



COMMUNITY FIRST
DEVELOPMENT



ARP-DREAM:STORY 1

STORIES OF CHANGE

DHARUG STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP

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Dharug Strategic Management Group's (DSMG) dream is to heal Country on a site which was handed back to the community in 2018. This story focuses on DSMG's dream and some of the progress towards this dream through working together with Community First Development. It has been co-authored as part of Community First Development's latest Action Research Project on measuring long-term outcomes with communities.

WHO IS A PART OF THIS STORY?

Dharug Strategic Management Group

Dharug Strategic Management Group (DSMG) is a Dharug-led, not-for-profit organisation based in Blacktown, NSW. Their purpose is to advance the culture and wellbeing of the Dharug people and promote reconciliation, respect and harmony between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

To the Board, describing the wider community that DSMG supports is very complex due to the ongoing impacts of colonisation.

As a DSMG Director describes, "one of the consequences of that historical and ongoing experience is that this is a really highly fragmented and fractured community". DSMG regularly navigates the complexities around identity and belonging.

Community First Development

Community First Development is a First Nations' community development and research organisation. Community First Development is a registered not for profit organisation and has been working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities for over 20 years.

Community First Development's vision is a world beyond the gap where First Nations' people and communities are thriving – with a focus on self-determination underpinning all the work that is done alongside communities, and to support cultural strength for First Nations' communities to achieve recognition, growth, and security.

"IT'S (OUR COMMUNITY) ACTUALLY IN THE PROCESS REALLY OF DISCOVERY AND UNITY. PARTS OF OUR COMMUNITY HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN WHO THEY ARE. PARTS OF OUR COMMUNITY HAVE BEEN ON THEIR JOURNEY FOR A WHILE. AND OF COURSE, EVERY DAY WE HAVE NEW PEOPLE WHO ARE FINDING OUT THEIR ANCESTRAL LINKS TO DHARUG. AND SO OUR COMMUNITY IS A LITTLE COMPLEX BECAUSE SOME PEOPLE LIVE ON COUNTRY, SOME PEOPLE LIVE OFF COUNTRY, AND THEN WE HAVE ANOTHER WIDER ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY WHO AREN'T DHARUG THAT LIVE IN AND AROUND THE AREA, THE BLACKTOWN NATIVE INSTITUTE SITE."

- DSMG Director



EVENT AT THE BLACKTOWN NATIVE INSTITUTE SITE.



THE COMMUNITY'S DREAM: WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT TO COMMUNITY

DSMG's dream centres around the Blacktown Native Institution (BNI) site which was handed back to the community in 2018. The site is of national, state, and local heritage significance because of its combination of historical, social and archaeological values for the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. The BNI is a landmark in the history of black-white relations in Australia. To the Dharug people in particular, it represents a window on the wider regional cultural landscape and a key historical site symbolising dispossession, child removal and enduring links to the land.

Unlike other historical sites that are inaccessible to Dharug people, the BNI site is now a place where the Dharug communities can visit and spend time on.

DSMG's dream is to heal Country on the BNI site. The community has developed a landscape master plan for the site that will introduce plants and trees of environmental, cultural, and historical significance and affirm the site as a place of importance to Dharug futures. This will see the site act as an outdoor learning hub for practicing and maintaining culture, which connects Dharug people to country by planting and landscaping the land for cultural use. Participation will also enable them to have various areas that cultivate and support women's, men's, families' well-being through gatherings, teachings, yarning, artworks, songs, and dance.

"THE BNI SITE IS THE ONE PLACE THAT ALL DHARUG PEOPLE CAN PULL UP A CAR ON AND WALK ONTO AND JUST NOW GO. WE CAN ACTUALLY SIT HERE OR PITCH A TENT HERE OR DO SOMETHING HERE AND NOT BE HUNTED OFF AND WE CAN SPEND TIME HEALING OR REMINISCING OR WHATEVER IT IS WE NEED TO DO.."

- DSMG Director

On a more personal level, DSMG also sees the community's vision as providing a space for belonging and being as well as to connect the past, present and future.

Thinking about the future, including future generations of Dharug children, is a key factor that keeps DSMG focused on their dream.

"I THINK OUR VISION TOO IS TO PROVIDE SIMPLY A SPACE THAT INCORPORATES PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE, THAT RESPECTS PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE, THAT ALLOWS PEOPLE FROM THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE TO HAVE A PLACE AND HAVE A VOICE BEYOND THE PRACTICAL THINGS LIKE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO WORK IN CULTURAL SPACES, TO WORK IN ANY SPACE."

- DSMG Director

"I THINK IT'S ALSO THAT IT IS THE VISION FOR THE GREAT-GRANDKIDS AS WELL BECAUSE I THINK THE THING THAT'S REALLY EASY FOR PEOPLE TO OVERLOOK IN OUR OBSESSION WITH THE PRESENT IS THAT WE BECOME THE ANCESTORS THAT PEOPLE REMEMBER."

- DSMG Director

"IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT MY CHILDREN, BUT IT'S ABOUT THEIR CHILDREN AND THEIR CHILDREN AND THEIR CHILDREN AND WHAT ARE WE SETTING UP SO THAT DHARUG PEOPLE IN PERPETUITY ALL THE WAY ALONG."

- DSMG Director

Connection to Community First Development's Story of Change

Community First Development's Story of Change concept aims to communicate how the organisation works and the outcomes the organisation contributes to achieving with communities. Similar to an ecosystem, this concept has a core (self-determination), organisms (the 'outcomes'), and elements that contribute to the ecosystem flourishing (Community First Development's people, approach and governance).



MORNING SMOKE



BLACKTOWN NATIVE INSTITUTION SITE

WHAT DID WE DO TOGETHER?

DSMG first invited Community First Development to work with them in 2019. Since then, we have worked together on five projects, three of which are ongoing. These projects are all key stepping-stones towards the community’s long-term dream.

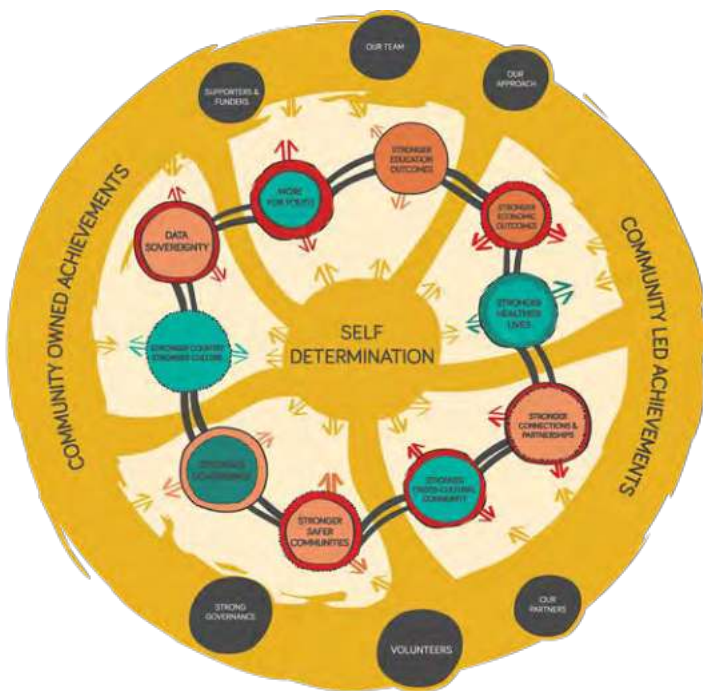


COMMUNITY FIRST DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEER, RUSSELL JAFFE, WITH BOARD DIRECTOR, MICHELLE LOCKE, AT THE WORKSHOP AS PART OF THE FIRST PROJECT IN 2019

Community First Development works with each community to define the community’s ‘dream’ (or ‘long-term goal’) and associated dream indicators, and link these to Community First Development’s Story of Change outcomes. Developing dream indicators can be iterative and may be undertaken after several projects.

DSMG’s journey connects with the Story of Change outcomes of Stronger Country, Stronger Culture, followed by More for Youth.

DSMG first reached out to Renee at Community First Development, former Senior CDO now Regional Manager – Eastern Australia. Renee is a Wiradjuri woman but lives on Dharug Country and has worked at Community First Development for approximately ten years. Prior to this, she worked with the Aboriginal community in Western Sydney for 12 years. Over time, she has built many strong and trusting relationships with people and communities in the area, something Renee sees as a key part of her role previous role as CDO and now Regional Manager – Eastern Australia.



“IF YOU DON’T HAVE TRUST, YOU WILL GET NO INFORMATION. YOU NEED TO HAVE THOSE RELATIONSHIPS TO GET THE BEST OUTCOMES.”

- Renee, Regional Manager — Eastern Australia, Community First Development

Figure 1: Community First Development’s Story of Change concept



Since early 2021, Emma, Senior CDO, has become DSMG’s main point of contact at Community First Development. Emma has worked with Community First Development for 11 years. During this time, she has established strong and trusting relationships with many communities in WA and since 2021, in and around Western Sydney and the Central Coast of NSW where she now lives.

Strategic

“IT TAKES TIME TO BUILD STRONG TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS, I FEEL OUR ACCOUNTABILITY AS CDO’S IS REALLY IMPORTANT, WE NEED TO DEEPLY LISTEN, BE PRESENT, TRANSPARENT AND FOLLOW THROUGH ON WHATEVER WE SAY WE WILL DO.”

- Emma, Senior CDO, Community First Development

Plan; Policy and Procedure Development (Completed)

Renee facilitated a collaborative working approach where DSMG worked together with two skilled Community First Development volunteers, Russell and Susanne, on two projects at the same time. DSMG owned and drove both projects, organising a two-day workshop to bring everyone together to yarn and progress both.

With Russell’s assistance, DSMG created a detailed, two-year strategic plan that provides a clear direction for the organisation as they work towards their dream. With Susanne’s assistance, DSMG reviewed and developed their policies and procedures to ensure good governance and build a strong foundation for future employees and community access to the BNI site. The policies weave in DSMG’s cultural protocol of respectful communication and active participation and will also assist in managing risk as well as other cultural-specific aspects.

Building Fundraising Foundations (On Hold); Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status (Active)

Following on from the strategic planning, DSMG invited Community First Development to work with them on two interconnected projects aimed at laying the foundation for an effective fundraising strategy.

In late 2020, DSMG held a two-day workshop in the Blue Mountains with skilled volunteer, Russell, attending virtually due to COVID-19. The yarning focused on specific constitutional amendments required to support future fundraising initiatives. This led to a second project focused on applying for DGR status. With the assistance of Renee and advice from a Community First Development volunteer,

DSMG has been attempting to seek DGR status but has encountered several hurdles along the way. They are currently working through the complexities associated with seeking DGR status for two special purpose funds – one environmental and one cultural.

DSMG has decided to put the Building Fundraising

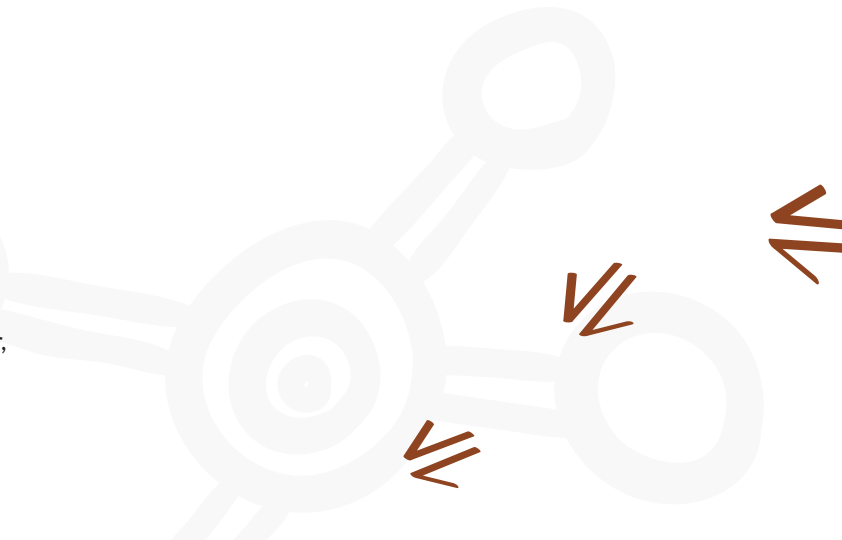
“IT’S LIKE A BUREAUCRATIC PROCESS, WHAT YOU THINK SHOULD BE FAIRLY STRAIGHT FORWARD HAS AN INCREDIBLY CONVOLUTED PATHWAY. AND EVEN WHEN YOU HAVE EXPERT ADVICE, AS WE’VE HAD FROM GILBERT AND TOBIN AND FROM CFD VOLUNTEERS AND SO ON, WHEN YOU WALK THAT PATH, YOU FIND THERE’S HURDLES THAT YOU DIDN’T IMAGINE WERE POSSIBLE THAT ARE REALLY STRAIGHTFORWARD HURDLES, BUT ARE DIFFICULT TO GET OVER. SO, THE FIRST ONE WE FACED WAS THE DEFINITION OF WHAT’S ALLOWED TO BE A DEDUCTIBLE GRANT, A GIFT RECIPIENT.”

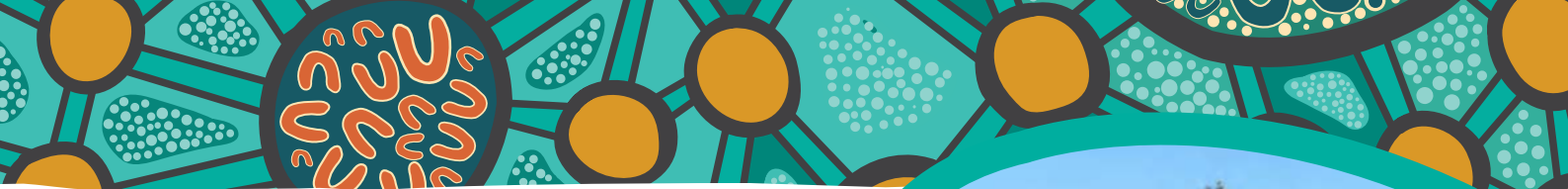
- DSMG Director

Foundations on hold while they seek DGR status.

Board Skills Matrix (Active)

Most recently, Community First Development has been supporting DSMG to complete a skills matrix process so they can continue to maintain strong and effective governance practices and continue thriving as an organisation. Skilled volunteer, Paul, worked with Richie, DSMG Director, to develop a draft matrix that will be reviewed in person with the rest of the board. It is anticipated that the skills matrix will assist the directors to identify any gaps in the current board composition. In turn, it is anticipated that this will support DSMG to undertake a more strategic and targeted approach to filling current vacancies, as well as assist future succession planning. This project has been delayed as the DSMG Board undertakes a period of renewal following changes in board membership in 2022 arising from health issues and changed circumstances.





WHAT DID WE ACHIEVE TOGETHER?

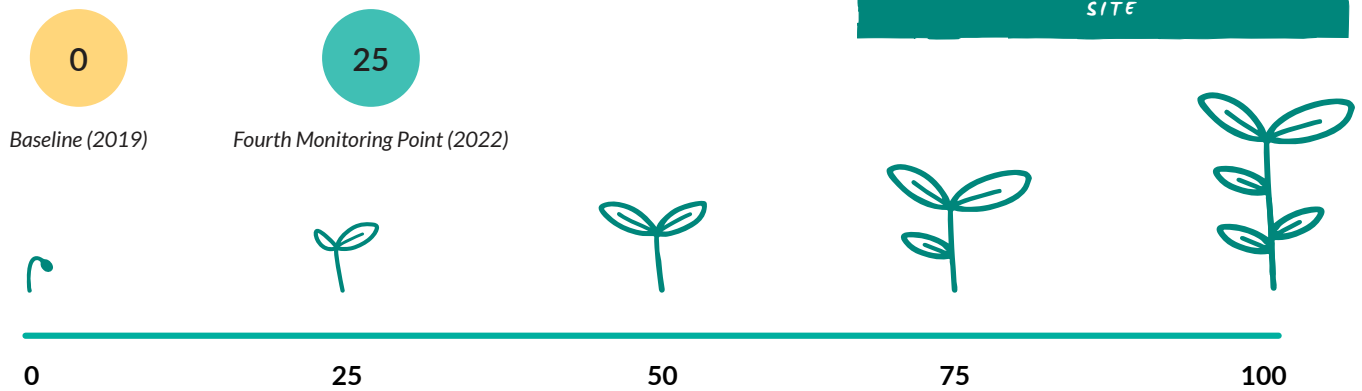
As DSMG is a relatively new organisation, their projects with Community First Development have focused on achieving Dream Indicator: Strong governance practices and foundations are in place.

The Seed to Tree scale below represents the change that has occurred to date against this Dream Indicator. Renee and Emma determined the baseline and most recent monitoring point readings through yarning with DSMG and project observations.



THE BLACKTOWN NATIVE INSTITUTE SITE

Dream Indicator: Strong governance practices and foundations are in place



With Community First Development's support, DSMG has developed a two-year strategic plan, reviewed and developed policies and procedures to ensure good governance, drafted a board skills matrix, and are currently seeking DGR status.

Beyond these projects with Community First Development, DSMG recently updated their Board manual for their new directors, and have been through two iterations of refining their constitution to secure their focus on Culture, Country and Community as the purpose of governance.

The strategic plan and policy and procedure projects have strengthened DSMG's governance practices, placing them in a stronger position as they work towards reaching their dream.

"WE HAD HOPED TO BUILD A STRATEGIC PLAN THAT WOULD GUIDE OUR ACTIONS OVER THE COMING 1-2 YEARS. WE ACHIEVED THAT.

WE ALSO FOUND A CLEARER SENSE OF OUR RISK APPETITE, A STRONGER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR LIMITATIONS AS A TEAM, AND OUR CAPACITY - WHICH LED TO RECRUITMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL BOARD MEMBER AND SOME CAREFUL THINKING OF WHAT SKILLSET IS NEEDED TO FILL OUR FINAL BOARD VACANCY.

WE ALSO FOUND A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPORTANCE FOR EVERY DIRECTOR TO SPEAK THEIR MIND, RAISE ANY CONCERNS AND QUESTION THINGS THEY ARE NOT CLEAR ABOUT OR THAT SEEM RISKY AS PART OF OUR APPROACH TO GOOD GOVERNANCE."

- DSMG Director



A DSMG Director provided the following reflections on the projects DSMG has done to date with Community First Development:

"I THINK THEY'RE ALL INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT BECAUSE DSMG IS A NEW FORM OF ORGANISATION FOR THE COMMUNITY BECAUSE IT'S A NOT-FOR-PROFIT COMPANY. IT REQUIRES A DIFFERENT SKILL SET AND A DIFFERENT PRACTICE THAN PEOPLE HAVE WORKED WITH BEFORE. AND SO I THINK THAT, THAT PROCESS OF BUILDING GOOD GOVERNANCE, SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE, IS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT IN MOVING FROM VISION TO PRACTICE; FROM DREAM TO REALITY.

SO WE AS A GROUP, AS THE DIRECTORS OF THIS NEW BODY, HAVE BEEN ON A MASSIVE LEARNING JOURNEY. CFD SUPPORT IN DOING THAT STRATEGIC WORK OF GETTING OUR HEADS AROUND POLICIES THAT ALLOW US TO EXERCISE GOOD GOVERNANCE, OF SUPPORTING US IN MAKING CONNECTIONS AND HAVING ONGOING CONNECTIONS, A NETWORK OF COLLABORATIVE SUPPORT, THAT'S BEEN INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT TO US."

- DSMG Director

COMMUNITY REFLECTIONS ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION

As part of the Action Research Project with Community First Development, participating communities reflected on the concept of, and approaches to, monitoring and evaluation during Yarning interviews.

When thinking about 'monitoring and evaluation', the following things comes to mind for DSMG:

- an ongoing process, one that involves looking and thinking beyond immediate projects;
- supporting accountability and transparency; and
- an opportunity to self-reflect, learn, grow and serve the wider community better.

"I THINK MONITORING AND EVALUATION IS REALLY ABOUT THIS ONGOING PROCESS OF CHECKING AND CROSS-CHECKING AND IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK, IT'S ACTUALLY AN ONGOING CONVERSATION THAT DRAWS PEOPLE INTO THINKING ABOUT UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO REALLY BIG ISSUES THAT AREN'T JUST ABOUT MANAGING A PROJECT, THEY'RE ABOUT LINKING, THAT NOTION OF LINKING VISION TO PRACTICE."

- DSMG Director

"WE ARE CONSTANTLY RE-EVALUATING OURSELVES, THE BOARD AS WELL, AND OUR PROJECTS, AND THAT PRACTICE OF PUTTING WHAT'S ON PAPER INTO ACTUAL PRACTICE ON THE GROUND WITH COMMUNITY. I THINK OUR BOARD IS REALLY BRAVE. I'M REALLY PROUD OF OUR BOARD FOR THE SIMPLE FACT THAT WE, I'M NOT AFRAID TO SAY WE, COULD HAVE DONE BETTER AND WE'RE NOT AFRAID TO SAY WE KIND OF GOT THAT A LITTLE BIT WRONG, NOT JUST ACKNOWLEDGE IT WITHIN AND MOVE ON. WE ACTUALLY ACKNOWLEDGE IT AND WE ACKNOWLEDGE IT PUBLICLY AND I THINK THAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT FOR THE TRANSPARENCY."

- DSMG Director



COMMUNITY FIRST DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEER, SUSANNE, WITH UNCLE COLIN LOCKE AND DSMG DIRECTORS, AT THE WORKSHOP IN 2019.



“SO, ACTUALLY ACKNOWLEDGING THAT WE DON'T HAVE TO HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS AND WE CAN GO OUTSIDE FOR THAT AND PUT THOSE THINGS INTO PRACTICE AND THEN CONSTANTLY HAVE THAT SYSTEM OF HOW DO YOU THINK WE DID? I THINK IT MAKES US A BETTER BOARD. I THINK IT MAKES US BETTER PEOPLE. AND I THINK IT ALLOWS US TO CONNECT WITH AND SERVE OUR COMMUNITY BETTER WHEN WE DO THAT RATHER THAN BE THAT ORGANISATION THAT DOESN'T TAKE ALL THESE THINGS ON BOARD AND HAS NO ACCOUNTABILITY AND DOESN'T TAKE RESPONSIBILITY.”

- DSMG Director

When thinking about words in language that better describe monitoring and evaluation for Dharug people, the Dharug language word “yuwing” comes to mind for a DSMG Director:

“I THINK IT ALL COMES BACK TO TRUTH. I MEAN, WE HAVE THE WORD YUWING, WHICH MEANS TRUTH, AND I THINK TRUTH HAS TO SIT AT THE FOREFRONT OF EVERYTHING I SAID. I THINK WE HAVE TO BE TRUTHFUL WITH OUR COMMUNITY, TRUTHFUL WITH EACH OTHER, TRUTHFUL TO COUNTRY. I THINK THAT'S AN IMPORTANT ONE.”

Community First Development's approach to monitoring and evaluation with communities

A DSMG Director has found Renee's approach to monitoring and evaluation as being crucial to maintaining momentum on challenging projects and keeping the Board informed of progress, including the reasons why things haven't gone as planned. What stands out is the strong relationship Renee has built with DSMG and the way she has integrated monitoring and evaluation activities into her regular engagement with DSMG.

“I'VE TOUCHED BASE WITH RENEE PRETTY ROUTINELY, PARTICULARLY AROUND THE DGR STUFF. IT'S BEEN INCREDIBLY HELPFUL AND IMPORTANT TO ME IN MAINTAINING THAT PROGRESS OVER WHAT'S TURNED OUT TO BE A TWO AND A HALF YEAR JOURNEY RATHER THAN A SIX MONTH 'YOU HAVE TO GET THE INFORMATION AND FILL OUT THE FORMS' SORT OF PROJECT... THAT TOING AND THROWING WITH RENEE AND THE VOLUNTEERS THAT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED HAS BEEN INCREDIBLY HELPFUL TO ME IN DRIVING THAT AND MAINTAINING PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE TO GET TO IT AND KEEPING THE BOARD INFORMED ABOUT WHY IT'S SO SLOW. YOUR MONITORING AND OUR REPORTING HAS MANAGED TO KEEP US ON TRACK IN ADDRESSING THAT GAP BETWEEN WHAT WE WANTED TO HAPPEN AND WHAT HAS HAPPENED AND ALSO WHAT HASN'T HAPPENED.”

- DSMG Director

WE ARE DRIVEN BY THE NEED OF A BETTER WORLD FOR ALL FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE; TO WORK WITH ALL CULTURES FOR RECOGNITION, RESPECT, AND THE RIGHT TO BE TREATED AND VALUED WITH EQUALITY. WITH OUR PEOPLE. FOR OUR PEOPLE.

COMMUNITY FIRST DEVELOPMENT



DSMG BOARD DIRECTORS WITH COMMUNITY FIRST DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEER, RUSSELL JAFFE, ATTENDING THE 2020 WORKSHOP VIA ZOOM DUE TO COVID-19

On the usefulness of indicators, DSMG sees these as beneficial in linking the immediate projects to DSMG's longer-term goals.

"BUT, I ACTUALLY THINK IF WE TAKE THESE INDICATORS AS AN EXAMPLE, THEN THEY'RE ACTUALLY REALLY HELPFUL BECAUSE THEY MAINTAIN THAT LINK BETWEEN THE LONGER TERM, MEDIUM TERM VISION AND WHY WE ARE DOING THE PARTICULAR WORK ON BUILDING A BOARD SKILLS MATRIX AND A SUCCESSION PLAN AND SO ON. AND I THINK THAT STRATEGIC COHERENCE IS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT IN BUILDING BOARD CAPACITY AND BUILDING SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES."

- DSMG Director

In terms of understanding how Community First Development's monitoring and evaluation processes work with projects, DSMG sees COVID-19 as impacting this. Regardless, DSMG believes that both Renee and Emma have built a strong and trusting relationship with DSMG despite the limited opportunities to yarn face-to-face.

"I RECKON SOME OF THIS WAS DISRUPTED BY COVID REALLY SUBSTANTIALLY. YEAH, THAT OPPORTUNITY TO SIT WITH CFD AS CFD. WE'VE ENDED UP DOING THAT OVER THE PHONE IN MUCH MORE FRAGMENTED WAYS THAN I THINK EITHER YOU OR US WOULD LIKE TO HAVE DONE. BUT I THINK THAT WE HAVE BUILT RELATIONSHIP AND TRUST EVEN DESPITE THAT."

- DSMG Director



WHAT IS THE NEXT STAGE OF THE JOURNEY/DREAM?

DSMG is continuing to pursue DGR status and building the foundations for an effective fundraising strategy and a strong board. This will position DSMG well as the community works towards their dream.

The year 2023 is the bicentenary of the establishment of the BNI site and the fifth anniversary of its return to Dharug care. DSMG are looking forward to this important milestone and the potential opportunities that may arise.

In the longer-term, DSMG hope to make real steps in delivering sustainable programs and a changed presence at the BNI site.


"WE ARE A COMMUNITY THAT SUFFERS ONGOING TRAUMA CONSTANTLY... I THINK THOUGH, IF I COULD THINK OF THE COMMUNITY GENERALLY, I MEAN WE ARE A RESILIENT BUNCH OF SURVIVORS."

- DSMG Director



GATHERING AT BLACKTOWN NATIVE INSTITUTION SITE





“... AT THE HEART OF WHAT WE DO, IS OPERATING IN A WAY THAT SUPPORTS SELF-DETERMINATION SO THAT WE CAN MAKE OUR OWN DECISIONS ON OUR HEALTH, EDUCATION, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES. AND THE CONTINUATION OF OUR CULTURE INCLUDING LANGUAGE.”

STEPHANIE HARVEY,
COMMUNITY FIRST DEVELOPMENT
CEO



ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT OVERVIEW

This story has been co-authored as part of Community First Development's latest Action Research Project. The research explores the effectiveness of Community First Development's approach to measuring long term outcomes and how Community First Development contributes to communities achieving their dreams.

Dreams drive the success of the project, as well as the revitalisation and resurgence strategies that communities are putting in place. Community First Development has learned that the multi-dimensional aspects of the dream narrative cannot be understated — economic, environmental, mob, spiritual, cultural customs, and Country.

Monitoring and Evaluation is an important part of communities' and Community First Development's story. It is a time to reflect and celebrate. It informs us both of where we are and how far we have come with the projects.

Dream indicators connect projects to the community's dream. Dream indicators inform us of where the community's dream journey is at, including the wider and longer-term impact of the projects we do together.

All community dream and project indicators are created through listening, yarning, and collaborating with communities

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Community First Development would like to thank DSMG, Renee Tomkinson, Community First Development Regional Manager – Eastern Region, Emma Mulvaney, Community First Development Senior Community Development Officer and Nicole Lim, Senior Strategic Projects Manager, for their contribution to this case study. We would also like to recognise and acknowledge the valuable support provided by Community First Development volunteers to DSMG. Lastly, we would like to thank DSMG for inviting Community First Development to join them on their journey, for sharing their stories with us, and for their important role in this Action Research Project.



COMMUNITY FIRST DEVELOPMENT

OUR VISION

First Nations' peoples and communities are thriving.

WHO WE ARE

Community First Development is a First Nations' community development and research organisation that creates positive change in and with First Nations' communities.

WHAT WE DO

We undertake social and economic development, and research projects in partnership with First Nations' communities, businesses and people. Communities have control; they name the priorities and choose the design, assets, capabilities and approaches to achieve their vision. We provide tailored support through community partners, skilled staff, trained volunteers, key supporters and service providers.




WE DO THINGS WITH,
NOT TO OR FOR,
OUR PEOPLE.



COMMUNITY FIRST
DEVELOPMENT

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