



**Building Community and Economic Legacy in the Greater Whitsunday
Region**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Greater Whitsunday Communities (GWC) was successful with a Building Better Region's Fund (Round 5) grant to fund the Project: Building Community and Economic Legacy in the Greater Whitsunday Region.

The intention of this Project was to raise awareness of the concept of Inclusive Growth, and garner support for progressing the concept in a number of pilot projects.

For the purposes of this Project, Inclusive Growth has been defined as: enabling as many people as possible to contribute to and benefit from the prosperity and growth of the region.

By exposing as broad a range of stakeholders as possible to the concept, it is hoped that future major projects and economic opportunities that are progressed in the region are scoped with the Inclusive Growth agenda in mind and enable as many people in the region as possible to benefit from the associated opportunities.

Inclusive Growth is a strategic focus area for GWC and GWC believes that it is essential to sustain the social fabric of the region as well as improve the liveability of the region. This in turn provides opportunities to attract additional investment, creating ever improving circular economic growth, where as many people as possible in the community benefit.

Key activities of the Project included:

1. Establishing an Inclusive Growth Community of Practice within the Greater Whitsunday region
2. Workshops with key stakeholders and content specialists in Isaac and Whitsunday regions
3. Exploring opportunities for pilot projects
4. Facilitating a region-wide socio-economic forum with the theme of Inclusive Growth in Mackay

Community of Practice

The Community of Practice comprised representatives from the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday Regional Council's economic development teams, the Queensland Department of State Development, AusIndustry, Regional Development Australia and an agricultural industry group.

The CoP met twice to explore the concept and how it could potentially be applied to existing and planned projects for the region.

Individual members of the CoP were also engaged with one-on-one and their feedback was gathered in terms of how best to progress the Inclusive Growth agenda in the region going forward.

From this engagement it can be concluded that:

- There is value in a Community of Practice (CoP) keeping the Inclusive Growth agenda top of mind, and to facilitate connectivity between initiatives across the region. Most importantly, it should create a bridge between economic projects that have significant social implications and the social / community sector, where GWC takes the lead in progressing parallel community projects. GWC needs to be properly resourced to address these parallel projects, and strategically positioned to take the lead.
- The participants in the CoP should be reviewed with consideration given to including a philanthropic representative, the Regional Community Forums and other community development leaders.

- For participants to attend, they will need to see the value for themselves, and how Inclusive Growth is improving their own outcomes.
- The activities of the CoP should be extended to the broader community through a number of events that aim to raise awareness of the concept and positive outcomes achieved (through case studies) more broadly.

Community Workshops

Two workshops took place, one in Moranbah (Isaac) and the other in Proserpine (Whitsundays). Both were well attended by a broad cross-section of the community and presentations from Professor Allan Dale, JCU, and Elise Parups, Queensland Social Enterprise Council, were well received and together with a panel discussion that focused on the relevant region's Inclusive Growth opportunities, set the scene for a workshop that explored the following key questions:

1. How well is the region doing with Inclusive Growth?
2. What are the top two or three missing social elements?
3. What are potential pathways?

The common themes that came out of these workshops are as follows:

- **Improved Collaboration:** Improved collaboration across a broad spectrum of stakeholders was seen as key to achieving Inclusive Growth, with frequent references made to aligning roadmaps of the economic and social sectors, as well as collaboration across State and Local Governments and departments. The challenges we are facing in the world require high levels of collaboration to resolve and collaboration will be necessary for new opportunities to be effectively leveraged for the Greater Whitsunday region. While necessary, this collaboration needs to take place within the context of stretched resources – creative solutions need to be explored for all parties involved to get value from the collaboration process.
- **Common and positive narrative:** The region needs a common and positive narrative to attract investment and regional migration
 - This common language has been referenced in many aligned projects, including in the Isaac Housing Summit workshops
 - It relates to how the region is supporting the world's transition to net zero and alignment with the UN sustainability goals
- **Articulate social legacy:** The region needs to articulate the social legacy it requires in order to coordinate ESG investments from industry for optimal impact – potentially a collaborative co-designed prospectus
 - Significant improvements can be made relating to core liveability measures like education, health and housing across the region
 - Aged care services and pathways for youth inclusion are needed
 - Coordination of social investment is critical supported by appropriate governance structures
 - Backbone support for the coordination of social investment was deemed to be essential
- **Measure social impact:** The importance of measuring social impact came across strongly in the panel discussion in the Isaac as a means of encouraging more as well as attracting investment on the back of the ESG credentials of the region
- **SME participation:** SME participation and support is needed to progress the Inclusive Growth agenda

Potential Pilot Projects

Engagement with the CoP members as well as discussions with organisations that have aligned projects highlighted opportunities for GWC to connect into the following initiatives to explore how Inclusive Growth can be progressed further, either as part of or as a separate project:

- RCOE Stage 3 in Isaac
- CRCTiME
- Queensland Government’s Energy and Jobs Plan
- Queensland Government’s Housing Summit
- MRC and RIN’s Workforce Attraction and Retention Project

There is an opportunity for GWC to lead a parallel project aligned to the RCOE and GW3 Decarbonisation Project to address and prepare for the long-term social and community impacts.

GWC and RDA GW have already partnered to deliver a Greater Whitsunday Housing Project to address the housing crisis at a social, affordable and commercial level. This Project’s scope is well aligned to the Inclusive Growth agenda.

There is significant alignment between the Inclusive Growth Project and the following initiatives:

- RCOE Future Industries Hub and Decarbonisation Project (in partnership with GW3)
- Isaac Housing Summit: liveability working group and action plan
- Queensland Government’s Regional Community Forums: Action Plan priority areas
- RDA Roadmap

GWC should connect into these initiatives to leverage alignment with Inclusive Growth opportunities.

Recommendations

The outcomes from the key activities relating to this Project have resulted in the following recommendations:

Action	Lead Organisation and Partners	Timeframe
<p>Collaborate to drive Inclusive Growth Continue the Inclusive Growth Community of Practice to “create a bridge” between various levels of government, government departments, economic development and community development sectors, key industry groups and create communication pathways where key projects can be leveraged to progress Inclusive Growth e.g., leverage the RCOE’s Future Industries Hub, annual roadmap mapping for alignment and collaborative Inclusive Growth projects, Isaac Housing Summit, Regional Community Forums and RDA Roadmap</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In many instances parallel projects may need to be established to optimise social legacy 	<p>GWC together with 3 Regional Councils, State Government, RDA GW, GW3</p>	<p>3 months</p>

There is opportunity to re-evaluate the participants in this Community of Practice to ensure that it includes representatives from all key sectors necessary to leverage Inclusive Growth opportunities		
<p>Develop a social legacy investment attraction document</p> <p>Defining the region’s “ask” for coordinated social investment to optimise impact and meaningful social legacy; perhaps linked to social legacy “pillars” identified in the Regional Community Forum Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain this document to keep relevant 	GWC in consultation with RDA GW, STACS, RCF	3 months
<p>Develop the governance framework to coordinate effective social investment and provide the backbone support for organisations delivering the relevant services</p>	3 Regional Councils and GWC	6-12 months
<p>Develop a regional coordinated campaign for investment attraction, including Inclusive Growth opportunities</p> <p>Common language for the region highlighting how the region is supporting the global transition to net zero</p>	Understand the work that key agencies such as GW3 (regional identity campaign) and RDA are delivering around this and develop social messaging value add to progress Inclusive Growth outcomes.	6-12 months
<p>Ongoing stakeholder engagement to progress the Inclusive Growth agenda:</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement plan to include SME engagement</p>	GWC	Ongoing
<p>Measure the impact of existing and new social investment to the region</p> <p>Add this data to the social legacy prospectus</p>	3 Regional Councils and GWC	12 months
<p>Pilot Projects</p> <p>GWC should connect into the following initiatives to explore how Inclusive Growth can be progressed further, either as part of or as a separate project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCOE Stage 2 and 3 • CRCTiME • Queensland Government’s Energy and Jobs Plan • Queensland Government’s Housing Summit • MRC and RIN’s Workforce Attraction and Retention Project • Regional Community Forums • RDA GW Roadmap • Isaac Housing Summit <p>There is an opportunity for GWC to lead a parallel project aligned to the RCOE and GW3 Decarbonisation</p>	GWC	3 -12 months

Project to address and prepare for the long-term social and community impacts.		
Case Study Leverage the outcomes of the Greater Whitsunday Housing Project to promote the Inclusive Growth agenda Gather examples of effective Inclusive Growth projects from outside the region to garner support for the concept within the region	GWC	6-12 months

The challenge with all the recommendations above is resourcing and funding. The recommendations sit on top of the funded capacity of all organisations referenced.