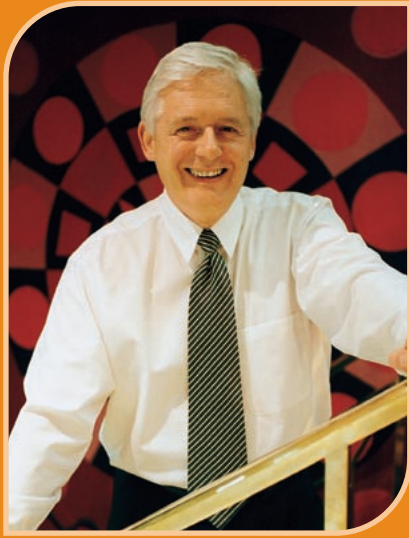


ANZ in the Community



ANZ has worked with the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) to create a program that helps lift community “spirit” in communities affected by drought.

Seeds of Renewal was a small grants program, funded by ANZ, offered to communities with a population of 10,000 people or less in declared Commonwealth Government Exceptional Circumstance areas. With the aim of rekindling community spirit in affected towns, community organisations could apply for funding for projects that would bring social, environmental, economic, health, education, community welfare or cultural development benefits to their town.

In total, 32 community organisations throughout New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia are sharing in \$150,000 worth of funding. With supported projects ranging from rebuilding town landmarks to furthering education opportunities for youth, this program shows the varying needs of rural Australian communities.

ANZ is also offering support to drought-impacted farmers across Australia through a range of financial measures. Some of these options include loan restructuring to minimise financial outgoings; conversions of loans to an interest-only basis; freezing of interest risk margins associated with deteriorating financial performance; and concessional/waiver of standard fees associated with loan restructuring and/or additional carry-on loan support.

I take pride in ANZ’s involvement in bringing such practical assistance to those in our communities most in need.

John McFarlane, CEO ANZ

Tara, Queensland

With the drought making an impact in prime hard wheat country, Tara’s Wieambilla South Rural Fire Brigade made the most of the opportunity to bring extra funds into their community. Determined not to let one disaster leave them unprepared in the face of another foe, a rural fire brigade muster will be held to upgrade the skills of volunteer fire fighters so they are better equipped in the event of bushfires.



Steve Avery (centre), Relationship Manager at Toowoomba, with (from left) Bob Peck, Mike Smith, Leah Jaspersen and Pat Peck of the Wieambilla South Rural Fire Brigade.

Nyngan, New South Wales

Thirteen years ago Nyngan was deluged with the worst floods in Australia in 100 years. In stark contrast, Nyngan is now one of the towns most affected by the drought. In an attempt to better equip community members with skills to cope with the extremes of life on the land, the Nyngan Network applied for a grant to improve local training opportunities. The Nyngan Network is now offering young people graphic and web design courses to help them better promote their farm businesses.

Chinchilla, Queensland

Chinchilla is a rural town built on the cattle, grain and horticulture industries, which have all suffered through the drought. With less money in the local economy, travelling for education purposes can become difficult to fund. The Chinchilla Student Accommodation Centre enables 24 boarders to attend a school much closer to home than would otherwise be available. A grant from Seeds of Renewal has allowed the Centre to purchase computers so the students have greater access to information and tools to complete their school-work.



Peter Nitz (centre), Chinchilla Branch Manager, with Chinchilla Student Accommodation staff members (from left) Sue Scott, Mark Ryan, Peter Seiler and Glenys Carter.

Newdegate, Western Australia

Newdegate is a small town of 500 people in the Western Australian wheat belt. The wheat belt has been experiencing drought for a number of years, which has taken a great toll on the farming industry. Through Seeds of Renewal, the Newdegate Land Conservation District Committee will hold a two-day workshop for landholders, offering advice on how to diversify their farm income. The Newdegate Pool Committee also secured a grant to purchase a pool security system and shade structure.



Glen Fraser (left), Agri Business Manager in Narrogin, with members of the Newdegate Land Conservation District Committee and the Newdegate Pool Committee.

Burren Junction, New South Wales

The small town of Burren Junction, 51 kms west of Wee Waa, is home to 150 people. Wee Waa is known as the Cotton Capital of Australia and as the drought wore on and the heat soared, local industries suffered. Through Seeds of Renewal, Burren Junction secured funding to replace shade sails for the community pool that had deteriorated under the ordinarily harsh climate conditions exacerbated by the drought.



Ann-Maree Galagher (left), Relationship Manager at Wee Waa, with Brett Stevens and Judy Retford in front of the new Burren Junction community pool's new shade sails.

Narembeen, Western Australia

Another drought-affected town in the WA wheat belt is Narembeen – a rural community 282kms east of Perth. Just as the drought damages farmers' crops, it also depletes food sources for wildlife and stock, causing the animals to seek food in unusual places.

One such place has been the airstrip, making it difficult for planes to land, including regular user the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

A Seeds of Renewal grant is enabling the Shire of Narembeen to construct an electrified fence around the airfield to make it a safer site for both animals and people.

Pooncarie, New South Wales

Pooncarie is a town of less than 90 people who rely on the sheep farming industry. In the heart of the town is the Pooncarie Hall, which just like the local residents, hasn't been immune to the drought. With sun-scorched, cracked and peeling surfaces, the hall is in need of a facelift.

Almost half the town celebrated the receipt of a grant, passed on by ANZ staff, to touch-up the hall. The Wentworth Shire Council arranged a BBQ lunch for local residents, shire council workers and the ANZ staff in attendance. Lunchtime was extended for Pooncarie Public School students and all 20 students and their teacher joined the festivities.

The hall is home to much of the town's activities, including birthday celebrations, school plays and town meetings. The grant, applied for by the Pooncarie Telecentre, will enable the hall to be repainted inside and out. Completing the facelift will be the development of a park around the hall, already planned by the council.



Peter Barclay, Rural Market Manager for North West Victoria, and Janene Greenhill, Rural Network Assistant, with Pooncarie residents, council members and local students in front of the soon-to-be-painted Pooncarie Hall.

For more information about ANZ's community programs please contact Trish Toohey on (03) 9273 6871 or email at tooheyp@anz.com