



Office of
Environment
& Heritage



Building sustainable communities

Ideas for inclusive projects

Published by

Office of Environment and Heritage

Department of Premier and Cabinet
59–61 Goulburn St, Sydney
PO Box A290
Sydney South NSW 1232

Phone: 131 555

Email: info@environment.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Acknowledgements

The Office of Environment and Heritage, Department of Premier and Cabinet developed this guide with the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW. Case studies were verified for accuracy in 2011.

Images courtesy of the Office of Environment and Heritage and the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW.

Disclaimer

The Office of Environment and Heritage has made all reasonable efforts to ensure that the contents of this document are factual and free of error, omission or inaccurate information. The Office of Environment and Heritage shall not be liable for any damage or loss that may occur in relation to any person taking or not taking action on the basis of this document.

Copyright

© 2011 State of NSW and Office of Environment and Heritage

The Office of Environment and Heritage and the State of NSW are pleased to allow this material to be reproduced in whole or in part, provided the meaning is unchanged and its source, publisher and authorship are acknowledged.

ISBN 978 1 74293 273 6

OEH 2011/0563

Published September 2011

Images courtesy of the Office of Environment and Heritage and the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW unless otherwise stated.

Contents

Terminology	2	Ideas for project activities	28
About this guide	5	Peer education and mentoring	28
The benefits of working with culturally diverse communities	6	Outdoor activities	29
Promoting equal access and opportunity	7	Classroom style activities	30
Fostering a sense of place	8	Art activities	31
Getting your project started	11	Incentives programs	32
Define the issue	11	Ideas for communication	34
Identify the target group	12	Determine what is appropriate	34
Research the local demographics	13	Translated materials	35
Review existing research about community attitudes	15	Interpreters	37
Approach representatives from the target group	15	Bilingual information	38
Talk to others who know people from the target group	16	Visual resources	39
Be sensitive to cultural norms and practices	18	Promote the project	40
Bring people together to talk	19	Celebrate the project's achievements	42
Ask questions	21	Case study	44
Linking with other community programs	24	Tzu Chi Foundation: Water for Life Ambassadors	44
Existing community education and migrant support programs	24	Cooks River Environmental and Cultural Partnership	48
English as a second language (ESL) and community language classes	26	Saving Water in Asian Restaurants	52
Festivals, ceremonies and celebrations	27	Appendix	54
		Number of LOTE speakers greater than 5000 in NSW LGAs 2001 and 2006	54
		Local Government Areas with the Highest Proportion of Language Other Than English Speakers	56
		Local Government Areas with the Highest Number of Language Other Than English Speakers	56
		Local government community profile	57

Terminology

Many different terms are used when talking about people from diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds. In this guide, 'ethnic communities' has been used as a generic term. However, the information in this guide applies to people from all of the groups described below.



Tip

The term 'community' is often used loosely. In general terms, being part of a community implies a sense of belonging and a shared identity. For example, the shared identity can be of nationality, ethnicity, language, religion or place of residence. People from any particular community are not necessarily one homogenous group. In any community, there are often a number of distinct sub-groups and people can be part of more than one group.

The most appropriate terminology to use will depend on the context. The guiding rule is to reflect as accurately as possible the group to which you are referring. For example, in some contexts the term 'non-English-speaking background' is accurate. In other contexts, another term would better describe the aspect of cultural diversity being referred to, such as 'people from the Italian community'.



Tip

Use terminology that reflects as accurately as possible the group to which you are referring. Avoid generalising or using labels. Also avoid referring to people by using acronyms, or making assumptions about people's birthplace, culture, religion or main language.

Here are some of the more common terms, and their appropriate use:

Culturally and linguistically diverse groups

For a whole population that includes different people from a diverse range of cultures, useful terms include:

- culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community
- culturally diverse population
- people of culturally diverse backgrounds.

Some things to keep in mind when using the term:

- The entire population of New South Wales can be said to be a culturally and linguistically diverse community. A whole local government area may be a culturally and linguistically diverse community.
- A specific ethnic group, however, should not be described as 'culturally and linguistically diverse' if its members share a common cultural and linguistic background.

Ethnic communities

For people who are migrants or the descendants of migrants, and who define their own cultural identity partly or wholly on this basis, useful terms include:

- members of an ethnic community
- people from ethnic communities.

Migrants

For people who have recently arrived in Australia, useful terms include:

- migrant
- immigrant
- first-generation immigrant
- overseas-born.

Language other than English

For people who speak languages other than English, useful terms include:

- speakers of specific languages (e.g. French speakers)
- speakers of languages other than English (LOTE). Community language media is often referred to as 'LOTE media'
- bilingual (people who speak 2 languages)
- multilingual (people who speak 3 or more languages).

Non-English-speaking background (NESB)

For people whose first language is not English, useful terms include:

- non-English-speaking background
- from a language background other than English
- from a background other than English-speaking
- overseas-born Australian of non-English-speaking background
- first-generation Australian of non-English-speaking background.

Some things to keep in mind when using the term 'non-English-speaking background':

- It is not always accurate. Many people come to Australia from countries where English is widely spoken, such as India, Pakistan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Fiji and parts of Africa.
- It focuses only on linguistic difference and ignores cultural diversity.
- It can have negative connotations, as it may imply that English is the desirable norm from which non-English speakers deviate.
- It is often used to refer only to migrants, not considering their Australian-born children whose first language might also not be English; or to Aboriginal Australians whose first language is also not English.



Just ask!

If in doubt, ask the group/s you are working with how they choose to refer to themselves.



Useful resource

Terminology and concepts

The NSW Community Relations Commission has compiled a list of currently accepted terminology. www.crc.nsw.gov.au/eaps/terminology

Sustainable communities – what do we mean?

The concept of sustainability has its origins in the environment movement of the 1960s in response to concerns about the impact of society consuming natural resources faster than they could be replaced. The term 'sustainability' does not always translate easily and is sometimes only considered in limited environmental terms. It is important to remember that the concept of sustainability includes three overarching and interacting elements: social, environmental and economic. Whilst most readers are familiar with the concept of sustainability, we sometimes gloss over the idea of social sustainability.

According to the Western Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS),

'Social sustainability occurs when the formal and informal processes; systems; structures; and relationships actively support the capacity of current and future generations to create healthy and livable communities. Socially sustainable communities are equitable, diverse, connected and democratic and provide a good quality of life.'

*WACOSS Housing and community sustainability indicators project,
Stage 1 Report Model of Sustainability April 2002 (accessed 13 September 2010)*

www.wacoss.org.au



Arabic community tree planting. Photo: Bankstown City Council.

About this guide

This guide is for local council officers and educators who run projects aimed at developing sustainable and harmonious communities. There are many ideas here for running projects that can be accessible to everyone within the community, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, language, religion or other characteristics.

Included in this guide is:

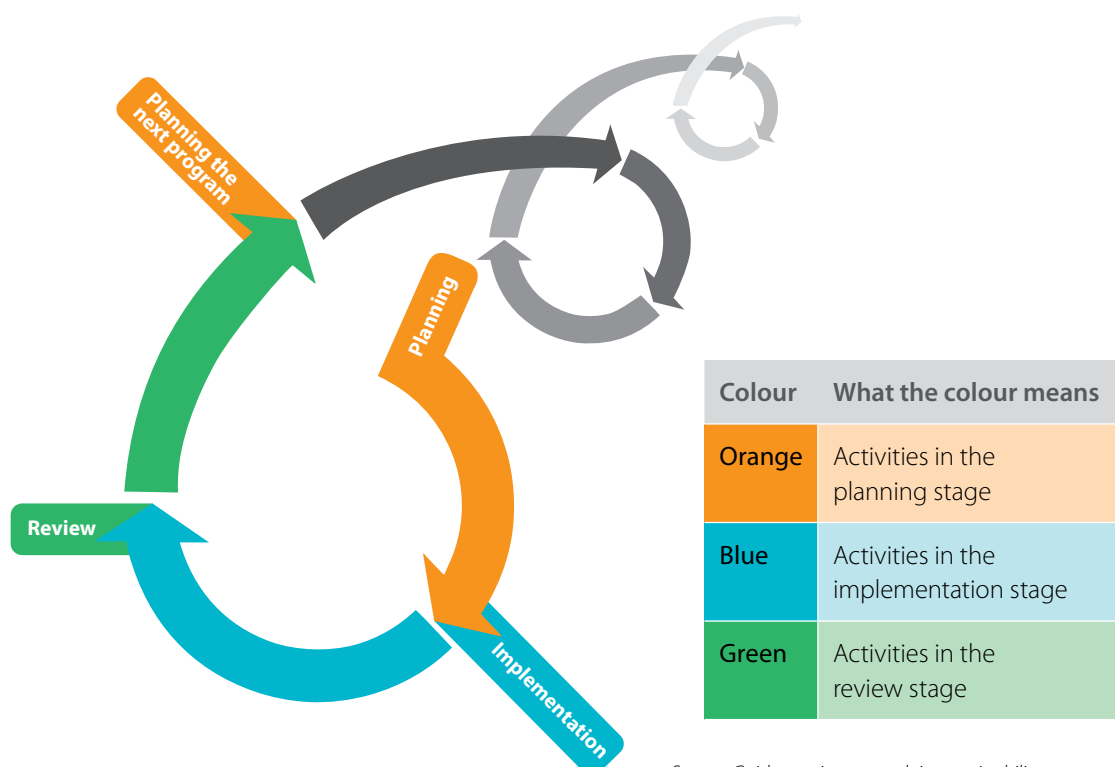
- useful background information, such as why it is important and worthwhile to work with culturally diverse communities
- tips and suggestions for running different aspects of a project
- case studies and examples ('snapshots') of innovative projects to date.

There is no 'correct' approach or formula for running projects in culturally diverse communities. The ideas in this guide come from some lessons learnt and shared experiences of educators and project participants.

The most important things are to:

- work in partnership with the people involved with the project (each step of the way)
- foster a culture of openness and inclusiveness
- be flexible and run activities that are relevant to the people involved
- stay open to a two-way process of exchanging knowledge (between you and the people involved)
- view the project as part of a continuous process of learning:

The continuous learning process



Source: *Guide to using research in sustainability programs*

The benefits of working with culturally diverse communities

NSW is becoming increasingly diverse. To build healthy, active, sustainable communities state and local government initiatives must embrace the principles of cultural inclusivity, awareness and appropriateness.

'As a nation, we now speak over 300 languages, practise more than 100 religions and originate from over 230 different countries. This increased diversity has brought with it many new recreational and cultural experiences, and has undoubtedly made Australia a more vibrant and interesting place to live.'

Senator Chris Evans, Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, and The Hon. Laurie Ferguson MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services
The People of New South Wales: Statistics from the 2006 Census,
Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2008



Workshop for new migrants at Australian Centre for Languages, Auburn.

In NSW there are many environmental issues that need cooperation between government, businesses, community organisations and individuals. Perhaps many of these environmental issues could be resolved through effective communication between the various groups involved.

People in NSW are concerned about the environment. The Who Cares about the Environment in 2009? research by the Office of Environment and Heritage showed many people are concerned about environmental problems, mainly for future generations, and the need to protect ecosystems.

Promoting equal access and opportunity

In 2006, almost 1.2 million people in NSW were from a non-English-speaking background. In some council areas (Fairfield, Auburn and Canterbury), the proportion of people from backgrounds other than English-speaking is greater than 60 per cent.

Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census 2006

Sometimes it can be difficult for council officers and educators to ensure that community projects reach diverse groups of people in the community. People in the community may already be interested in a particular issue but unaware of a project aiming at addressing it. Linguistic and cultural factors can also restrict people's access to information and therefore their ability to become involved.

Community projects can assist people to make informed decisions about their lives. Everybody is entitled to information and resources that encourage positive choices for:

- recycling
- green cleaning
- composting
- worm farming
- water-wise gardening
- waste reduction
- water conservation
- energy conservation
- weed removal
- protecting habitat and biodiversity.

Issues relating to the environment are not necessarily new knowledge for people. People may already have knowledge and skills to address a particular issue, so a key purpose of a project may simply be to give positive reinforcement for what people already know and do.



Composting workshop.

Good community projects also create valuable opportunities for building communication, understanding and trust, and often bring people together for the first time. Engaging the whole community gives everyone an opportunity to be involved in creating a healthy, harmonious community and environment.

All NSW Government agencies are required to observe the four principles of multiculturalism enshrined in the Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000. These principles promote equal access to contribute to, and participate in, one's community; respect for diverse cultures, languages and religions; opportunities to participate in Government run programs; and recognition of the linguistic and cultural assets in the NSW population.

NSW Community Relations Commission

Embracing diversity as an advantage

Working with people from a diverse range of cultures, experiences and languages is an advantage for any community project. Diverse groups bring diverse skills, knowledge, experiences, communication networks, artistic expression, history and stories.

With diversity of outlook comes diversity of ideas and innovative approaches to solving problems. Community projects that embrace the diversity within a community are valuable opportunities to make new discoveries, form new relationships, cooperate and solve problems together – both locally and globally.



Vietnamese participants learn more about the benefits of bluetongues.

The concept of 'citizenship' is not limited to the naturalisation process, but rather focuses on civic participation and responsibilities of the people of NSW.

NSW Community Relations Commission

Fostering a sense of place

The level of participation in a community project often depends on how strongly people feel a sense of belonging or connection to place.

People of ethnic communities come from many different situations.

- Some people may have come from countries where English is spoken, but they are unfamiliar with the Australian landscape, climate and sustainable-living practices.
- Some come from non-English-speaking backgrounds but have lived in Australia for many years and speak English well.
- Others come from non-English-speaking backgrounds and have lived in Australia for many years but don't speak English well.
- Some have recently arrived in Australia, already speaking English as a second language.
- Others have recently arrived in Australia and do not speak English at all.
- Some have come from devastating social and political circumstances and are happy to be in Australia.
- Others have come from desperate situations and are grieving for their families and homelands left behind.

'People have a bond, attachment and familiar sensations in their country of origin. When they come to Australia, they can feel grief for this loss of attachment. Some people plant a fig tree in the garden, as a little bit of home. Then the Australian birds come and eat the figs. It is very frustrating. It is hard to develop an attachment to something you don't yet know much about.'

Mariette Mikael, Arabic bilingual educator
Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project

Many recently arrived migrants are most likely to be focused on becoming established, finding a house, a job and a school for their children. Many live in relative isolation within the community. Fostering a sense of safety and connectedness to the local area and community can encourage people to get involved in local activities. For some recently arrived migrants, planting a tree or going on a guided bushwalk might be an important way of establishing a connection with their new home.

For others, learning English or finding a house or a job might help them to feel a sense of belonging and security.



Snapshot Operation Bluetongue

Community workers from the Auburn Migrant Resource Centre took a group of recently migrated Afghan, Iraqi and African women on an outing to Sydney Olympic Park. The outing was offered as part of Operation Bluetongue, a project designed to assist the settlement process of newly arrived migrants with education about the natural environment. At the start of the outing an Aboriginal elder performed a Welcome to Country ceremony and gave an introduction about Australia's Aboriginal heritage. The outings are both social and educational experiences, and aim to encourage participants to establish their 'sense of place' and recognise Australia as their new home. Each of the women involved had experienced extreme hardship, coming from a war-torn country. For most of the participants, it was their first experience of a bushwalk and of seeing Australian native animals so close up. They were apprehensive about touching the animals, but were interested in the information about them. For one participant, it was her first time outside Auburn in the five years that she had been living there.



'Connecting back with nature is considered valuable for the women's emotional wellbeing, and for this reason they enjoyed the gathering with others and the experience of nature.'

Oula Falah, former Community Capacity Building Officer
Auburn Migrant Resource Centre



Useful resource

Learning from Operation Bluetongue – A Facilitator's Kit: Developing a sense of place for new migrants through cultural exchange, biodiversity education and social networking.

The kit can be downloaded from www.ecslp.org.au (search under 'Resources')

'We chose this land. We have a reason to keep the Australian environment beautiful so we can all enjoy it.'

Quoc Tran Duong, Chinese – Vietnamese bilingual environmental educator
Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project

Creating sustainable and harmonious communities

Encouraging people to identify with and contribute to their community has important social benefits, as well as environmental and economic benefits. Feeling connected to a community encourages people to have a voice and contribute something positive.

Community projects that involve diverse groups of people provide valuable opportunities to foster social inclusion, raise cultural awareness and promote

community harmony. Bringing different people together and being interested in what they think, feel, say and have to offer promotes tolerance and a strong foundation from which to build community harmony and develop future projects.



Multicultural Cooks River Sustainability & Arts Festival



Snapshot

Sustainability Street in Merrylands

With funding from Housing NSW, Holroyd City Council worked with St George Community Housing to coordinate a program at an apartment block in Merrylands. The project is based on the Sustainability Street program developed by Vox Bandicoot in Victoria.

The residents of the apartment block met every five or six weeks to participate in workshops about sustainable living practices such as recycling (some of the residents were unaware of what could be recycled and had been putting plastic bags in the recycling bins). The residents also worked together to design a community garden for the apartment block. A bilingual educator was engaged to assist the Chinese-speaking residents in communicating with the other residents throughout the project. The bilingual educator also used Chinese versions of the 'Easy guide' brochures to help the senior citizens with hearing difficulties.

The program promoted environmental awareness while also building new relationships and community harmony between the tenants, who shared morning tea each time they met.



Other useful resources

Implementing the principles of multiculturalism locally
www.crc.nsw.gov.au/publications

Learning for Sustainability 2007–10
www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cee/lfs.htm

Getting your project started

As the project is being planned and getting started, keep your ideas about how to run it fairly broad until you talk to some people from the target group. The details really need to be worked out together so that people have an opportunity to participate and contribute in ways that are meaningful to them.

Remember that your desired outcomes of the project might not always be the same things that motivate people to participate. For example, some people might initially join a project to meet new people and to get involved in the local community.

Projects that allow people to contribute and build on their existing knowledge and practices have a much greater chance of creating a meaningful learning experience where people feel that they can make a genuine contribution. These projects are also valuable opportunities for two-way learning.

Define the issue

Look at what is happening in the local area to cause the issue of concern. Think about what your project aims to address in relation to the issue. This will need to be clearly defined and communicated effectively.

Examples of issues:

- excessive use of water or energy
- incorrect recycling practices
- rubbish dumping
- pollution
- degradation of a natural area
- damage to habitat of a threatened species.

Set some realistic objectives and outcomes for the project that can be measured over time.

Example of a project objective (the purpose of a project):

Within six months, residents of the (targeted) apartment building will know how to dispose of unwanted household items correctly.

Examples of project outcomes (what the project aims to achieve):

Reduced illegal dumping incidents around the targeted apartment building.

Reduced costs to council for collection and disposal of dumped items in the targeted area.



Bilingual educators select which issues are most important to them

Checking in

- What is the issue of concern?
- Are there any 'hotspots' where the issue is most prevalent?
- Who is contributing to the issue?
- Who is affected by the issue?
- Who else has an interest or 'stake' in the issue?

A sustainability project might also have social, economic or political outcomes. A community project often addresses several needs at the same time:

- physical needs (changing the state of the environment)
- your organisation's needs
- information and communication needs
- settlement needs
- financial needs
- social needs.



Useful resource

For information on how to use research in sustainability programs, including the planning stage, see

Guide to using research in sustainability programs

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/education/researchguide.htm

Identify the target group

Start identifying the people that the project aims to reach. Identify the target group/s by characteristics such as age, gender, location, occupation, cultural background, main language spoken and so on.

'Working with people from diverse backgrounds has given me an understanding about the communities within ethnic communities – such as the different age groups, religions and language backgrounds, and how they think and do things in different ways. It's easy to assume that people need information about how to save water, but I've met people who are already really careful about how they use water and can teach us a thing or two!'

**Jean, Waterevolution Project
Marrickville Council**

Examples of target groups:

- All people living in a specific location, such as an apartment building, a street, a suburb or a creek catchment
- Speakers of a language other than English
- Members of a cultural organisation
- Recently arrived migrants
- Women aged 25–50 years
- Families with young children
- People who shop (or work) in the business district
- Business owners
- Young people.



Connecting human health and environment. Photo: Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority.



Tip

The issue may require engaging with a lot of people from many parts of the community and different groups. If this is your first experience working with culturally diverse communities, it is a good idea to start with one or two target groups, and allow the project to evolve. A project doesn't always have to encompass the whole council area or run a large number of activities. One well planned activity can also make a difference to an issue.

Research the local demographics

Do your own research to get an idea of where the people in the target group live, the main languages they speak and their levels of English language proficiency. Demographic information is also useful for:

- developing project proposals and funding applications
- deciding whether to provide information in languages other than English
- getting an idea for where to distribute information.

Remember that the data provides an indication, but it is not a substitute for talking directly with people from the target group.

Checking in

- What countries are people from?
- What cultures and religions do they identify themselves as belonging to?
- What languages do people speak and read at home?
- How many people speak English well? Not well? Not at all?



Useful resources

Australian Bureau of Statistics

This is the Australian Government's central authority for statistical information. It provides free, comprehensive information based on Census data.

www.abs.gov.au

NSW Community Relations Commission

This is the NSW government agency responsible for promoting community harmony, participation, equal rights, access to services and recognition of different ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds. It publishes The People of New South Wales, a compilation of statistics on ancestry, birthplace, language and religion based on Census data.

www.crc.nsw.gov.au/publications/documents/ponsw

Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW

This is the peak non-government organisation that promotes advocacy, education and community development of members' ethnic communities.

www.eccnsw.org.au

Migrant Resource Centres

These are community-based organisations that provide support, services and assistance with the settlement process of migrants and refugees.

www.eccnsw.org.au (Look in the 'Links' section.)

Local councils

All councils are required to develop a social plan every five years, which includes information about the people living, working and visiting in the area, and the services and facilities provided to meet their needs. Other useful sources of information from councils include:

- reports about previous projects and community attitudes surveys
- directories of local groups, organisations, services and places of worship.

Review existing research about community attitudes

Review the existing research about environmental attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, understandings and practices of people from ethnic communities. This research provides useful information about trends within communities, as well as effective questions and research methods.

Remember that the information in this research is a guide only. It is not a substitute for talking directly with people from the target group.



Useful resources

Who cares about the Environment in 2009?

This is a research project conducted by the Office of Environment and Heritage every three years since 1994 that uses surveys and focus groups to measure people's environmental knowledge, awareness and behaviours, as well as motivations for and barriers to adopting environmentally friendly behaviour.

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/community/whocares.htm

The environment and ethnic communities in 2004

This is a research project that uses telephone surveys and focus group discussions to investigate the relationships between ethnicity and environmental knowledge, attitudes and behaviours in eight of NSW's largest ethnic communities (speakers of Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Korean, Macedonian and Vietnamese).

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/community/ethniccom.htm

Local Council community attitudes surveys

Some councils conduct these surveys on a regular basis.

Approach representatives from the target group

Invite representatives of the target group to be involved in planning the project. This is a valuable opportunity to start building trust, relationships and communication networks from the very beginning of the project. Allow time for relationships to develop. It might require working through barriers such as language and any fears or suspicions that people might feel about government organisations. Sometimes this requires making the extra effort to discuss concerns and answer questions. It is important that people understand the aims and benefits of the project so that they can promote the project to others in their communities.



Tip

Using photographs or short films, show examples of people participating in similar projects. You could also invite people who have been involved in similar projects to come and share their experiences with the target group representatives.

Talk to others who know people from the target group

Approach the people who already have contacts and resources that will help you connect with the target group. These people may also offer valuable information and local knowledge:

- Council staff who work with community services and community organisations
- Interagency networks for community development workers
- Staff and community workers from migrant resource centres, community health centres and neighbourhood centres
- Ethnic or cultural advisory groups (some local councils have these)
- Community leaders, including religious leaders, elders, mentors and youth leaders
- Leaders, committee members and members of community organisations
- Teachers from community language and religious schools
- Teachers from schools where there is large percentage of students from the target group
- ESL (English as a second language) teachers
- Councillors and Local Members
- Coordinators and bilingual educators from the Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project



Tip

Community leaders are often accepted as the 'voice' of a particular ethnic community. However, within any community there may be great diversity. Community leaders are one, but not the only, representative voice of a community. For some communities that are fragmented, it may be difficult to find community leaders, if in fact there are any. The workers who already have contacts within these communities might be able to assist.



Bilingual environmental educators from the Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project



Useful resources

Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project

This is a joint project between the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW and the Office of Environment and Heritage. A team of bilingual environmental educators is available to support local councils to work more effectively with culturally and linguistically diverse organisations and residents. The educators work with the Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Korean, Macedonian, Spanish and Vietnamese speaking communities to deliver sustainability workshops, and support councils to develop local community-based environmental education projects.

www.eccnsw.org.au (click on *Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project*)

Ethnic communities reference guide

This guide, produced by the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW, contains a comprehensive list of organisations that work with ethnic communities.

Email admin@eccnsw.org.au Phone (02) 9319 0288

Directory of NSW community organisations

This is a list of the peak or key community organisations, produced by the NSW Community Relations Commission.

www.crc.nsw.gov.au/communities/NSW_Community_Organisations

EmailLink

This is an email distribution network developed to enable direct communication with particular ethnic community groups, leaders and individuals.

www.crc.nsw.gov.au/services/emaillink

Be sensitive to cultural norms and practices

People of ethnic communities are not one homogenous group within society. Within any community there are often several sub-groups, and people from the same cultural background or family will have different concerns, knowledge, skills and experiences. When developing the project and activities, learn about the main cultural norms and practices of the people participating, including the factors listed below:

- Family structure, and which family members are the most influential
- Education and literacy levels
- Values relating to education, family, money etc
- Appropriate ways of contacting people and groups – who to approach and how
- Body language, such as shaking hands, raising voices, pointing fingers, making physical or eye contact
- Appropriate greetings, such as addressing people as Mr, Mrs, Ms or Miss, or by their first name
- Rules for men and women participating in activities together
- Political systems, and how people relate to the government, rules and regulations
- Religious and spiritual beliefs
- Prayer routines (avoid booking meetings at routine prayer times, or allow for prayer breaks and organise a prayer room)
- Cultural or religious dietary traditions



Just ask!

If providing refreshments for a meeting or event, work with someone from the target group to organise catering that is appropriate and considers people's diets and traditions.

People who share a language do not necessarily share a culture or religion. People born in the same country or region do not necessarily have the same first language. A person's religious faith is not bounded by culture or language ... Being Muslim is not an ethnicity, nor does it necessarily mean you speak Arabic. Muslims have come to Australia from over 120 countries.

Practical guide to involving volunteers from diverse cultural and language backgrounds in your organisation
Volunteering Australia, 2007.



Multicultural bush picnic

Bring people together to talk

Bring people together to start bouncing around ideas and exchanging information. This could involve anything from formal meetings and site visits to an informal chat at the local cafe.

'People's experiences in Vietnam are very different to here, and I like to encourage people in the group to share their stories and participate in the group discussions. This is how we can all learn and benefit from other people's experiences and understanding.'

Tim Huynh,
Vietnamese bilingual educator
Ethnic Communities Sustainable
Living Project



Meeting to discuss waste issues at the Happiness Inn



Snapshot

Living Green: Communities, Environment, Education project

In 2009, the Auburn Community Development Network (ACDN) initiated this innovative project to bring together cultural development and environmental awareness. With the assistance of multilingual support workers, the project also aims to engage with people who are not literate in either their first language or English. Working with diverse groups of people across Western Sydney, environmental issues and sustainable local practices are promoted through digital storytelling, arts activities and sharing of cultural practices. The participants are encouraged to share their knowledge and ideas about protecting the environment in their everyday lives, such as in the kitchen and garden. Through this process of information sharing and consultation, gaps in environmental awareness are also identified, such as the appropriate disposal of unwanted furniture and household products, recycling and access to community gardens. Participants then have the opportunity to learn more about these local environmental issues and practices through a range of activities including arts projects, workshops and field trips.



Markets at Auburn Central. Photo: ACDN



Meetings

Whatever format is used, the aims of a meeting should always be to:

- encourage people to share insights, stories and knowledge
- gauge skills, knowledge, attitudes, current behaviours and needs
- find out how people want to contribute
- discuss the most appealing educational methods and formats
- pre-test proposed strategies, activities and publications
- share concerns, offer feedback and evaluate progress.



Representatives of the Congolese community at the Multicultural Leaders Forum on Climate Change



Tip

Meetings can be daunting for some people. Avoid getting bogged down with bureaucratic meeting formats and terminology. All that is needed is a clear agenda, some lively discussion and a list of actions to keep the project moving.

Site visits

A great way to generate discussion is to take people on a site visit. Take people to the source of the issue so that they can see the connection between their actions and the effects. Providing this direct experience encourages people to feel connected with the area, ask questions and start developing solutions. A site visit puts the issue into context.

Not all countries have separate sewerage and stormwater systems. Seeing a gross-pollution trap (GPT) emptied can be a great eye-opener for people! The location of the site visit depends on the project. If the project relates to healthy waterways, visit the local creek, river or ridgeline that forms the catchment boundary. Encourage discussion by asking questions such as 'How would you like this creek to look?', 'How could we make that change?'

Other locations for site visits might include a community garden, bushland reserve, drinking water supply, rubbish tip, recycling facility, a sustainable house or eco-living centre.



Visit to Rouse Hill Recycled Water Facility

Ask questions

Asking specific questions gathers valuable information to help identify and understand the target group and their knowledge, attitude, opinions, behaviours and skills relevant to the issue. Remember to acknowledge any differences, and look for the common ground where you can work together.

Always give some background about the project and explain why you are asking these questions.

Reassure people that they will not be in trouble for doing or saying the wrong thing. Let them know that their input is valuable and how the information gathered will be used to develop the project activities and resources.

Questions about knowledge, attitudes and behaviours

Examples of questions to ask:

- What do you think about the issue?
- What do you already know about the issue?
- Are you concerned about it? Why? Why not?
- How does the issue affect people in your community?
- Does a similar issue exist in your country of origin?
- What do people do about it there? Does it work?
- What would you change if you could?
- What do you think should be done about the issue?
- Who do you think should do it?
- What other solutions can you think of?
- What barriers can you think of?
- What experiences and skills do you have?
- What do you do about the issue, at home? In your garden? In the street?
- What would you need in order to do these?
- What information do you need?
- How do you prefer to receive the information (in what format)?
- What are you concerned about?
- What is important to you?
- What would you need in order to participate?



Tip

Be systematic in the way you collect and collate the information you gather from talking to people. This includes planning who you will talk to and why and how you will talk with them, keeping a record of the questions you ask and the responses you are given, collating this information and recording any conclusions and recommendations you draw from this. This will allow you to refer back to it during the course of the project, whether it is to justify, clarify or review your approach.



Tip

People may already be doing something positive in their everyday life but not thinking of it as 'living sustainably', being 'green' or 'environmentally friendly'. While listening to the responses, listen to the language and expressions people use. They might talk about 'fresh air', 'clean beaches', 'good places to fish', 'safe places for family picnics' or 'saving money on electricity and water bills'. This same wording can be used in the project's promotional and educational information.

Questions about sense of place

- In what ways is this place different to other places where you have lived?
- What do you think is the best thing about living in Australia/Sydney/your local area/your suburb?

Questions about languages spoken and cultural activities

- What language/s do you speak at home?
- What language/s do most people speak in your community?
- What language/s do you read? (Remember that people may be able to speak a language but not read it well.)
- How could this project link with your community's cultural days and traditions?
- What kind of activities might be suitable or interesting to the men/women/children/families in your community?



Tip

Ask people to map the places they visit and the activities they do in the local area. This is also a useful way of gathering information about the appropriate places to distribute invitations and information for the project.



Worm farming workshop for the Macedonian community in Cabramatta

Questions about being involved in the project

- Would you like to be involved in this project?
- What kind of activities would you like to participate in? Where? When?
- How could we encourage other people in your community to get involved?
- What might prevent them from getting involved?
- How do you find out about what's happening in the local area? (for example, community radio or television stations, local newspaper, community newspaper, community or church noticeboards, word of mouth)
- Where do cultural groups meet in the area?



Useful resources

Guide to using research in sustainability programs

This guide explains how to plan to do research, source existing research, conduct new research and integrate research in sustainability or sustainability education programs. In the appendices, there are links to useful methodological resources and tools, and a checklist of research questions.

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/education/researchguide.htm

Practical guide to involving volunteers from diverse cultural and language backgrounds in your organisation

www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Does your project make a difference?

A guide to evaluating environmental education projects and programs

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/community/projecteval.htm

The Education for Sustainability Professional Learning Hub (EFS Hub) is an interactive online professional learning network and resource hub for sustainability educators. Visit

www.efslarninghub.net.au

Linking with other community programs

Look for opportunities to link the project's activities with other community development programs where people are already involved. Consider taking the project activities to these places or events, and working with a 'captive audience'.

Often, community projects have a limited timeframe or short-term funding. If your project is a one-off or has a short life span, it is a good idea to link it with other community programs that receive ongoing support and funding.



Tip

Some councils have a high turnover of staff. It can take a long time to build trust from people in the community. If you are leaving the organisation, let people involved in the project know in advance. Look after those positive relationships that have been nurtured and connect these people with other staff members until a replacement is employed.

Existing community education and migrant support programs

Migrant resource centres, diversity services centres, community centres, neighbourhood centres and open spaces run a broad range of education programs for recent migrants and are often the hubs of information for local communities. Some examples include:

■ Settlement support programs

Activities about sustainable living could be included in the settlement support process to foster a sense of place and orientate people to their new environment.

■ Programs in other sections of council

Consider how your project can link with Bushcare volunteer programs, guided walks, health promotion, community consultations, community development and information packs for new residents.

■ Religious organisations

Members who organise activities may welcome opportunities to become involved in other local community projects.

■ Health promotion programs

Promoting good health has many synergies with community gardening, organic gardening, composting, worm-farming, Bushcare, sustainable shopping, healthy eating and green cleaning workshops. Recreation and opportunities for regular exercise could also promote cycling along a river foreshore or walking in natural open spaces.



*Bushwalking for health.
Photo: Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority*

■ **Leisure programs and classes**

Class activities could incorporate guided bushwalks and practical demonstrations.

■ **Community language schools, religious schools or schools with a high percentage of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds**

Resources and lesson plans could be developed to assist teachers in delivering information as part of the curriculum.



Snapshot

Environmental activities incorporated into Chinese Leisure Learning program

The Carlingford and Epping branches of Christian Community Aid have integrated environmental education activities into their Chinese Leisure Learning program. In 2007 the photography class participated in a photography competition and exhibition with an environmental theme. The competition produced outstanding photographs of local natural areas. The images that made an ‘impact statement’ were exhibited at the Chinese Leisure Learning open day and at a presentation for Waste Services NSW, which had provided a grant to the program.

Other classes have included walks through a local bushland reserve, bushcraft, local places of conservation significance and wildlife habitats. Council officers from the City of Ryde have assisted with running some of the activities and providing technical information. Many of the participants are migrants from highly urbanised and densely populated countries, so appreciating the beauty of the natural environment is a new experience for them. Some participants showed a sense of wonder and fascination, as they did not grow up with the experience of being in the natural environment. This made the classes a rewarding experience for both the participants and the organisers.



Dundas Community garden

English as a second language (ESL) and community language classes

ESL classes are offered by several organisations including NSW TAFE, community colleges, migrant resource centres (MRC), community centres, religious organisations, the NSW Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES) and the Australian Centre for Languages (ACL). Charity organisations such as the Smith Family, St Vincent de Paul Society and Mission Australia also provide English learning classes and tutoring for recently arrived migrants.

The NSW Federation of Community Language Schools provides language classes after school hours to support children to speak and read their home language. At the time of printing 34,000 students were enrolled in 56 languages.

Language teachers are often looking for opportunities to develop lessons, workshops, demonstrations and excursions that provide a meaningful context for students. Working with language classes also offers an opportunity to meet more community members.



Snapshot

Water, waste and energy workshops for Auburn ACL students



Teachers at the Australian Centre for Languages (ACL) in Auburn have run short workshops for their English language students about water conservation, waste management and energy use. The workshop content was developed specifically for students who are learning English. An officer from Auburn Council presented the workshop about waste and recycling as part of council's broader waste education strategy and the rolling out of new recycling bins. Council's education strategy was addressing illegal dumping, incorrect recycling practices and littering in multi-unit dwelling residences, particularly in north Auburn where a large number of newly arrived migrants live. As well as door knocking, Auburn Council staff took the education to places where the residents were already attending, such as English classes.

'The participants were interested and understood what we were asking of them and why. Delivering the workshops involves a free morning once in a while and compiling some resources to show the participants. It is not a huge workload, and we are aiming to visit the ACL classes regularly.'

Madeline
Auburn City Council



Useful resources

Discovering biodiversity: how to plan and deliver an excursion for English as a second language (ESL) class groups. A resource for organisations and ESL teachers.

www.kmc.nsw.gov.au (Search 'discovering biodiversity')

NSW Federation of Community Language Schools
www.nswfcls.org.au

Festivals, ceremonies and celebrations

Many groups and councils run cultural festivals, ceremonies and celebrations that bring together residents, businesses and organisations. Think about how your project can be linked to these events by holding a stall, distributing information or running an activity.

One example is the coffee ceremony that is an integral part of Ethiopian culture, and is central to social gatherings where community issues are collectively discussed. Incorporating this kind of activity into an education event at a local park is a nice way to get people involved.



Snapshot

Information stall with council staff and bilingual educators

Vietnamese and Chinese bilingual environmental educators have been working with council officers at an information stall during Fairfield Council's Cabramatta Moon Festival.

The educators talk to people passing by and hand out information in Vietnamese, Chinese and English. The educators provide familiar faces and encourage people from various cultural backgrounds to approach the stall.



Cabramatta Moon Festival

'A lot of people were keen to find out environmental information from the bilingual educators. Without the educators present I was surprised at how few people came up to our stall.'

Matthew,
Environmental Health Officer



Useful resources

Practical guide to involving volunteers from diverse cultural and language backgrounds in your organisation

www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Training manual on recruiting and supporting volunteers from diverse cultural and language backgrounds

www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Ideas for project activities

There is no rule about which project activities work best. Stay flexible and run activities that:

- provide a fun, welcoming and safe learning environment
- give information in different languages
- allow for different learning styles
- encourage discovering and learning with each other
- incorporate with cultural identities, traditions, food and music
- encourage participation as part of existing community activities and time commitments.



Just ask!

Consult with representatives of the target group and community workers about the appropriateness the proposed activities. Activities or games that involve people wearing coloured tags, throwing balls, physical contact or taking shoes off (for example, to discuss the concept of an 'ecological footprint') may be uncomfortable for some people.

Within a project, there might need to be different activities for different sub-groups:

- Some people might prefer to do things in groups with people they already know.
- Others might enjoy participating in a fun activity with people they don't know.
- Some people might prefer to do practical, hands-on activities rather than being involved in meetings and discussions. An example is getting men involved in a local project to change light bulbs or shower heads throughout the neighbourhood.



Operation Bluetongue participants learning an Aboriginal dance

Peer education and mentoring

Peer education and mentoring activities work well because they get people of equal status and influence talking to and inspiring each other. The *Water for Life Ambassadors* and the *Cooks River* case studies at the end of this guide describe good examples of peer education projects.



Tip

Mentors and volunteers involved in your project will need training and support from your organisation.



Outdoor activities

Outdoor activities are opportunities to give people good experiences of the natural environment whilst also fostering positive attitudes towards protecting these areas. Outdoor activities can also help demystify preconceived ideas or media-generated fears (such as images of crocodiles and poisonous snakes that are often shown in media and tourism promotions, both in Australia and overseas). At the same time, fun activities outdoor will also promote good health, exercise and social contact, fulfilling several positive outcomes at the same time.

Examples of outdoor activities include:

- guided tours in natural areas, such as bushland, parks, wetlands and rivers
- visits to a local park or reserve where people can see others having picnics, walking and enjoying being outdoors. If the participants have a good experience and know how to get there, they might feel encouraged to visit again in their own time
- existing community events such as Clean Up Australia Day, National Tree Day, World Wetlands Day, Walk Against Warming or Earth Hour
- field trips and site tours to show the issue in context
- fishing trips to introduce information about aquatic habitats and sustainable fishing practices (remember that while fishing might be considered a male-dominated activity in Australia, this is not the case in some other countries)
- tree planting days with a picnic lunch afterwards, opportunities to play music, share coffee and socialise
- meeting an Aboriginal elder and participating in a local bush foods tour
- bush regeneration days, which also encourage people to get to know others in their local area. People can start their own bush regeneration project or join an existing group. Bush regeneration activities are usually promoted as 'volunteering'. Be aware that some people might see this as a negative concept – a way of 'using' people for free labour. Consider using other language such as 'looking after our local bushland reserve'.
- work days at a community nursery, where people can be involved in growing and/or planting native plants while also learning about biodiversity
- a community garden project, allowing people to meet others in the neighbourhood while growing their own food. Gardens can be spiritual and safe places where people can do something good for their own wellbeing while also contributing to the health of the environment.



Tip

When talking to people about the negative effects of weeds, remember that most weeds are plants that have originated in other countries. Australian plants, such as some Paperbark or Eucalyptus trees, are now noxious weeds in other countries. What is considered a weed in Australia might be considered a useful plant in another country. Show examples and explain why the plant is a problem in Australia.

Things to remember when organising an outdoor activity:

- Local places often work best.
- Choose somewhere that is easy to access and close to public transport.
- Give the participants a map and directions for how to get there by foot, public transport, bicycle or car.
- Provide clear information before the day of the activity about suitable clothing and shoes, as well as what else people will need to bring (hat, sunscreen, drinking water etc.). Use pictures to demonstrate an example of suitable clothing – people's perceptions of suitable walking footwear and clothing vary enormously!



Local residents exploring their surrounding natural places – many for the first time

Hiring a bus can be expensive, so allocate transport costs as part of the project budget. With larger groups it might be easier to organise a bus to transport everyone together. Working with groups that include young children is likely to involve manoeuvring prams onto buses. This can be logistically challenging, but well worth the effort because it will make it easier for parents and young families to participate.

'Remember that the concept of 'going out' will have different meanings within each culture. Different expectations and ideas of comfort and of what needs to be taken along will influence the way people dress and engage with nature and each other. Be sure to explain clearly what the day will entail and what participants can expect.'

Learning from Operation Bluetongue: A facilitator's kit
Developing a sense of place for new migrants through cultural exchange, biodiversity education and social networking.

Classroom style activities

Workshops, talks and demonstrations held indoors or outdoors are opportunities for people to get the necessary information, learn new skills, and share knowledge and experiences. Consider holding these activities at a familiar place such as a community group's usual meeting venue.



Examples of classroom style activities:

- Workshops to encourage sharing of ideas and problem solving
- Talks or presentations to provide information, show new products or native wildlife
- Hands-on demonstrations of natural cleaning practices, worm farming, composting or potting of native plants. Include opportunities for people to share their own skills and traditional practices



Afghani community learning how to compost at Macarthur Centre for Sustainable Living

When running classroom style activities, use a variety of teaching methods and visual materials that don't only rely on people reading information on a screen.

Art activities

Art activities are fun, and also encourage the expression of ideas without relying on literacy skills. Community art projects can encourage a sense of connection with an issue or place and allow groups to create a culturally specific product that has a universal environmental message.



Snapshot

Crosscurrents – Stories of Water project

In 2009 Bankstown City Council embarked on an innovative project to build community capacity through sharing of experiences, traditional knowledge and culturally specific stories about water. The Crosscurrents project explored the significance of water in the contemporary lives of people living in the Bankstown region, working specifically with members of the local Arabic, Vietnamese and Aboriginal communities.

Artists, Aboriginal elders and bilingual educators worked with these community members to explore their stories, history, proverbs, myths and rituals about managing water, and how this cultural knowledge can be experienced and applied in today's context. The project has led to the development of a DVD, postcards, photographs, weaving, paintings, paper art, music and an annual Crosscurrents festival on the Georges River. The interactive workshops, tours and creative activities have encouraged local residents to discover and care for their local environment in a new way. This project is a good example of bringing diverse groups of people together to share knowledge, find commonalities and work towards solutions that build on their core values.



Other examples of arts projects:

- Designs for calico bags or T-shirts
- Murals
- Stencilling of stormwater drains
- Legal graffiti and graphic design
- Music projects
- Photography exhibitions
- Performing arts productions
- Film, documentary or DVD production



Snapshot

Arabic language Energy and Water Conservation DVD

In a project facilitated by Parramatta City Council, participants from Granville Youth and Community Recreation Centre produced a DVD, in Arabic with English subtitles, about saving energy and water. The participants, who were aged between 19 and 50 years and represented six different cultural groups, first took part in workshops about energy saving and filmmaking. They each received a TAFE Statement of Attainment for completing the filmmaking activities, which included scriptwriting, acting, voiceover and other skills.

The DVD is distributed to community service providers who work with Arabic-speaking communities and is a great tool to engage people who might otherwise not have been reached in energy conservation. The DVD can be viewed at www.livingthing.net.au/enews.htm (Search under e-Newsletter, Issue 8 May 2008)

'The participants in the project have increased their understanding and appreciation for saving water and energy and have become activists and educators in their own communities, as well as developing their skills and interest in filmmaking. Through the project, friendships were developed, cross-cultural understanding was achieved and self-esteem was improved.'

Youth Officer,
Parramatta City Council

Incentives programs

Incentives help motivate people to change behaviour. Saving money at home is usually a big incentive for people.

Programs that offer financial rewards such as discounts, rebates or free installation of new equipment appeal to home and business owners. The distribution of information to prevent people from being fined is also a type of incentive.



Tip

The *Saving Water in Asian Restaurants* case study at the end of this guide describes an example of a successful incentive scheme with a clearly defined target group.

Free giveaways are quick and easy incentives. For example, if you are running an information stall, ask people to complete a short quiz or simple activity that demonstrates their knowledge or commitment to the issue. In return they 'win' the giveaway and you collect more information about community attitudes, skills, knowledge and behaviours.

Examples of giveaways include:

- Compost bins
- Worm farms
- Mulch
- Native plants
- Calico bags
- Reusable mugs
- Sink strainers
- Shower timers
- Butt bins



Tip

If the incentive is an object, consider whether it is consistent with the message being promoted. What materials is it made from? How functional is it? Does it reduce or generate more waste?



Snapshot

Anti-littering campaign in Holroyd business district

Holroyd City Council runs an anti-littering campaign to address small-scale illegal dumping in its central business districts. As part of the campaign, bilingual environmental educators who speak Arabic, Hindi, Mandarin and Vietnamese visited shopkeepers and talk to them about correct waste disposal and recycling practices. For many people this was new information.



Bilingual educator Quoc-Tran talks with Holroyd business owner in

Having the bilingual educators speaking to the shopkeepers in their own language helped to break down barriers and perceptions of the council as an authority. Many of the shopkeepers gained better understanding of an unfamiliar issue and appreciated Council's effort to provide this information in their own languages.

'Once the shopkeepers understood that the bilingual educators were there to represent Council and could communicate in their languages, they seemed to open up'.

**Warwick, Waste Education Officer
Holroyd City Council**

Ideas for communication

Determine what is appropriate

The most appropriate ways to communicate your project's messages will depend on:

- how well people understand spoken and/or written English
- how well they read in other languages
- how they prefer to receive information
- how they learn best and absorb information (people may be able to read, but may not read often, so they may learn more effectively from verbal or demonstrated information).

Find out whether translators and/or interpreters will be needed. Translators are used for written information, while interpreters are used for delivering spoken information. A bilingual educator is also good for delivering hands on workshops and presentations. Ideally, work with a translator, interpreter or bilingual educator who is familiar with the subject matter.



Just ask!

Avoid making assumptions about the language/s that people speak and read. Some people might prefer to attend a workshop presented in their first language even if they are able to speak and read English.

'I have a responsibility to my community – to help them to understand how to do the right thing, how to recycle properly and how to compost, in our own language.'

Soon Yong Yoo,
Korean bilingual educator
Ethnic Communities Sustainable
Living Project



Checking in

- Do people in the target group know about the project? If not, why?
- What is the best way to communicate with them?
- Will written information need to be translated?
- Has this information already been translated by another organisation?
- Will an interpreter be needed?
- Are there any people in the target group who assist as interpreters?
- Will a bilingual educator be needed?
- Does the project have a budget to pay for interpreters, translators or bilingual educators?



Tip

Avoid using conceptual terminology, jargon or ‘buzzwords’ such as ‘sustainability’, ‘conservation’ or ‘biodiversity’. (This also applies to people who speak English as their first language but are not accustomed to the terminology commonly used by council officers and educators!) Use clear, simple wording, such as ‘making our street a nicer place to live’, ‘living in a clean and healthy area’ or ‘looking after the variety of Australian plants and animals’.

Translated materials

Brochures, posters, flyers and booklets are ways to get information across quickly to many people. Written information also gives people time to digest the information, share it with others and keep it for future reference when needed.

Written information needs to be distributed to places regularly visited by people from the target groups such as libraries, community or health centres, places of worship and shops.

Before developing new material and paying for translations:

- ask representatives of the target group whether translated information is needed and, if so, what is the preferred format
- check whether the information has already been translated and printed by another organisation that is willing to share it with you. This will save a lot of time and money.



*Translated information at Sydney Fish Markets.
Photo: Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority.*

Checking in

- Who is the target audience for the translated information?
- How will the translated information be distributed?
- How can the translated information be evaluated for effectiveness?

Translating written material from one language into another is an accredited skill, and normally involves paying a fee to a qualified person or organisation. Professional translators can assist you to translate your information into a language style and context that is appropriate for the target group. It is a good idea to include one round of changes within the quote. Be sure to check the translated materials with your target group before printing.



Tip

The Chinese language has different spoken and written forms. Spoken forms include Cantonese, Mandarin and several dialects. Written forms use either Traditional Chinese or Simplified Chinese characters. If you are having written material translated to reach a Chinese target group, check which format/s will be needed.



Snapshot

Waste management information for food shop owners in Eastwood

Chinese and Korean bilingual educators worked with an environmental health officer from the City of Ryde to talk to food shop owners in Eastwood about their waste management practices. The council officer developed an information folder for the shop owners, containing translated information and culturally appropriate images about waste management and collection services. The folders contained pages in plastic sleeves, which enabled the shop owners to keep the information dry and clean, and to add more pages as they received more information.

Council received a positive response about the folders. The information was presented in a way that was useful and practical for the shop owners.

Things to remember when preparing information to be translated:

- Provide information to the translator about the project target group.
- Provide information about the intended purpose, tone, style and context of the information.
- Use English that is clear, simple and in short sentences. Don't use jargon or 'buzzwords' that might not have a direct translation in other languages. For example, rather than saying 'biodiversity', use 'variety of native plants and animals'.
- Use good photographs or illustrations to help communicate messages.
- If contact details are being included for more information, insert the contact details of a person who speaks the same language as the people who will be receiving the information.
- Have the text checked by people who work with the target group to make sure the information and messages are culturally appropriate and relevant. The tone, context and wording of the information can sometimes be changed in the translation process.
- Check that the information is not too technical. As someone who is already familiar with the issue or project to read it.
- Include extra time and money in the budget in case more work needs to be done with the translator to fine tune the wording.



Useful resources

Resources translated into various languages (recycling, green cleaning, worm farming, composting and mulching)

www.livingthing.net.au/RC_Multi.htm and www.ecslp.org.au

NSW Community Relations Commission interpreting and translating service

www.crc.nsw.gov.au/services/language_services

SBS translation service

www.sbs.com.au (Search 'Translation')

The Education for Sustainability Professional Learning Hub (EFS Hub) is an interactive online professional learning network and resource hub for sustainability educators. Visit

www.efslarninghub.net.au (Search 'multilingual' under resources)

Interpreters

Talking directly with people usually has greater success than just distributing translated written information. Interpreters can support the project in various ways, from giving people instructions to making presentations and running workshops. Bilingual staff members from councils and migrant resource centres might be suitable interpreters in some situations. People from the target group who speak English as well as another language might also be willing to interpret information on your behalf.



Snapshot

Waste education for an apartment block in Kogarah

Kogarah Council regularly responds to residents' requests for information about topics such as waste disposal. Based on these requests, Council targeted particular apartment blocks to distribute information about waste disposal, worm farming, recycling and composting. Previously, information flyers had been put in residents' letterboxes, but it was not known whether residents actually read them. Council identified that many of the residents were of Chinese origin, so a Chinese bilingual educator was employed to go door-knocking and speak to the residents about what they could and couldn't do with their waste. Council officers also worked in conjunction with the strata management of some apartment blocks.

This approach worked well. Many of the residents started worm farms on their balconies, and the number of contaminated recycling bins dropped.



Useful resources

Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project

Bilingual environmental educators deliver environmental education in various community languages.

www.ecslp.org.au

NSW Community Relations Commission interpreting and translating service

www.crc.nsw.gov.au/services/language_services



Bilingual information

Bilingual information (both written and spoken) provides a format that can be understood while also enhancing people's English skills. For translated publications, include the English text next to the translated text. This gives people a chance to discuss the information with family members of different generations, friends or neighbours who read English.



Snapshot

Save Money and our Environment bilingual booklet for residents

This booklet is a collaborative project between Holroyd, Fairfield and Bankstown councils. The booklet contains simple, practical information about a range of sustainability issues, and has been translated into the main language groups for these council areas – Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian and Vietnamese. The booklet is a good example of bilingual information, giving simple English text on one page and the translation on the opposite page. A copy of the booklet is at www.ecslp.org.au (Search under 'Resources')



Verbal presentations can also be delivered in both languages.



Snapshot

Riverlife interpretive volunteer program and bilingual tours

Canterbury Council's Riverlife interpretive volunteer program recruits and trains local residents who are passionate about the Cooks River to lead free interpretive walks for people in the community. The walks offer information and inspiration about the Cooks River, its history, degradation, rehabilitation efforts and key messages about how people can help to look after the river system. Some Riverlife volunteers are now delivering bilingual tours, giving information in both English and Mandarin, attracting interest and participation from the Chinese-speaking community.

'The aim of running the bilingual tours is to encourage the participants to integrate into the community, while also assisting with their English language learning.'

Mikall
Riverlife volunteer

Visual resources

As much as possible, include photographs, illustrations, diagrams and symbols in written material to help enhance the messages in the information. This will be especially useful for people with low levels of literacy.

Things to remember when using images:

- If the information is about an event or activity, use colour images of the event or activity showing happy faces of people participating.
- If the information is about an action or practice, use images of people doing the correct thing.
- Avoid using images of correct/incorrect actions showing ticks and crosses next to them – this can be confusing.
- Use images of people who look like people in the target group. If the target group includes people from diverse backgrounds, use images that reflect this diversity.
- Before publishing the information, show it to representatives from the target group to check that the images are understood and culturally appropriate.



Tip

Some images and humour that are acceptable in Australian culture might be offensive or misunderstood by others.



Promote the project

A common complaint is 'We put advertisements in the local paper and on the library notice board, but no one came to the workshop.'

Not everyone reads the flyers in their letterbox, the newspaper or listens to the radio. In many cultures, information is disseminated by word of mouth. Ask representatives of the target group how they find out what is happening in the local area.

- Which newspapers or magazines do they read?
- Which radio stations do they listen to?
- Where do they shop?
- Which cafes do they go to?
- Which social/religious gatherings do they attend?



Tip

Use a combination of promotional methods and use them more than once (for people who missed the announcement the first time). Allow time for word of mouth to spread and for people to talk to others in their community who have heard about the issue or project.

There is no rule here. Different media work for different issues, with different communities and in different areas.

Be clear about the reason for promoting and ensure that the information matches this need.

Some examples include:

- Raising awareness about the issue (and the proposed solutions)
- Raising awareness about the project and inviting community participation
- Acknowledging the people involved
- Acknowledging the project's funding bodies and sponsors
- Celebrating the project's achievements.

Make use of the communication avenues already available. Some examples include:

■ Council networks

Council meetings, community newsletters, website, noticeboards, staff email groups and professional networks.

■ Community networks

Migrant resource centres, community health centres, Centrelink, schools, pre-schools, religious groups, places of worship, cultural organisations, dance groups, Saturday language schools, community service organisations, local businesses and cafes.

■ Media

Mainstream, local and ethnic papers, television and radio:

- Television or radio advertisements
- Radio interviews
- Newspaper articles or advertisements.



Tip

Radio works well because it does not rely heavily on literacy levels. People from smaller communities tend to rely more on local community radio stations, while people from larger communities often have access to programs on larger radio stations such as SBS.



Snapshot

City of Sydney's Greek workshop promotion

The City of Sydney council worked with a Greek bilingual environmental educator to run two composting workshops in Rosebery. In the past the council had promoted and delivered these workshops to existing groups within the Greek community, but this time they advertised them on the SBS Greek radio program to try to widen the reach. The organisers were unsure whether this form of promotion would work, as the workshops would be unfamiliar to most people listening to the program.

Two workshops were scheduled and advertised several times on the program. The first workshop had six participants. A fortnight later, the second workshop had 30 participants.

The SBS broadcaster explained that it is important for people to hear things several times, and to allow time for word-of-mouth advertising within communities.



Useful resources

Ethnic media in NSW

www.crc.nsw.gov.au/ethnic_media

The environment and ethnic communities – community profiles

For information about media use patterns in specific ethnic communities:

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/community/ethniccom.htm

Celebrate the project's achievements

As well as the environmental outcomes, sustainability projects with culturally diverse communities bring different groups of people together and foster community harmony. Remember to celebrate and share the project's achievements along the way. Promote and celebrate with the participants, other stakeholders, peers, managers, councillors, local members and funding bodies.

Some ways to do this include:

■ A media story

A good news story in a newspaper or on radio.

■ A pictorial report

Many people now own digital video cameras. Photos and short videos are a great way to document and evaluate the project, capturing the participants in action, having fun, and their reactions, observations and comments. Rather than long written reports to councils and funding bodies, enhance reports with good quality photos and short videos to tell the story of your project.

■ A launch

Invite the media, local politicians, sponsors and local businesses. Use a launch as an opportunity to brag about the project's commencement, successes so far and to seek more support. Ask the participants if they would like to hold a launch at one of their regular venues or meeting places. This might be the first time that council staff, councillors and other stakeholders attend the venue.



Tip

Invite a spokesperson that is well known to the target audience. For example, invite a celebrity (sporting, religious, cultural, culinary etc) who has authority to endorse the project and will help attract attention from the community, media and other important stakeholders.

■ A website

This could be as simple as a link to a number of websites for council and community organisations.

■ Write the project up as a case study

As well as the facts and figures, include other interesting information:

- How did the project start?
- How did you get people involved?
- How did you communicate to them?
- Who else has been involved? (other stakeholders, partners, community workers etc)
- Who were the instrumental people who made the project happen?
- Were there any surprises, unexpected outcomes or 'spin-off' projects?
- What were some of the challenges and how were these dealt with?

Remember to also share what didn't work, so that others can learn with you.

Celebrating the project provides another valuable opportunity for all the participants and stakeholders to come together, to reflect on what has been achieved so far and to start dreaming about future plans.

And the cycle of learning continues ...



Participants celebrate their involvement in Ocean Watch's 'Healthy Catchments = Healthy Oceans' program with the opening of an art exhibition at Sydney Fish Markets.



Tip – Share your success ...

Email your story to environment@eccnsw.org.au to be featured in the 'Community Projects' section of the Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project website www.ecslp.org.au



Useful resources

Write it up!

A booklet about writing case studies

www.aaeensw.org.au/write_it_up.htm

The *Cooks River Cultural and Environmental Partnership* DVD documents the experiences and motivations of a group of community volunteers.

The DVD can be viewed on the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority website www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au (Search under 'Our Projects/Videos')

The Education for Sustainability Professional Learning Hub (Efs Hub) is an interactive online professional learning network and resource hub for sustainability educators. Visit www.efslearninghub.net.au

'This work is important. We need to keep a healthy environment for our grandchildren.'

Lila Ibrahim, Arabic bilingual educator
Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project

Case study

Tzu Chi Foundation: Water for Life Ambassadors

Members of the Tzu Chi Foundation in Sydney are working as ambassadors for the Water for Life project. The Water for Life project, funded by the Office of Water with assistance from Sydney Water and the Office of Environment and Heritage, aims to increase community understanding and encourage water conservation practices.

Originally, the project's educational information was delivered to the Chinese community with the assistance of bilingual environmental educators. When the Tzu Chi Foundation joined the program, its members started delivering the information to the Chinese, Indonesian, Malaysian and Sri Lankan communities through its close relationship with the Lak Saviya Buddhist Foundation. Today, the Tzu Chi Foundation's water ambassadors take advantage of every opportunity – neighbourhood chats, festivals, language schools or dharma classes – to encourage people in these communities to rethink the way they use water. This is a great example of working with community leaders and mentors, and supporting them as agents for change and inspiration.

History of the project

The Tzu Chi Foundation is an international non-profit organisation that was founded in Taiwan in 1966. It is a spiritual and welfare organisation, run by volunteers and dedicated to charity, health, education, environmental protection and community volunteerism. The Foundation has developed its own peer-training program for the volunteers with the assistance of Chinese bilingual environmental educator Jenny Tang Luis, who provided training sessions in English and Mandarin.



Environmental protection is a key part of the Foundation's mission. After talking together about the issue of water shortage, a group of Sydney members decided to form a project team to help encourage more people in the community to adopt water conservation practices. They were later invited to become ambassadors for the Water for Life program.

Forty ambassadors, including leaders and members of the Tzu Chi Foundation and the Lak Saviya Buddhist Foundation, were initially trained by staff and bilingual environmental educators from the Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project (ECSLP). Many of the ambassadors had previously been involved with the ECSLP as participants in sustainable living workshops delivered by the Chinese bilingual educators.

The training included a fieldtrip to Warragamba Dam, which one ambassador said gave participants 'further understanding of how serious the water shortage was'. The ambassadors are promoting simple key messages and realistic actions that people can do to reduce water consumption in their daily lives, such as taking shorter showers and using a bucket to wash cars.



'I now feel more empowered in delivering the concept of water saving to people around me. As environmental protection is one of Tzu Chi's missions, the [training] presentation on water saving has provided us with practical tips and given Tzu Chi a solid foundation with its environmental work.'

Wenley Ho,
Water for Life Ambassador and representative of the Tzu Chi Foundation

The ambassadors deliver presentations at Tzu Chi Foundation events and hold information stalls at shopping centres and local festivals. They also present to school groups and have developed an entertaining skit for primary school students and audiences at festivals, as well as a slide presentation of more technical information pitched at high school students and adults. They also host tea parties for friends and other members of their communities, where they demonstrate the installation of do-it-yourself water-saving kits.

The ambassadors are keen to talk to everyone to 'plant the seed' in people's minds. Some have even had conversations with people while waiting at an airport or on a plane! Others have tried handing out pamphlets at train stations, but found that this did not work well, as people were not willing or available to stop and listen at the time. As one ambassador observed, 'If people have agreed to come to a tea party, information stall or workshop, then they have already committed some of their time and are more prepared to listen.'

The ambassadors have found that having something to hand out to people can help to 'break the ice' and start a conversation. For example, distributing free shower timers opens the conversation about having shorter showers. Some ambassadors have even encouraged people to sign a pledge to have four-minute showers from now on, which is one of their most important messages.

'For my community, it is better to focus on one action rather than many things. Everyone uses a shower – it doesn't matter what sort of house you live in or whether you are young or old or rent or own a house or unit. The shower uses the most water in the home. Everyone can make a difference this way.'

John, Tzu Chi
Foundation Water for Life Ambassador

Unexpected outcomes

Through its extensive networks, the Tzu Chi Foundation has spread the water conservation message internationally, broadcasting televised information in 31 countries and radio coverage in Sydney and Taiwan. The four-minute shower message has become part of the Foundation's global environmental mission.

On a more personal level, one of the ambassadors said that plucking up the courage to talk to strangers about water conservation has been 'a humbling experience' and has provided a great confidence boost. She has been heartened by the interest and responses of the many people she has talked to. This increased confidence also assisted with addressing an issue of a leaking tap at her workplace. After a year of asking the building manager to fix the tap, she organised a petition that was signed by all the tenants in the building. Not surprisingly, the tap was fixed shortly afterwards!

Why this project works well

The passion and commitment of the Tzu Chi ambassadors makes them powerful agents for change in the community. The sense of ownership that they feel about their message is inspiring and their enthusiasm is infectious. The success of this project can be attributed to the fact that communities respond best to their own leaders, so meaningful messages developed by communities for their own members have great impact.

Like any group of community volunteers, the Water for Life ambassadors require ongoing support to keep up to date with current information and to feel part of a bigger network of sustainability educators. The Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project provides ongoing education and training on how to run seminars and deliver presentations.

Costs

Council's costs per year \$0

One-off costs Approximately \$2,000

- Shower timers and educational resources and material
- Bus hire to Warragamba Dam

In-kind contributions

- Hundreds of volunteer hours
- Support from Sydney Water in the form of training by Chinese bilingual environmental educators and multilingual educational materials
- Support from the Ethnic Communities Sustainable Living Project team, Office of Environment and Heritage and Office of Water

Outcomes hierarchy: Water for Life Ambassadors

Outcomes hierarchy	Outcomes	Evaluation questions	Performance indicators	Unexpected outcomes
Ultimate outcomes	Increased water conservation Reduced water bills	Has there been a reduction in water usage?	Follow-up surveys: ■ number of people who have changed behaviour ■ number of water bills reduced	
Intermediate outcomes	Increased number of people practising water conservation techniques Good relationships between water ambassadors, community members and project partner organisations	How do we know if more people are conserving water? Which organisations are working together to deliver the community education?	Follow-up surveys: ■ number of people who have changed behaviour ■ number of water bills reduced Details of meetings and collaboration between project partners Amount of funding and resources pooled	Global expansion of project Broadcasts to 31 countries via TV and radio
Immediate outcomes	Participants are installing DIY kits, using buckets, etc. Project promoted in the wider community, on websites and educator networks Ongoing support for water ambassadors	How do we know if people are changing these behaviours? What evidence can we collect? How is the project being promoted? How are the ambassadors trained and supported on an ongoing basis?	Follow-up surveys: ■ number of four-minute shower pledges Number of articles and public events Recognition and feedback received Surveys Feedback received	
Activities outcomes	Ambassadors trained Educational activities held	What training and resources do they need? Who is participating in the educational activities? In what locations? Who is making a commitment to change behaviour?	Number of ambassadors trained Details of training events, participants and evaluation Number of shower timers distributed Number of pledges signed	
Needs	Increased water conservation practices	What are people currently doing (or not doing) about water conservation? How can they be given information? Who can deliver this information?	Research into current community attitudes and practices Liaison with Tzu Chi representatives	Tzu Chi members who had already adopted a mission to protect the environment and undertake training, then joined the Water for Life project

Case study

Cooks River Environmental and Cultural Partnership

Students from al-Ghazzali Centre for Islamic Sciences and Human Development, along with friends and family members, have been restoring an area of native vegetation along the Cooks River foreshore in Sydney's inner-west. This project is a great example of a Bushcare volunteer project that has evolved from the activities and interests of an already established community group.

History of the project

The philosophy of al-Ghazzali Centre is to nurture its students with positive knowledge and then facilitate projects where they can put this knowledge to good use. The Cooks River project was born out of the Centre's own Mizaan Ecology Program ('mizaan' is an Arabic word meaning 'balance'), which aims to foster awareness of the value of caring for the environment and being involved in practical activities.

The Cooks River project started in 2007, when a group of Mizaan members approached the City of Canterbury Council. The group was looking for a natural area that they could restore as a long-term group project. A few of the group members including the Imam, a leader of the community, had previously been involved with natural area restoration projects, both in other parts of Sydney and overseas. Council staff members were thrilled with the idea of working together and provided immediate support to the project by selecting a site along the Cooks River, preparing it for planting, sending mounds of mulch, plants and jute matting, and a supervisor to train the volunteers at the monthly work days.

The group worked closely with the council staff to develop a restoration plan for the site. They also linked up with another local volunteer group, the Mudcrabs, to share knowledge and occasionally work together at their adjoining worksites. The site is being transformed from a weed-infested, soil-eroded cliff face that hardly looked like a riverbank at all into a beautiful thriving habitat for native plants and animals. The site is also much more visually attractive for the local residents who walk and cycle in the area.

As a separate training activity, some of the volunteers took part in sessions on native bird listening and dawn meditation with staff from Birds Australia and Sydney Olympic Park Authority. Once again, the volunteers found a way to blend an educational activity with their existing commitments and interests, observing their morning prayer time against the backdrop of native bird calls.



al-Ghazzali planting day. Photo: Sydney Catchment Management Authority

Sharing their story

The al-Ghazzali Centre volunteers also want to be a source of inspiration within the community by encouraging others to also get involved in environmental projects. Some of the group members have a specific interest in taking photographs or making short films. So, after each work day, a short film and project update was posted on YouTube (search for 'Cooks River environmental and cultural partnership'). In this way, the group took on responsibility for documenting their own project and sharing progress with others in their community.

The Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority (SMCMA) provided the group with a grant to buy extra tools, materials, a sign for the site and a contribution towards paying for a trainer. SMCMA staff members were so inspired by the drive and community spirit of this group that they invited the volunteers to be involved in producing a short DVD about their project, as a way of promoting the benefits of environmental volunteering. The SMCMA engaged a Sydney-based production company to produce the DVD and worked closely with the volunteers beforehand to develop the key messages of the film. The filming took place in half a day.

The key message of the resulting nine-minute DVD – *Walking Together, Working with Nature* – is that environmental volunteering can be a lot of fun, while also making a valuable contribution to the local environment and community. The DVD is an excellent resource for other local councils and community organisations to use. The Imam has even showed it to peers in New Zealand! The appeal of the DVD lies in its themes of peer-sharing and education, with the volunteers telling their story from the heart and encouraging other people to get involved in their own local area.



al-Ghazzali planting day. Photo: Sydney Catchment Management Authority

'A lot of people wonder, "What can we do?" I would say, "Don't worry if you are only fixing one patch or only planting one tree – it all makes a difference."

Farah Jan,
volunteer

Why this project works well

The volunteers incorporated this environmental project into their existing activities and commitments. It is also a project that has enabled them to participate together – as most of the volunteers are friends or family, getting together once a month at the site is as much a social activity as it is about doing the hands-on work. The volunteers have fun while they work together and always stop for a morning tea break and a chat.

The project also links closely with the Muslim value of contributing to one's community. The participants probably wouldn't describe themselves as 'community volunteers', but the work that they do is what councils and other organisations regard as volunteering for the benefit of the local community and environment.

Volunteering is as much about fulfilling one's own personal motivations as it is about contributing to the community, and for these community volunteers, participation in the Cooks River environmental and cultural partnership project ticks both boxes. It's about doing something to restore balance in nature, as well as in one's own physical, spiritual and mental wellbeing.

'I'm in an office from Monday to Friday, so it's good to get outdoors, plant some trees and give something back to the environment.'

Bilal,
volunteer

Costs

Council's costs per year

Native plants, mulch and jute matting

A supervisor to train the volunteers

One-off costs*

\$5,000 Extra plants, mulch and materials in 2008

\$1,000 Sign for the site

\$4,500 DVD production and launch

* These costs were funded by the Australian Government through the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority.

In-kind contributions

- Volunteer hours (15–20 volunteers on site for three hours, once a month)
- Staff hours from City of Canterbury Council, Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority, Birds Australia and Sydney Olympic Park
- Morning tea for work days
- Venue and catering for DVD launch at al-Ghazzali Centre

Outcomes hierarchy: Cooks River Environmental and Cultural Partnership

Outcomes hierarchy	Outcomes	Evaluation questions	Performance indicators	Unexpected outcomes
Ultimate outcome	Increased native flora and fauna habitat along the Cooks River foreshore	Is there an increased area of self-sustaining native vegetation? Has there been an increase in native wildlife seen and recorded at the site?	Weeds being maintained Detailed wildlife survey	
Intermediate outcomes	Native plants established and weed infestation reduced	Has there been an increase of native vegetation and a reduction in weed infestation at the site?	Site assessment Observations recorded	
	Community actively involved in managing the natural area		Volunteers are working at the site regularly Volunteers are skilled and motivated	
	DVD inspires similar volunteer projects to be established	How is the DVD being used? Where is it being distributed?	Details of DVD distribution Survey of some recipients Feedback received	
	Good relationships fostered between council, SMCMA and volunteers (project partners)	How are the project partners Working together?	Details of meetings and collaboration between project partners New Bushcare projects inspired	
Immediate outcomes	Site weeded, mulched and planted with native species	What work is being done on the site?	Number of volunteer work days Numbers of volunteers participating	
	Native wildlife monitored	What signs of native wildlife and regeneration are seen at the site?	Observations recorded Detailed wildlife survey	
	Volunteers work at the site once a month	How often do the volunteers work? How many volunteers are involved?	Number of volunteers involved Number of work days	
	Project promoted in the community, on websites and in natural resource management networks	How is the project promoted? How will the DVD be promoted and distributed?	Grants received Number of articles and events Details of promotion and showing of DVD	Interest from local residents and groups using the adjacent sports field. DVD shown in New Zealand.
Activities outcomes	Volunteers recruited and trained	Who is involved? What training and resources do they need?	Number of volunteers involved Details of training events	Bird call activity with morning prayer.
	Site restoration plan developed by staff and volunteers Worksite prepared	What needs to be done at the project site? By whom?	Site prepared Volunteers start work	
	DVD produced and promoted Sign installed at the site	How will others be told about this project?	Production of DVD Number of articles, events, websites Sign installed Feedback received	Production of the DVD was economical and fun. Volunteers also post their own short films posted on YouTube.
Needs	Increased community involvement restoration of Cooks River foreshore	What is the benefit of having the community involved?	Benefits promoted	The al-Ghazzali Centre group approached Council with their idea (often it is the other way around)
		Do Council's programs reflect the community demographics? Does Council promote opportunities for all people in the community to be involved?	Research about community Review/rethink Council's programs	
		Where are suitable areas for volunteers to work?	Sites selected Site restoration plans developed	

Case study

Saving Water in Asian Restaurants

The Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW used funding from state government agencies and local councils to deliver the Saving Water in Asian Restaurants Project (SWARP). The project had a clearly defined target group and an equally clear purpose: to reduce the use of potable water in Asian restaurants in Sydney and Wollongong.

The largest proportion of Asian restaurants in Sydney and Wollongong are Chinese-style restaurants. The SWARP project delivered a combination of educational material, financial rebates, interest-free loans and face-to-face consultations between Chinese bilingual educators and owners of Chinese-style restaurants to encourage the purchase and installation of a new technology: the 'waterless wok stove'.



History of the project

Research conducted in 2003–2004 by consultants on behalf of Sydney Water revealed the comparatively high water use of Asian restaurants due to the use of conventional wok stoves, which use water jets to cool the hot cooktop. The researchers identified a potential for real savings in water use if these businesses switched to using the new waterless wok stoves. This would have both environmental and economic benefits.

Guided by a committee of Chinese community leaders, the SWARP project began with a series of high-profile launches, awards presentations and events to demonstrate the benefits of the waterless wok stoves to Asian restaurant owners and community representatives. These events were covered by the Chinese media and attended by Ethnic Communities' Council Executive Committee members, government ministers, mayors, councillors and council officers.

To support the project delivery, a series of culturally appropriate materials was produced, including a DVD in English, Cantonese and Mandarin demonstrating a Chinese chef using the waterless wok stove, and brochures in both English and Chinese.

At the end of the first stage of the project, participating restaurant owners were presented with awards for installing the woks. Each participating restaurant was presented with a sticker to place in the window so that customers would be aware that the restaurant was saving water.

Why this project works well

Much of the project's success can be attributed to the use of Chinese bilingual educators, who were responsible for contacting and visiting restaurants to introduce the project and to continue liaising with businesses that took up the rebate and installed the woks.

At the end of the project's first year, interviews were conducted with the project participants in Cantonese and Mandarin. Among other things, they were asked about the factors that had influenced their decision to make the change to the waterless wok stove. One respondent said that while the written material was useful, it was 'not as useful as the educator who came to explain everything to us'.

'It will be a big difference. Although I can speak English, but culturally I feel easy to talk to someone who speaks my mother language.'

Survey response from a restaurant owner

'It's excellent. We speak the same language and everything is clear.'

Survey response from a restaurant owner

Another important factor in the success of the project was that it had a clear, measurable goal defined at the start, and the capacity to evaluate at the end of the project whether that goal had been achieved (and it has been!). The original project proposal stated that its intention was 'to replace 40 traditional wok stoves with waterless wok stoves, with an estimated saving of 72,000 kL [of water] per year'.

The bilingual educators supplied each restaurant owner with a chart (in English and Chinese) so that staff could record the time the stoves were turned on and off each day. This information was required to determine the number of litres of water saved per hour and per day as a result of installing a waterless wok stove. This information was collated and analysed by the same consultants who undertook the original research.

The project has so far engaged with 101 Asian restaurants throughout Sydney and Wollongong. Of these, 23 restaurants have joined the project, installing a total of 67 waterless wok stoves. In total, the project has so far resulted in an estimated annual water saving of 66,860 kL.

Case studies of four participating restaurants have also been developed (see example case study for Jade Lotus Restaurant). These case studies, published in both English and Chinese, are useful promotional tools to encourage other restaurants (as well as funding bodies) to become involved in the next stage of the project.

The first stage of the Saving Water in Asian Restaurants Project focused on Chinese-style restaurants. With its measurable results, powerful project evaluation and widespread publicity, the Ethnic Communities' Council has now secured funding to continue working with the Chinese restaurant community and to initiate the project with the Thai and Vietnamese restaurant communities.

'The best part of this project is to help the whole Asian community to know that water is very important, especially in the restaurant's kitchen. With this promotion, everybody talks about this. It's word of mouth. Everyone starts to talk – whether it's good or bad, they all start to talk about it and be aware that the government is determined to save water.'

Survey response from a restaurant owner

Appendix

Number of LOTE speakers greater than 5000 in NSW LGAs 2001 and 2006

LGA with LOTE speakers >10%/+10,000	% LGA speak LOTE at home 2001	% LGA pop speak a LOTE at home 2006	Number of LOTE speakers 2006	Most commonly spoken Languages other than English spoken at home by LGA in 2006 with more than 1,000 speakers of each language or greater than 5,000 LOTE speakers of combined languages. Note: This table does not reflect all languages in any given area, it is indicative of most commonly spoken languages (>1,000) within each LGA.
Fairfield	66.0	67.2	120,895	>30,000 Vietnamese >10,000 Arabic, Assyrian, >5,000 Cantonese, Spanish, Italian, Khmer, >1,000 Mandarin, Serbian, Croatian, Teochew, Lao, Macedonian, Greek, Hindi, Turkish, Maltese, Samoan OL >10,000
Blacktown	28.9	32.4	88,044	>5,000 Tagalog, Arabic, Hindi, Filipino, >1,000 Samoan, Cantonese, Maltese, Spanish, Punjabi, Italian, Mandarin, Turkish, Greek, Urdu, Tamil, Croatian, Tongan, Polish OL >20,000
Bankstown	46.1	50.5	86,014	>30,000 Arabic >10,000 Vietnamese >5,000 Greek, Cantonese, Mandarin, Italian >1,000 Macedonian, Korean, Spanish, Hindi OL >10,000
Canterbury	62.0	62.6	81,387	>15,000 Arabic, >10,000 Greek, >5,000 Cantonese, Mandarin >1,000 Vietnamese, Italian, Korean, Bengali, Portuguese, Indonesian, Hindi, Spanish, Urdu OL >10,000
Liverpool	43.6	45.9	75,489	>10,000 Arabic, >5,000 Vietnamese, Hindi, Italian, Spanish, >1,000 Serbian, Greek, Cantonese, Assyrian, Tagalog, Macedonian, Croatian, Mandarin, Lao, Samoan, Turkish, Khmer, Polish OL >10,000
Parramatta	38.8	44.1	65,424	>15,000 Arabic, >5,000 Cantonese, Mandarin, >1,000 Korean, Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati, Turkish, Spanish, Vietnamese, Italian, Greek, Persian, Tagalog, Dari OL >15,000
Rockdale	48.4	51.0	46,974	>5,000 Greek, Arabic, Macedonian, >1,000 Cantonese, Mandarin, Italian, Spanish, Bengali OL >10,000
Auburn	65.5	66.2	42,978	>5,000 Arabic, Cantonese, >1,000 Turkish, Mandarin, Korean, Vietnamese Dari Tamil OL >10,000
Holroyd	39.5	45.2	40,579	> 10,000 Arabic > 1,000 Cantonese, Tamil, Mandarin, Hindi, Italian, Maltese, Turkish, Greek, Spanish, Dari OL >10,000
Baulkham Hills	20.5	24.4	38,892	>5,000 Cantonese >1,000 Mandarin, Arabic, Korean, Italian, Hindi, Greek, Persian (exc Dari), Tamil, Spanish OL >10,000
City of Sydney ¹		24.1	37,725	>5,000 Mandarin, Cantonese >1,000 Indonesian, Korean, Greek, Thai, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Japanese, Italian OL >10,000
Hornsby	20.3	24.0	36,311	>5,000 Cantonese, Mandarin >1,000 Korean, Arabic, Hindi, Italian, Persian (exc Dari) OL >10,000
Ryde	32.8	36.3	35,171	>5,000 Cantonese, Mandarin >1,000 Italian, Korean, Armenian, Arabic, Greek OL >10,000

OL: Other languages

LGA with LOTE speakers >10%/+10,000	% LGA speak LOTE at home 2001	% LGA pop speak a LOTE at home 2006	Number of LOTE speakers 2006	Most commonly spoken Languages other than English spoken at home by LGA in 2006 with more than 1,000 speakers of each language or greater than 5,000 LOTE speakers of combined languages. Note: This table does not reflect all languages in any given area, it is indicative of most commonly spoken languages (>1,000) within each LGA.
Randwick	28.8	27.9	33,422	>5,000 Greek, >1,000 Cantonese, Mandarin, Indonesian, Italian, Russian, Spanish, French OL >10,000
Hurstville	37.5	42.8	31,550	>5,000 Cantonese, Mandarin, >1,000 Greek, Arabic, Macedonian, Italian OL >5,000
Campbelltown	19.4	22.0	31,535	>1,000 Arabic, Spanish, Samoan, Hindi, Tagalog, Bengali, Filipino, Lao OL >10,000
Wollongong	17.1	16.1	29,667	>5,000 Macedonian, >1,000 Italian, Greek, Spanish, Arabic, Serbian, Mandarin, Portuguese OL >10,000
Marrickville	38.5	32.7	23,508	>1,000 Greek, Vietnamese, Arabic, Portuguese, Cantonese, Italian, Mandarin OL >5,000
Penrith	13.1	13.4	23,132	>1,000 Arabic, Italian, Maltese, Tagalog, Greek, Hindi, Croatian, Spanish OL >10,000
Kogarah	38.2	43.9	23,047	>1,000 Greek, Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic, Macedonian, Italian OL >5,000
Sutherland	10.1	10.3	21,235	>1,000 Greek, Cantonese, Arabic, Italian, Mandarin, Spanish OL >5,000
Canada Bay	30.3	31.3	20,567	>5,000 Italian, >1,000 Cantonese, Greek, Mandarin, Korean, Arabic OL >1,000
Willoughby	27.9	31.1	19,796	>1,000 Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Japanese OL >5,000
Warringah	14.3	14.7	19,634	>1,000 Italian, Cantonese, Mandarin, Armenian OL >5,000
Strathfield	53.6	56.5	18,063	>1,000 Korean, Cantonese, Mandarin, Tamil, Arabic, Italian OL >5,000
Burwood	52.8	55.7	17,235	>1,000 Mandarin, Cantonese, Italian, Arabic, Korean, Greek OL >5,000
Ashfield	43.4	43.3	17,196	>1,000 Mandarin, Italian, Cantonese OL >5,000
Ku-ring-gai	15.9	17.2	17,385	>1000 Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, OL >5,000
Botany Bay	45.7	43.6	15,698	>1,000 Greek, Spanish, Bengali, Cantonese OL >5,000
Waverley	19.5	17.5	10,617	>1,000 Russian, OL >5,000
Newcastle	7.1	7.2	10,176	>1,000 Macedonian, Italian, OL >5,000
North Sydney	14.6	16.5	9,633	>1,000 Cantonese, Japanese, Mandarin, OL >5,000
Leichhardt	15.5	13.8	6,747	>1,000 Italian, , OL >5,000
Shellharbour	11.8	10.8	6,499	>1,000 Macedonian, OL >1,000
Woollahra	13.1	12.8	6,402	OL >5,000
Lane Cove	17.7	18.7	5,684	OL >5,000

Note

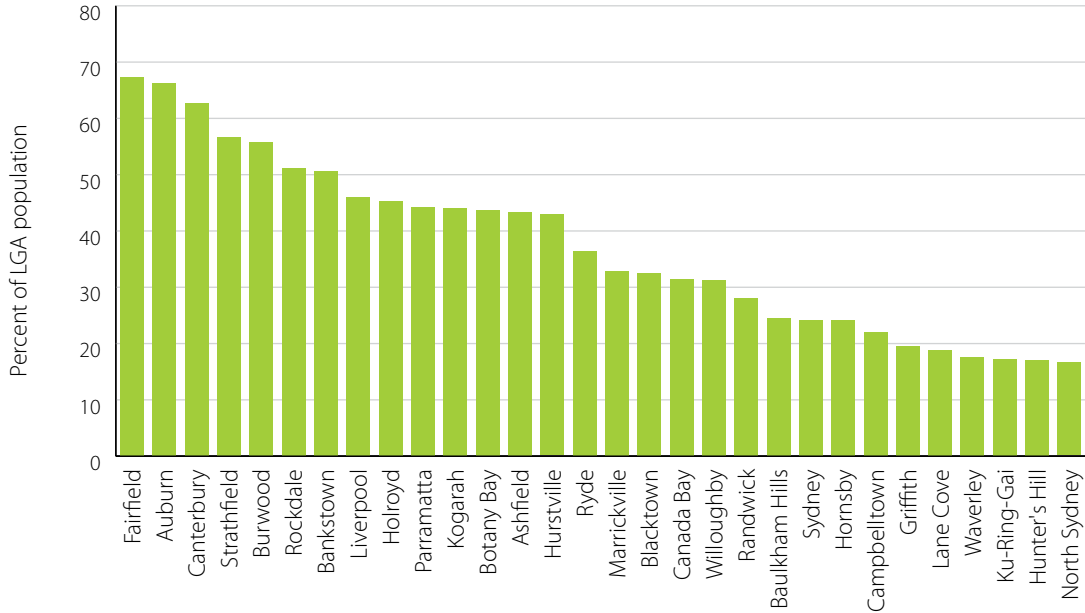
1 This LGA has undergone significant boundary changes since 2001. Data for 2001 is not directly comparable with 2006 data.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census 2001 and 2006

OL: Other languages

Local Government Areas¹ with the Highest Proportion of Language Other Than English Speakers

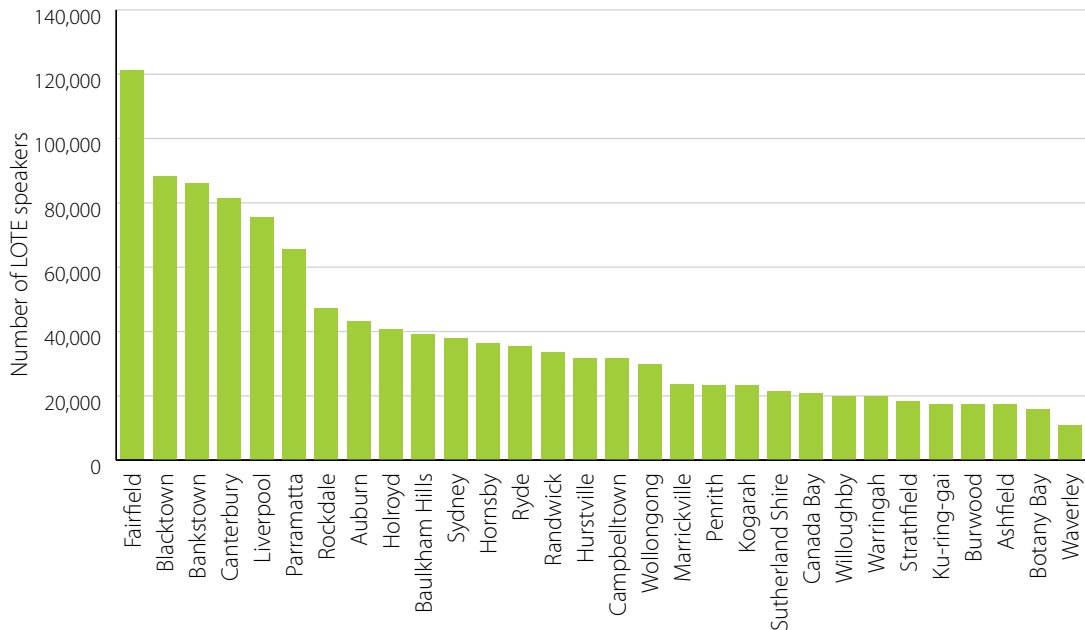
New South Wales: 2006 Census



¹ Excludes Community Government Councils (CGC), Island Councils (IC) and Aboriginal Councils (AC)

Local Government Areas with the Highest Number of Language Other Than English Speakers

New South Wales: 2006 Census



Local government community profile

Below is an abbreviated example of a local government profile. A profile like this example for Fairfield is available for every LGA in NSW. It is a very useful starting point for understanding the current make-up and the changing nature of your LGA.

Percentage of Australian and overseas born residents in Fairfield

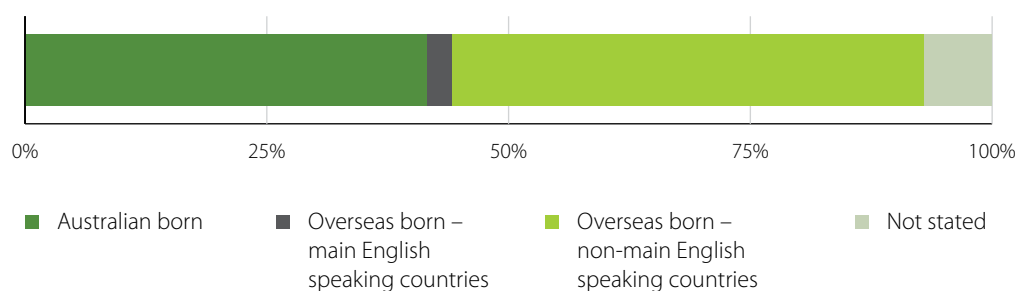


Table 1
Fairfield LGA – Statistics from the 2006 Census

Summary Indicators	2006 Census	% of population	2001 Census	Change 2001–2006	% change
Population	179,891	100	181,480	-1,589	-0.9
Australian born	74,699	41.5	75,446	-747	-1.0
Overseas born	92,555	51.5	95,358	-2,803	-2.9
Birthplace not stated	12,637	7	10,676	1,961	18.4
Overseas born – main English speaking countries	4,610	2.6	5,178	-568	-11.0
Overseas born – non-main English speaking countries	87,945	48.9	90,180	-2,235	-2.5
Overseas born – Australian citizens	77,390	43	78,387	-997	-1.3
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders	1,112	0.6	1,117	-5	-0.4
Language other than English spoken at home	120,895	67.2	119,735	1,160	1.0
Overseas born arrived since 2001	10,402	5.8	–	–	–
Overseas born arrived since 2001 from NMEESC	9,731	5.4	–	–	–
Overseas born with Internet access	52,246	29	15,289	36,957	241.7
Australian born with Internet access	48,493	27	18,347	30,146	164.3
LOTE spoken at home with Internet access	71,056	39.5	21,509	49,547	230.4

Table 2
Overseas born: birthplace by gender, 2006, 2001 and 1996 Census

Birthplace	Males	Females	Persons	% of OSB	2001 Census	1996 Census	% change 2001–2006
Viet Nam	11,547	13,150	24,697	26.7	24,904	24,654	-0.8
Iraq	5,251	5,225	10,476	11.3	7,882	5,214	32.9
Cambodia	2,951	3,453	6,404	6.9	6,654	6,681	-3.8
Italy	2,402	2,312	4,714	5.1	5,346	6,021	-11.8
China (excl. SARS and Taiwan)	1,758	2,060	3,818	4.1	4,240	4,460	-10.0
Croatia	1,275	1,267	2,542	2.7	2,584	2,499	-1.6
Lebanon	1,268	1,106	2,374	2.6	2,169	2,050	9.5

Table 3
Languages other than English spoken at home by gender, 2006, 2001 and 1996 Census

Birthplace	Males	Females	Persons	% of LOTE speakers	2001 Census	1996 Census	% change 2001–2006
Vietnamese	14,777	15,887	30,664	25.4	28,016	23,389	9.5
Arabic	5,900	5,670	11,570	9.6	8,775	6,305	31.9
Assyrian	5,404	5,575	10,979	9.1	8,891	6,780	23.5
Cantonese	4,801	5,186	9,987	8.3	10,578	10,265	-5.6
Spanish	3,761	4,030	7,791	6.4	8,866	9,544	-12.1

Table 4
English language proficiency by age: selected language groups, 2006 Census

Language	Age					Total
	0–14	15–24	25–44	45–64	65+	
Vietnamese						
Speak English well/very well	5,125	3,951	6,259	2,108	134	17,577
Speak English not well/not at all	1,970	332	4,612	4,328	1,510	12,752
Total incl. not stated proficiency	7,281	4,302	10,933	6,487	1,661	30,664
<i>Percent not well/not at all</i>	<i>27%</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>42%</i>	<i>67%</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>42%</i>

Table 5
Religious affiliation by gender, 2006 and 2001 Census

Birthplace	Males	Females	Persons	% of population	2001 Census	% change 2001–06	% change
Western Catholic	29,838	30,953	60,791	33.8	63,369	-2,578	-4.1
Buddhism	19,121	20,687	39,808	22.1	38,466	1,342	3.5
Anglican	5,484	5,986	11,470	6.4	13,979	-2,509	-17.9
No religion, nfd	6,156	5,150	11,306	6.3	10,473	833	8.0
Islam	4,065	3,831	7,896	4.4	6,810	1,086	15.9

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *The People of NSW – Statistics from the 2006 Census*, www.crc.nsw.gov.au/publications/documents/ponsw

Note: 4 page profiles for Sydney Metropolitan Local Government Areas can be downloaded from www.crc.nsw.gov.au/publications



Tip

Be careful when using statistics. LGAs vary in the total number of residents. Looking at the actual *percentage* of LOTE speakers in a particular LGA might be more useful than looking at the *number* of LOTE speakers.



Useful resource

Profiles for each council area can be downloaded from:

The People of NSW (2006)

www.crc.nsw.gov.au/communities/ponsw

Refer to the Appendix for local government areas in NSW with more than 10,000 local residents (and/or >10 per cent) who speak a language other than English (LOTE) at home.



