



Australian Government

Cotton Research and
Development Corporation

FINAL REPORT 2013/2014

Part 1 - Summary Details

Please use your TAB key to complete Parts 1 & 2.

CRDC Project Number: CGA1406

**Project Title: Cotton Communities Health
Empowerment**

Project Commencement Date: 1/01/14 **Project Completion Date:** 30/06/14

Part 2 – Contact Details

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Part 3 – Final Report

Background

This project was identified when Kelly Foran delivered her story at the Dirranbandi Camp draft in 2013. The reaction from attendees was overwhelming and the CGA identified a strong need in the community for the information and services that were being provided. This initiated the planning of a broader project.

The anecdotal feedback from these Dirranbandi community members was prolific with a number of people contacting Kelly to tell their story of dealing with the stress of farming and the resulting mental health issues. These types of stories were corroborated by members of the CGA, indicating the strong need in the Dirranbandi community.

Objectives

- **List the project objectives (from the application) and the extent to which these have been achieved.** Project Activities/Itinerary. *(Outline the activities that are planned and how these activities align CRDC's Strategic Objectives. If travel is involved, provide an itinerary, even if exact dates are not available. If you are attending a conference, please give details.):*

Three Mental and Physical Health Empowerment Days were held. Dirranbandi was held on the 9th of May 2014, St George on the 30th of May 2014 and Mungindi was held on the 13th of June 2014. 172 people attended the 3 days. We had 20 speakers who empowered, encouraged, informed and inspired the participants. Subjects covered were mental health, breast care, community supports, work and life balances, chronic disease, holistic supports and chemist supports. We identified, through engaging with the community, the needs of the community and sourced someone to speak in these areas. These days pulled together Government, Private, Community and Not for Profit organisations through speakers, presenters and stall holders. The morning tea and lunch breaks created time to network and to peruse the stalls and take part in some of the relaxation and health promotion stands. Our speakers, presenters, stands and gift bags with information inserted covered resources such as.

Medicare Local representatives

Queensland Health

Rural community nurses

Local community groups such as CWA, schools, Rotary etc.

Angel Flight, Flying Doctors, Local Doctors and other health services locally

Methods

- 1. Detail the methodology and justify the methodology used. Include any discoveries in methods that may benefit other related projects.**

We contacted and engaged with the Regional Managers from Cotton Australia and CGA Managers in the areas we held the Empowerment days to ensure local cotton growers were invited and their friends and family. We also contacted the local Hospital, health services and business owners from each of the areas. We estimated that around half of the attendees were related to the cotton industry – wives of growers, local cotton businesses or support industries. By engaging with these people we could identify the need in the community and also we could seek out inspirational people and community workers who we could highlight at our days. We then built our days with this information in mind seeking presenters, stall holders, information providers, caterers and also our audience.

To contact each local community we engaged through emails, flyers and local Newspapers and magazines.

We discovered a short fall in the local media as sometimes we had missed the deadlines for these papers and they were only published fortnightly etc.

Outcomes

- 2. Describe how the project's outputs will contribute to the planned outcomes identified in the project application. Describe the planned outcomes achieved to date.**

The project Empowered and informed 174 attendants's who now have the capacity to utilize services and now have a better understanding of and know who to contact. This helps people to be proactive with their health and able to make better informed decisions. This leads to

reduced time away from farms, and the health impacts of seeking help earlier produces a more resilient community.

3. Please report on any:-

- a) Feedback forms used and what the results were we used
Feedback forms and each events form were tailored to suit the presenters. Overall we received 96 forms completed.
- b) The highlights for participants or key learnings achieved
Some of the responses were.
I was so inspired and overwhelmed by this day.
Brilliant – Life changing
Speaker’s fantastic informative
Goose bumps- thanks
I think we need more of these days.
Great choice of speakers
Inspirational organiser
Fantastic day really well done
- c) The number of people participating and any comments on level of participation
174 people participated. Comments given on the forms were for more of these days to be held, very informative, very interesting and inspiring.

Mungindi enriched by our presence. *Just had a quick read – when you talk about the engagement, I would just include some more cotton references.*

iMaybe a guess of how many involved with the industry at large – ie we estimated that around half of the attendees were related to the cotton industry – wives of growers, local cotton businesses or support industries.

Budget

4. Describe how the project’s budget was spent in comparison with the application budget. Outline any changes and provide justification.

We had under budgeted the time taken to organise these events. However we now have set up a proforma that will make any others held easier and less time consuming. We also under budgeted the catering and travel and accommodation expenses. As each town has difference services to offer it was very hard to put a price on the catering until we had an idea of numbers and had sources a caterer that was willing and able to do it for us. However, we were fortunate to find speakers in the towns involved who spoke for no cost and therefore cut costs on speaker fees and speaker travel and accommodation. We estimated our expenses \$15,800 and they ended up being over \$17,300.

Conclusion

5. Provide an assessment of the likely impact of the results and conclusions of the research project for the cotton industry. What are the take home messages?

If the 174 people who attended were to tell 2 people each of the services that can help and support the community then we have helped over 500 people.

500 people would be empowered to be proactive with their health. These people will therefore spend less time away from jobs, farms and community. One of our aims is to try

to better utilise local health services by giving people a better understanding of what is available.

Extension Opportunities

6. Detail a plan for the activities or other steps that may be taken:

(a) To tell other CGAs/growers/regions about your project.

We would like to have our report published in any publications that would help and support other CGA Valleys and regions. We have used this project in the nomination of the Telstra Business Women's Awards and also The Regional Achievement Awards. We now have a terrific template which could be rolled out in these areas and these wonderful days would support more people.

(b) To keep in touch with participants.

Each attendant left a contact email so we can keep in touch. We also produce a Newsletter and will engage with these people about other services and what we are doing. All participants also took home our contact details and the details of the other speakers in our gift bags.

(c) For future projects.

We would love to hold more of these terrific days to help other communities to be proactive with their health. We are a not for profit organisation with limited funding. These days inform and empower people to be proactive and support everyone in their health journeys. Friendly Faces Helping Hands Foundation does not gain anything financial from these days. We just provide hard work and pull all these terrific services together so that we can help more people.