

# STORYTELLING TOOLKIT

**for empowering culturally & linguistically  
diverse communities in disasters**



## Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which our research has taken place. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and to Elders past and present. The research team sincerely acknowledges Cairns Regional Council and the staff at Centacare FNQ Multicultural Services who have made this research project possible. We thank them for their support, time, resources and expertise in improving disaster preparedness and resilience for culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Far North Queensland. We also give our thanks and gratitude to the Cultural Ambassadors and participants from diverse cultural communities, organisations and government departments who generously gave the project their time and insights.

This research project received assistance provided by the Australian and Queensland Governments under the Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (ID: QUT.PR15.2122.RFA). The views expressed herein are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Australian Government, Queensland Government, or the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.

## Citation

Hou, J.Z., Osman, K., Hearn, G. & Johnston, K. (2025). *Storytelling toolkit for empowering culturally and linguistically diverse communities in disasters*. Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5204/rep.eprints.256732>

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Please visit <https://qut.to/eyrte> or scan the QR Code.



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**Australian Government**



**Queensland  
Government**

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# Why are stories important?

Stories are the shared language of humanity, passed down through generations. In today's increasingly divided and polarised world, storytelling is an even more important and powerful tool to foster social inclusion and community engagement. For culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, stories are at the heart of their identity. Much like music, storytelling transcends language barriers and builds bridges across diverse cultures.

In the face of more frequent and intense natural hazards, storytelling can make disaster risk communication more informed, accessible, and relatable. More than that, it empowers marginalised voices, enabling CALD communities to share lived experiences, advocate for their needs, and take an active role in resilience-building and decision-making. Through the vibrant exchange of stories and narratives, emergency management sectors and CALD communities can establish a meaningful two-way dialogue.



**The [official] information provided feels too vague, lacking a personal connection for me. In contrast, the information on Facebook includes many real stories and experiences, which I find more down-to-earth.**

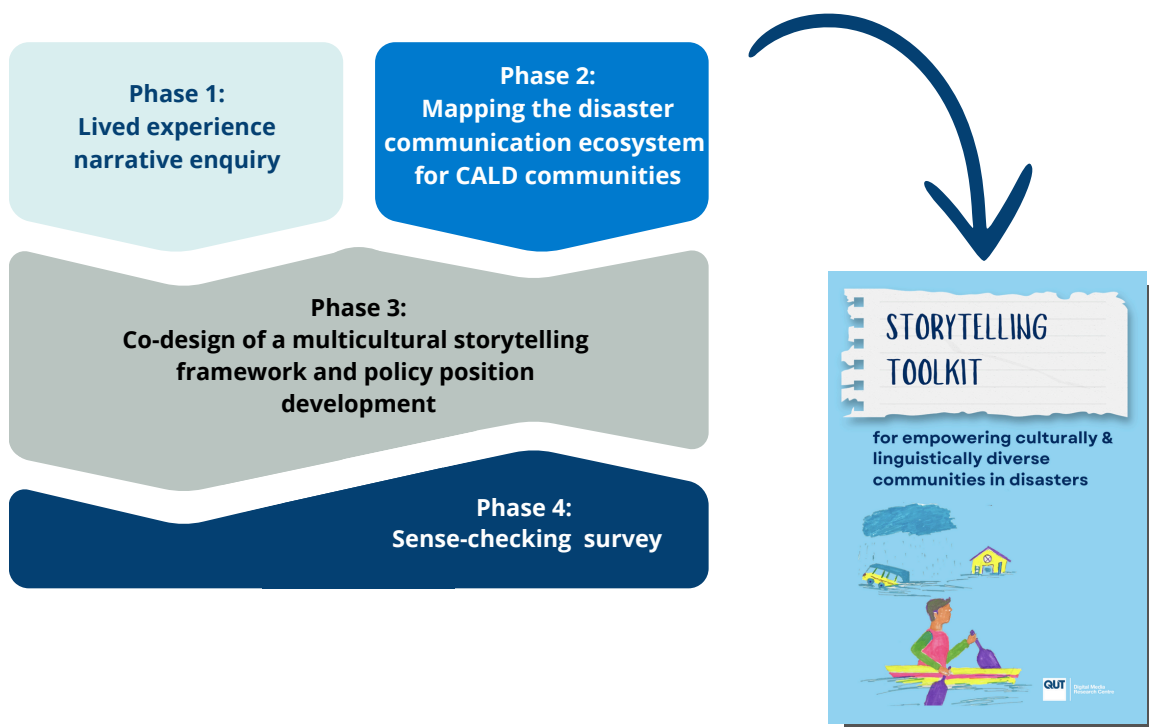
**(Participant, Chinese)**



# Background

This toolkit was developed from a Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (QRRRF) [project](#) in Cairns, which aimed to create culturally relevant communication resources, primarily through a storytelling lens, to help CALD communities build resilience to disasters. Using a multi-method approach that involved individual storytelling, resource mapping, co-design/co-production workshops, and sense-checking surveys, we gathered insights from both emergency management practitioners and CALD community members.

Our in-depth engagement with seven cultural groups—Congolese, Bhutanese, Colombian, Japanese, Chinese, Indonesian, and Filipino—was made possible through partnerships with multiple local organisations, including Cairns Regional Council, Centacare FNQ Multicultural Services, Trinity Bay State High School, Cairns and Regional Multicultural Association, Study Cairns, and Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland, among others. The study involved over 150 CALD community members, alongside 18 emergency management practitioners representing 12 organisations. All participants and collaborators provided valuable and creative insights into the development of the toolkit.



# Who is the toolkit for?

This toolkit offers a suite of purpose-built tools designed to enhance communication with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. It supports efforts to amplify disaster risk awareness, encourage preparedness actions, foster self-resilience, and promote collaborative decision-making between emergency management sectors and diverse communities. Serving as a comprehensive guide, it supports the shared responsibilities of disaster risk reduction (DRR) among:

- **Emergency management authorities** – including governments at all levels, public sector agencies, and local councils.
- **Community support services** – including non-government organisations, humanitarian agencies, multicultural associations/societies, and grassroot CALD groups.

The toolkit adopts an all-hazards inclusive, multi-channel, and multi-dimensional communication approach tailored to the diverse needs of multicultural communities and individual members in various contexts. While cultural differences are crucial for inclusive communication, it is equally important to acknowledge shared humanity—the fundamental yet evolving human needs, rights, and well-being (Hou et al., 2025) that unite individuals in emergencies, regardless of backgrounds. Therefore, many of the strategies, tools, and plans presented here are also applicable to broader non-CALD communities.

# Why is the toolkit needed?

CALD communities are both vulnerable and resilient to natural hazards given the systemic challenges they are facing (e.g., language barriers, cultural integration) and the adaptive capabilities they have developed through their life journeys and migrating to Australia. In recent years, cross-sectoral stakeholders have made efforts to develop best-practice support for CALD communities. However, the ability to effectively communicate complex disaster science, encourage appropriate response behaviours, and integrate cultural knowledge into local emergency plans varies widely.

While CALD communities possess valuable cultural knowledge that can strengthen resilience-building efforts, their perspectives have yet to be actively heard and meaningfully incorporated into national disaster risk reduction (DRR) frameworks. More than a toolkit for simply ‘disseminating’ risk information, it serves as a guide to ‘integrate’ the generative power of CALD communities’ cultural heritage and lived experiences into disaster risk communication and collaborative resilience-building.





# What is the toolkit?

This toolkit provides a set of practical, storytelling-driven, and culturally responsive tools designed to facilitate dynamic dialogue between emergency management sectors and CALD communities, fostering collaborative disaster resilience. Structured into four key components, the toolkit guides the strategic use of disaster storytelling for:

- **Communication** – Delivering key messages effectively.
- **Education** – Designing culturally engaging programs.
- **Listening** – Amplifying diverse voices and lived experiences.
- **Advocacy** – Building collective power for meaningful changes.

Each function of the toolkit (i.e., communication, education, listening, advocacy) focuses on the most pressing challenges identified through the research project (see the [Project Report](#)), pairing them with creative storytelling solutions that progress engagement from awareness-raising and knowledge-building to community participation and policy influence.



# How to use this toolkit

The toolkit is hosted on the [project website](#), alongside the ‘Creative Gallery’, which showcases real-world applications of participatory storytelling tools such as co-creative workshops, story circles, and storyboard developed in collaboration with CALD communities. These storytelling activities have empowered individuals to reimagine disaster resilience by blending cultural knowledge with creative expression, enabling both a sense of agency and therapeutic benefits. Additionally, the outcomes generated by this toolkit will offer valuable insights for emergency management authorities and policymakers, enhancing inclusive disaster risk communication and support system development.

## Considerations

To maximise impact, consider the following when using these disaster storytelling tools:

**Customisation** – Adapt tools to the specific linguistic, cultural, and experiential backgrounds of CALD communities, considering their past lived experiences and current realities in Australia.

**Accessibility** – Make storytelling a ‘low-threshold’ communication pathway by using different types of storytelling (e.g., oral account, anecdote, photograph, artwork). For storytelling production, ensure content is available in audio, visual, and written formats to accommodate different literacy levels across CALD communities.

**Community Involvement** – Engage community organisation leaders, cultural figures, and influencers in storytelling efforts for credibility and trust. Use interactive storytelling techniques, such as participatory group storytelling, to encourage broader community participation.

**Crowdsourcing** – Actively invite story entries/contributions and cultural artefacts from CALD communities to honour their lived experiences. This fosters sustainable storytelling to continuously inform policy and investment decisions with authentic, community-driven narratives.

**The toolkit is divided into sections; however, it is not intended to be used in a linear way. Use it as you want and as you need.**

# Toolkit Rationale

The toolkit starts with background research that lays a foundation for using the four functions of storytelling (i.e., communication, education, listening, advocacy) effectively, along with impact evaluation methods and recommendations to ensure its continued relevance for CALD communities.



# SECTION 1: RESEARCH

Know your community

# The Audience Guide Tool

## Purpose

This tool helps you identify and understand your community audience and map existing resources to effectively share stories with them.

## Components

Community Profile Builder, Ecosystem Map, Resource Audit

### Step 1.

Create a Community Profile.

### Step 2.

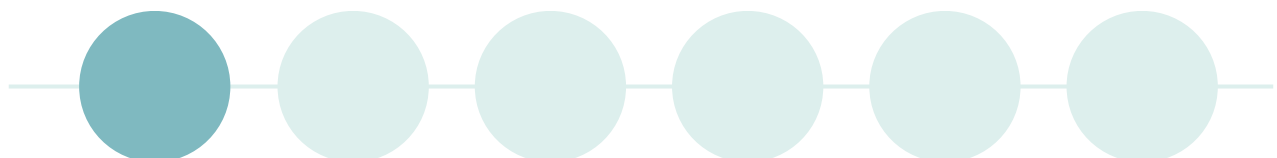
Identify different CALD groups and organisations within your community. Create an ecosystem map.

### Step 3.

Identify CALD groups of people (audiences) who may be more vulnerable in times of crisis. For example, older people, people who live alone, single mothers with young children, people living with disabilities, newly arrived people (e.g., refugees), people with low literacy, people with limited access to digital communication channels.

### Step 4.

Think about what you will need to create and share stories with targeted communities.



# Community Profile Builder

The community profile builder provides a guide for sourcing information and statistics to understand your audiences. The level of detail required depends on your purpose.

## People

- What is the total population?
- What is the median age? How many are people in each age bracket?
- How many people live with a disability?
- How many people have long-term health conditions?
- What percentage of the population is in the labour force?
- What religion are people?
- What SEIFA Index quintile is your community?
- Approximately how many people live in community housing, social housing, or housing provided by a housing authority?
- What is the median household income?

## Cultural & Linguistic Diversity

- What percentage of the population in your community speak a language other than English at home?
- How many people are born overseas?
- How many people come from a non-English speaking background (NESB)?
- What are the countries of birth of people born in NESB countries? How many people were born in each country?
- Are there significant numbers of tourists in your community?
- Are there international students living in your community?
- Are there working holidaymakers or seasonal workers living in your community?
- What countries do they come from?

## Information Source

# Places

- Where do CALD communities gather? How do they connect?
- Is your community geographically isolated? Where do people go to access services?
- What public transport is there? Are there any areas not accessible by public transport?



## Legend

-  [dbr.abs.gov.au](http://dbr.abs.gov.au)
-  [statistics.qgso.qld.gov.au/qld-regional-profiles](http://statistics.qgso.qld.gov.au/qld-regional-profiles)
-  [www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/temporary-visa-holders-australia/latest-release](http://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/temporary-visa-holders-australia/latest-release)
-  [www.qld.gov.au/community/your-home-community/groups-in-your-community/Neighbourhood-centres](http://www.qld.gov.au/community/your-home-community/groups-in-your-community/Neighbourhood-centres)
-  [migration.qld.gov.au/about-queensland/cities-and-regions](http://migration.qld.gov.au/about-queensland/cities-and-regions)
-  [www.qld.gov.au/transport/public/transport](http://www.qld.gov.au/transport/public/transport)



# Ecosystem Map

## Outreach and influence ecosystem

It is useful to consider all organisations that respond during disasters and those that provide ongoing support to different CALD communities. These may include:

- Community hubs
- Cultural associations
- Councils
- Police
- Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)
- Consulates
- Migrant or refugee support services
- Local multicultural groups and networks
- Tour groups/tourism operators
- Accommodation providers



**Are any of these places also evacuation centres?**

**What is public transport like to these centres?**

Use the websites below to help you complete the ecosystem map:

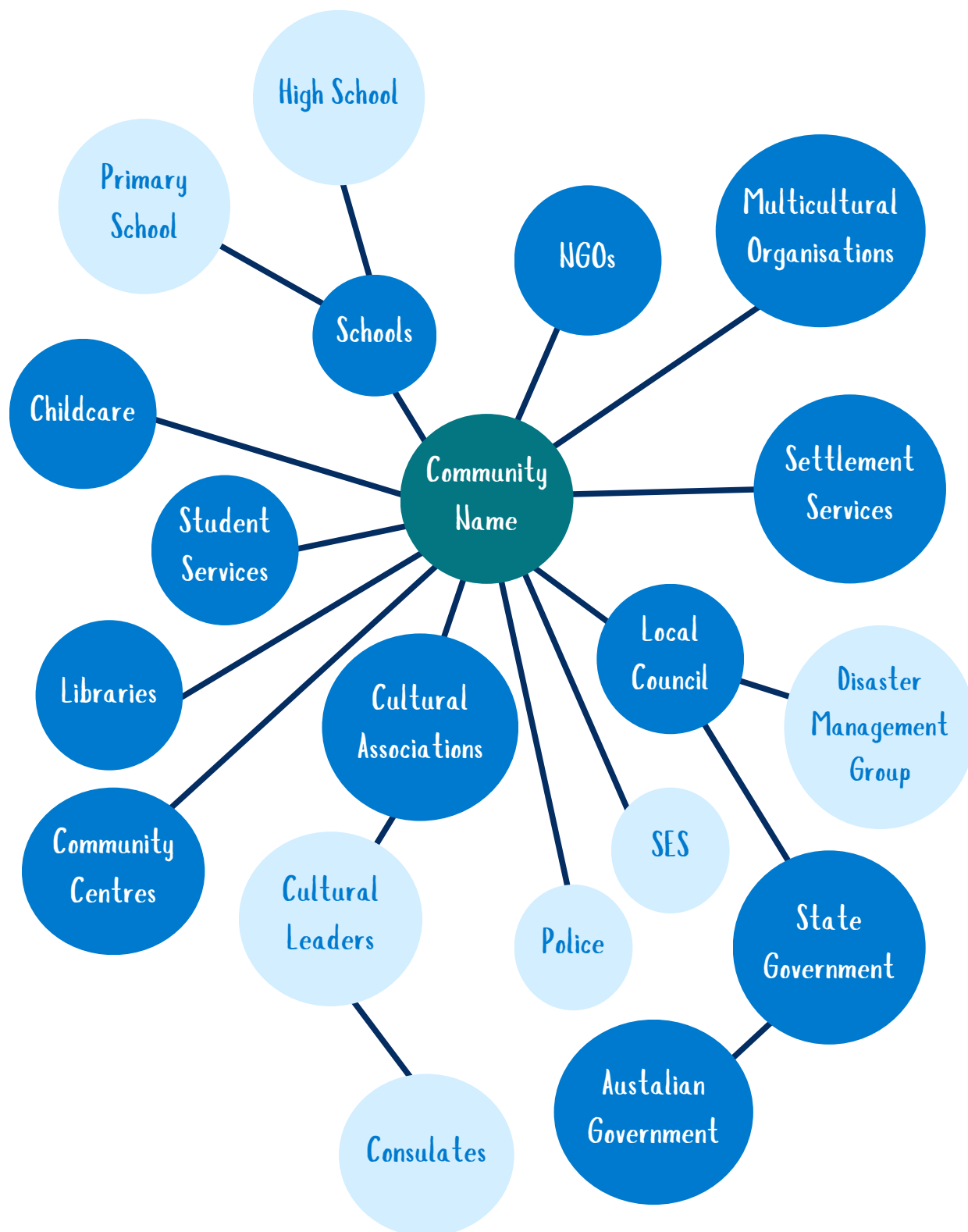
<https://www.qld.gov.au/community/disasters-emergencies/disasters/resources-translations/regional-support-brochures>

[askizzy.org.au](http://askizzy.org.au)



## Example: Ecosystem Map

An ecosystem map is a convenient visual representation of stakeholders, which can be useful for communicating with CALD communities or emergency planning.



(Source: Created based on the project case study in Cairns)

# Resource Audit

It is important for organisations to be aware of the staffing, financial, and other resources available to support CALD communities in disaster preparedness and recovery.

For Cultural Associations	
Resources	Details
Do you have dedicated people who create communication resources?	Names, types of communication they create (e.g. social media posts, flyers, emails)
Do you have people who are responsible for translating disaster communications from English?	Names, languages spoken
Do you have someone who is responsible for communicating with other local organisations?	Name, association role
Do you have anyone with content creation skills?	Name, skills (e.g. graphic design, making videos and music)
Do you have people in your association who are good at public speaking and training others?	Name, skills, professional role
Do you have access to cameras, voice recorders, digital devices like iPads and laptops?	Names, list of devices
Do you have access to meeting rooms and office supplies?	Locations, types of supplies, budget
Do you have a person dedicated to coordinating disaster communication with your community?	Name, association role, professional role (if applicable)

## For Organisations

Resource	Details
Do you have culturally and linguistically diverse staff?	Cultural backgrounds, number of staff, names, organisational role
Do you have existing connections with different cultural communities?	Cultural communities, names, meeting frequency
Do you have a communications team?	Number of staff, names, role
Do you have staff responsible for disaster communication with CALD communities?	Number of staff, names, role
Do you have a remit and/or a budget for disaster communication with CALD communities?	Policy, budget amount

### Example

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community Data – Metro North Hospital and Health Service</b>
<b>Description:</b>	Report that presents data on CALD communities for needs identification and planning.
<b>URL:</b>	<a href="https://www.refugeehealthnetworkqld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Metro-North-cald-data.pdf">https://www.refugeehealthnetworkqld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Metro-North-cald-data.pdf</a>

## SECTION 2: COMMUNICATION

### Planning with a Purpose

# Communication Planning Tool

## Purpose

This tool helps you develop purpose-driven, culturally resonant stories that effectively communicate key actionable messages.

## Components

Message Maker, Checklist, Testimonies

### Step 1.

Identify your purpose.

### Step 2.

Using the research you did in Section 1, identify your audience.

### Step 3.

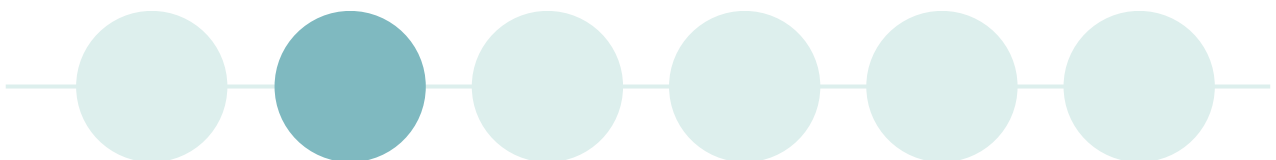
Identify the genre that best fits with your audience.

### Step 4.

Identify the channels that align with both your audience and genre.

### Step 5.

Once you have created your message or story, come back to make sure it still aligns with Steps 1-4 and use the checklist.



# Mix'n'Match Message Maker

		Purpose					
Purpose	Identify your goal	Understand a disaster risk	Understand causes and outcomes	Cope with uncertainty	Be physically prepared for disasters	Build resilience	
	Identify your key message	You can take simple but life-saving actions	Explain a sequence of weather events	Support services are here to help	Have a disaster kit ready to go at all times	How to access mental health support	
					Create a disaster preparation checklist	How to access government services and support	
						Create community networks	
	What is the call to action?	Visit websites and read information	Keep track of warnings on BOM	Identify how to contact support services	Create a disaster kit	Join community group	
	Audience	Identify the cultural community you are targeting	Cultural Backgrounds	Languages Spoken	Literacy Levels	Communication channels used	Religion
			Traditions	Rituals & Festivals			
		Identify a sub-group (if applicable)	Older people	People living with a disability	Families	New arrivals	People who live alone

## Genre

Identify the storytelling genre that aligns with your audience above

Storytelling techniques

Oral History

Life Story

Testimony

Popular Science

Photovoice

Auto/biography

Personal Account

Edutainment

The Hero's Journey

Show, Don't Tell

Compare & Contrast

First-Person Perspective

Recurring Motifs

## Channels & Format

Identify ways you might connect with your audience

In-person

Digital

Mass Media

Cultural festival

Social media

Radio

Training workshop

Website

TV

School event

App

Newspaper

What type of storytelling will you use?

Oral

Written

Visual

Digital

Presentation

Brochure

Comic & Animation

Instagram Reel

Radio Interview

Letter

Flyer

YouTube video

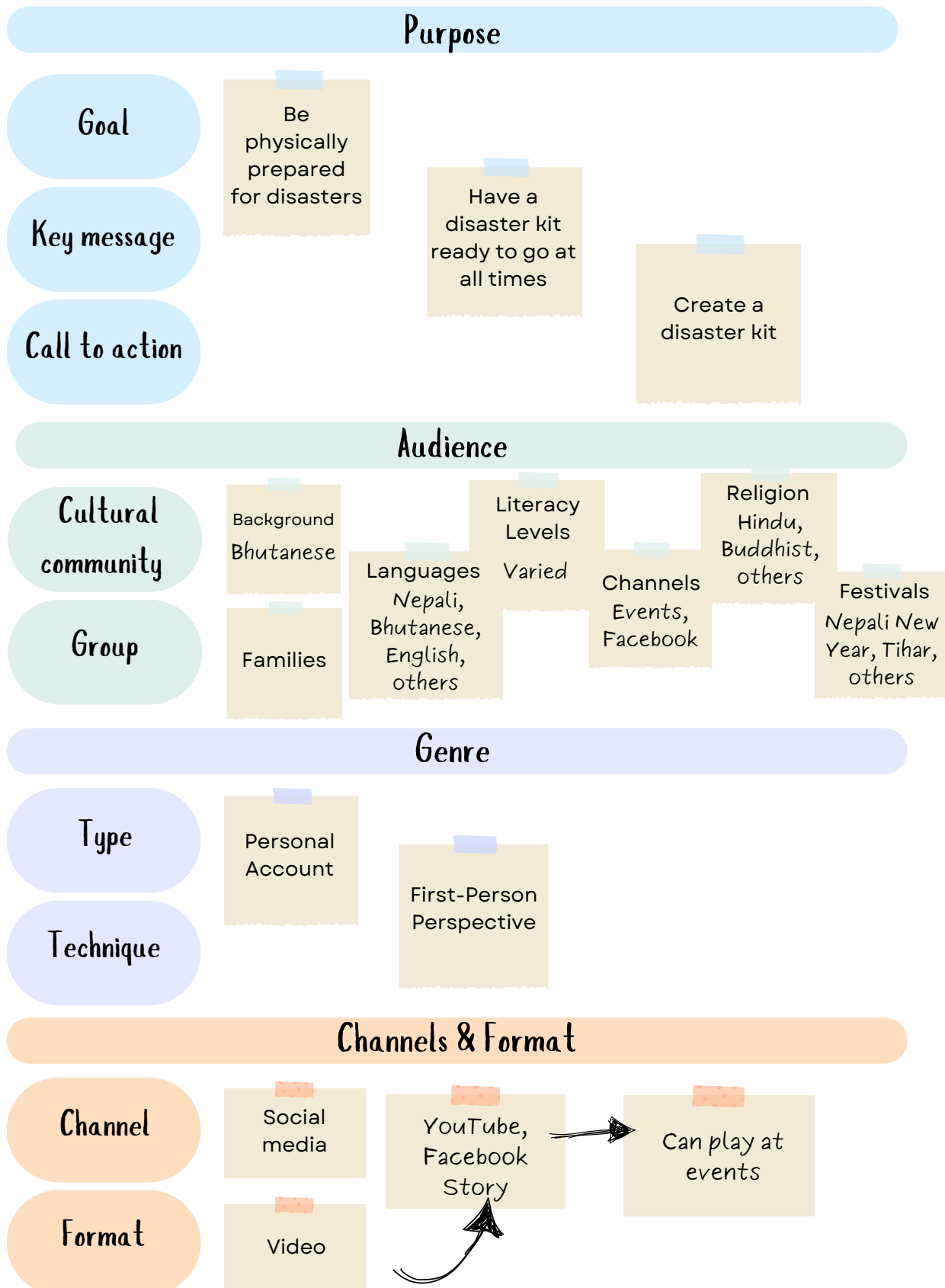
Podcast

Groupchat

Infographic

Digital storytelling

# Demonstration: How to use the Maker







## Checklist

The purpose of the checklist is to ensure the key messaging in your story is clear, relatable, and effective.

☐

Is the risk topic relevant to your community?

☐

Is the material easy to understand and readable?

☐

How could the message be made clearer?

☐

How friendly and respectful is the tone?

☐

Have you used plain English?

☐

Have you used culturally relevant images, sayings, and examples?

☐

Have you used multi-format communication?

☐

Have you used culture-specific storytelling. For example a storybook, music, dance, animation, comics?

# Testimonies: The power of storytelling



**“But it’s very hard for people - I don’t know about other communities, but in my community, if you do not break things down, if you do not give examples, if those examples are not given by the source person, then it’s very hard for people to understand.”**  
**(Participant, Bhutanese)**

**“The text message was a little confusing—just saying ‘water coming’. I’d prefer it to mention the specific area first, like the suburb or street. If it’s for the whole Cairns region, then say ‘All Cairns region’, or specify ‘Bentley Park’ or ‘Southside’, or something like that. Using a map with major roads and shopping centres would be really helpful, because everyone knows where the shopping centres are, more so than rivers or street names.”** (Participant, Japanese)



## Example

<b>Title:</b>	Communication during Disaster Recovery
<b>Description:</b>	This guide provides practical guidance for effective communication in large- to small-scale recovery contexts.
<b>URL:</b>	<a href="https://www.gfdrr.org/sites/default/files/publication/Communications_Sector_Guidance_Note_0.pdf">https://www.gfdrr.org/sites/default/files/publication/Communications_Sector_Guidance_Note_0.pdf</a>

## SECTION 3: EDUCATION

Co-learn with your community

# Community Co-design Tool

## **Purpose**

This tool helps you integrate diverse cultural values and traditions of the community you are engaging with into the development of disaster educational resources, making scientific instructions more accessible and easier to follow.

## **Components**

Cultural Compass, Education Planner, Image Library Builder, Image Inventory and Checklist

### **Step 1.**

Use the compass to map out cultural considerations, such as food preferences, and the time of day or year when you hold the educative sessions.

### **Step 2.**

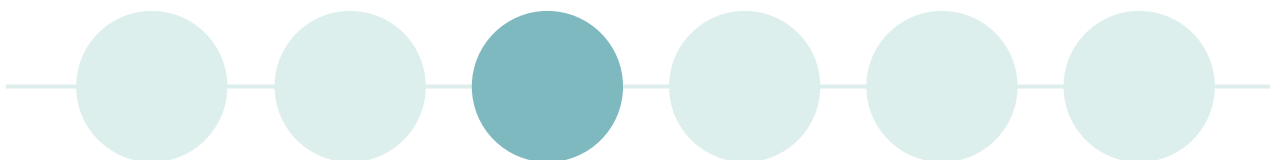
Research cultural histories and folklore, and/or how religious beliefs may affect participants' attitudes to disaster.

### **Step 3.**

Talk with cultural leaders to get an idea of the participants' backgrounds and the stories they may be bringing with them, and make sure that any materials you produce for the workshops use culturally appropriate languages and images.

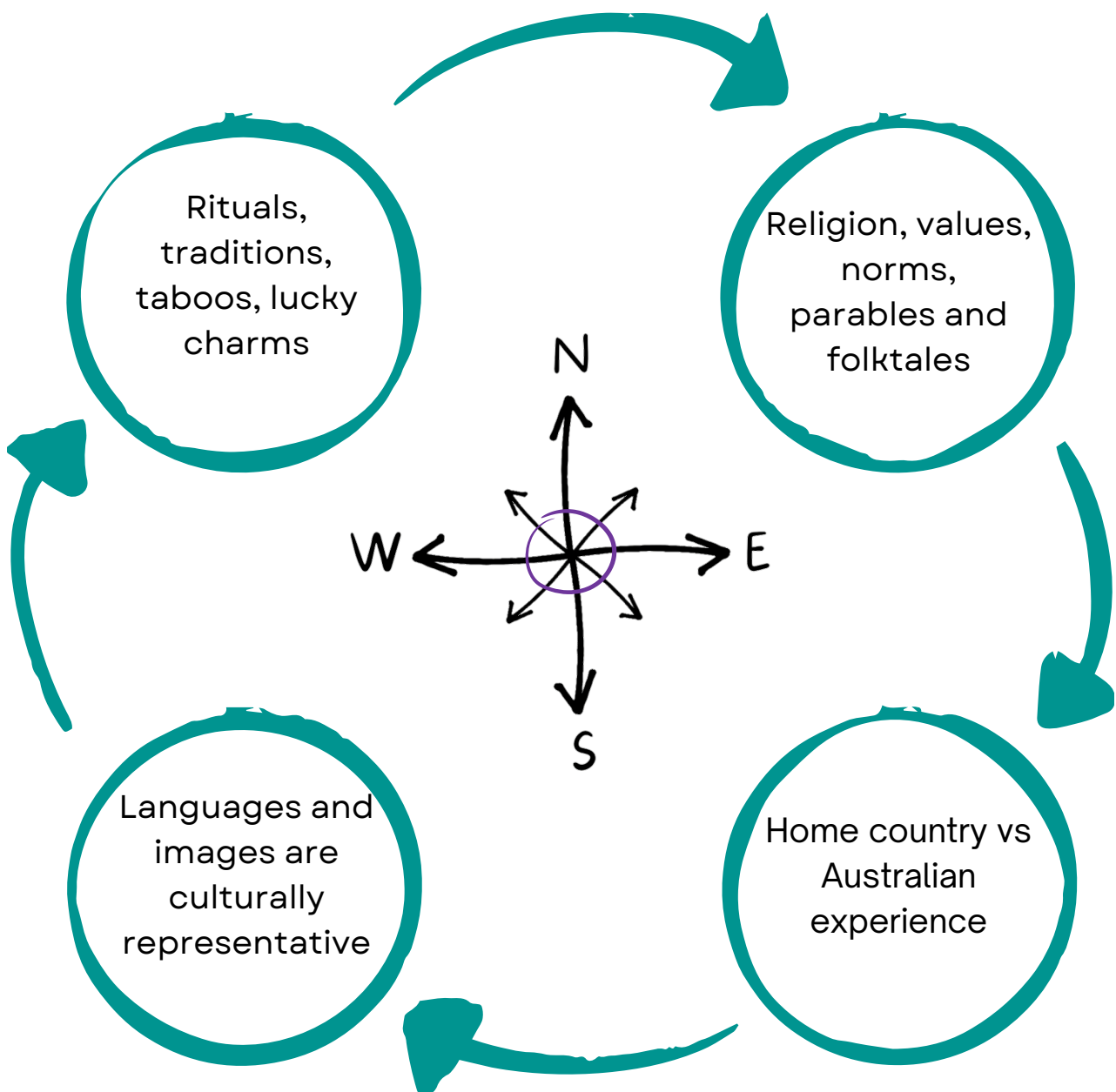
### **Step 4.**

Take photos and videos at the workshop, or encourage participants to bring along their own images to share and use.



# Cultural Compass

This visual representation highlights key cultural dimensions to consider when co-designing with CALD communities. These dimensions offer powerful ways to embed CALD communities' cultural identities in emergency narrative-building.



# Education Planner

These are important questions to consider when co-designing educational initiatives.

Considerations	
CULTURAL EXPERTISE	Have you included one or more community members in the design of the education program?
CULTURAL CONTEXT	Have you used the Cultural Compass to map cultural considerations for the program?
ACCESSIBILITY	Are the learning resources available to all members of the community? Will you have to design resources for different formats and channels? Is the language simple?
DISASTER EXPERTISE	Have you engaged members of the community with expertise in disaster preparedness and recovery in the design of learning resources? How will they contribute to the education program?
LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES	What opportunities are there for the community to develop their own skills and build capacity? What knowledge do they bring from their own disaster experiences?
LEARNING OUTCOMES	Do the education resources and programs empower the community and improve their disaster resilience? Can they leverage their own cultural knowledge for improved disaster resilience?

# Image Library Builder

The tool components below will help you:

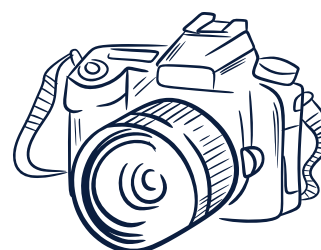
1. Source images
2. Ensure you have the correct permissions to use the images, and
3. Store the images for easy future use

Source	Photographs	There are many free image libraries online. A good place to look is library and museum websites. There are also online platforms that provide free images for non-commercial use.
	Infographics, flow-charts, symbols & maps	You can search the image libraries mentioned above, or you can use graphic design software to create your own. There are many free and easy-to-use graphic design platforms online.
Permissions	Copyright	You may need to attribute the image you use, if it is not your own. This means a short line of text giving credit to the creator of the image. This information is normally attached to the photograph.
	Image Release	In Australia, you do not legally need to have an image release form to photograph people at public events. However, if the person is identifiable and you will be using the image in future publications, it is a nice idea to get consent. If you are looking to photograph people to build up your image library, you can use a simple consent form.
Storage	Image Details	It can help to have an 'Image Inventory' (see below) that stores the details of the photos you have for later use. The suggested template below may help you organise your images, ensure you have permissions and ensure that you attribute the creator correctly.

# Image Inventory

This is a guide for image management and storage for easy future use from different sources.

<b>File Name</b>	Make it descriptive
<b>File Location</b>	This could be a location on your own computer or a URL.
<b>Source</b>	For example, own image/from a library/photograph from community members
<b>Copyright</b>	For example, Creative Commons license such as CC-BY-NC or CC-BY
<b>Attribution</b>	What credit do you need to give the image creator?
<b>Image Release</b>	Yes/No/Not needed
<b>Description</b>	A few words about the image
<b>Tags</b>	You may choose to add tags so you can sort images for later use. For example, cyclone, recovery centre, floods.







## Checklist

☐

Are you using your own, a freely licensed image, or one you have permission to use?

☐

Have you licensed the images you have created? For more information visit [creativecommons.org](https://creativecommons.org).

☐

If it is your own photo, do you have permission from any people in the photo to use their images?

☐

Do your images reflect the group of people you are communicating with?

☐

Do you have alternate text for the image for people using screen readers?

### Example

**Title:**

**Learning from Intercultural Storytelling (LISTEN)**

**Description:**

The LISTEN project uses storytelling techniques as an educational strategy in adult learning by enhancing the key competences and improving the language skills of adult learners.

**URL:**

<https://listen.bupnet.eu/>

## SECTION 4: LISTENING

Elevate diverse voices

# Participatory Storytelling Tool

## **Purpose**

This tool offers a guide for creating a platform or space for community-based participatory storytelling, where everyone can share experiences and learn from each other.

## **Components**

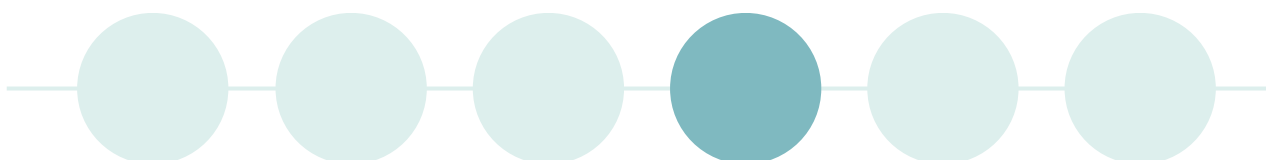
Community Storytelling, Resilience Storyboard

### **Step 1.**

Identify a format and activities for a community workshop.

### **Step 2.**

Use a storyboard, or any other tools to co-create stories with participants.



# Community Storytelling

This tool component outlines some different approaches you can take to structure storytelling activities with your community.

You may be working with different cultural groups, which means different communities can share with and learn from each other, or you may be working with your own, or one cultural community to develop a rich targeted story.

## Story Circles & Sharing Sessions

Facilitated sessions where community members can share their experiences and learn from each other.

## Photovoice Projects

Encouraging community members to document and share their disaster experiences through photos and videos.

## Scenarios and Role Playing

For example, “What I Wasn’t Expecting About the Disaster”, encourage participants to think about what they wish they had known beforehand

## Example

**Title:**

**Connecting communities: Improving Digital Inclusion in Disaster-Prone Communities**

**Description:**

This resource includes stories from people about their disaster experiences, along with a playback of running community workshops.

**URL:**

[https://www.infoxchange.org/sites/default/files/connecting\\_communities\\_-\\_improving\\_digital\\_inclusion\\_in\\_disaster-prone\\_communities\\_report.pdf](https://www.infoxchange.org/sites/default/files/connecting_communities_-_improving_digital_inclusion_in_disaster-prone_communities_report.pdf)

# Resilience Storyboard

This is a template for CALD members to create and share resilience stories in groups. Use the storyboard to sketch out all the elements of the story in sequence. It can be used in community listening or co-design workshops.

Disaster: _____		Date: _____
<b>Before</b>		
1	2	3
Daily Life	Preparedness	Warnings
<b>During</b>		
4	5	6
Key Events	Emotions	Actions taken
<b>After</b>		
7	8	9
Recovery journey	Lessons	Community Support

## SECTION 5: ADVOCACY

Drive changes from the  
bottom-up

# Advocacy Narrative Tool

## Purpose

This tool helps community leaders and social support services (e.g., multicultural organisations) leverage the power of collective storytelling to advocate for the interests of CALD communities and drive meaningful, bottom-up changes.

## Components

Advocacy Story Template, Coalition Builder, Community Mobiliser.

### Step 1.

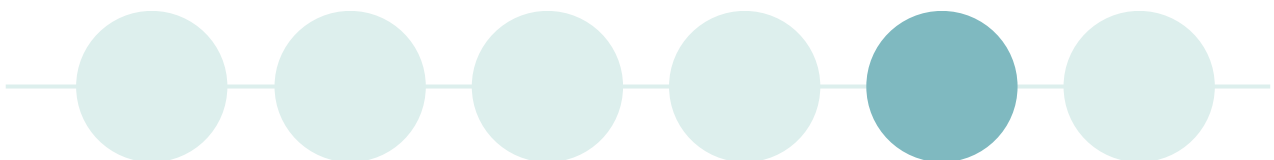
Use the Advocacy Story Template to create policy briefs, letters, and petitions that highlight the key issues impacting CALD communities during disasters. The story can then be used in a letter, policy brief, or petition to make the case for equitable disaster responses.

### Step 2.

Build coalitions with other advocacy groups, NGOs, and policymakers to amplify the impact of CALD communities' voices. Highlight ways to collaborate on disaster preparedness and policy change.

### Step 3.

Organise community forums, town halls, or online webinars to discuss disaster equity and justice and build collective power. These platforms should highlight the importance of including CALD communities in decision-making and ensure their needs are met during emergencies.



# Advocacy Story Template

This template is useful to design advocacy communication materials, for example, letters, posters, and mission statements to influence stakeholders and decision-makers.

<b>Title</b>	Keep the title simple and descriptive.
<b>Key issue affecting CALD Communities during disasters</b> Clearly outline the issues such as the lack of simple visual information, or transport in evacuation	
<b>Purpose of the letter/petition/policy brief</b> Be clear and direct.	
<b>Background to the issue</b> Explain the issue and current situation.	
<b>Describe an example of the issue</b> Use detail and quotes.	
<b>Describe the impact this example had on individuals, families &amp; the community</b> Provide examples of how it has affected people	
<b>Recommendations</b> Provide a call to action	



# Coalition Builder

This is a visual illustration of the key elements of forming a group of people who will advocate for the changes to an issue that affects them or their communities.

## Unifying Issue

What is the issue you are building a coalition to address?

## Membership

Who will be part of the coalition?  
Refer to your ecosystem map

## Goals

What are the values, mission, and goals of your coalition?

## Resources

What do you need to achieve your goals?

## Leadership

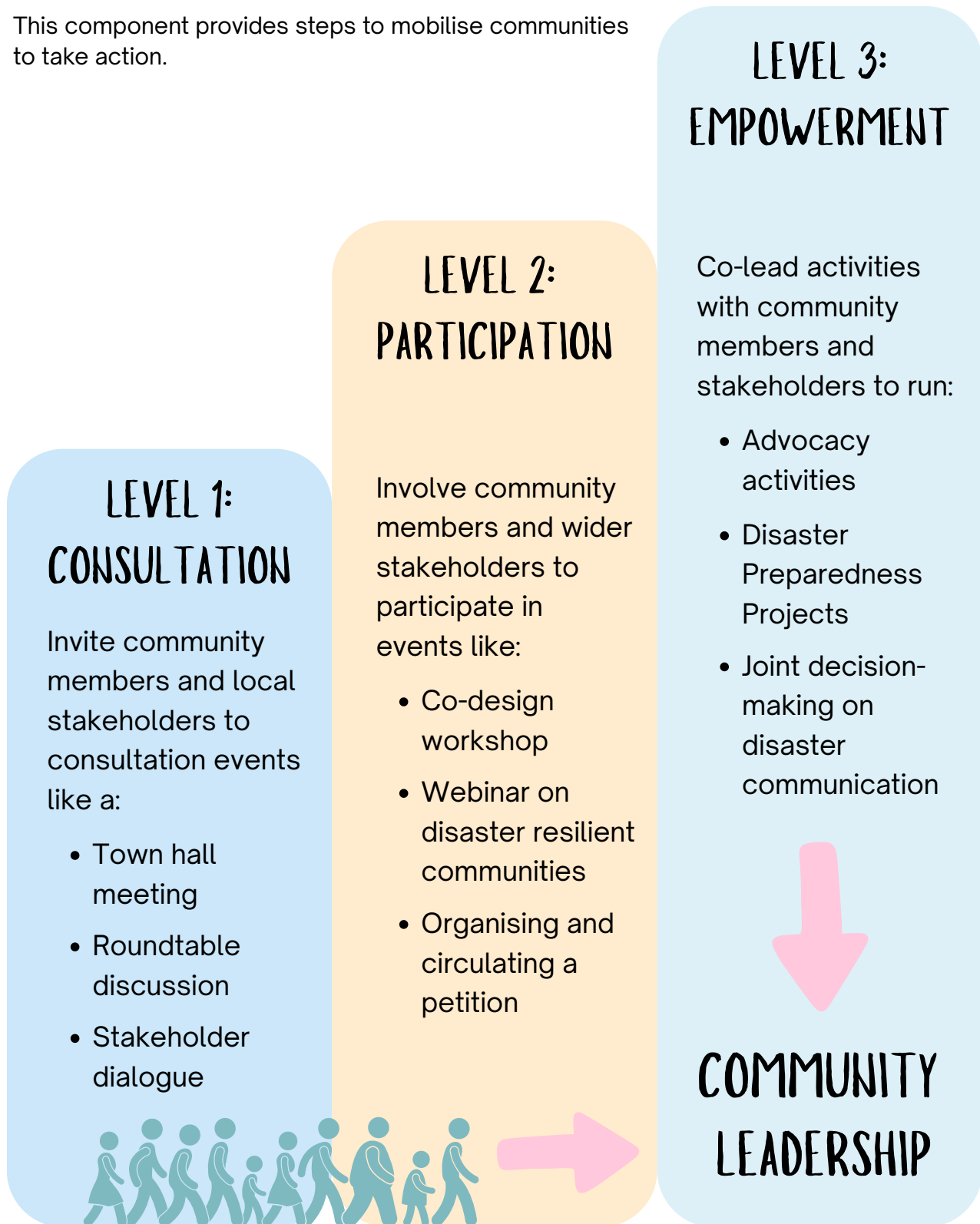
Assign roles and responsibilities

## Advocacy

Identify advocacy activities, develop a timeline, and use your stories to advocate!

# Community Mobiliser

This component provides steps to mobilise communities to take action.



Adapted from Bowen et al. (2010)

## Example

**Title:**

**Nepal earthquake response: Creating lasting change for survivors**

**Description:**

This resource is a good example of how to use a story for advocacy. Along with telling a compelling story, it includes engaging visuals and an emphasis on key statistics.

**URL:**

<https://www.oxfam.org/en/nepal-earthquake-response-creating-lasting-change-survivors>



# SECTION 6: IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Keep it going

# Evaluation and Improvement Tool

## Purpose

This tool is designed to help you assess the impact of storytelling communication at multiple levels and establish an ongoing feedback mechanism to keep the toolkit updated.

## Components

Impact Evaluation Guide, Good Story Criteria, Toolkit Refresher

### Step 1.

Consider how you are going to evaluate the effects of your storytelling campaign/initiatives when you are designing your story (or using the Message Maker). The earlier consideration will make it easier to measure outcomes.

### Step 2.

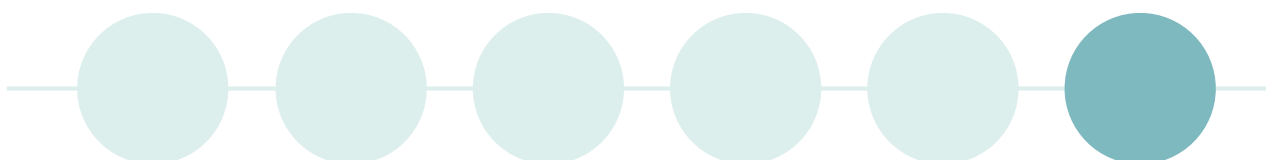
Use the Impact Evaluation Guide early and refer back to it throughout the storytelling campaign/initiatives.

### Step 3.

Evaluate the effectiveness of your campaign/initiatives, did you meet your objectives? Is there anything you will do differently next time?

### Step 4.

Gather feedback from various stakeholders about your story and activities at different stages. Use the Toolkit Refresher to improve and update the tools or resources created for CALD communities.



# Impact Evaluation Guide

This guide helps evaluate the utility and effectiveness of storytelling initiatives by developing SMART objectives, setting a baseline, selecting appropriate measurements, and matching them with suitable methods. It supports data-driven decisions by enhancing understanding of what and how stories create impact.

## 1. SMART objectives

Objective-making should occur at the planning stage and be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART), outlining steps to achieve a broader goal. Differentiating goals from objectives, for example:

<b>Goal</b>	Enhance CALD community resilience by using storytelling to improve disaster risk awareness, preparedness, and response.
<b>Objectives</b>	Develop and distribute 5 scenario-based educational stories to 1,000 CALD community members to improve their understanding of disaster risks (e.g., floods, cyclones) by September 2025.
	Assess message retention and knowledge recall among these members by November 2025.
	Measure the percentage of these members who take action to prepare an emergency kit by March 2026.
	Collaborate with 5 emergency management agencies to integrate CALD storytelling into scientific disaster communication strategies by June 2026.

## 2. Baseline

Set up a reference point for measuring changes *before* and *after* an intervention, such as implementing the toolkit, or launching a storytelling campaign. For example, only 10% of new refugee arrivals know what to do during a cyclone before implementing the culturally appropriate storytelling campaign.

### 3. Measurements

Type	Indicators	Examples
Output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stories produced by organisations</li><li>• Stories collected from CALD members</li><li>• Story shares/resharing frequency</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How many stories were created?</li><li>• How many were contributed by CALD members?</li><li>• How often were stories reshared?</li></ul>
Outcome	<b>Knowledge</b> (Understanding key messages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How many recall the key message?</li><li>• How many can describe the three flood prep steps?</li></ul>
	<b>Attitudes</b> (Shifts in perception)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How many feel storm preparedness as a priority?</li><li>• How many feel confident following evacuation steps?</li></ul>
	<b>Behaviour</b> (Action taken)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How many attended emergency training?</li><li>• How many prepared an emergency kit?</li><li>• How many called a helpline for assistance?</li></ul>
	<b>Policy</b> (Institutional impact)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What policy amendments were made?</li><li>• How much additional funding was allocated?</li></ul>

### 4. Methods

This will depend on what data you are collecting (indicators) above. It could include a survey of people, social media analysis, interviews, focus groups, or a short questionnaire.

### 5. Resources

What resources will you need to complete your evaluation? This includes people's skills, budget, rooms, etc. What resources do you have, and what gaps will you need to fill? Make a list and refer back to the methods you are using and the data you need to collect.

### 6. Report

Consider how you will communicate the findings of your evaluation back to your community or senior management. How will it inform your next activities?

# Good Story Criteria

These criteria help you determine what makes a good story. Use it to help you evaluate your own stories.



## Emotional connection

Does the story evoke strong emotions such as joy, sadness, excitement, or empathy?



## Simplicity and clarity

Does the story feature a core message or idea, presented in a clear and concise manner?



## Unexpectedness

Does the story feature novelty or surprise that makes it more memorable?



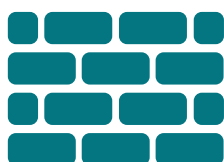
## Concrete and visual

Does the story feature a vivid picture or use sensory details?



## Authenticity

Does the story feel genuine and share personal insights to build connection?



## Structured narrative

Does the story feature a clear structure including a clear beginning, middle and end?



## Relevance

Does the story address the needs, interests, and experiences of the intended listener/audience?



# Toolkit Refresher

This suggests ways to continuously gather feedback to ensure the toolkit remains relevant and up to date for future end-users.

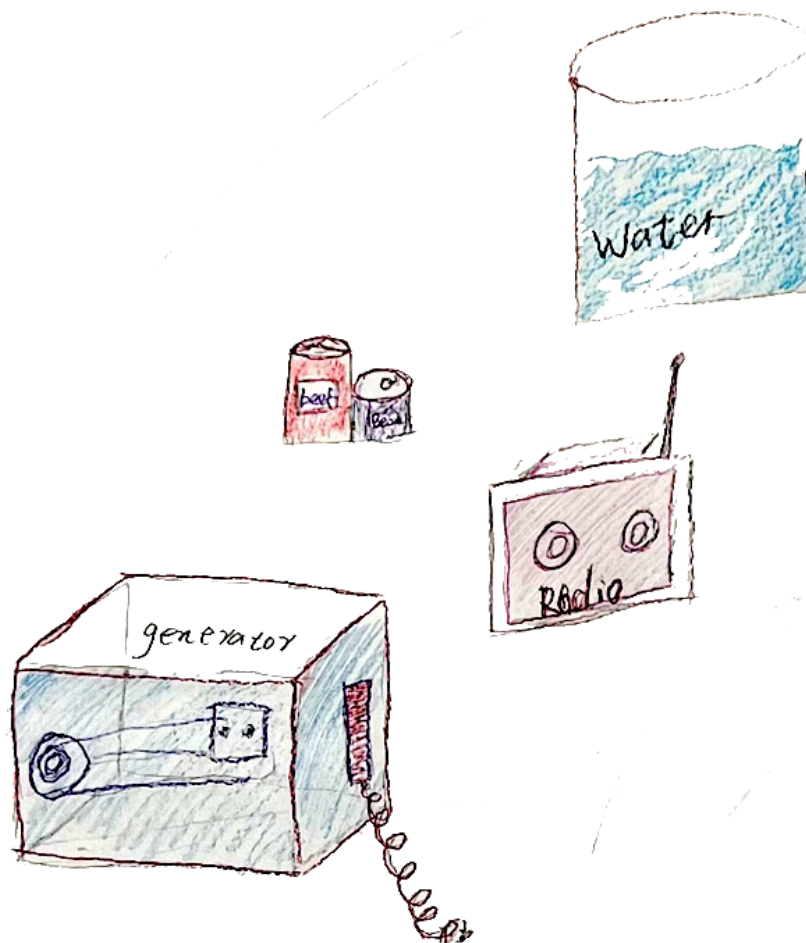


## Example

**Title:** Hurricane Season, a project with the World Bank and Civil Protection in Haiti

**Description:** This is an excellent example of a communications campaign to reach the most vulnerable people in Haiti. It includes components of the campaign along with the results and an evaluation of the campaign

**URL:** <https://hurricanes-haiti.info/#home>



# RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

# Additional Resources

Topic	URL
<b>Community Profiling</b>	<a href="https://eprints.qut.edu.au/133235/16/133235.pdf">eprints.qut.edu.au/133235/16/133235.pdf</a>
<b>Storytelling Framework</b>	<a href="https://publicworkspartners.com/storytelling-framework-for-recovery-and-resilience-building">publicworkspartners.com/storytelling-framework-for-recovery-and-resilience-building</a>
<b>Communication Planning</b>	<a href="https://www.preventionweb.net/hubs/disaster-risk-communication-hub">www.preventionweb.net/hubs/disaster-risk-communication-hub</a>
<b>Images</b>	<a href="https://www.getready.qld.gov.au/council-hub-image-library">www.getready.qld.gov.au/council-hub-image-library</a>
<b>Graphic Design</b>	<a href="https://www.canva.com">www.canva.com</a>
<b>Copyright</b>	<a href="https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/cclicenses">creativecommons.org/share-your-work/cclicenses</a>
<b>Story Circles</b>	<a href="https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370336">unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370336</a>
<b>Community Engagement</b>	<a href="https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/7989/aidr_handbookcollection_communityengagementfordisasterresilience_2020.pdf">knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/7989/aidr_handbookcollection_communityengagementfordisasterresilience_2020.pdf</a>
<b>Advocacy through Storytelling</b>	<a href="https://communitymattersmedia.org/2024/08/15/the-power-of-advocacy-through-storytelling/">communitymattersmedia.org/2024/08/15/the-power-of-advocacy-through-storytelling/</a>
<b>Storytelling Approaches</b>	<a href="https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/141922682.pdf">core.ac.uk/download/pdf/141922682.pdf</a>
<b>Communications Evaluation Guide</b>	<a href="https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/arewethereyet.pdf">www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/arewethereyet.pdf</a>

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# Glossary

<b>Call to action</b>	A message calling to do something in order to achieve an aim.
<b>Compare and contrast</b>	A writing technique that uses two examples to understand the similarities and differences between things.
<b>Digital Storytelling</b>	The practice of using digital media tools, like video, audio, and images, to create and share narratives, combining the art of storytelling with multimedia to engage and educate audiences.
<b>Edutainment</b>	Video games, television programmes, or other materials, intended to be both educational and enjoyable.
<b>First-person Perspective</b>	A mode of storytelling in which a storyteller recounts events from that storyteller's own personal point of view.
<b>Life Story</b>	An account of the series of events making up a person's life.
<b>Oral history</b>	A method of gathering historical information through planned, recorded interviews.
<b>Photovoice</b>	Photovoice is a method of community-based research involving gathering photographs and narratives taken by participants to translate their experiences into actionable knowledge.
<b>Popular science</b>	The interpretation and explanation of scientific concepts and research for a general audience.
<b>Recurring motif</b>	A recurring element, like an image, symbol, or idea, that reinforces a theme or pattern in a story, film, or other work of art.
<b>SEIFA Index</b>	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is a product developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics that ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The indexes are based on information from the five-yearly Census.
<b>Show, don't tell</b>	A writing technique where you convey information through actions, details, and sensory descriptions rather than explicitly stating it, allowing the reader to infer and experience the story rather than being told.
<b>Testimony</b>	A written or spoken statement about an experience.
<b>The Hero's Journey</b>	A common narrative template where a hero embarks on a quest, faces challenges, and returns transformed, often after a decisive crisis.





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