

UNDER EMBARGO, 12.01AM WEDNESDAY, 17 AUGUST 2022

GIO partners with FRRR to rebuild Regional Communities

- *Applications open for the second round of the Rebuilding Futures program*
- *Grants aim to support locally-identified recovery and rebuilding programs*
 - *Grants of up to \$25,000 available for NSW community groups*

Six months on from the devastating East Coast Floods which swept through northern New South Wales (NSW), and GIO, as part of the Suncorp Group, has once again partnered with the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR) to support remote, rural and regional communities.

The [Rebuilding Futures](#) program will see grants of up to \$25,000 awarded to not-for-profit groups and local community organisations to rebuild and recover from the devastating impacts of February's Floods.

In 2021, the Suncorp Group pledged \$1 million to FRRR to support rural Australian communities impacted by, or vulnerable to, significant natural disasters. Last year the program awarded over \$200,000 worth of grants to 17 community groups and not-for-profits, and in 2022 a further \$500,000 will be available.

GIO Head of Flood Response and Recovery, Cath Stewart acknowledged that a lot of communities were still struggling in the aftermath of February's floods, and encouraged those community groups and not-for-profits in impacted regions to apply for a one-off grant.

"While the initial clean up may have finished, impacted communities are now faced with the difficult task of rebuilding," Ms Stewart said.

"Our partnership with FRRR to offer the Rebuilding Futures program was created to provide support and funding to the many groups, clubs and organisations who contribute so much to our local NSW communities, yet who are doing it extremely tough right now.

"Local community groups and leaders are best-placed to identify those initiatives which will help their community move forward from this latest event, and our grants program aims to empower them in achieving their recovery and rebuilding priorities."

Six months on from East Coast Floods

GIO received more than 22,300 claims from NSW customers after an unprecedented 'rain bomb' left a trail of devastation from the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, all the way down the east coast to the NSW border in February this year.

To date, more than 36% of home claims and 84% of motor claims have been finalised.

Ms Stewart said the insurer is continuing to work hard to finalise all remaining claims as soon as possible and acknowledged that due to the scale of the event, many communities will have a long road to recovery.

"This has, and will continue to be a major rebuilding effort, across multiple regions, and we appreciate our customers' patience as we work with them to get them back in their homes as quickly as possible," Ms Stewart said.

Media Release



“We understand this is a difficult time for our customers and we are committed to getting people’s lives back on track.”

GIO has also launched the Event Control Centre to improve its approach to disaster readiness and damage detection. The platform combines geospatial mapping, satellite and aerial imagery as well as artificial intelligence to help detect damage to homes and communities following a natural disaster.

“Despite the scale of this weather event, GIO’s claim team has resolved an average of 208 claims per day over the past six months.

“Our people have attended over 28,500 inspections, spent almost 12,768 hours supporting customers in impacted communities, and made over 4,980 customer care calls.

“We have also increased our workforce by recruiting an additional 400 team members in NSW to support our customers,” Ms Stewart said.

Community grants for ongoing recovery

GIO, as part of the Suncorp Group, has been a long-standing advocate of increasing resilience, and its partnership with FRRR to deliver the second round of the Rebuilding Futures Grants Program is another way it is supporting NSW communities.

“Through our latest round of grants with FRRR, we can support community groups and not-for-profits in building their resilience, by improving their facilities for mitigation and preparedness,” Ms Stewart said.

Grants are available for locally-identified and driven activities, events, initiatives and small-scale infrastructure or equipment projects.

Natalie Egleton, CEO of FRRR, said that Suncorp's support means the community can create opportunities to reconnect, share experiences or support overall wellbeing and improved mental health, in whatever way makes most sense to that community.

“We also hope that for some the grant opportunity can be a catalyst for projects that reduce the impact of future disasters on community wellbeing and physical infrastructure,” Ms Egleton said.

Grant applications open

GIO and FRRR’s Rebuilding Futures Grants Program opens on 17 August 2022 and is available to northern-NSW community groups and not-for-profits impacted by the February 2022 floods. Further information, including information on how to apply for a one-off grant can be found at www.frrr.org.au/Rebuilding-Futures.

A Grant Seeking Workshop, including a Q&A on the Rebuilding Futures Grant Program will be held online from 1-2pm AEST Tuesday, 23 August 2022 for potential applicants.

Applications close 28 September 2022, and grants will be awarded in December 2022.

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Notes to Editor

About FRRR

The Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal - FRRR - (phonetically: F-triple-R) - is the only national foundation specifically focused on ensuring the social and economic strength of remote, rural and regional communities. FRRR's unique model connects common purposes and investment with locally prioritised needs, to create communities that are vital and resilient. Since FRRR's start in 2000, it has delivered nearly \$155 million to around 13,000 projects.