



# Implementing Climate Change Adaptation with enliven

## VCCCAR Implementing Adaptation project

### CASE STUDY REPORT

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## **Images**

Courtesy of enliven

## **Disclaimer**

The views expressed herein do not represent those of the Victorian Government or VCCCAR. They are the views of the report authors.

This case study report is a co-developed research output of the Implementing Adaptation project, funded by the Victorian Government through VCCCAR. The report was co-written by researchers and key individuals at Enliven Victoria. Chapter 5 of this report draws heavily on interviews held with Enliven Victoria as part of an evaluation meeting. The report captures the views of Enliven Victoria and the researchers involved.



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# 1 About us

*Enliven Victoria* (enliven) is the trading name of *SEHCP Incorporated*. It became a not for profit association in December 2012.



enliven was established as part of the Victorian Government's Primary Care Partnership Strategy in 2000 by a voluntary alliance of health and social service organisations operating in south east metropolitan Melbourne. Since then it has developed a deep understanding of the municipalities it serves, their issues, and the service organisations working within them.

The primary purpose of enliven is to enable partnerships between health and social service organisations to improve the health of the population by working together on integrated responses to issues.

enliven has worked in the area of climate change, and its health and social impacts, since 2008. It has published a number of reports, peer reviewed papers and resources, to support mitigation and adaptation action by its member agencies. These are available at: [www.enliven.org.au](http://www.enliven.org.au)

A key goal in enliven's 2012-2013 Strategic Plan has been to build local climate change adaptation capacity by developing and trialling adaptation tools, shifting action from emergency responses to an anticipatory or proactive approach, and enhancing community resilience.

## 2 The VCCCAR Implementing Adaptation project

### 2.1 The project

enliven has been involved in a project funded by the Victorian Government through the *Victorian Centre for Climate Change Adaptation Research (VCCCAR)*. The project entitled '*Implementing tools to increase adaptive capacity in the community and natural resources management sectors*' (*Implementing Adaptation* in the following) has been conducted to gain a better understanding of the adaptation capabilities and needs of three types of government service providers and funded agencies. These were catchment management authorities (CMAs), community service organisations (CSOs), and primary care partnerships (PCPs), and the purpose of the project was to facilitate the implementation and testing of tools and methodologies for climate change adaptation planning.

enliven is one of five sites across Victoria that participated in the tools-testing phase of the project. This phase has aimed to gain a better understanding of how identified climate change adaptation needs can best be responded to using decision-support tools.

### 2.2 The process

The process involved four meetings facilitated by the research team over the course of a six month period, with work carried out between each meeting. The meeting process is shown below.

- 1: Scoping – Organisational context, needs and capabilities
- 2: Tool Selection – Introducing and selecting an adaptation tool
- 3: Tool Implementation – Progressing the tool use
- 4: Evaluation – Reflection on project process and usefulness of tool.

Based on prior work enliven developed a Climate Change Adaptation Audit Tool to assist ten member organisations to work towards the Strategic Plan goal.

## 3 Getting started

### 3.1 Why we wanted to participate

enliven with its members has an extensive history in working on climate change adaptation. The opportunity to test an appropriate adaptation tool, in collaboration with an external research partner, was considered an important continuous improvement initiative. enliven considered that engagement in the Implementing Adaptation Project would support the achievement of its Strategic Plan goals and better prepare services to be able to support their clients affected by climate change, including adverse weather events.

The associated support by VCCCAR and the researchers within the Implementing Adaptation research team were perceived as a collaboration that would strengthen local work, provide evidence and documentation that can be used to advocate and lobby with all levels of government in the future.

## 4 The tool

### 4.1 Our chosen tool

enliven developed a fit-for-purpose tool, drawing on its previous work, the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) investigation into adaptation for the community sector<sup>1</sup>, the UK DEFRA *National Indicator*

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<sup>1</sup> Mallon, Hamilton, Black, Beem, & Abs (2013)

188 (NI 188)<sup>2</sup>, and the organisational development perspective contained in a manuscript entitled '*Attributes of a Health Literate Organisation*'<sup>3</sup>. The performance rating scale in the tool was based on the Victorian PCP Continuous Improvement Framework<sup>4</sup>.



FIGURE 1 THE CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AUDIT TOOL

The Climate Change Adaptation Audit Tool (Figure 1) was developed to assist health and social service organisations self-assess their level of adaptation to climate change with a particular focus on extreme weather events. The tool is comprised of eight criteria describing attributes of a health or social service organisation that is adapting to deal with climate change. Application of the tool was aimed at the member organisation level with acknowledgement that organisational context varies significantly across the catchment. The following tables illustrate an example criterion (Criterion 1: Figure 2) and associated Performance Rating Scale (Performance Rating Scale: Figure 2).

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<sup>2</sup> <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/corporate/about/with/localgov/indicators/ni188.htm>

<sup>3</sup> [http://iom.edu/~media/Files/Perspectives-Files/2012/Discussion-Papers/BPH\\_Ten\\_HLit\\_Attributes.pdf](http://iom.edu/~media/Files/Perspectives-Files/2012/Discussion-Papers/BPH_Ten_HLit_Attributes.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/pcps/downloads/continuous.pdf>

| <b>Criterion 1.</b><br>Has plans for maintaining service delivery following an extreme weather event. (derived from the ACOSS study)  | <b>Met</b> | <b>Partially met</b> | <b>Not met</b> | <b>Not applicable</b> |
|---|------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1.1 Service provider has contingency plans if the building became inaccessible.   |            |                      |                |                       |
| 1.2 Service provider has contingency plans if the power, telecommunications or water access is affected.  |            |                      |                |                       |
| 1.3 The organisation has plans that allow it to cope if demand for services increased due to an extreme weather event.  |            |                      |                |                       |
| 1.4 The organisation has plans that allow it to cope if demand for services increased long term.  |            |                      |                |                       |
| 1.5 The organisation has plans that allow it to cope if staff are unable to operate for more than one day.  |            |                      |                |                       |
| 1.6 The organisation has plans that allow it to cope if the usual volunteer workforce is unavailable for more than one day.   |            |                      |                |                       |
| 1.7 The organisation has adequate insurance cover that would ensure maintenance of services. Potential items for cover include: assets, contracts, income, business continuity, staff absence, and volunteer absence. |            |                      |                |                       |

### PERFORMANCE RATING SCALE

Below are commonly used definitions for each point on the rating scale<sup>3</sup>.

**Met:** clear evidence that performance meets or exceeds the standard.

**Partially met:** clear evidence that performance meets some, but not all, of the standard.

**Not met:** clear evidence that performance does not meet the standard.

**Not applicable:** The item is not applicable.

FIGURE 2: THE ENLIVEN CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AUDIT TOOL –CRITERION 1 AND PERFORMANCE RATING SCALE AND EXAMPLE

## 4.2 How the tool was selected

In developing the Climate Change Adaptation Audit Tool, enliven selected a format that was familiar to organisations, written in understandable language, and addressed adaptation issues that were familiar to service managers, such as service continuity and organisational processes.

The tool was developed to address the following adaptation needs:

- To monitor and evaluate adaptation action at member agency level;



- To provide a checklist for a 'well adapted health or social service organisation' for member agency use;
- To embed adaptation at member agency level through a self-assessment tool; and
- To achieve greater engagement in adaptation action through all levels of member agency organisations.

### **4.3 How the tool was implemented**

enliven implemented its Climate Change Adaptation Audit Tool at member organisation level, involving ten member organisations. As it is a self-assessment tool, member organisation representatives were asked to test the tool internally with the aim of furthering the conversation and action around adaptation within their organisational operations and service delivery. Annual application of the tool was proposed to monitor the change or progress in the adaptation process over time.

A baseline survey was conducted prior to tool implementation through the VCCCAR research team to:

- Establish baseline understanding around climate change impacts;
- Determine the appropriateness of the tool over time; and
- Determine the expectations of the enliven Climate Change Adaptation Audit Tool.

All ten participating member agencies completed the baseline survey.

enliven conducted a briefing on the tool with the participating agencies in which the tool and its role in the research was explained and where participants discussed the modes of evidence required to support their self-assessment.

The tool was then piloted with the ten member agencies over a period of a month. Member agency representatives were encouraged to apply the

tool within the organisation's management group or team meeting to arrive at a consensus rating of performance on each criterion.

A follow-up survey was conducted after tool implementation through the VCCCAR research team:

- To establish how the enliven Climate Change Adaptation Audit Tool met the expectations of participating member organisations;
- How it had aided in embedding climate change adaptation within their organisation; and
- Organisational learning facilitated through use of the tool.

Seven out of the ten participating organisations completed the follow-up survey.

## 5 Outcomes of the Process

### 5.1 What did we learn?

The surveys carried before and after tool implementation provided insights into the learning associated with implementing the Climate Change Adaptation Audit Tool.

Participating member agencies expected the Climate Change Audit Tool to assist their organisation to adapt to climate change the most in the following ways:

- Allowing conversations to be held around climate change impacts and adaptation within the organisation;
- Help identify and agree on goals and objectives for adaptation;
- Raising awareness of climate change impacts and adaptation

After testing the tool, organisations considered the tool to be well placed to facilitate conversations about climate change impacts and adaptation,

with four out of seven organisations outlining that the tool fully met their expectations and the remaining agreeing that some expectations were met. Four out of seven organisations said that the tool had helped them with planning for the impacts of climate change. Only one participating organisation either felt the tool did not help their organisation, or were unsure about the use of the tool in this regard, or thought that there was no change.


Three out of seven of the participating member agencies said that the tool was relatively easy to use, while the same number of organisations were ambivalent about the tool's ease of use and one member agency stating it was difficult to use. The majority of participants felt that the language used within the tool was appropriate for its application.

According to the participating organisations, the key strengths of the tool were:

- Its simplicity around language and application;
- Its relevance to member agency context;
- Its facilitation of conversations on climate change within the organisation; and
- Its applicability as an ongoing monitoring tool to track the adaptation process within enliven's member agencies.

Potential points of improvement outlined by member agencies were:

- The 'readiness' of organisations for an audit type tool, i.e. where organisations were at different stages of the adaptation process;
- Lack of clarity about who should lead the tool implementation within the organisation e.g. senior management, officer, etc.;
- Inclusion of a glossary and diagrams for explanation; and
- The high-intensity information gathering required to complete the tool.



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Overall, enliven member agencies were pleased that the tool enabled conversation on climate change adaptation with staff across multiple levels of their organisation that would not have occurred otherwise. Also, the tool facilitated improvements in operational practice that will be incorporated into organisational work plans.

## **5.2 What was challenging?**

The key challenges in participating in the research project were:

- Developing a common understanding between enliven and VCCCAR researchers of what a PCP is, how it works as a partnership, and how the PCP is different from other 'organisations' in the primary health and community services sector.
- Working through the complexity of achieving clarity and a shared understanding about the research objectives, and ensuring that these objectives were complementary to the objectives, needs and best interests of the health and social services implementing the tool.
- Ensuring there is a shared understanding of the 'practical application' of tools in a health and social services setting.
- A crucial challenge remains 'selling' climate change as a strategic priority to leaders within health and social services and keeping climate change on the agenda.

## **5.3 What has changed during this process?**

Development of the tool and engagement in the research process has consolidated thinking about the organisational focus around adaptation considerations in enliven's work.

The findings from the pre and post tool implementation surveys were very valuable and have allowed us to gain further insight into the needs of our member agencies. They have provided us with information for future

planning and a focus for reflecting on the work that has been undertaken over the past few years.

We now know that:


- The enliven Climate Change Adaptation Audit Tool is an effective means of raising awareness and promoting discussion on climate change within health and social services;
- A high proportion of local organisations are building knowledge and accessing climate change information through enliven;
- Effective leadership or 'champions' support adaptation action within an organisation; and
- There is still a need to make it easier for health and social services to understand, and use, climate change information.

## **5.4 What was most important for us?**

This research project has provided the opportunity for enliven to articulate and document some of the processes and learning that we have gone through over the past few years in our climate change work journey. What has come out of this process is not necessarily new in content, but it is reinforcing what we were thinking and experiencing and putting it into a bigger picture context.

The VCCCAR research project provided a useful opportunity for us to reflect on our journey and what we've done to get to where we are in promoting the consideration of adaptation in our strategic planning, in collaboration within our member agencies. For enliven, it was a privilege to be part of the research project and this involvement has added value to enliven's work with our member agencies. Being involved in the VCCCAR project has injected us with a new sense of vigour.

The survey-based evaluation of the enliven Climate Change Adaptation Audit Tool at member agency level was most useful as it provided a well-structured opportunity for member agencies to report back on their



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experience. The VCCCAR research team acted as a body independent from enliven during this evaluation process.

## 6 What Next? Moving Forward.

enliven's goal is to progress the work that has been commenced with member organisations. We plan to utilise the survey outcomes and feedback from each of the participating member agencies that have used the tool, to make further enhancements to the fit-for-purpose audit tool developed during the tools testing phase of the VCCCAR Implementing Adaptation project.

Participating member agencies have agreed to share information and build a 'catalogue of evidence' that they have used to implement the Climate Change Adaptation Audit tool and to guide decision-making regarding the tool's self-assessment performance rating scale. We hope to co-develop this catalogue with our member agencies and anticipate that this work will lead to more consistent decision-making in regard to tracking progress with adaptation across organisations.

enliven will also investigate the feasibility of an online version of the tool, along with an accompanying workbook, which would have the capacity to collate results and produce individual agency and catchment reports.

Being involved in the VCCCAR research project has reinforced our view that collaborating with researchers is of significant benefit to enliven. We plan to foster further collaboration with VCCCAR and other research organisations to support our work on climate change adaptation.

## Participating enliven member agencies

The authors would like to acknowledge the following member agencies of enliven that participated in the VCCCAR Implementing Adaptation project and have agreed to be listed in this report:

- Connections Uniting Care
- Kooweerup Regional Health Service
- Women's Health in the South East
- Windermere
- Baptcare
- City of Greater Dandenong
- Uniting Aged Care
- BrainLink Services



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