

Our Communities Our Region Our Future



NORTHERN RIVERS REGIONAL SOCIAL PLAN 2013–2018

DRAFT FOR COMMENT

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Cover image: *Gypsie Rover and the Table of Knowledge*, by local artist Clare Urquhart of Tabulam. The piece won first prize in the art competition which formed part of the community engagement campaign to develop the Northern Rivers Regional Social Plan.

01 Introduction

The Northern Rivers Regional Social Plan 2013-2018 was developed through a partnership between Northern Rivers Social Development Council and Regional Development Australia – Northern Rivers. The project was entitled ***Our Communities, Our Region, Our Future: creating a regional social plan*** and aimed to develop a plan that includes the voices of the community, identifies regional community development priorities and initiates key actions to address identified social priorities across the seven local government areas of Clarence Valley, Richmond Valley, Kyogle, Lismore, Byron Bay, Ballina and Tweed.

The objectives of the Project were:

1. To create a community-owned and evidence-based regional social plan that:
 - includes the voices of the community;
 - identifies regional community development priorities;
 - initiates key actions to address identified priorities.
2. To create a knowledge base that:
 - highlights current social conditions;
 - provides a baseline that can be monitored over time;
 - is freely and publicly available to all.
3. To support community development and capacity building through community engagement processes.
4. To develop a framework to inform policy and program development, advocacy and investment.

The Plan contained in this document sets out the values and principles that emerged from the community engagement process and informed the desired future outcomes and strategies for achieving these outcomes. Each outcome identifies measures that can be used to monitor progress in Section 2. Implementation options and opportunities are discussed in Section 3.

Acknowledgements

The partners would like to thank key stakeholders who have participated in consultation, provided support and information as part of the project ***Our Communities, Our Region, Our Future: creating a regional social plan***. In particular, we would like to acknowledge over 1,200 members of the community and over 60 stakeholder organisations, including non-government organisations, government agencies, local media and private sector organisations who have participated in the development of the Plan.

NRSDC would also like to acknowledge the funding contribution made by NSW Family and Community Services (FACS) through the Community Builders program, which contributed to the development of the plan and enables our organisation to continue to build capacity in the regional community services and health sector.

Feedback on the Draft Plan

The Draft Regional Social Plan will be disseminated in August 2013. We will be seeking feedback on suggested changes, as well as interest from parties that may wish to be involved in

implementation of the strategies contained in the Plan. These interested parties will be included in the final published version of the Plan as Implementation Partners.

Feedback will be sought via an online feedback form, with a deadline for final submissions and feedback on 30 August, 2013. The final Northern Rivers Regional Social Plan will be published and disseminated in October 2013.

Methodology

The methodology described below was used to understand our communities' strengths, needs and priorities for the future; and informed selection of the outcomes and strategies, measures and indicators used in this plan.

Our Communities, Our Region, Our Future: creating a regional social plan involved three distinct elements:

1. Development of a **Regional Social Profile**. This included consultation, needs analysis and desktop research conducted during 2012 and 2013 and involved Councils, non-government organisations, government agencies and key stakeholders.
2. **Community and stakeholder engagement** program. This included media and communications, a writing competition, an arts competition, short interviews conducted at community events, community forums, consultation with Aboriginal people, community services and health sector consultations and community surveys and submissions.
3. Development of a **website** to facilitate free public access to information. This included the social profile, community engagement activities and the future actions contained in the plan. It can be found online at www.regionalsocialplan.org.au.
4. Review of the planning and policy context. This included local, state and federal government plans.

Models and frameworks

The project partners have taken an outcomes-focussed approach to the planning process, to encourage aspirational thinking and foster activities that improve the real lived experience of people and communities in our region. As such we have drawn on the following models or frameworks which have been internationally recognised and validated:

- Community Indicators Victoria (CIV) (Cox, Frere, West & Wiseman 2010), a framework for measuring and understanding social indicators, to inform the development of the Regional Social Profile.
- International Association for Public Participation, Public Participation Spectrum, to inform the development of the community and stakeholder engagement program.
- Results Based Accountability, developed by Mark Friedman from the Fiscal Policy Studies Institute, to inform the development of the draft Regional Social Plan.

A socio-ecological approach to desired future outcomes

Included in the Plan are a range of desired future outcomes, strategies and measures that affect children, families and communities across the Northern Rivers region. Rather than creating a specific outcome for each major population group or each key social issue, the Plan takes a socio-ecological approach, taking into account the interconnections between the social, economic

and environmental systems and the impacts they have on people, families and communities.

So, for example, there is no specific outcome relating to older people in our region. Community feedback and data gathered during the initial phases of the project suggested that achieving other outcomes in transport, health, housing, homelessness, education, employment and cultural and natural assets would significantly improve the lived experiences of older people in the region. Similarly, feedback suggests that achieving outcomes related to having a healthy economy and access to local safe affordable food are critical to the health and wellbeing of entire communities and provide individual and family opportunity. And finally, the model highlights the significance of connection and belonging to place as critical factors in social inclusion.

The desired future outcomes which form the basis of the Plan are summarised below:

1. A region where our children and young people reach their potential
2. A region where people with disabilities reach their fullest potential
3. A region that closes the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people
4. A region where people are healthy
5. A region where people participate in meaningful employment and education
6. A region of appropriate and affordable housing where no one has to be homeless
7. A region of people who value and enjoy our unique natural, arts and cultural assets
8. A region where people where people can get around easily
9. A region with sustainable, viable, community assets
10. A vibrant, innovative regional economy
11. A region with affordable, safe, local food
12. A clean energy future for our region
13. A region with integrated, accessible services

Values and principles

Envisioning the desired future outcomes for our region, we have based our work on a set of principles and values, which are common to the partner organisations involved in the planning process, and also are commonly held by key stakeholders, community groups and individuals with whom we have consulted.

The Northern Rivers Regional Social Plan should:

- Build resilience of individuals, families and communities
- Celebrate diversity of regional lifestyles and cultures
- Protect and strengthen village character
- Protect and strengthen our assets
- Ensure that benefits are cumulative and have flow -on effects
- Enhance rural and regional viability and self-reliance
- Acknowledge the variability between our high growth coastal areas and sparsely populated hinterland
- Use research, planning, evidence, consultation and community involvement
- Align with regional planning and/or stakeholder groups in the region
- Acknowledge the right to core social and physical infrastructure such as education, housing, health and community services, transport, information technology and telecommunications
- Create a service system that has the greatest efficiency and equity, drawing on innovation and evidence to produce real outcomes.

02 Plan for achieving desired future outcomes

Outcome 1: A region where our children and young people reach their potential

Why is this outcome important? According to the Australian Productivity Commission¹, “A child’s earliest years fundamentally shape their life chances...The evidence points to there being critical times for building capabilities for life: * the early years – these lay the foundation for children’s future learning and lifetime outcomes, * the school years – success at school is a key determinant of whether children go on to further education and training and employment, * beyond compulsory schooling and the transition between education and work – decisions made during this period can have lasting effects on future job opportunities and life chances.” We see that this outcome is about children and young people having every opportunity in life, including education, safety, wellbeing, welfare, support, diversity, community and culture.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
<p>Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) results</p> <p>Participation in Early Childhood Education</p> <p>Participation rates in pre-school parenting and nutritional programs</p> <p>% school completions</p>	<p>Decrease developmentally vulnerable levels on AEDI index</p> <p>No developmentally vulnerable AEDI scores</p> <p>More people complete year 12</p> <p>More people complete higher education</p>	<p>Higher rates of development vulnerability for physical health and wellbeing AEDI domains than for NSW and Australia.</p> <p>Lower rates of children who are developmentally vulnerable for all other AEDI domains</p> <p>NR (Northern Rivers) has lower rates of school completion and transition to university (9%, compared to 27% NSW)²</p>	<p>Early childhood education providers; Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD), NSW FACS</p> <p>Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (AECGs), Aboriginal Education Liaison Officers, Aboriginal Land Councils</p> <p>School Principals and Welfare Officers</p> <p>Family support providers,</p>	<p>Early intervention</p> <p>Flexible, tailored learning environments</p> <p>Focus on transition points: school entry, high school transition</p> <p>Programs to support carers, parents and grandparents in parenting</p>	<p>1.1. Strengthen the skills, resources, networks and capacities of parents and families</p> <p>1.2. Build the capacity of communities to support children, young people and families</p> <p>1.3. Reduce incidence of domestic and family violence</p> <p>1.4. Support and strengthen service system to engage families on the fringe and build parenting capabilities</p> <p>1.5. Foster and celebrate the cultural diversity of communities</p> <p>1.6. Map education and employment pathways for youth</p>

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How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
<p>Child protection data</p> <p>Truancy/ absenteeism</p> <p>NAPLAN (National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy) data</p> <p>Post school education</p> <p>Youth crime and recidivism data</p>	<p>Decrease domestic violence rates</p> <p>Decrease child protection reports</p> <p>Decreased rates of young offenders/ recidivism</p> <p>Lower absenteeism/ truancy rates</p> <p>Children enjoy being at school</p>	<p>Higher rates of development vulnerability for physical health and wellbeing AEDI domains than for NSW and Australia. Lower rates of children who are developmentally vulnerable for all other AEDI domains¹</p> <p>54% of people did not complete Year 12 in NR region vs. NSW 41%²</p> <p>Educational attainment: 11% Bachelor and higher degrees for NR (12% NSW); 26% Advanced Diplomas (36% NSW); 10% Diplomas (11% NSW);</p>	<p>Neighbourhood and Community Centres, Youth Services</p> <p>Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre, Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (DVCAS)</p> <p>NSW Police, NSW Education and Communities, NSW FACS</p> <p>Parents and Citizen Associations (P&Cs), NSW Teachers Federation, Student Councils,</p>	<p>Holistic approaches: include culture, recreation, education, nutrition, transport, housing, health</p> <p>Schools, community services, communities AND families working together to create learning environments and teach children</p>	<p>1.7. Reduce rates of homelessness, drug and alcohol use amongst children and young people</p> <p>1.8. Enhance involvement of communities in schools, in education and learning, include mentoring especially for youth at risk of disengaging</p> <p>1.9. Support and strengthen early identification of children and young people who are disengaging from education</p> <p>1.10. Implement mobile schools and learning facilities to increase access for isolated communities</p>

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How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
		7% Certificate IV (6% NSW) ² NR domestic violence crime rates are higher than NSW: 422 per 100,000, compared to NSW at 375 per 100,000 ³	primary and high school networks of teachers Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW, Community Colleges		

Existing policy and planning context: Keeping Them Safe; Early Years Learning Framework; National Quality Standards; NSW 2021; Every Student, Every School

Outcome 2: A region where people with disabilities reach their fullest potential

Why this outcome is important: *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities affirms the “the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and the need for persons with disabilities to be guaranteed their full enjoyment without discrimination.” This outcome is about ensuring that people with disabilities are able to realise their dreams and potential in this region and improving outcomes for people with disabilities. This includes choices about education, employment, lifestyles, access to services, building connection and belonging and social inclusion for all, in line with DisabilityCare Australia (previously the National Disability Insurance Scheme) approaches.*

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
<p># individualised funding packages</p> <p># disability support pension (DSP) recipients in NR</p> <p>Qualitative feedback from community engagement</p>	<p>Greater access to mainstream services</p> <p>Natural supports provide as much or more support than funding programs</p> <p>People realise their dreams and aspirations</p> <p>Positive role models from our region to the rest of the country</p>	<p>DSP pension recipients in NR region are almost twice NSW⁴</p>	<p>NSW FACS, NSW Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC)</p> <p>Mainstream community service providers [e.g. schools, early childhood education, housing, Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)]</p> <p>Specialist community services providers, e.g. RED Inc., Multitask, HWNS, Lifebridge East, On Track Community Programs (OTCP), Early Childhood Intervention, Caringa</p> <p>Peaks and advocacy organisations</p>	<p>Building connections and belonging in mainstream community settings</p> <p>Person centred practice and thinking in specialist and mainstream community services</p> <p>Consideration for accessibility in institutional and mainstream settings, including physical, emotional and cognitive</p>	<p>2.1. Develop capability of individuals and families to build natural supports</p> <p>2.2. Empower individuals, families and carers to access the widest range of mainstream resources, specialist services and information networks</p> <p>2.3. Support and strengthen early identification and intervention</p> <p>2.4. Develop a peer workforce to contribute their unique lived experience, knowledge and capacities</p> <p>2.5. Support the service system transition to individualised funding and person centred care with individuals, families and carers involved in service design</p> <p>2.6. Advocate for, and strengthen, accessible and inclusive design of public spaces and events</p> <p>2.7. Deliver community and employer education programs to decrease social</p>

Outcome 2: A region where people with disabilities reach their fullest potential

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How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
			Disability Employment Services Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DOHA)	supports Showcasing what is possible with community role models Sharing stories with families	exclusion 2.8. Build workforce capability and impact of services and projects for people with disability, including people with mental health issues 2.9. Map the profile of people with disabilities in the region, including who, what, how much, what is needed, potential to recognise gaps for children and young people

Existing policy and planning context: *Living Life My Way, Stronger Together 2, NSW Ability Links, Consumer Development Fund, DisabilityCare Australia/ National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)*

Outcome 3: A region that closes the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people

Why this outcome is important: in the Northern Rivers, as in other regions of Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are significantly worse off than non-Indigenous people on many social indicators. The Australian Government’s Closing the gap strategy has been formulated to address this inequity, and states that “engagement and partnership with Indigenous people and communities, building on their ideas, strengths and leadership, will help to find sustainable solutions to long-standing problems. Closing the Gap is a cross-community effort. The corporate, NGO and philanthropic sectors are also important to assisting Indigenous people and communities and contributing to Closing the Gap”. We see that the Regional Social Plan should outline strategies our region will use to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our communities.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like? ¹	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
Strategy implementation by Aboriginal people Life expectancy Infant mortality Literacy and numeracy Year 12 attainment Employment	Close life expectancy gap within a generation Halve gap in infant mortality rates for Indigenous children under five by 2018 Halve the gap in reading,	23% attainment of Year 12 for Aboriginal YP in region, compared to 38% non-Aboriginal and 52% NSW ² Median age of Aboriginal people is 20, compared to 44 (non-Aboriginal) ² Aboriginal people constitute 4% of NR population, compared to 2.3% of NSW population ²	NSW Aboriginal Land Council, NR Aboriginal Land Councils, Elders Non-government and government agencies in NR NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC), NSW FACS Aboriginal Medical Services, Aboriginal Legal Services, other Aboriginal organisations Primary and high	Aboriginal people involved in development of strategies and are drivers of action Self determination	4.1. Involve Aboriginal people in design of services and programs for their communities 4.2. Government and non-government agencies implement Close the Gap strategies across the region 4.3. Involve Elders and community in providing culturally supportive spaces and lessons in primary and high schools 4.4. Advocate for funding and resources to teach community languages and culture 4.5. Support and strengthen Aboriginal employment opportunities and business development 4.6. Advocate for funding for Aboriginal youth programs and services 4.7. Encourage greater access for Aboriginal people to use health services earlier, e.g. prevention and early intervention services, nutritional and smoking

¹ These are the Closing the Gap targets

Outcome 3: A region that closes the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people

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How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like? ¹	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
outcomes Human rights and social justice	writing and numeracy within a decade Halve the gap for Indigenous students in year 12 equivalent attainment by 2020 Halve the gap in employment within a decade	49% Aboriginal young people less than 20 years, compared to 28% of non-Aboriginal ² 20% Aboriginal unemployed in Northern Rivers, compared to 6% of entire population ²	schools Reconciliation Australia Southern Cross University, Gnibi, TAFE and other RTOs		programs 4.8. Tailor justice, health, housing and community services to be culturally safe and supportive 4.9. Support children and young people to fully participate in school, community, culture and society 4.10. Foster and strengthen Aboriginal leadership and representation 4.11. Promote Reconciliation Action Plans to be developed across the region in non-government agencies and government. Support regional collaboration amongst reconciliation groups to enable sharing of existing learning and promote cross-cultural understanding.

Outcome 3: A region that closes the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people

Why this outcome is important: in the Northern Rivers, as in other regions of Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are significantly worse off than non-Indigenous people on many social indicators. The Australian Government’s Closing the gap strategy has been formulated to address this inequity, and states that “engagement and partnership with Indigenous people and communities, building on their ideas, strengths and leadership, will help to find sustainable solutions to long-standing problems. Closing the Gap is a cross-community effort. The corporate, NGO and philanthropic sectors are also important to assisting Indigenous people and communities and contributing to Closing the Gap”. We see that the Regional Social Plan should outline strategies our region will use to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our communities.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like? ¹	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
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Existing policy and planning context: Northern NSW Health and Disease in the Aboriginal Community; NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, Aboriginal Employment Plan; NSW Department of Education and Training, Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy, 2009-2012; NSW Government, NSW Aboriginal Health Plan, 2013-2023; NSW Aboriginal Justice Plan: beyond justice 2004-2014, NSW Aboriginal Justice Advisory Council; NSW Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy, 2010; Office of Communities, Aboriginal Affairs, OCHRE Aboriginal Affairs Plan; NSW State Government Regional Action Plan; Northern Region Aboriginal Cultural Inclusion Strategy

Outcome 4: A region where people are healthy

Why this outcome is important: *Equitable access to quality, timely preventative, primary and community-based health care, including mental health, is critical to social inclusion. According to the NSW Government's Northern Rivers Regional Action Plan, "a diverse health delivery system including primary health care, public hospitals, specialty health centres, mental health and dental service providers is needed to support the health needs of the community".*

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
Self-rated health Obesity rates % fruit and vegetable consumption Physical activity levels Alcohol attributable hospitalisations Life expectancy Smoking prevalence Immunisation levels Access to health services Community	Increase in self-rated health Lower obesity rates by 10% to 43% of the population by 2018 Increase in fruit and vegetable consumption Physical activity levels increased from 56% to 70% for people aged over 16 years Decrease in alcohol attributable hospitalisations	80% self-report positive health in NR (excellent, very good or good); 80.1% NSW ⁵ 52% population overweight or obese ⁵ Higher rates of fruit (56% NR; 52% NSW) and vegetable consumption (12% NR; 9% NSW); and physical activity levels (56% NR; 54% NSW) to NSW ⁵ Life expectancy at birth slightly below NSW ⁵ Alcohol attributable hospitalisations higher in NR (750/100,00 people) than NSW (650/100,000) ⁵ 17% population smoking ⁵	NNSWLHD, NCML Ngayundai Aboriginal Health Council University Centre for Rural Health (UCRH) RDA-NR, NRSDC Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council Pharmacies Save Our Services - Upper Clarence Health Care Inc.	Focus on social determinants of health: early life and children; education employment, income and work; access to health care; social gradient; social security; lifestyle factors: food, addiction, stress; urban design; transport; social exclusion Peer support Cross generation mentoring	5.1. Implement real time, online medical and health services, especially in the hinterland 5.2. Improve linkages between health and other sections of the service sector 5.3. Implement a regional measure of health amongst children and young people, to track and support improvement of health in this cohort throughout the lifespan 5.4. Support health services to become more culturally safe to increase use of services by Aboriginal people 5.5. Strengthen preventative health programs 5.6. Improve access to GPs and specialist services 5.7. Advocate for investment into the identified priorities of the <i>NCML After Hours Program Stage 2 Plan 2013-14</i>

Outcome 4: A region where people are healthy

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How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
wellbeing survey	<p>Decrease in smoking prevalence</p> <p>Increase in immunisation levels</p> <p>Improved access to quality, timely health care</p> <p>Increase in access to health services</p> <p>Reduce demand for final stage health care, increase early intervention</p> <p>Improve access to GPs, after hours and</p>	<p>85% immunisation for 12-15 month year olds in 2009⁵</p> <p>North Coast Medicare Local (NCML) After Hours Primary Care Stage 2 Needs Assessment provides data on current primary care access and after hours priorities⁶</p>		Online access to information	<p>5.8. Advocate for the creation of allied health support positions (and accompanying accredited training) to assess needs and coordinate allied health services delivery for service users in remote and regional areas</p> <p>5.9. Advocate for implementation of recommendations from <i>Provided There's Transport: transport as a barrier to accessing health care in NSW</i>, NCOSS 2012.</p> <p>5.10. Develop a flexible Aboriginal Health Transport strategy</p>

Outcome 4: A region where people are healthy

Why this outcome is important: Equitable access to quality, timely preventative, primary and community-based health care, including mental health, is critical to social inclusion. According to the NSW Government’s Northern Rivers Regional Action Plan, “a diverse health delivery system including primary health care, public hospitals, specialty health centres, mental health and dental service providers is needed to support the health needs of the community”.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
	specialist services Online health service delivery helping meet needs in remote parts of the region				

Existing policy and planning context: NSW Government Regional Action Plan; North Coast NSW Medicare Local After Hours Program Stage Two Plan 2013-14; Northern NSW Health and Disease in the Aboriginal Community; NCOSS, Provided There’s Transport.

Outcome 5: A region where people participate in meaningful employment and education

Why this outcome is important: This outcome recognises the significant social benefits of access to meaningful employment and education, both on the individual and family levels and in benefits to entire communities. According to the Productivity Commission's July 2013 report 'Deep and Persistent Disadvantage', "rates of income poverty, deprivation and social exclusion are high among the unemployed and jobless households". This outcome also seeks to recognise the long-term benefits of education and life-long learning to the development of dynamic, resilient communities.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
Labour force participation Unemployment Employment status – part-time, full-time, less than 15 hours/week Transition from school to university Post-school qualifications	Increased labour force participation and reduced unemployment More secure employment Resilience to changing workforce requirements Increased university participation and completion People have choices for participation in both	55% labour force participation (64% for NSW) ⁷ 6% unemployment (5% NSW) ⁷ 13% worked less than 15 hours/week (10% NSW) ² 34% part time employment (28% NSW) ² 52% full time employment (60% NSW) ² NR has lower rates of transition to university (9%, compared to 27% NSW) ² , and low university education levels (8%) ²	Southern Cross University, RDA NR TAFE, Community Colleges and other RTOs U3A DEEWR, Local Employment Coordinators (LECs) and Regional Education, Skills and Jobs Coordinators NSW DEC, State Training Services, Industry Skills Councils; JSAs/DES employment providers	Job creation Lifelong learning Alternate and flexible pathways Recognition of prior learning Linking education activities to employment opportunities	6.1. Invest in job creation programs 6.2. Foster growth in social enterprise to create employment opportunities based on viable business models 6.3. Equip people with skills to transition into changing employment opportunities 6.4. Support long-term unemployed, under-employed and employees at-risk to access integrated education, training and employment programs 6.5. Map industry skill needs and match to employment pathways and skills development programs 6.6. Provide opportunities for training and education to enable life-long learning 6.7. Improve collaboration between

Outcome 5: A region where people participate in meaningful employment and education

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How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
	employment and education				industry training providers

Existing policy and planning context: DEEWR Regional Education, Skills and Jobs (RESJ) Plan; DEEWR Regional Employment Plan; NSW Government Regional Action Plan; Northern Rivers Regional Economic and Industry Plan; NSW Education and Communities, Smart and Skilled Industry Profiles; RDA Regional Plan

Outcome 6: A region of appropriate and affordable housing where no one has to be homeless

Why this outcome is important: The Productivity Commission’s 2013 ‘Deep and Persistent Disadvantage Report’ identifies that “housing stress is more prevalent among households where the main source of income is either the Newstart Allowance or the job seeker Youth Allowance” and highlights the impacts of housing stress and homelessness on relationships, family violence, health, mental health, drug and alcohol abuse and educational performance. We see that access to affordable housing and ending homelessness in the region as critical to social inclusion and community wellbeing.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
Rental and mortgage costs Household incomes Mortgage and rental stress Housing tenure Homelessness data	Decrease mortgage and rental stress rates, particularly for low income earners Less variation in housing costs across the region Decrease rates of people experiencing homelessness by 10% and reduce period of homelessness by 2 weeks	Mortgage (16%) and rental stress (38%) higher in Northern Rivers: NSW 11% mortgage and 29% rental stress ⁸ Variation in housing costs across the region ⁹ Waiting times for social housing greater than 10 years on the coast and between 2-10 years for rest of region ⁹ Higher rates of homelessness compared to NSW ¹⁰ 20% of state rough sleepers are in NR ¹⁰ 14% of community	Local governments NR Housing Forum, and sub-regional networks in Clarence, Tweed and Richmond, NRSDC Regional Community Housing Providers and Specialist Homelessness Services NSW Aboriginal Housing Office; Aboriginal Tenancy, Advocacy and Advice Services YFoundations, Shelter and other peaks Housing NSW and Planning NSW Centrelink	Flexible housing design Integrated support services system More efficient use of existing resources Attract appropriate housing development Private sector partnerships Crisis refuges Transitional housing	7.1. Attract National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) incentives to the region 7.2. Advocate for Local Councils to map local housing supply and demand and develop local housing strategies 7.3. Promote and educate affordable housing design and construction 7.4. Demonstrate and educate about flexible housing design and construction – adaptable housing through the life cycle 7.5. Advocate for planning reform process to include/reflect local conditions 7.6. Educate and advocate for more efficient use of existing housing resources – housing ‘matching’ service, support/encourage sharing/borders 7.7. Improve access for people with complex needs through providing supported tenancy services in partnership with real estate agents 7.8. Strengthen the Northern Rivers Housing

Outcome 6: A region of appropriate and affordable housing where no one has to be homeless

Why this outcome is important: The Productivity Commission’s 2013 ‘Deep and Persistent Disadvantage Report’ identifies that “housing stress is more prevalent among households where the main source of income is either the Newstart Allowance or the job seeker Youth Allowance” and highlights the impacts of housing stress and homelessness on relationships, family violence, health, mental health, drug and alcohol abuse and educational performance. We see that access to affordable housing and ending homelessness in the region as critical to social inclusion and community wellbeing.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
	Greater options for emergency accommodation Access to water and toilets in locations for homeless people	wellbeing survey respondents had experienced homelessness, 30% for more than 3 months ¹¹	Regional Homelessness Action Plan (HAP) Committee, Housing NSW, Tenancy Advocacy and Advice Services Real Estate Agents Other support providers, e.g. Neighbourhood Centres, emergency relief, financial counselling, family support, youth workers NSW FACS, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)		Forum, creating a strong voice for the region 7.9. Advocate for National Housing Supply Council to provide regionally disaggregated data 7.10. Influence the allocation of resources on the basis of need in the region, based on Going Home Staying Home research 7.11. Influence next Regional HAP to reflect the conditions in the Far North Coast and respond to homelessness needs in NR 7.12. Increase availability of emergency and supported accommodation where and when people need it 7.13. Improve integration and collaboration between mainstream and specialist services, enabling early intervention; sustaining tenancies; collecting and sharing evidence; and accessing suitable accommodation 7.14. Engage local government in collaboration

Outcome 6: A region of appropriate and affordable housing where no one has to be homeless

Why this outcome is important: *The Productivity Commission’s 2013 ‘Deep and Persistent Disadvantage Report’ identifies that “housing stress is more prevalent among households where the main source of income is either the Newstart Allowance or the job seeker Youth Allowance” and highlights the impacts of housing stress and homelessness on relationships, family violence, health, mental health, drug and alcohol abuse and educational performance. We see that access to affordable housing and ending homelessness in the region as critical to social inclusion and community wellbeing.*

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
					on planning regulation to reduce barriers for potential accommodation providers.

Existing policy and planning context: *NSW State Government Regional Action Plan; Australian Government – NRAS; Going Home Staying Home; NR HAP; NSW 2021; National Partnership on Homelessness NSW 2009-2013*

Outcome 7: A region of people who value and enjoy our unique natural, artistic and cultural assets

Why this outcome is important: Access to natural, arts and cultural assets contributes to community wellbeing and is a significant factor in social determinants of health.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
<p>Community wellbeing survey – participation in arts and cultural activities</p> <p><i>Who cares about the environment</i> survey¹²</p> <p>Regional State of the Environment Report¹³</p>	<p>Increased participation in arts and cultural activities</p> <p>Impacts of industry minimised on environment</p>	<p>52% community wellbeing survey respondents participate in arts and cultural activities¹¹</p> <p>56% community wellbeing survey respondents agree or strongly agree there are adequate opportunities to participate in arts and related activities¹¹</p>	<p>Arts Northern Rivers</p> <p>Local Government</p> <p>NR Creative Industries Consortium</p> <p>Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority</p> <p>North Coast Local Land Services</p>	<p>Community involvement and ownership of arts and cultural assets</p> <p>Conservation and protection of threatened and endangered natural assets</p> <p>Land management practices that reduce impacts on the environment</p> <p>Land use planning</p>	<p>8.1. Support participation in arts and cultural activities for all</p> <p>8.2. Maintain and enhance regional arts, cultural and natural resources</p> <p>8.3. Promote the contribution of the natural environment and natural infrastructure to community wellbeing</p>

Existing policy and planning context: Northern Rivers Arts and Creative Industries Strategy; RDANR Regional Plan; NSW Government Regional Action Plan; RDANR Regional Industry and Economic Plan; NR Catchment Management Authority, Northern Rivers Catchment Action Plan 2

Outcome 8: A region where people where people can get around easily

Why this outcome is important: The NSW Government's Northern Rivers Regional Action Plan states that "An effective transport system is essential for the economic and social viability of communities in regional NSW. The community noted that the availability of public transport in the Northern Rivers can limit people's access to employment, services and community activities". Benefits of a more accessible transport system include: more affordable transport options within and between communities, reduced transport disadvantage, increased access to goods and services, increased mobility, reduced social isolation, improved access to employment and education, improved road safety and connection between economic hubs.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
<p>Motor vehicle ownership</p> <p># passenger vehicles, buses, motorcycles</p> <p>Transport fare data</p> <p>Local and regional transport studies</p>	<p>Transport disadvantage reduced</p> <p>Transport no longer a barrier to access goods and services</p> <p>Greater access to employment and education</p> <p>Increased mobility</p> <p>Wider transport options</p> <p>Cost effective transport options</p> <p>Reduced social</p>	<p>3,465 passenger vehicles per 7,000 people; 31 buses per 7,000 people and 180 motorcycles per 7,000 people registered in NR in 2010⁴</p> <p>Regional fares comparison shows that on average fares are twice the cost of metro rates¹⁴</p> <p>Northern Rivers transport survey identified dependency on cars¹¹</p> <p>Half Northern Rivers transport survey respondents unable to make trips they would like to due to lack of transport¹¹</p>	<p>Sustain Transport</p> <p>Buslines</p> <p>NRSDC</p> <p>Community Transport providers</p>		<p>9.1. Support and advocate for resources to implement Sustain Transport Action Plan</p> <p>9.2. Develop a flexible Aboriginal Transport Strategy through a collaborative, Aboriginal-led process</p> <p>9.3. Advocate for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collection of local transport data • increased subsidies under Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme • increased bus routes and frequencies between and within communities and connections with other transport modes, e.g. trains and airports • equalisation of fares state-wide • changes to contracting system

Outcome 8: A region where people where people can get around easily

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How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
	<p>isolation</p> <p>Less car dependency</p> <p>Improved transport information – 131500 number and app rolled out across the state</p>				<p>to support diversification of public transport options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of equitable nation-wide concessions system • 131500 website and app to be rolled out in Northern Rivers • investment to maintain local roads and bridges • investment to maintain local roads and bridges • completion of upgrade of pacific Highway to dual carriageway <p>9.4. Promote and strengthen transport information resources e.g. Northern Rivers Carpool, <i>goingplaces</i> website</p> <p>9.5. Promote and provide infrastructure to enable active transport options e.g. walking,</p>

Outcome 8: A region where people where people can get around easily

Why this outcome is important: *The NSW Government’s Northern Rivers Regional Action Plan states that “An effective transport system is essential for the economic and social viability of communities in regional NSW. The community noted that the availability of public transport in the Northern Rivers can limit people’s access to employment, services and community activities”. Benefits of a more accessible transport system include: more affordable transport options within and between communities, reduced transport disadvantage, increased access to goods and services, increased mobility, reduced social isolation, improved access to employment and education, improved road safety and connection between economic hubs.*

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
					cycling 9.6. Assess feasibility to establish a real-time, localised Transport Information and Coordination Service in NR region 9.7. Investigate options for improving and strengthening real-time ride share functionality

Existing policy and planning context: *Sustain Transport Action Plan; Transport Masterplan; NSW Government Regional Action Plan*

Outcome 9: A region with sustainable, viable, community assets e.g. community halls, public spaces, volunteer and social groups, schools, parks and gardens

Why this outcome is important: Community assets can be significant builders of social capital, community connectedness, economic diversity and activity.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
Community connectedness/ volunteering rates, participation in community groups	Efficient use of resources Income generation sustaining community assets Community ownership and pride in community assets Financial and rural viability	62% of survey respondents participate in community groups ¹¹ 21% of Northern Rivers population 15 years and older volunteer ⁸	Local government Regional media Community groups, social clubs and volunteer groups NRSDC Schools Resident action groups Residents		10.1. Map community assets and who manages them on a local government level; promote multi-purpose use of facilities, including fee for service options 10.2. Consult with communities and villages on the development, management and use of assets 10.3. Support the development of governance skills for community management committees (training, mentoring, volunteering) 10.4. Support and promote involvement of the community to maintain community assets 10.5. Showcase models of community and corporate financing and ownership of assets

Existing policy and planning context: RDANR Regional Plan

Outcome 10: A vibrant, innovative regional economy

Why this outcome is important: Economic development and entrepreneurial activity creates employment and positive social/environmental outcomes; A vibrant, innovative regional economy enables us to manage our challenges and opportunities, including an ageing workforce, retention of local knowledge, maintaining rural viability; Readiness for National Broadband Network (NBN).

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
<p>Business size</p> <p>Labour force participation and unemployment rates</p> <p>Median age of employees in key industry sectors</p> <p>Gross regional production</p> <p>Employment in key industry sectors</p>	<p>Economic activity fit for purpose, building on our key industries and economic strengths</p> <p>Rural viability</p> <p>Local business takes advantage of NBN and engages in global marketplace</p> <p>Economic activity has positive social and economic outcomes</p>	<p>Predominance of small business (52% sole traders and 46% businesses with 1-19 employees)²</p> <p>55% labour force participation (64% for NSW)⁷</p> <p>6% unemployment (5% NSW)⁷</p> <p>Median age of farmers 53 years compared to 40 years for occupations people in other sectors¹⁵</p> <p>46% employees in health care and social assistance aged 45 and over¹⁶</p>	<p>RDA-NR, NSW Trade and Investment, NSW Department of Primary Industries, DEEWR</p> <p>NSW Health, Southern Cross University, TAFE, NSW Department of Education and Communities, State Training Services</p> <p>Business and industry stakeholders, e.g. Industry Associations, Chambers of Commerce</p> <p>Local government, Social Traders, Social Ventures Australia, Centre for Social Impact, NRSDC</p>	<p>Optimise outcomes by leveraging growth in unique regional strengths and assets, e.g. health and education for older population</p> <p>Industry clusters and networks</p>	<p>11.1. Capitalise on existing industry strengths, skills base and supply chains</p> <p>11.2. Prioritise succession planning in health, community services, agriculture sectors</p> <p>11.3. Support alternate models of work for people approaching retirement</p> <p>11.4. Support transition to global digital economy</p> <p>11.5. Foster social enterprise and social business that creates social and/or environmental benefit</p> <p>11.6. Provide education about new media development and the digital economy</p> <p>11.7. Promote regional opportunities, products and services</p> <p>11.8. Foster innovation projects e.g. waste reducing / recovery project</p>

Outcome 10: A vibrant, innovative regional economy

Why this outcome is important: Economic development and entrepreneurial activity creates employment and positive social/environmental outcomes; A vibrant, innovative regional economy enables us to manage our challenges and opportunities, including an ageing workforce, retention of local knowledge, maintaining rural viability; Readiness for National Broadband Network (NBN).

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
					on regional level

Existing policy and planning context: Northern Rivers Regional Industry and Economic Plan (RIEP); Northern Rivers Digital Economy Strategy; RDA Regional Plan; NSW Government Regional Action Plan; NSW 2021

Outcome 11: A region with affordable, safe, food

Why this outcome is important: Build on existing Sustain Food collaboration, to “create a food system that respects our bodies, our communities, our producers and our land”. This outcome recognises nutrition and health benefits to individuals, families and communities of local, affordable, safe food and the impact to local sustainability.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
<p>Fruit and vegetable consumption rates</p> <p>Employment in agriculture</p> <p>Contribution of agriculture to gross regional product</p> <p>Household incomes</p> <p>Emergency food relief</p>	<p>Retention and protection of agricultural land</p> <p>Affordable nutrition</p> <p>Less reliance for emergency food relief</p> <p>Decreased waste of food</p> <p>Greater awareness of food production</p> <p>Use of food information tools and resources</p>	<p>Higher rates of fruit (56% NR; 52% NSW) and vegetable consumption (12% NR; 9% NSW); and physical activity levels (56% NR; 54% NSW) to NSW⁵</p> <p>Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing constitutes 5% of local GRP¹⁷ and employment²</p> <p>53% of households earn less than \$1,000 per week (38% in NSW)²</p>	<p>Sustain Food Working Group</p> <p>NNSWLHD</p> <p>RDA-NR</p> <p>NSW Department of Primary Industries</p> <p>Training providers</p> <p>Food and agricultural industry</p>		<p>12.1. Collaborate to support the implementation of the Sustain Food Road Map</p> <p>12.2. Build skills, awareness and capacity for home and community gardening</p> <p>12.3. Raise awareness in community and industry about options for buying local food e.g. local farmers markets, sustainfood.com.au website, <i>MyFood Northern Rivers</i> phone app, labelling food as locally produced</p> <p>12.4. Build skills and capacity for improved nutrition and low cost food</p>

Existing policy and planning context: Northern Rivers Sustain Food Roadmap; NSW 2021; National Food Plan

Outcome 12: A clean energy future for our region

Why this outcome is important: Long-term sustainability of region and the communities that live within it. This outcome also has a policy imperative, in line with national carbon reduction targets and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Community engagement identified the opportunity for greater regional investment and employment through the achievement of this outcome.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
<p>Energy use</p> <p>Consumer attitudes and behaviours regarding energy use, choices and impacts</p> <p>Energy supply</p>	<p>Renewable energy sources increased to 20% by 2020</p> <p>Greenhouse gas emissions reduced by 20% by 2020</p> <p>Increased community and individual responsibility for energy choices and their impacts</p> <p>Energy production in the region minimises its impact on the</p>	<p>Significant community concern about CSG mining</p> <p>28% of Northern Rivers annual electricity consumption could be met by the main bioenergy feed stocks</p>	<p>Sustain Energy, RDA-NR, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW Trade and Investment, NSW Department of Primary Industries, Local Government, Southern Cross University</p> <p>Local community and environmental and energy action groups</p>		<p>13.1. Support and advocate for resources to implement <i>Sustain Energy Action Plan</i>: specifically to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collate regional energy data • understand current and projected energy demand • identify viable future renewable energy sources • develop a regional carbon emissions reduction program • develop sustainable business models and investment briefs • support with communications and marketing strategy targeting behavioural change <p>13.2. Raise awareness about energy options, local and community responses, and generate community ownership of problems and solutions</p>

Outcome 12: A clean energy future for our region

Why this outcome is important: Long-term sustainability of region and the communities that live within it. This outcome also has a policy imperative, in line with national carbon reduction targets and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Community engagement identified the opportunity for greater regional investment and employment through the achievement of this outcome.

	natural environment and human health				
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Existing policy and planning context: Northern Rivers Sustain Energy Action Plan; North Coast Bioenergy Scoping Study; Australian Government, Clean Energy Future; NSW Government, Renewable Energy Action Plan; Australian Energy White Paper (2012), Australia’s Energy Transformation; Australian Bioenergy Roadmap

Outcome 13: A region with integrated, accessible services

Why this outcome is important: In the Northern Rivers, the largest growing employment sector is in community services and health and this sector services a wide range of community needs and significantly contributes to community health and wellbeing. Our strategies are designed to result in a service system based on evidence of the needs and strengths of our communities and will result in efficient and equitable use of existing resources.

How will we measure this?	What would these conditions look like?	Measures – how are we doing?	Potential partners	What works?	Strategies
<p>Employment in health care and social assistance, education and training</p> <p>Government investment into service delivery</p>	<p>Channel funding into evidence-based gap areas</p> <p>More efficient assessment and service delivery system</p> <p>Outreach services in sparsely populated hinterland areas</p> <p>No wrong door, service access experience for community is seamless in the ‘front office’</p>		<p>Government and non-government service providers</p> <p>Consumer advocacy groups</p> <p>NCOSS, ACOSS</p>	<p>Integration and collaboration</p> <p>Evidence-based practice</p>	<p>14.1. Localise decision making and planning, linking on-the-ground engagement and feedback directly with resource allocation and program development</p> <p>14.2. Develop and implement evidence-based approaches to service delivery: non-government organisations (NGOs) and government collect, share and communicate common data; programs and services based on evidence</p> <p>14.3. Collaborate to ensure communities and consumers have timely access to the best available resources to meet their needs</p> <p>14.4. Advocate for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognition/resourcing for coordination and integration of programs and services • flexible funding to enable tailoring of services and programs to the local conditions, e.g. transport for outreach to isolated communities, purchase of services • transparency /sharing data collection and communication, funding, policy and resource allocation <p>14.5. Facilitate pathways for community through enabling holistic, quality service delivery</p>

Existing policy and planning context: DisabilityCare Australia; Investing in the Early Years—A National Early Childhood Development Strategy; Early Years Learning Framework and National Quality Standards; Early Childhood Services: Models of Integration and Collaboration; AIHW, Effective practices for service delivery coordination in Indigenous communities2011

03 Implementation

Critical to the measure of success for any plan is the extent to which it is owned and implemented by the community or population it serves. The Northern Rivers Regional Social Plan cannot be fully implemented by one agency. It has been developed as a resource to the entire community, and it is the aspiration of the partners that it will be used as a tool by community groups, non-government organisations and government agencies to drive collaborative progress towards the identified social outcomes.

It is our intention to reconvene the regional social planning process in 2017 to evaluate our progress against social indicators included in this Plan and to communicate what outcomes have been achieved.

The Integrated Community Services Planning Workshop with senior managers of non-government organisations and government agencies in June 2013 canvassed the following options and opportunities for implementation and ongoing monitoring of progress:

- engagement of key stakeholders, including government (local, state and federal) and non-government organisations, as well as community groups and partnership brokers;
- using the Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework, to consider the story behind the data and how to 'turn the curve' on specific trends; and to implement an RBA-style scorecard for the plan;
- engage at the senior management / CEO level to ensure buy-in;
- build on existing networks, including regional leadership groups;
- promote the inclusion of non-government representatives in regional leadership groups;
- set priority actions and work towards change on specific issues;
- invite interested parties to nominate how they would like to be involved in implementation;
- seek feedback to identify gaps and areas of need;
- set a timeframe for first key priorities (12 months), and measure and report on these actions and change over that period;
- bring partners together to create a common logo;
- assign each outcome to a specific working group or leadership group, which must involve non-government representation; and
- utilise the regional social plan website to hold information and communicate across the region about progress.

RDA-NR and NRSDC will make public commitments to specific outcomes and strategies in the final version of the Plan to be released in October 2013.

RDA-NR is currently updating the Northern Rivers Regional Plan and whilst this will inform the identification of key actions in the Regional Social Plan by RDA-NR, the following outcomes have been priority areas for RDA-NR to date:

- A region where people are healthy
- A region where people participate in meaningful employment and education
- A region where people where people can get around easily
- A vibrant, innovative regional economy
- A region with affordable, safe, local food
- A clean energy future for our region

NRSDC is committed to advancing regional community wellbeing, and to contributing to the

desired future outcomes listed below:

- A region where our children and young people reach their potential
- A region where people with disabilities reach their fullest potential
- A region that closes the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people
- A region where people are healthy
- A region where people participate in meaningful employment and education
- A region of appropriate and affordable housing where no one has to be homeless
- A region where people where people can get around easily
- A region with sustainable, viable, community assets
- A vibrant, innovative regional economy
- A region with integrated, accessible services

In August 2013, feedback and comments will be sought using an online feedback process. This process will provide opportunities for organisations to:

1. identify specific strategies they will **contribute** to (or to which they are already contributing); and/or
2. identify strategies they will commit to taking the **lead** on in the Implementation Phase.

Those organisations that are willing to commit to a lead role in implementation will be included in the final version of the Plan as Implementation Partners. We will work with Implementation Partners following publication of the final Plan to address implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Plan and encourage collaboration between 2013 and 2018.

Monitoring and updates

The website at www.regionalsocialplan.org.au incorporates three key sections:

1. Our Communities – a repository of information drawn from the community engagement phase of the project. This section will be available as a resource to provide updates on regional consultations held by the partners or other key stakeholders during the Implementation Phase.
2. Our Region – draws together the research led by RDA-NR and which illustrates the social profile of the region. This section will be used to provide easy access to other regional and relevant data and research, or any updates of data in the *Regional Social Profile*.
3. Our Future – the main access point for any updates or additions to this Plan. This section may also be used by Implementation Partners or other stakeholders to provide information about any projects or programs conducted to make progress against the Plan or specific desired future outcomes.

04 Appendices

Acronyms used in this document

ADHC	NSW Ageing, Disability and Home Care
AEDI	Australian Early Development Index
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CEE	Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence
DEC	NSW Department of Education and Communities
DES	Disability Employment Services
DEEWR	Australian Government Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations
DOHA	Department of Health and Ageing
DSP	Disability Support Pension
FACS	NSW Government Family and Community Services
HAP	Homelessness Action Plan
JSA	Job Services Australia
RDA-NR	Regional Development Australia – Northern Rivers
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NBN	National Broadband Network
NCML	North Coast Medicare Local
NCOSS	National Council of Social Services
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NGOs	Non-government organisations
NNSWLHD	Northern NSW Local Health District
NR	Northern Rivers
NRAS	National Rental Affordability Scheme
NRSDC	Northern Rivers Social Development Council
NWDF	National Workforce Development Fund
P&Cs	Parent and Citizen Associations
RIEP	Regional Industry and Economic Plan
UCRH	University Centre for Rural Health

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