic organisations to support rural, regional and remote communities. The organisation was established with a \$10M corpus from the Federal Government, plus seed funds from a number of philanthropic bodies to support FRRR’s granting activity. This has grown to \$26M under management, while distributing \$70M in grants. FRRR endeavours to cover the majority of its operating costs through investing the corpus; enabling them to be a low-cost partner. On average, each dollar administered costs 5-10 cents.

Most grants that FRRR makes are small – over the lifetime of the organisation, the median is \$4,031. However, in the Foundation’s experience, communities leverage them in cash and / or in-kind at least three times, and often far more.

Funding mix

Approximately 60 percent of the funding that has been distributed by the Foundation since 2000 (\$38.2M, 58.8 percent) has been funded by FRRR through surplus returns from its corpus and raising funds from philanthropic trusts and foundations, individuals, and businesses. The balance has been distributed on behalf of funding partners who have collaborated with FRRR to undertake their grant making activity (\$16.8M, 42.2 percent).

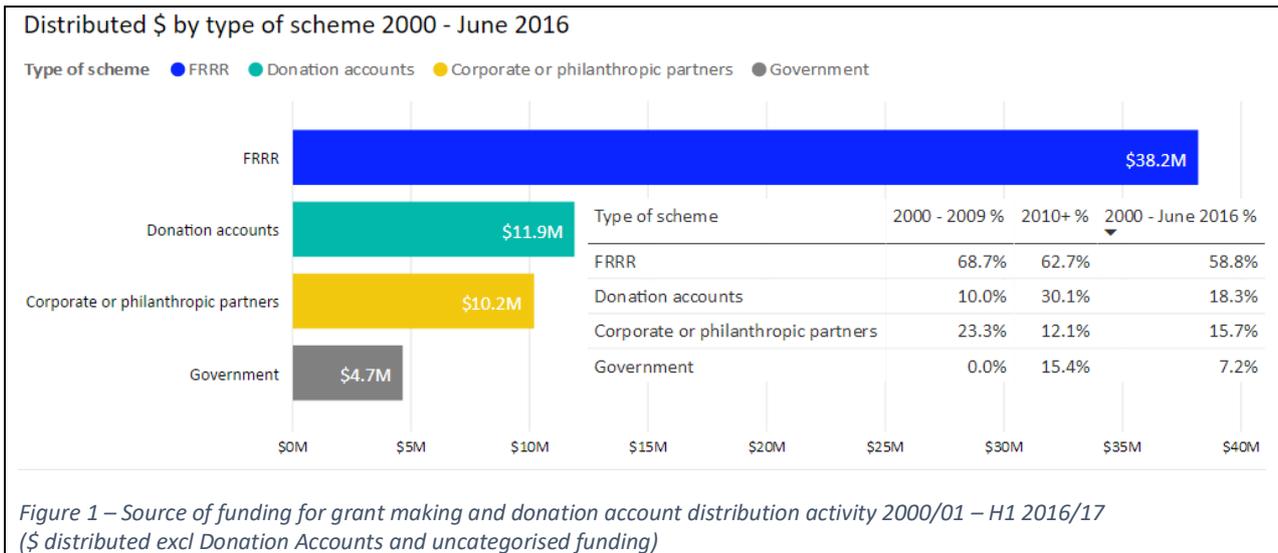
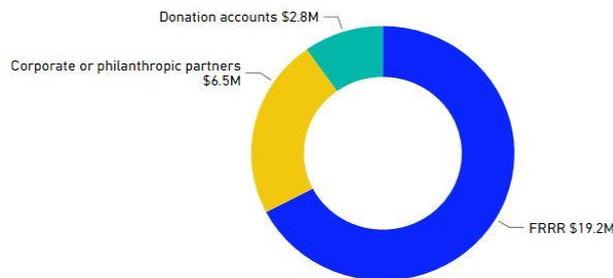


Figure 1 – Source of funding for grant making and donation account distribution activity 2000/01 – H1 2016/17 (\$ distributed excl Donation Accounts and uncategorised funding)

Distributed \$ by type of scheme 2000 - 2009



Distributed \$ by type of scheme 2010 - June 2016

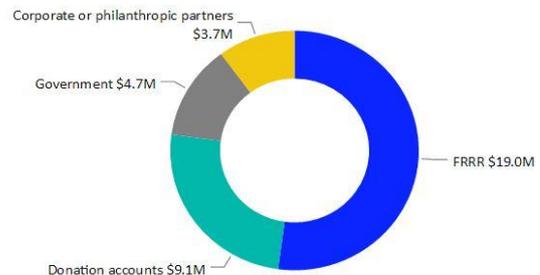


Figure 2 – Funding source comparison between FY2000/01 – FY2009/10 (FRRR first 10 years of operation) and FY2010/11 – FY2016/17 (\$ distributed excl Donation Accounts and uncategorised funding)

The mix of funding that FRRR has managed has shifted over time. Fundraising (Donation) Accounts now make up a significant proportion of the Foundation’s distribution activity (30 percent since the start of FY2010/11). As noted above, this reflects the value placed by communities, organisations and individuals on being able to access that mechanism to raise and distribute funds to rural and regional communities.

FRRR is increasingly being seen by government as a valued funding dissemination partner. FRRR first partnered with government to distribute funds to regional communities in 2011. Approximately 1 in 8 of the dollars that FRRR has distributed since the start of FY2010/11 (12.8 percent) has been distributed on behalf of government partners. The bulk of those funds (69 percent) have related to emergency and post-emergency relief and recovery initiatives; the balance has covered a mix of areas including community renewal and resilience, economic development, leadership development, innovation and education-based initiatives.

The proportion of funding managed by FRRR on behalf of partner organisations, including corporate, philanthropic and government partners, has remained relatively stable over time (approximately 22 percent), with periodic contributions from government.

In all cases, funds have been allocated collaboratively with the partners, although at FRRR’s discretion and in accordance with criteria set by the Foundation and its charitable purposes.



Theory of change

The review of FRRR's 17 years of grant-making activity has supported the articulation of FRRR's theory of change and focus areas. A number of community consultations and deep dives into issues and places also informed the theory of change and reinforced the multi-faceted long-term value of the role and type of support that FRRR provides.



Figure 3 – FRRR's theory of change

FRRR's goal is to enable rural and regional communities to respond to the needs of:

- their **PEOPLE** - to develop healthy, connected, skilled communities and individuals;
- their **PLACE** - to build vibrant cultures, healthy environments, sustainable social and physical infrastructure; and
- their **PROSPERITY** - to support sustainable, viable and adaptive local economies that are inclusive and provide opportunities for economic participation and financial wellbeing.

FRRR's role has been to help **FACILITATE** community engagement and planning, **REMEDiate and MAINTAIN** community assets, **RESOURCE and SCAFFOLD** community action and help communities to **INNOVATE**.

FRRR's approach has been to do that by **investing in infrastructure and equipment**, building **organisational resilience**, **developing individual and community awareness, knowledge and skills** and **providing access to services / activities** to help meet community aspirations and needs.

FRRR's focus has been on:

- Building community resilience;
- Developing organisational resilience and capacity;
- Acting on environmental challenges / opportunities;
- Contributing to a culturally vibrant community;
- Supporting lifelong learning, education and/or training;
- Building economic strength and sustainability; and
- Promoting individual and community health and social wellbeing.

The Foundation believes that supporting these things will help to create vibrant, adaptive and sustainable rural, regional and remote communities. The specific **outcomes they strive for** are:

1. Communities that can **innovate or respond to local opportunities / issues**;
2. Greater ability to **deal with / respond to individual / community level challenges**;
3. Stronger individual and / or **community resilience**;
4. Stronger **local economies**;
5. Improved **financial security / reduced poverty or financial stress**;
6. Enhanced **community identity / wellbeing / sense of place**;
7. A **friendly and inclusive community / stronger social fabric**;
8. Promote **environmental health / sustainability**;
9. More **creative / culturally vibrant** communities;
10. More **engaged / participative** community;
11. Optimal **start in life for children, starting school ready to learn**; and
12. Increased **engagement in learning and improved educational outcomes**.



FRRR's role in supporting rural & regional renewal

Focus on people, place & prosperity

FRRR has balanced its support over time across the three domains of People, Place and Prosperity, highlighting the interdependent and systemic nature of building social and economic resilience, and the importance of simultaneously investing in the capability and development of these areas to create vibrant, adaptive and sustainable places to live and work.

Since 2000, **FRRR's goal** has been to enable rural and regional communities to respond to the needs of their:

- **PEOPLE** - to develop healthy, connected, skilled communities and individuals;
- **PLACE** - to build vibrant cultures, healthy environments, sustainable social and physical infrastructure; and
- **PROSPERITY** - to support sustainable, viable and adaptive local economies that are inclusive and provide opportunities for economic participation and financial wellbeing.



Figure 4 – Alignment of funding distributions to goals of supporting People, Place and Prosperity FY2000/01–FY2016/17. Note grants have been categorised across multiple domains in some cases, resulting in higher figures than total amount granted (\$ distributed)²

Enabling community-led action

FRRR has played four key roles through its distributions. It has assisted communities to:

1. resource and scaffold community activity, particularly providing temporary support and a platform for communities to build from;
2. remediate and maintain community assets, particularly in times of emergency / disaster;
3. facilitate community engagement and action; and
4. innovate.

Analysis of those functions indicates that just under 60 percent of the funds that FRRR has distributed since 2000 have helped resource / scaffold the provision of activity at a community level. This includes services and programs as well as broader activity that strengthens social fabric (57 percent, \$37M); just under a quarter has been used to help remediate / maintain community assets and infrastructure (23 percent, \$15M); and just over 10 percent (11 percent, \$7M) has helped facilitate planning and community engagement activities.

² A proportion of the Donation Account funds distributed through FRRR is not included in the Foundation's DIGITS database and so has not been able to be categorised. A small number of grants have also not been able to be categorised based on the data stored in the database.

Anecdotal feedback indicates that FRRR has supported community innovation, but it has been difficult to consistently identify projects falling into that category across its historical grant portfolio. For this reason, it is not shown in the chart below. It has been easier to identify where the Foundation has played a hand in the other three roles. This may also confirm that before communities can innovate, they need to have the fundamentals in place – the right infrastructure, capabilities, programs and services – to ensure that communities can survive and keep growing.

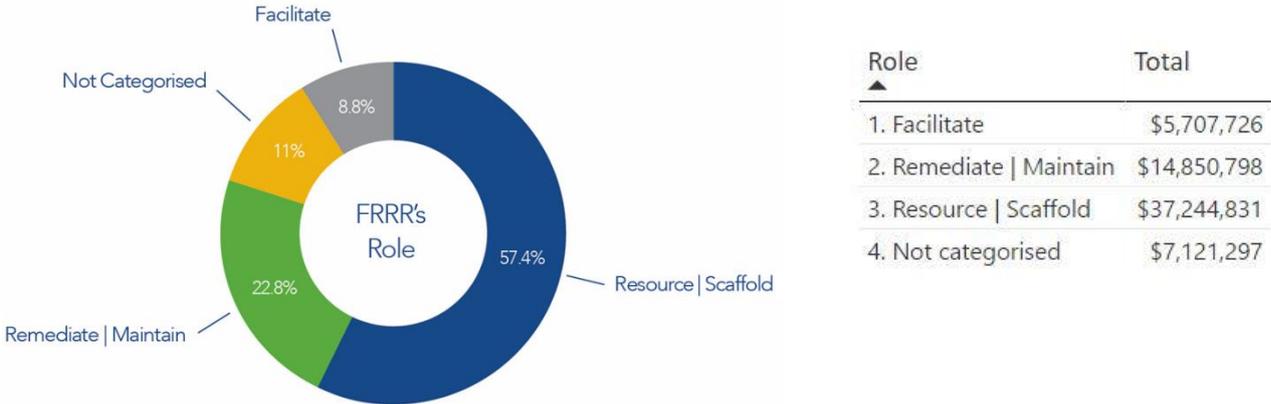


Figure 5 – The role played by FRRR FY2000/01 – FY2016/17 (\$ distributed)

In addition to demonstrating the scale of the need for this kind of support, the emphasis on funds to help resource and scaffold communities and remediate and maintain community assets speaks to the importance of identity and a sense of place. Only once those fundamental needs have been addressed is it possible to galvanise the community into action and to innovate.

Mechanisms for change

The Foundation has sought to enable community action across its program of work through four key mechanisms:

1. investing in community assets / infrastructure;
2. building community / individual capability;
3. building awareness, knowledge and / or skills; and
4. providing equitable access to services.

Since 2000, FRRR has allocated significant funds to improve regional and remote community access to activities / services (60 percent, \$39M). This indicates that FRRR’s funding has contributed to filling a significant gap in access to locally available services and programs / activities that enable people to live well in their communities. It also reinforces the observation that for many rural, regional and remote communities, the greatest focus of effort is on ensuring that the fundamental service needs of their communities are met and that new activities are available as need and opportunities arise. It is important to note that this includes cultural and place-making activities, as well as core services such as education, health and wellbeing, and support for vulnerable members within communities. It speaks too, to the strength of local leadership and the importance of funds being available for programs and services that are locally led and delivered.

FRRR has invested heavily in community assets / infrastructure (26 percent, \$17M). There is a clear linkage between the provision of services and activities and the availability of adequate and fit for purpose community infrastructure. The emphasis on maintenance of infrastructure also reflects that this is a responsibility that has fallen to community committees and indicates just how challenging it is to raise the funds for the upkeep locally. Anecdotally, FRRR has heard from its grantees that having quality local community infrastructure contributes to a stronger sense of community pride and identity and plays a key role in attracting new residents, businesses and visitors.

“When the community is responsible for the upkeep of their community hall it becomes quite a financial burden at times. It is very difficult to obtain funding for projects for these halls as they are seen as a poor investment. Luckily the communities don’t see it this way and they strive to make their halls a very proud place in their community.

Without organisations such as FRRR offering these grants, I doubt it would be possible for town groups to be able to continue the upkeep of these community halls to a standard that is safe for everyone to use. What I have found when researching is that FRRR is really the only organisation that supports grants for historical halls. Your process to apply for the FRRR grants is easy and very simple to follow. To the FRRR - thank you for your support, not only to allow us to improve our hall, but for the many other community halls that you must support over the years. It is reassuring that there are organisations that understand that all communities - large, small and remote - rely on a meeting place for the township and their surrounding areas to access.”

Banana & District Community Association

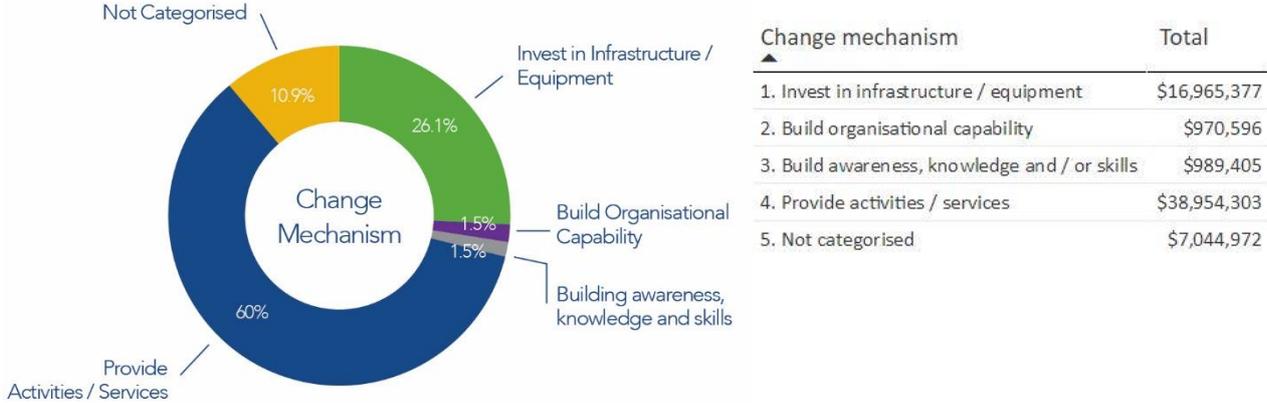


Figure 6 – Mechanisms through which FRRR has sought to enable community action & renewal

Invariably, funds from FRRR are only part of the solution, with contributions from a range of other sources, including local authorities, the community groups themselves, and local businesses. FRRR’s grants are critical though, as they are often either the funds that trigger additional funds to get the project moving, or they are the funds needed to complete a project.

The communities that FRRR has touched

Through its grants, the Foundation has touched approximately 1,487 communities³, including communities from each state and territory. The bulk of the Foundation’s grants since 2000 have been allocated to the eastern seaboard States, particularly Victoria (42 percent), NSW (26 percent) and Queensland (16 percent). While this reflects population spread, the Foundation is alert to this bias and is working to build a stronger profile in the other States and Territories.

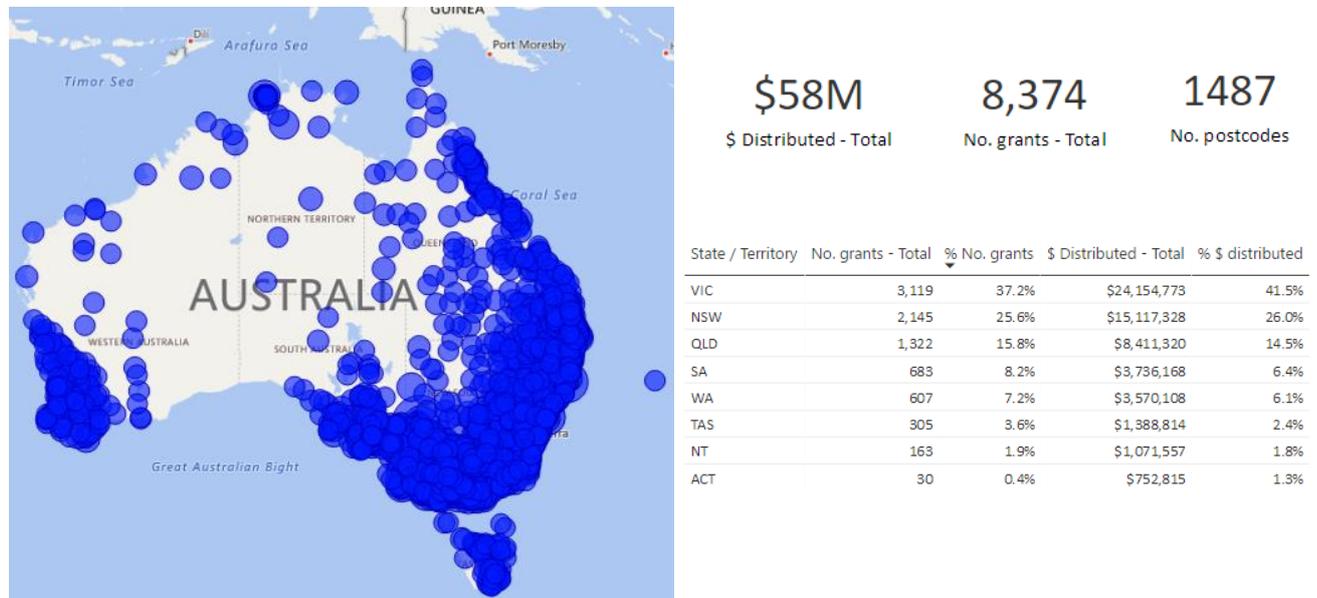


Figure 7 – Grant making profile by geography FY2000/01 – FY2016/17 (\$ distributed excl Donation Accounts as not recorded by state)⁴

Does community size matter?

FRRR’s grants support a wide range of communities, from hamlets of fewer than 50 people that act as the hub for a larger district, to major regional centres. While the data underpinning this report did not consistently capture details about the size of the communities where grants were distributed, we do have this information for FY2012-FY2016, excluding Donation Account distributions.

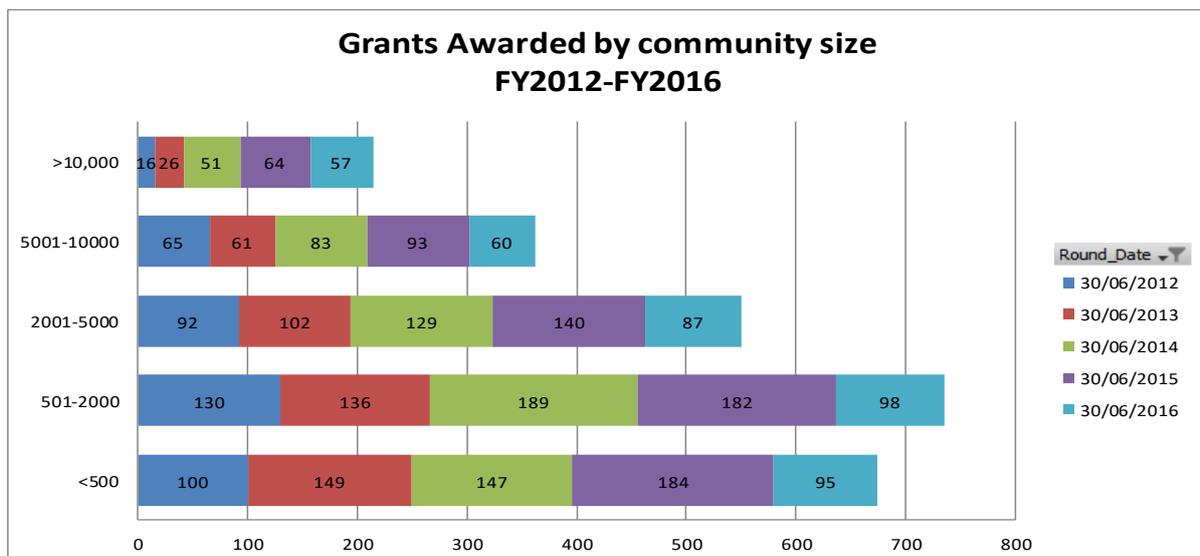


Figure 8 – Grants awarded by community size - FY2012-FY2016

³ Based on a count of discrete postcodes receiving funding.

⁴ Best estimate based on grants and Donation Account distributions that were able to be categorised.

From this data, it's clear that FRRR's grants have supported smaller communities, particularly those with fewer than 2,000 people - 56 percent of grants during this period.

Similar trends are evident in terms of the unsuccessful applications, although during this period, proportionally more applications were declined from larger communities than smaller communities.

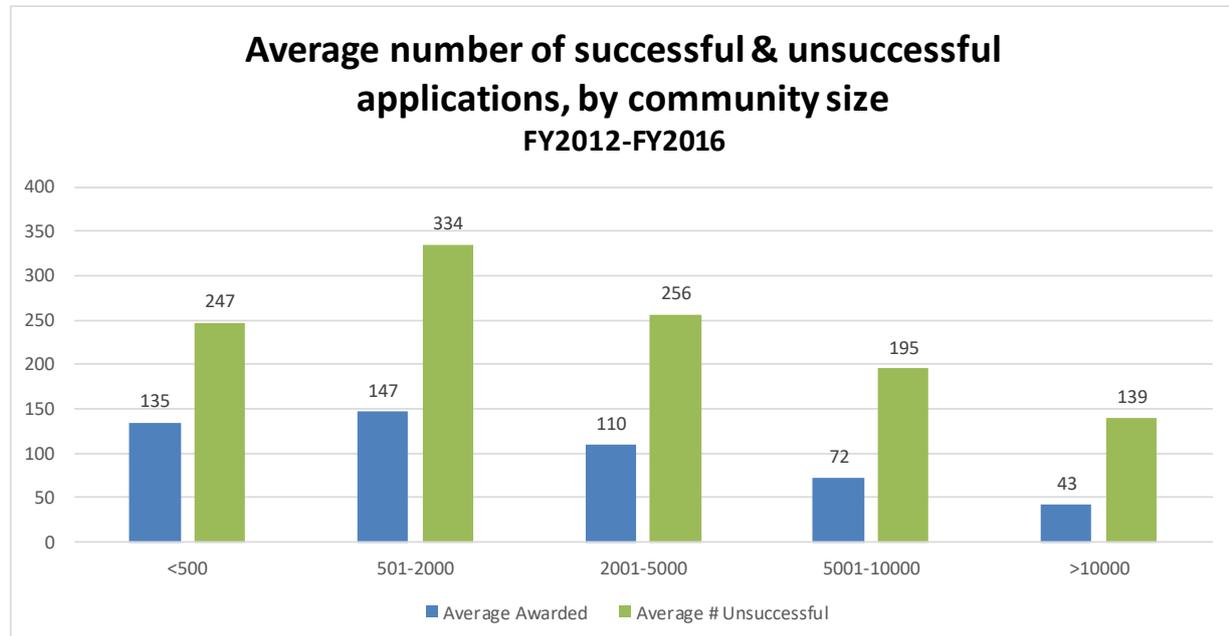


Figure 9 – Average number of successful & unsuccessful applications, by community size FY2012-FY2016

On average, from FY2012-FY2016, just 8 percent of grants went to communities of greater than 10,000 people. Where funds go to organisations based in larger regional centres, the people who benefit from the grants tend to be within a discrete community within that larger centre. Occasionally grants are administered from a larger regional centre but deliver benefit to a number of smaller communities.

There is no typical community, nor is there a standard profile of what communities of a particular size are likely to need. Anecdotally, FRRR believes the needs and requests of communities are driven less by their size and more by factors such as their remoteness, the impact of weather and climate, the effect of natural disasters and the local economy. However, the Foundation knows that smaller communities have less fundraising capacity due to their size, and as such their need for philanthropic support is related to this factor as well as the importance of the issue they are responding to.

While the data doesn't necessarily show it, FRRR is aware that remote communities have different needs than communities that are peri-urban or rural centres. For example, in Central Australian communities or outback Queensland, car hire, fuel and accommodation can add \$5,000 to a budget before anything is even delivered. In Fly In-Fly Out (FIFO) communities, fewer than average long-term local residents results in fewer volunteers, so groups may seek funding for staff. The more remote a community, the fewer potential leaders, so a considered investment in one or two people can have strong ripple effects, delivering wide benefit. However, even in what may seem to be less remote areas, there are challenges. For example, limited public transport is a major issue impacting on people's access to employment and educational opportunities in Tasmania and in western Victoria.

Importantly, FRRR's experience and review of granting activity has shown that smaller communities can adapt to changing contexts and thrive, despite the barriers and limitations they experience. However, to do this, a range of conditions are required and funding support that helps to seed and grow those conditions is essential. FRRR's theory of change and focus areas of funding are deliberately directed in this way, and this review has generated insights that confirm and encourage this approach.

DEEP DIVE: A decade of investment in Boyup Brook, WA

Boyup Brook is a small Western Australian community located 269 kilometres south-southeast of Perth and 31 kilometres northeast of Bridgetown, with a population of 532 (Shire: 1738). The town's economy is primarily agricultural, including employment at the local grain handling depot.

In recent years Boyup Brook has become a tree change choice for families, particularly those where the main breadwinner operates on a Fly In-Fly Out (FIFO) mining roster. This has created a strong need for services and infrastructure to support families (especially mothers) and school aged children.

FRRR's support of Boyup Brook

Between 2005 and 2015, the Boyup Brook community received over \$48,624 via 13 FRRR grants.

- **21 Requests**, totalling of \$130,758.
- **13 Grants**, totalling of \$48,624 granted.
- **Via 5 FRRR programs:** Back to School, Small Grants for Rural Communities, ANZ Seeds of Renewal, REAPing Rewards, and Caring for Ageing Rural Australians.
- **8 organisations received funding:** Boyup Brook District High School Parents & Citizens Association; Country Music Club of Boyup Brook WA; Boyup Brook Community Resource Centre; Boyup Brook Youth Advisory Council; Blackwood Valley Wine Industry Association; Shire of Boyup Brook; Upper Blackwood Agricultural Society; and Boyup Brook Arts and Craft Club.
- **Projects funded** ranged from bush poetry events, expanding the Greenbush Discovery Theatre, craft clubs, fitness, supporting teens and the Boyup Brook Country Music Festival.
- **Beneficiaries:** Projects benefited all parts of the community, from school children to seniors, local businesses to tourists.

Providing grants to the same community over a decade has shown that continued support across different issues, organisations, and change mechanisms leads to greater sustainability and vibrancy of those communities. In Boyup Brook, there is now greater confidence and capability to generate funds from within and beyond the community, and the ripple effect of projects means that the benefits continue to multiply over time across different parts of the community. Related to this, a likely contributor to sustainability is also providing funding to different organisations within the community, rather than only one lead or backbone organisation.

A focus group found that some grants delivered unexpected community benefit. The “Cool at School” project planted trees at the Boyup Brook District High School to improve the school grounds and increase shade for more outdoor activity time for students. Years later, the trees have grown and are providing unexpected economic benefits, providing a welcoming place for campers to stay when they come for the country music festival.



The philanthropic contribution FRRR has made to rural & regional communities

FRRR's grant making & related donation account activity

Between 2000 and H1 FY2016, FRRR distributed \$65M in funds to rural, regional and remote Australian communities in the form of grants and Donation Account distributions. It delivered 325 separate grant rounds, processed more than 25,000 applications and awarded over 8,000 grants.



Figure 10 – FRRR's grant making activity FY2000/01 –H1 FY2016/17

Apart from FY2012/13 and FY2016/17 (for which this report has analysed first half data), FRRR has distributed more than \$4M to Australian communities per annum since FY2007/08.⁵

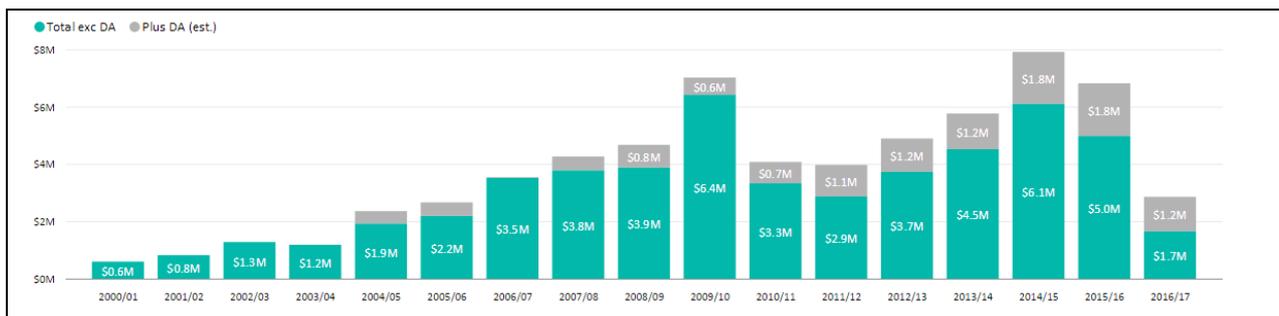


Figure 11 – Funding profile between FY2000/01 and FY2016/17 (\$ distributed) (including grant and estimated Donation Account distributions)⁶

Just over 80 percent of the \$65M (82 percent, \$53M) has been distributed through grant programs; the balance (18 percent, \$12M) was distributions from Fundraising Accounts. The strong take up of Fundraising Accounts since their introduction in FY2004/05 is reflective of the value derived by communities, organisations and individuals from being able to formally partner with FRRR to raise funds for or disseminate funds to entities working in rural, regional and remote communities that do not have deductible gift recipient (DGR) status.

FRRR administers multiple grant rounds each year, distributing funds in line with the Foundation's objectives of promoting, for the public benefit, rural and regional renewal, regeneration and development in Australia in social, economic, environment and cultural areas. It also distributes funds on behalf of partner organisations wanting to support rural and regional communities.

⁵ Including both grant and (estimated) Donation Account distributions. The year to year distribution of Donation Account amounts has been estimated because of the way those accounts have been recorded in the Foundation's DIGITS database.

⁶ Total includes allocated grants and estimated value of Donation Account distributions.

Fundraising and capacity building support

In addition to the above grant making activity, FRRR also supports local community organisations without DGR1 status to access and leverage philanthropic funding by formally partnering with particular communities and not-for-profit organisations to receive donations and re-grant these for agreed projects that benefit rural, regional and remote communities. These partnerships are called Fundraising Accounts (formerly known as Donation Accounts), making philanthropy more accessible and extending the impact of rural not-for-profit organisations.⁷ It also undertakes a range of research and philanthropic and community sector development activities. FRRR played a key leadership role in the development of the Community Foundation sector in rural Australia. During the early-to-mid 2000's, FRRR, in partnership with state and federal Governments and other philanthropic entities, played a key role in distributing funds for feasibility studies and establishment of rural Community Foundations as place-based philanthropic vehicles. FRRR has continued to support the development of the Community Foundation sector and is active in providing capacity building support and partnering with Community Foundations to distribute funds in their communities.

The value of small grants

While there is no consistent definition of a small grant, FRRR considers a small grant to be between <\$5,000 and \$10,000. Over time FRRR has shifted its grant-making activity from initially making fewer large grants, toward making a higher number of small grants, predominantly to smaller communities for a broad range of activities.

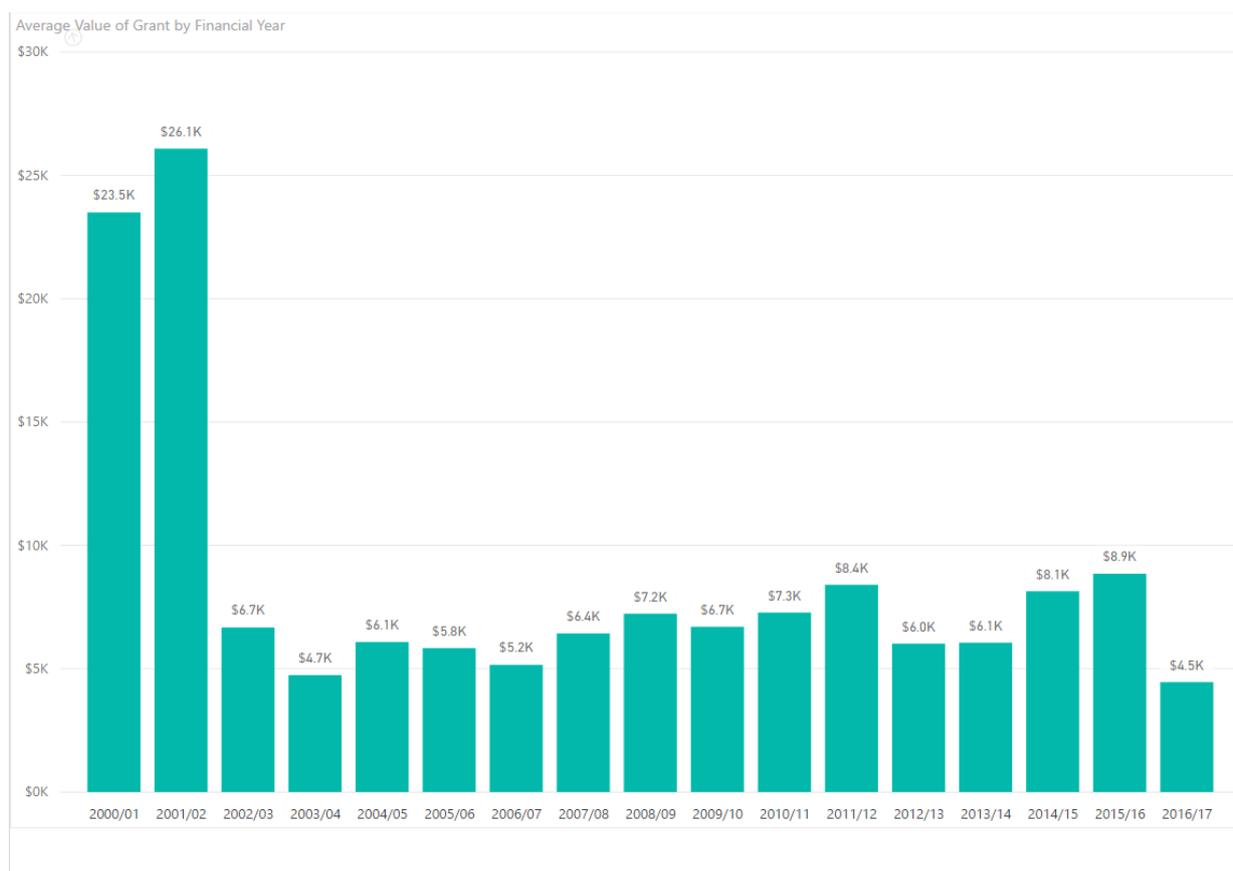


Figure 12 – Average value of grants awarded FY2000 – H1 FY2017

⁷ Fundraising Accounts (formerly known as Donation Accounts) refer to funding accounts that allow the establishing individual or organisation to utilise FRRR's DGR status to receive tax deductible donations for projects that benefit rural, regional and remote communities in line with the objectives of FRRR.

While the financial value may be small, as noted earlier in this report, FRRR is rarely the only contributor to a community project and plays a number of roles in its support. The mere process of applying for and receiving a grant does several important things. It:

- gives confidence to others considering providing support and has a legitimising effect;
- catalyses partnerships and cooperation within the community;
- builds the confidence and skills of the local community and increases their chances of attracting further funding support; and
- builds momentum within the community – success breeds success.

On-the-ground research and focus groups found that the mere fact that a group gets a grant has significant community benefits.

Through focus group discussion, FRRR explored how crucial the grant funds are to the delivery of projects and the outcomes achieved by the communities. Results found that 80% of projects would not have proceeded without the FRRR grant. The balance would have proceeded but with limited capacity, and adjustments to the project. This is consistent with the feedback provided in surveys in final grant acquittal documentation.

The focus groups also explored in qualitative terms the nature of the benefits of applying for and receiving a grant. Six common areas emerged as consistent benefits for the communities.

1. **Sense of worth and inclusion** – grants give small towns something to celebrate and connect to.
2. **Economic benefit** – brings fresh money and attracts visitors.
3. **Skills development** – gained through grant application and reporting process.
4. **Networks and collaboration** – projects create a sense of connection and social cohesion.
5. **Mental wellbeing** – engages residents in new activities and creates social interaction.
6. **Physical wellbeing** – cultural change by educating the benefits of healthy eating and exercise.

“When the community receives funding through grants, it really does give them something to celebrate because it adds more value to the town, it adds more value to the existing programs, being able to create new programs.”

Jodi Nield, Boyup Brook Community Resource Centre Inc.

There are also substantial benefits in the scale and volume of support provided via small grants, as evidenced through the articulation of the roles that FRRR grants have played, as well as the identification of the change mechanisms adopted and nature of outcomes achieved. It can be concluded that FRRR’s approach to providing small grants has been highly effective in developing and improving the core competencies needed to sustain vibrant and adaptive rural, regional and remote communities, at scale.



“When I started in my role as EO at Ellimatta Youth in 2015, I found our small organisation had a big job ahead of us. Due to the help of many, especially FRRR and the Ranges Foundation in that first year, we went from a youth worker one day a week to being opened and staffed three days per week. We have met and serviced over 280 young people in that time. We have improved young lives; helped them get work and overcome very difficult barriers. Our sustainability plan is well into implementation due to funding and support from FRRR. We see sustainability as the only way to continue to offer programs and services to our youth. I feel we are getting stronger and give thanks to the Team at FRRR for believing that young people are worth the investment.”

Belinda Temby, EO, Ellimatta Youth

Categorising funding focus areas

FRRR has always known that its grants support a wide range of projects, and that its funds contribute to a wide range of benefits. Traditionally, analysis was done against Regional Development Australia classifications. However, it recognised that there was a need to find ways to refer to its activities, and the outcomes it supported, to make it easier for broader analysis, both internally and within the philanthropic sector more broadly.

The review of all of the grants funded made this even more obvious, and in the course of the review, the Foundation developed and adopted a classification taxonomy that allows it to break its grant making activity down into seven categories. There are two general capacity development-focused categories covering community and organisational capacity building activity, and five issues-focused categories addressing environmental sustainability, cultural and economic vibrancy, lifelong education and training, and community health and wellbeing. This taxonomy aligns with the work undertaken globally in measurement and evaluation.

Approximately a third of all funds distributed supported community and organisational resilience and capacity building (27 and 6 percent respectively). Just under 30 percent (27 percent) was allocated to support lifelong learning, education and / or training projects and just under 20 percent (18 percent) to projects promoting individual and community health. Smaller allocations were made to support economic (re)development (11 percent), cultural vibrancy (7 percent) and environmental sustainability (3 percent).⁸ This breakdown has been fairly consistent across the life of the Foundation.

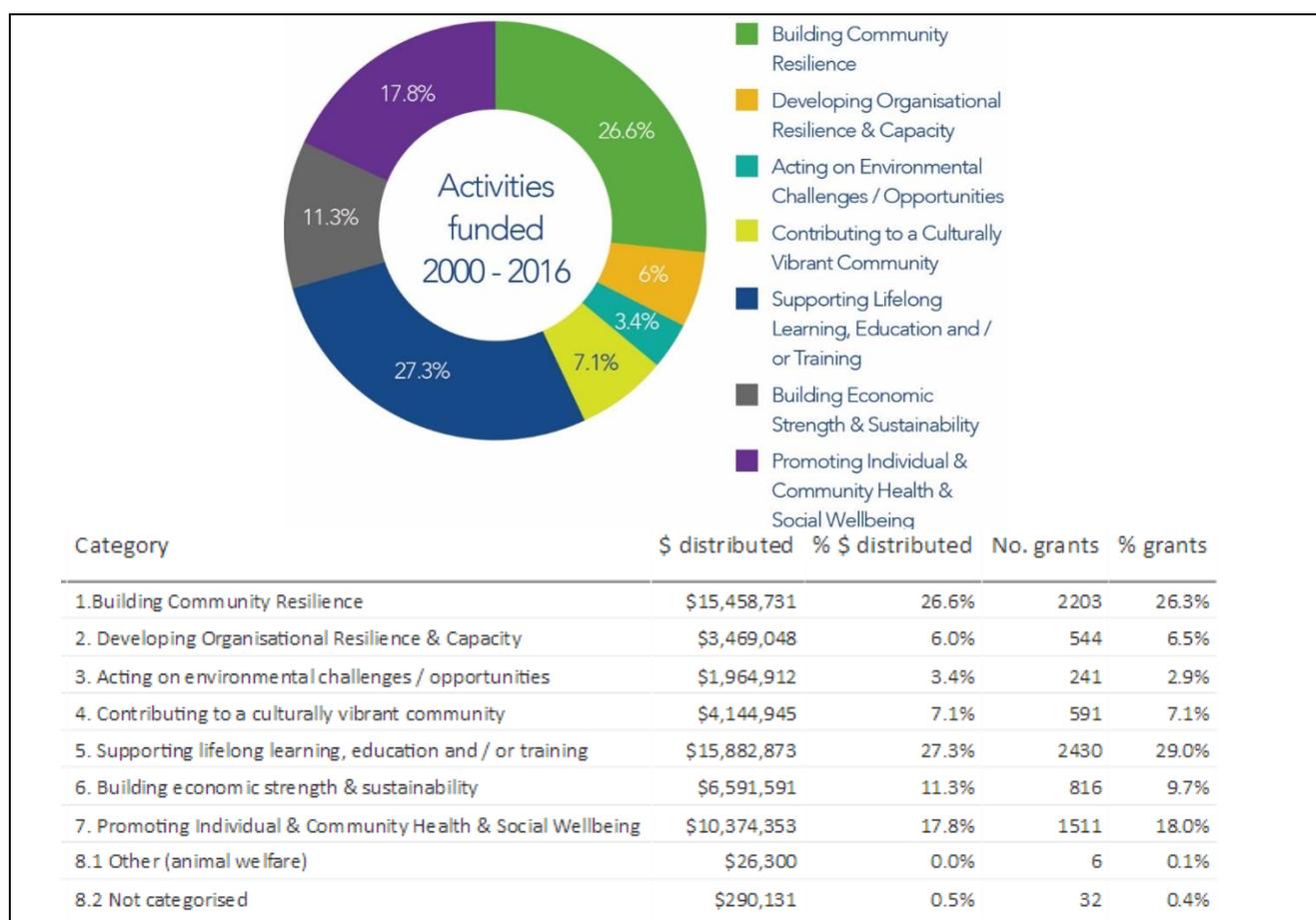


Figure 13 – Percentage breakdown of distributed funds by funded activity type FY2000/01 – FY2016/17, excluding Donation Accounts

⁸ As noted above, some Fundraising Accounts and a small proportion of past grants have not been able to be classified.

The groups funded by FRRR

FRRR has provided grants support to a broad range of organisations from across Australia. Just over a quarter of the organisations funded (28 percent) have been (largely local) service providers of some sort. This includes community-owned aged care facilities, community child care providers, local hospitals and Scout groups. Just under 20 percent have been education / training providers or institutions (mainly kindergartens, pre-schools, school committees and vocational training colleges). The next largest grouping of grant recipients has been grassroots community groups or associations (16 percent) and local community councils, governing groups or asset managers (12 percent).

Organisation type	%GT Grants awarded	Funds distributed
Service provider	32.00%	\$18,096,487
Educational institution	19.23%	\$9,425,466
Grassroots community group or association	16.79%	\$7,516,303
Community council / governing group / asset manager	12.06%	\$7,597,591
Trust / foundation / community appeal	6.95%	\$6,393,619
Community resource centre / neighbourhood house	5.50%	\$2,715,402
Chamber of commerce / industry group / progress association	4.96%	\$2,521,305
Cultural institution (e.g. gallery, museum, theatre etc.)	0.93%	\$623,653
Religious organisation / group	0.79%	\$497,961
CTC / business centre or network	0.57%	\$257,024
Aboriginal Land Council / Traditional Owners Group	0.20%	\$74,672
Peak body	0.04%	\$32,000

Figure 14 – Profile of funded organisations by type FY2000/01 – FY 2016/17 (based on percentage of grants awarded and amount of funds distributed). Excludes Donation Accounts.

DGR vs non-DGR organisations

Looking at the groups supported over the last five years (which is when FRRR began consistently tracking the DGR status of organisations), it's apparent that FRRR's support favours non-DGR organisations (for grants made outside fundraising accounts). This is consistent with FRRR's priority on supporting those communities and organisations that have barriers to accessing philanthropic funding due to their tax status. It also reflects FRRR's support for smaller communities and the fact that there are far fewer organisations with DGR1 status in those communities.

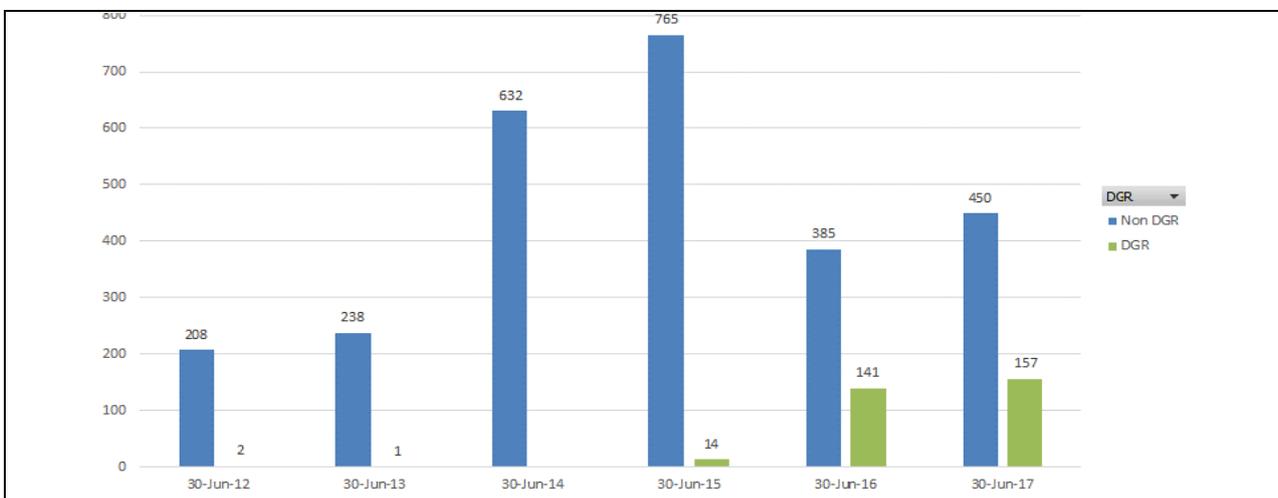


Figure 15 – Numbers of grants to DGR vs non-DGR organisations - FY2012-FY2016

In terms of the amounts awarded to DGR vs non-DGR organisations, for the most part, they are similar. This is interesting because it shows that while the majority of grants were made to non-DGR organisations, the financial value of grants was much the same for DGR and non-DGR organisations, indicating that DGR1 organisations are likely to have received larger grants. This was certainly the case in 2014/15, for example, (see below) when programs that involved a small number of larger grants, such as the Innovation for Community Impact program (a partnership between FRRR, Philanthropy Australia and the NSW Government) was delivered. Many of the grant recipients were DGR1 organisations.

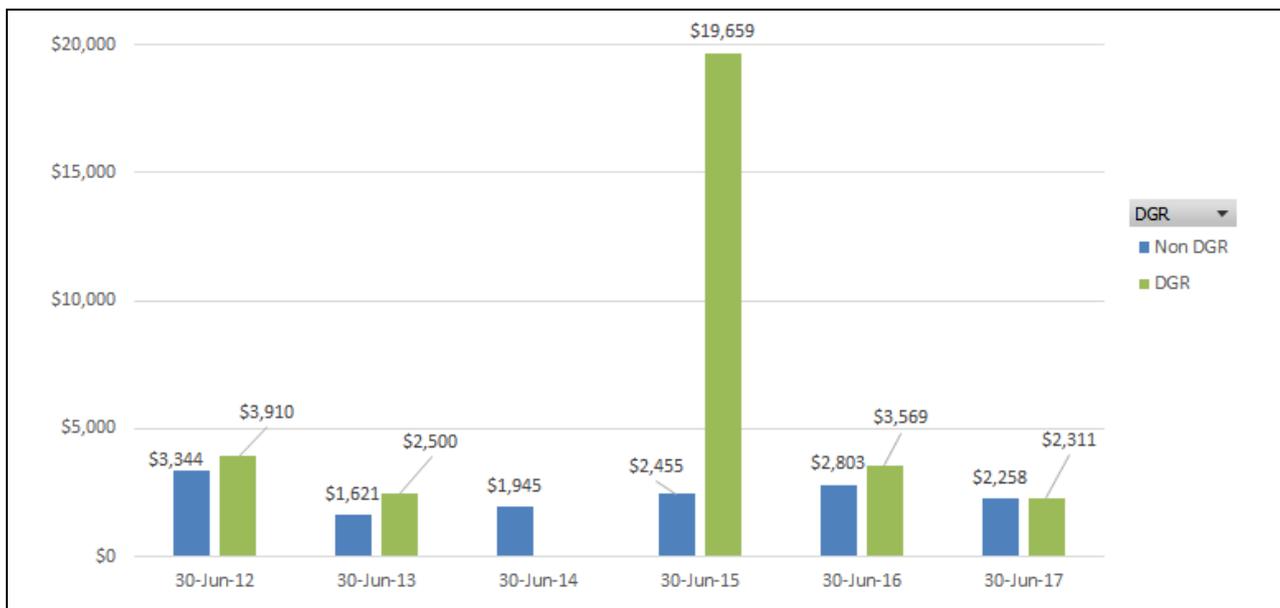


Figure 16 - Average grant awarded to DGR vs non-DGR - FY 2012-FY2016

What FRRR has funded

FRRR has distributed grants across a range of social, economic, and environmental areas. The majority of its grants are focused on helping communities to address local opportunities and challenges and to deal with factors of distance, service access and to maintain and build community cohesion and strength. The Foundation has also played a significant role in helping regional and rural communities to prepare for, respond to and manage emergency and disaster.

While FRRR made the decision not to classify disasters as a separate granting activity, they do track whether grants were made in a disaster preparedness / recovery context, or not.

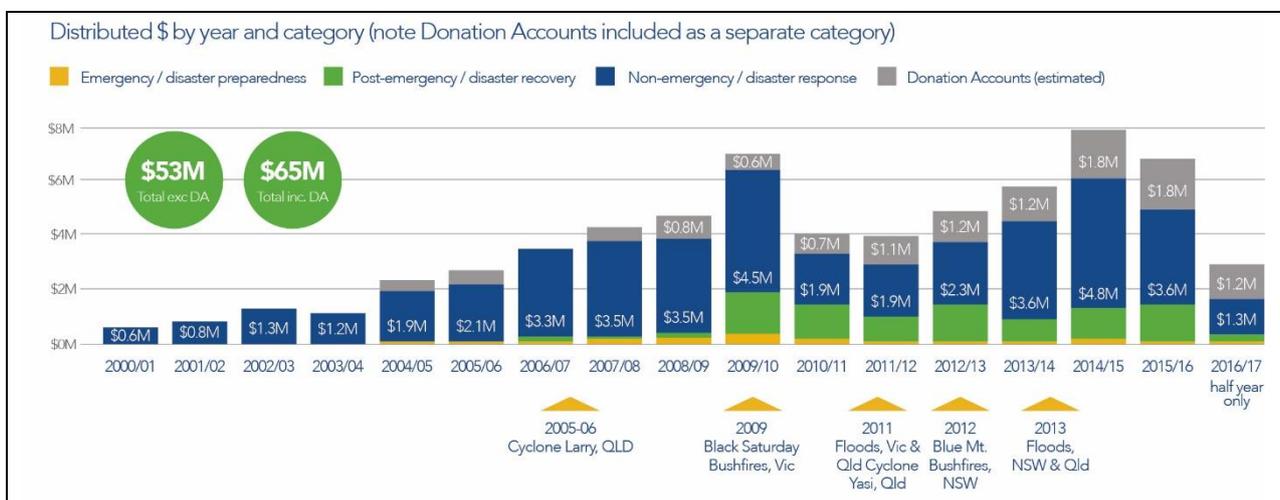


Figure 17 – Breakdown of funding by non-disaster (general funding), disaster preparedness and disaster response (disaster funding) areas FY2000/01 – FY2016/17 (\$ distributed) with Donation Account distributions shown but not categorised

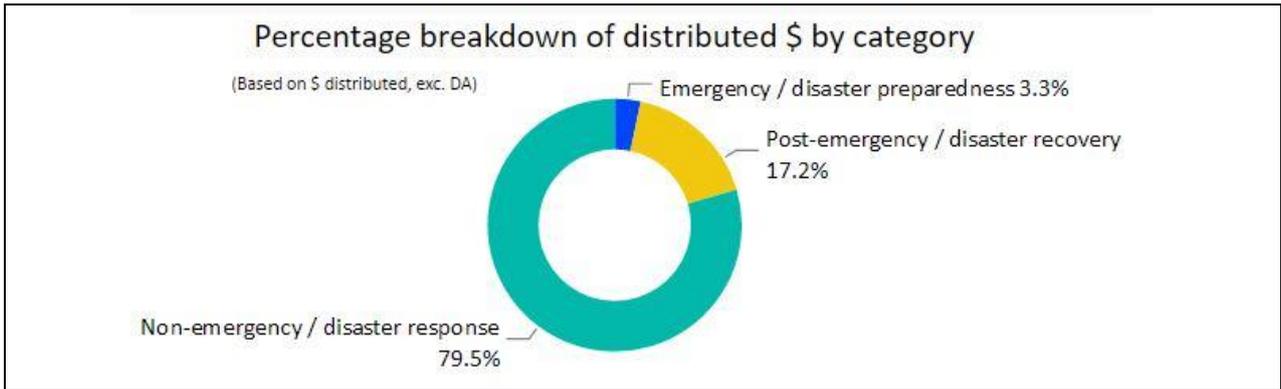


Figure 18 – Breakdown of FRRR funding by area non-disaster (general funding), disaster preparedness and disaster response (disaster funding) areas FY2000/01 – FY2016/17 (\$ distributed) not including Fundraising Accounts distributions

Since responding to Cyclone Larry in 2006, FRRR has provided support to more than 418 communities⁹ responding to drought, flood, cyclone and bushfire. This includes support provided for the 2009 Victorian Bushfires, Cyclone Yasi and the floods that followed it and the Victorian floods, both in 2011, the 2013 Tasmanian and Blue Mountains bushfires and 2013 Queensland and NSW floods and cyclones, as well as extended drought relief.

In many places FRRR has provided ongoing support to communities responding to an emergency / disaster by helping them to address immediate needs post-disaster, as well as longer-term recovery requirements over time. The Foundation has intentionally done this, as there is often a gap in the longer-term provision of funding and support, making this an area where philanthropy can play a significant and strategic role.

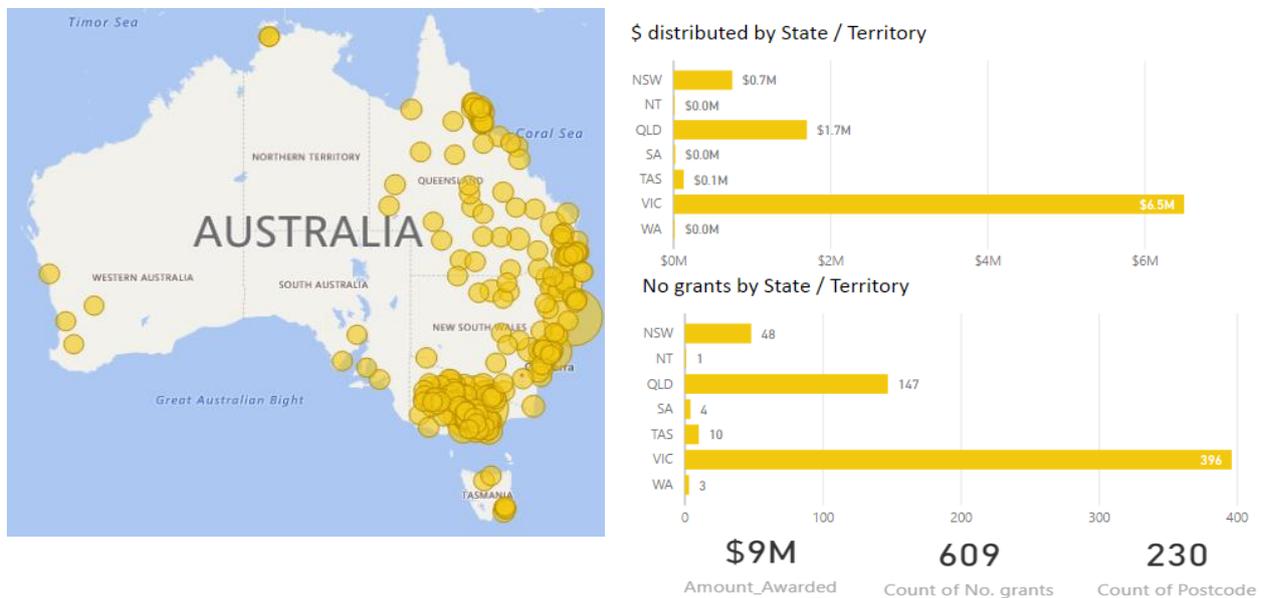


Figure 19 - Map of emergency / disaster response activity FY2000/01–FY2016/17 (\$ distributed)¹⁰

⁹ Based on a count of discrete postcodes receiving funding.

¹⁰ Best estimate based on grants and donation account distributions that were able to be categorised.

The Foundation has also worked with communities to help them to build up their disaster preparedness to improve their ability to withstand natural disasters and drought.

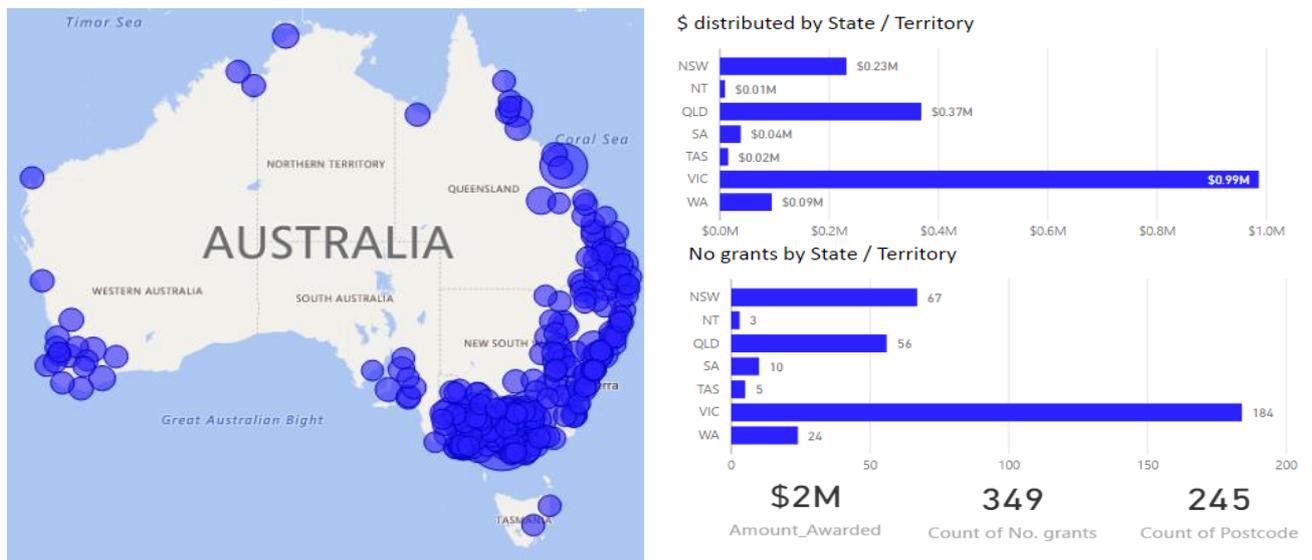


Figure 20 – Map of emergency / disaster preparedness activity FY2000/01–FY2016/17 (\$ distributed)¹¹

DEEP DIVE: Supporting recovery in Kinglake

An example of the nature of the support provided is set out in the case study below detailing the support that the Foundation has provided to the Kinglake area following the Black Saturday Bushfires in 2009.

FRRR distributed \$0.8M through 46 emergency / disaster related grants to organisations working in the Kinglake community between FY2009/10 – FY2016/17.

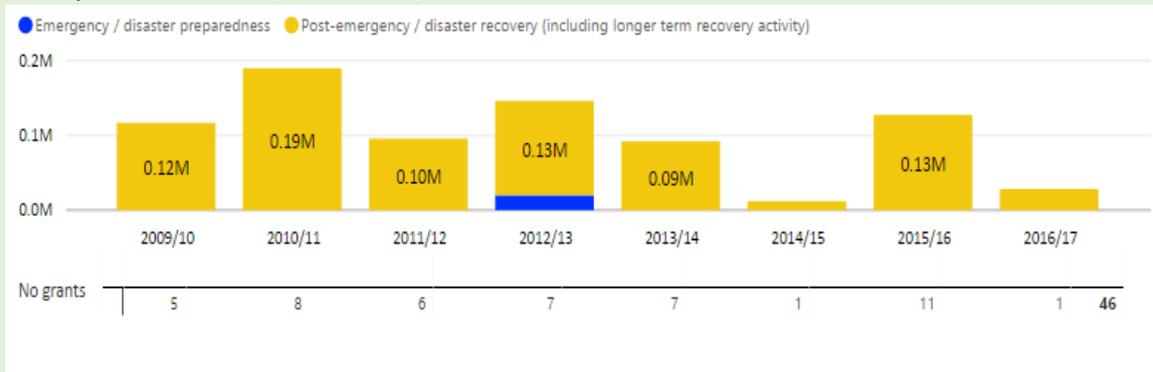


Figure 21 - Profile of funding distributed between FY2009/10-FY2016/17 (\$ distributed)

Just under 60 percent of the funds provided supported the delivery of otherwise unmet services / activities, such as those engaging youth impacted by the fires, provision of transport, and ‘soft edge’ supports for residents needing assistance such as wellbeing and physical exercise programs (\$0.5M, 59 percent); just over 20 percent supported local organisation capacity development (\$0.2M, 22 percent); and 16 percent helped rebuild local infrastructure (\$0.1M). The remaining funds (\$0.02M, 3 percent) were allocated to support a range of community awareness and skill development initiatives.

The focus of the funding was on helping to (re)build community and organisational resilience and position local organisations to respond to the emerging needs of the community; on helping to re-establish a positive sense of place through community activities and events; and on helping to rebuild the local economy.

¹¹ Best estimate based on grants and Donation Account distributions that were able to be categorised.

The kinds of projects funded included skill development for volunteers and for local committees of management, a new music event to bring the community together and attract visitors back to the town, and upgrading of the community radio station to support sharing of local news and opportunities for residents to engage positively in community life.

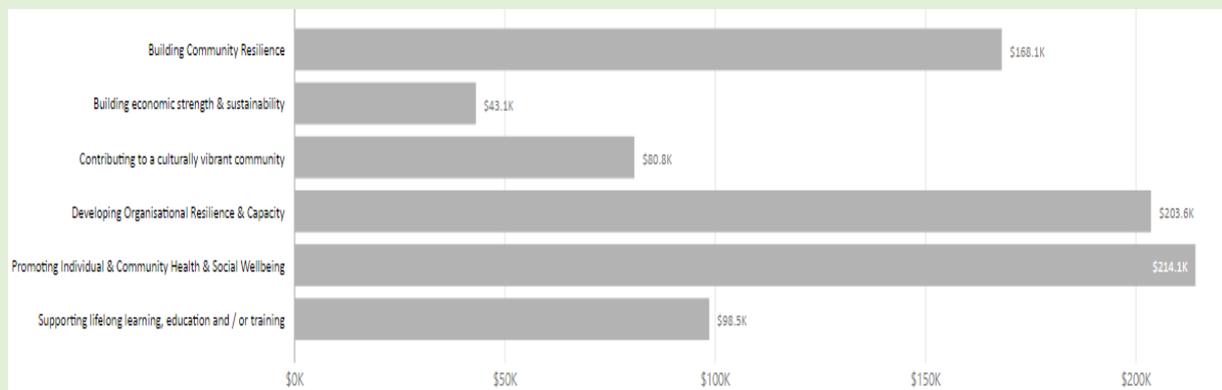


Figure 22 – Focus of activity funded (\$ distributed)¹²

It's interesting to note that there are no projects that were primarily focused on enhancing environmental outcomes. There were several projects run by the likes of Landcare groups, however the primary purpose was more oriented toward enhancing connectedness and rebuilding the social fabric.

Community consultations¹³ indicate that many of the projects that were funded would not have taken place had FRRR funding not been provided. Community members noted that the projects contributed positively to the morale of the community:

“We felt proud and happy in our community.”

“[The project] Lifted pride, brought groups together, became a source of [a] second phase of recovery”.



In addition to indicating that the projects had been successful in delivering direct benefits associated with community rebuilding and recovery, community members also noted that there were several indirect benefits or “ripple effects” that also helped to strengthen the community, to support increased collaboration between organisations, community engagement, participation and volunteering, and to support individual and community recovery and wellbeing.

“When you write a grant application, you have the perceived outcomes but it ripples out and across communities. People who have lost everything then start to help one another through an organisation, and through that time their recovery is happening and through their recovery their family members are recovering. It is so multi-layered. It is important for philanthropists to understand this is what happened with their dollar, it has multiple benefits by going into these rural areas and rippling out over the years.”

Community members also noted that the community was now better prepared to deal with another emergency should it occur:

“Should something else happen in the future we have a better ability to respond and recover.”

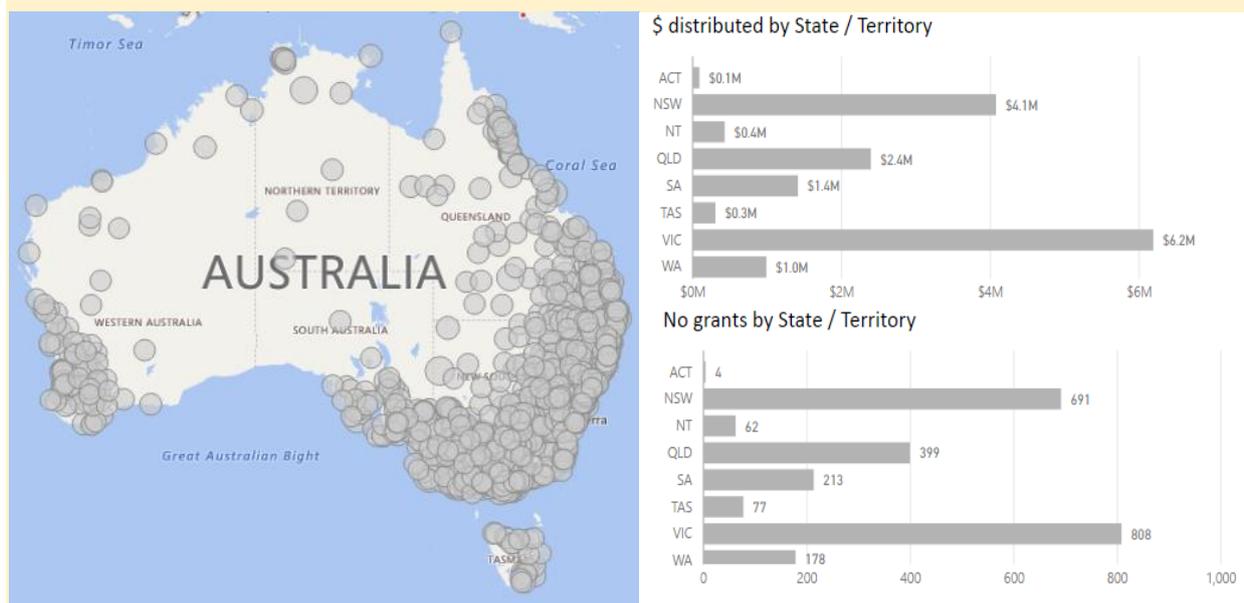
¹² Best estimate based on grants and Donation Account distributions that were able to be categorised.

¹³ Focus Group conducted in Yea on 20 July 2017 with representatives from sixteen funded organisations.

DEEP DIVE: Our impact in education

FRRR believes a good education system is at the heart of strong, vibrant rural, regional and remote communities and has directed support intentionally toward communities that experience disadvantage due to geography and scale, for projects that assist in redressing the challenges faced by those communities in resourcing equitable educational opportunities.

Between 2000 and 2016, FRRR made more than 2,400 grants and distributed approximately \$16M to support lifelong learning, education and training initiatives. The Foundation has supported projects in each state and territory, although there has been a bias in funding towards the eastern seaboard. However, the Foundation has made grants in a number of remote communities in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.



\$16M Amount Awarded **2432** Count of No. grants **833** Count of Postcode

Figure 23 – Education / lifelong learning and training funding distributed between FY2009/10–FY2016/17 (\$ distributed)

Approximately 20 percent of the funds (21 percent, \$3.3M) that have been distributed have been allocated to support early childhood learning and development. Most of those funds were used to support the provision of quality, well-resourced learning environments (\$2M) and to supporting the development of foundation literacy and numeracy skills (\$1M).

Just over 70 percent has been allocated to support engagement in school and learning (71 percent, \$11.2M). A significant portion of these funds supported parents and families to help their children to engage at school and to learn (\$5.3M), including both financial support to assist families to set their children up to attend school as well as initiatives supporting parents to support their child(ren)'s learning. The funding also supported the provision of quality, well-resourced learning environments (\$4M).

Focus	No. grants	\$ distributed	Percentage \$ distributed
1. Supporting early childhood development	766	\$3,322,736	20.9%
1.1 Providing access to quality learning environments / experiences	448	\$2,028,206	12.8%
1.2 Providing learning aids / resources	63	\$152,268	1.0%
1.3 Providing children with support to develop foundation skills (including literacy and numeracy)	230	\$957,058	6.0%
1.4 Supporting parents and families to help their children develop and learn	10	\$121,061	0.8%
1.5 Not categorised	15	\$64,143	0.4%
2. Fostering school engagement / learning	1545	\$11,194,817	70.5%
2.1 Providing access to quality learning environments / experiences	771	\$4,222,070	26.6%
2.2 Providing learning aids / resources	68	\$561,277	3.5%
2.3 Providing children with support to develop foundation skills (including literacy and numeracy)	54	\$393,382	2.5%
2.4 Providing other remedial / extension learning support	27	\$486,395	3.1%
2.5 Supporting parents and families to help their children to engage in school and learn	595	\$5,368,892	33.8%
2.6 Supporting student wellbeing	28	\$162,798	1.0%
3. Helping people access further education / training	58	\$370,320	2.3%
3.1 Tertiary / further education	23	\$139,990	0.9%
3.2 Adult education (exc. vocational training)	35	\$230,330	1.5%
4. Supporting general or life skill development	60	\$995,000	6.3%
4.1 Personal / leadership skill development	50	\$910,644	5.7%
4.2 Other skills	8	\$74,356	0.5%
Total	2430	\$15,882,873	100.0%

Figure 24 - Detailed distribution of Education & Lifelong Learning grants FY2009/10 – FY2016/17 (\$ distributed)

In terms of the change mechanism employed, 85 percent of the funds distributed in this area went to provide equitable access to services / activities (\$13.5M). Almost all of the remaining funds were used to purchase infrastructure or equipment (15 percent, \$2.4M). The remaining funds (\$5,000) were allocated to support a small number of school / educator-based skill development initiatives.

DEEP DIVE: Economic development

One of the unique things about FRRR is its ability to fund economic development as a charitable activity. Up until 2016, FRRR had directed more than \$6.5M toward 816 projects that were focused on economic development. The largest number of grants went toward the development of enterprises or economic development, with significant additional support for promoting tourism, as below.

Category	\$ distributed	% \$ distributed	No. grants	% grants
6.1 Supporting economic recovery post-emergency or disaster	\$419,846	0.7%	7	0.1%
6.2 Promoting agricultural industry sustainability / development	\$829,666	1.4%	101	1.2%
6.3 Promoting tourism	\$1,750,583	3.0%	126	1.5%
6.4 Supporting other enterprise / economic development	\$2,821,692	4.8%	470	5.6%
6.5 Addressing barriers to employment	\$690,563	1.2%	98	1.2%
6.6 Not categorised	\$79,241	0.1%	14	0.2%

Figure 25 - Detailed funding distribution of economic development grants - FY2000/01 - FY2016/17

A survey of organisations receiving funding for economic (re)development related projects¹⁴ affirms the benefits that funding can provide in terms of supporting community revitalisation and renewal. Survey respondents identified a number of direct and indirect benefits flowing from those projects including:

- Improved liveability of rural towns to retain and attract residents;
- New business / enterprises established and jobs generated;
- Increased industry / business activity and capability;
- New and invigorated events attracting more visitors and promoting tourism;
- Increased community optimism and wellbeing;
- Increased financial earning capability of youth, women and people with disabilities;
- Reduced barriers and increased access to services and learning; and
- Increased community safety and emergency response capacity (in the case of projects supporting post-emergency / disaster economic recovery).

¹⁴ Survey conducted August 2017, 48 respondents.

Maldon Market flourishes from grant

In 2011, the Victorian Goldfields town of Maldon had increasing vacant retail outlets and decreasing visitors and local spending. (Essential Economics, 2011, report commissioned by the Mt Alexander Shire Council).

On hearing the findings, The Maldon Neighbourhood Centre wanted to take action to reverse this trend. They reasoned that local markets are always popular with tourists, and a well-run one would bring repeat visitors from across Central Victoria and further afield. They knew that a market close to the town centre would have a spin-off effect for local businesses, with extra visitors bringing extra dollars to Maldon's shopkeepers.

Jenny Merkus, President of the Maldon Neighbourhood Centre, saw this as a great opportunity for locals, as it would also enable artisans and producers from the town to showcase and sell their wares to both visitors and the Maldon community.

"The two main gaps in the Maldon shopping centre were fresh fruit and vegetables and 'speciality' shops. Maldon and the surrounding communities are bursting with growers, as well as talented artists, jewellery designers, sewers and bakers – so we thought a monthly market, utilising the local talent, could fill this gap," said Jenny.

"An ANZ Seeds of Renewal grant of \$5,000 gave us the opportunity to promote the market and raise awareness across the region, and we utilised local newspaper advertising and a targeted postcard distribution to households, information centres, shops and cafes."

Spreading the word was a success - the market launched in November 2013 and the aim was to achieve 500 visitors to the market in the first few months. In the summer months following the funded advertising, visitor numbers hit 1,600 (December) and 1,800 (January).

"Our vision for the market was to provide a genuine service, social activity and pride of place for residents. Since launching at the end of 2013, we have certainly achieved this, and the locals are enjoying the benefits," Jenny said.

In the final acquittal, the Neighbourhood Centre reported that stores are pleased with the increase in visitors to the town, as well as taking pressure off for services that they don't deliver.

Market stallholders had a local opportunity to sell their wares via a low-risk platform and were reporting financial successes.

The market also created a socially diverse public place for local people of all ages to come together and enjoy the food, shopping, music and conversation.

This is a fantastic example of a community organisation understanding the gaps in the area and building local capacity to meet the needs to allow the town to flourish and grow. Today the monthly market continues to be a strong presence as one of the town's key tourist attractions, with an average of 1,500 visitors each month. It is held the second Sunday of each month, hosting approximately 60 specialty stalls – so get on down there for some local produce and products.



The outcomes

As with the classification of activities that FRRR funding supports, this review process has made the outcomes from the funding more obvious. The twelve areas below are deliberately broad and allow for projects to be categorised across these and mapped over time. Importantly, they can be linked to other frameworks that measure community level outcomes such as the Sustainable Development Goals and Regional Wellbeing Survey, among others.

1. Help a community to innovate or respond to local opportunities / issues;
2. Strengthen ability to deal with / respond to individual / community level challenges;
3. Help build individual / community resilience;
4. Strengthen local economy;
5. Improve financial security / relieve poverty or financial stress;
6. Help (re)build community identity / wellbeing / sense of place;
7. Help build a friendly & inclusive community / strengthen social fabric of community;
8. Promote environmental health / sustainability;
9. Help build creative / culturally vibrant community;
10. Support community engagement / participation;
11. Help children to get the best start in life and start school ready to learn; and
12. Increase engagement in learning and strengthen educational outcomes.

It is important to note that most projects achieve more than one outcome. However, FRRR's classification framework seeks to identify the main outcome, and based on this model, the areas that the Foundation has invested in most strongly are:

1. Helping to build individual / community resilience (20.6 percent, \$20M);
2. Helping to (re)build community identity / wellbeing / sense of place (13.5 percent, \$13M);
3. Strengthening local economies (12.2 percent, \$12M); and
4. Increasing engagement in learning and strengthening educational outcomes (11.7 percent, \$12M).

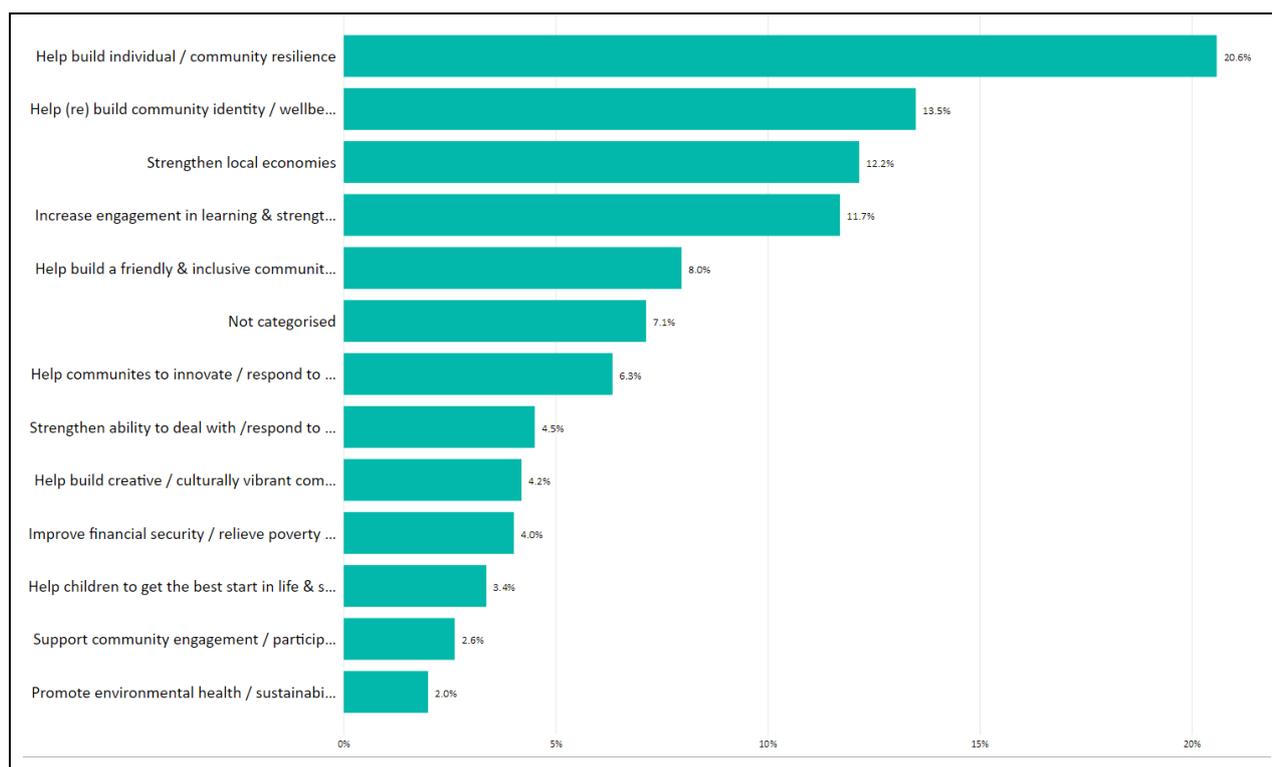


Figure 26 – Distributed funds mapped against targeted outcome areas FY2000/01 – FY2016/2017 (\$ distributed)

The relatively small size of many of the grants that FRRR makes, and the small scale and volunteer nature of many of the organisations that the Foundation supports, makes undertaking detailed evaluations of the impact of individual grants challenging. Anecdotal feedback provided by communities and acquittal documentation have historically suggested that grants have been valued as supporting these outcomes.

That feedback is confirmed through the focus group and survey work that has been undertaken to better understand the role that the Foundation has played in supporting community activity and the outcomes that it has delivered. Community consultations¹⁵ conducted with organisations receiving funding indicate that the projects receiving funding through FRRR often would not occur if those funds were not available. The implementation of those projects often involves more than one organisation and / or support organisations to collaborate with other members or groups in their community. They contribute positively to community morale and deliver not only direct benefits associated with the specific project being funded but, through the ability to support local activity and engagement, often contribute to other positive benefits.

In discussions with funded organisations, the types of benefits attributed to funded project activity include:

- Contributing to a **sense of individual and community self-worth and inclusion**: recipients feel valued when they receive a grant, it gives them “a boost” in the face of what is often a “hard slog” and gives them, their organisation and / or community something to “celebrate”.

“When the community receives funding through grants it really does give them something to celebrate, because it adds more value to the town, it adds more value to the existing programs, being able to create new programs. It gives the community something to really celebrate; to say that we are valuable, we are proactive, we are doing things that are meaningful for our community.”

- Supporting volunteer and funded organisation staff **skill development**: volunteers and staff build their skills and knowledge by applying for, implementing and reporting on funded projects in addition to skills developed by people participating in project activity.
- **Strengthening local networks and fostering collaboration**: projects often involve and foster collaboration and strengthen relationships and networks between organisations and community members.
- **Promoting wellbeing**: projects often help community members to access services and / or engage community members in activities, fostering new relationships and friendships and contributing positively to individual and community health and wellbeing.
- Contributing to **local economic activity**: funded project activity and events can help generate economic activity and encourage tourism, bringing visitors and money into town to support local businesses and community organisations.

¹⁵ Focus Groups conducted in Boyup Brook (29 May 2017) and Yea (20 July 2017) with representatives from seven and sixteen funded organisations respectively.

Unmet need

There were more than 26,000 applications, and FRRR granted to just over 8,200 projects. Of the more than 17,800 applications FRRR was unable to fund, the most common activity for which funds were requested was developing organisation resilience & capacity, with more than 6,440 (or 37%) unmet requests. This was closely followed by requests to support promoting individual and community health & social wellbeing (3270 applications or 18.8 percent), then supporting lifelong learning and education (14.6 percent). This is in contrast to the grants awarded, where the majority went toward education and lifelong learning.

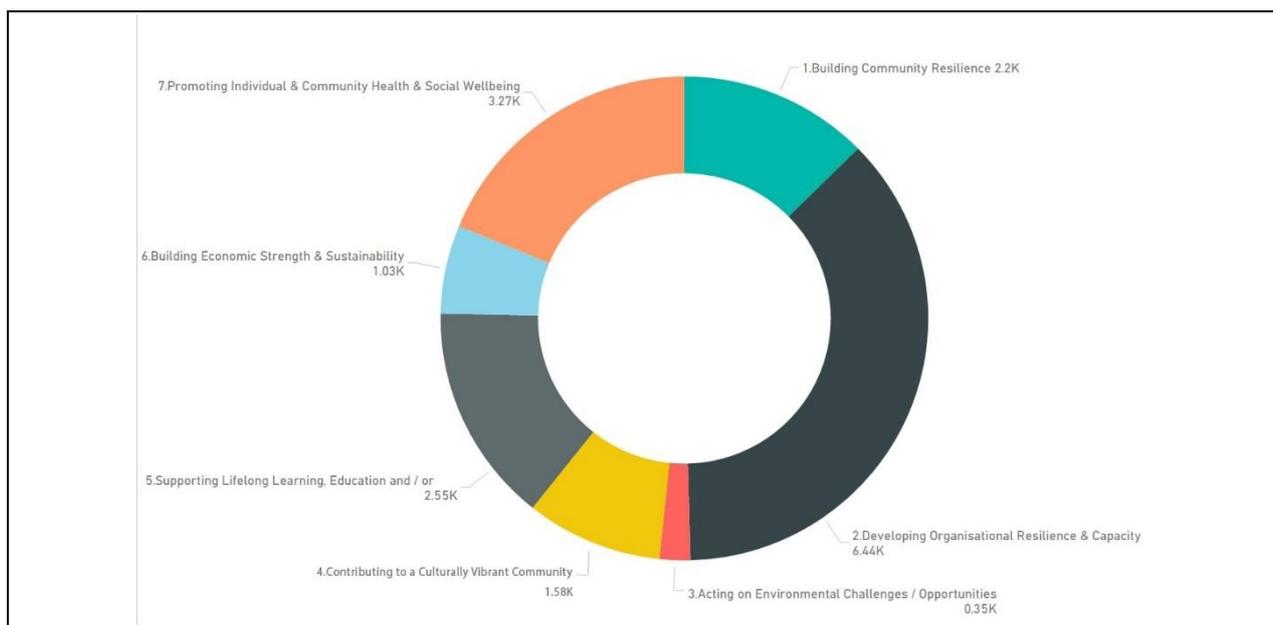


Figure 27 – Unmet requests mapped against targeted outcome areas FY2000/01–FY2016/2017 (% of \$ requested)

Because the funds that FRRR provides are sourced primarily through partnerships with other philanthropic organisations, businesses and governments, the contrast between the focus areas of funds awarded against those not awarded points to a broader historical trend of philanthropy funding activities and ‘things’ in preference to funding the capacity and capability of the organisations delivering the outcomes. FRRR’s grants data is reflective of this historical pattern and this review presents an opportunity to further consider the implications of this and engage in dialogue about whether the focus of funding, as it has been, is striking the right balance to achieve impact. It is noted that this is occurring in many parts of the philanthropic sector, however this may be further informed by data and insight.

The spread of unmet demand broadly reflects the typical geographic distribution of the grants FRRR actually makes. The areas where FRRR provides funds depends on the funding that they have available from donor partners, which is often determined by Trust Deeds. Many of Australia’s oldest and largest philanthropic organisations are Victorian and were established with geographic restrictions. The geographic data in part reflects this.

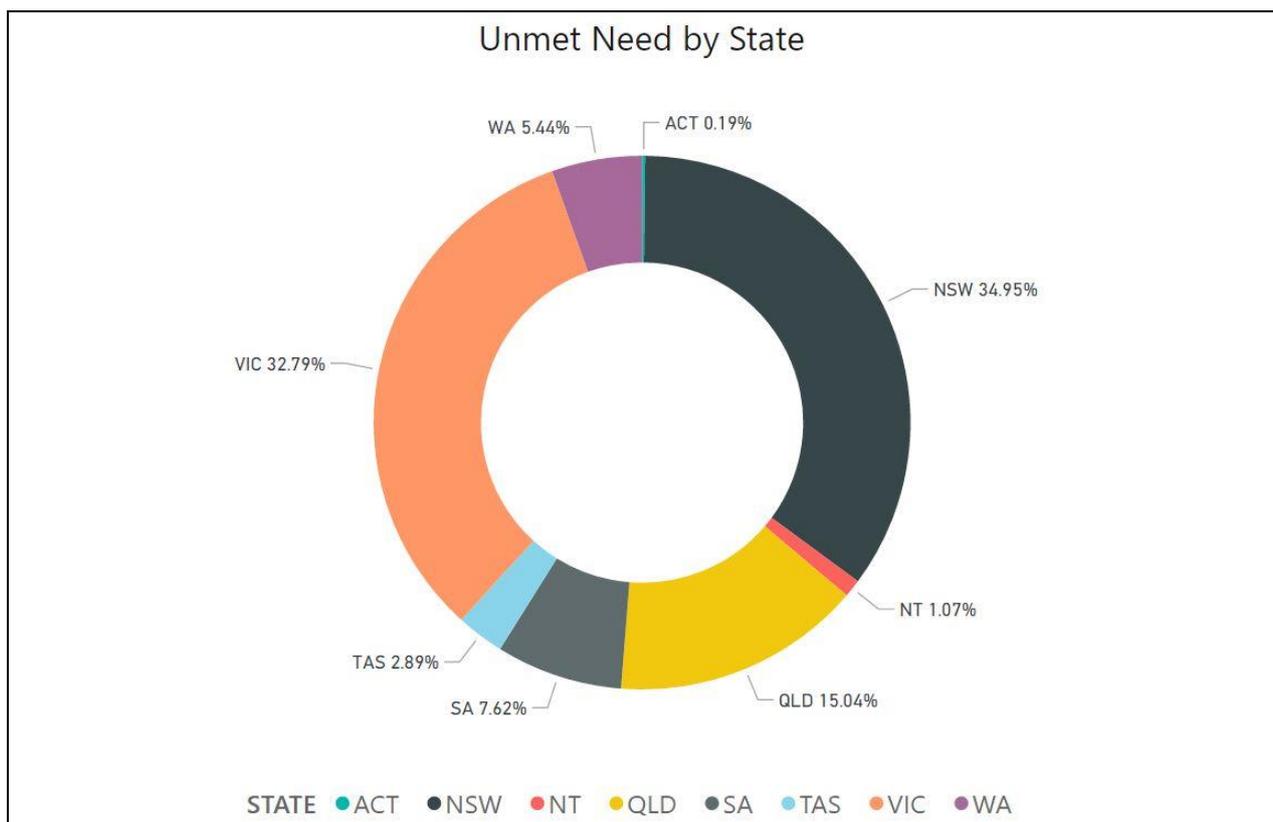


Figure 28 – Unmet requests by State FY2000/01 – FY2016/2017 (\$ requested)

FRRR’s other research, engagement & advocacy work

In addition to its grant making activity, FRRR has also played an active role, commissioning and supporting research, convening discussions across the philanthropic sector and sharing knowledge and insights that it has gained through its work. Examples of this include:

- Chairing of the **Rural and Regional Funders’ Group** via Philanthropy Australia;
- Commissioning **research and evaluations** of the philanthropic sector’s role in natural disaster recovery;
- Development of **tailored capacity building resources and tools** for rural, regional and remote communities;
- Acting as a **backbone for funder collaborations** on areas of common interest;
- Contributing to **policy discussion papers** including the 2017 DGR Reform Discussion Paper; Review into Rural, Regional and Remote Education; and a review into Commonwealth natural disaster recovery funding arrangements.

Copies of published reports are [available on FRRR’s website](#), under the About / Insights tab.

FRRR's commitment going forward

The needs and priorities of rural, regional and remote Australian communities will continue to be dynamic, influenced by factors including remoteness, population and liveability. Global and domestic social, environmental and economic conditions call for leadership, collaboration, and adaptability which will require targeted social investment to enable communities to determine their own futures and support regional sustainability and viability.

As FRRR approaches its third decade of operation, it will continue to play an important role in connecting funders with rural, regional and remote communities to help them to meet their aspirations and needs. The Foundation will continue to be an efficient conduit for funds, a strong voice for community, and a respected source of knowledge and insight, supporting and informing community action, philanthropic practice and policy.

FRRR remains committed to enabling rural and regional communities across Australia to build their social capital and economic resilience by providing resources to help communities to respond to the needs of:

- their **PEOPLE** - to develop healthy, connected, skilled communities and individuals;
- their **PLACE** - to build vibrant cultures, healthy environments, sustainable social and physical infrastructure; and
- their **PROSPERITY** - to support sustainable, viable and adaptive local economies that are inclusive and provide opportunities for economic participation and financial wellbeing.

FRRR has used the insights from this review to design a learning and evaluation framework, as well as invest in new technology and systems which will enable the Foundation to more effectively and consistently monitor the nature of the community activity that it supports, and the outcomes that activity delivers. FRRR looks forward to being able to share what it has learnt through this framework over the coming years, and to continuing to work hard to support communities across the country.



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