Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit

Overview
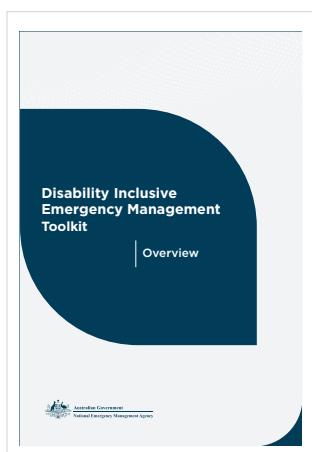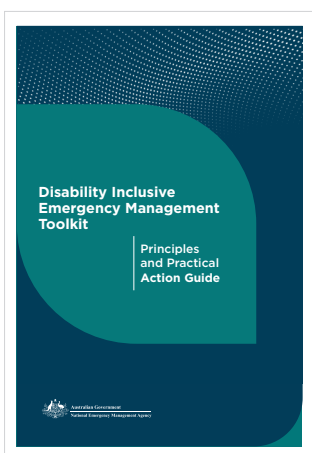
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Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031

Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit

The Toolkit has four components:

The **Overview** provides essential background on the need for the Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit. It identifies the challenges faced by individuals with disability during emergencies and emphasises the importance of incorporating their lived experiences and specific support needs throughout all phases of emergency management. The Overview explains who the Toolkit is for and how its components work together to facilitate self-assessment, encourage collaboration and guide tailored action planning. As the foundational element, the Overview should be read first to set the context before exploring the practical tools offered in the Toolkit.

The **Principles and Practical Action Guide** support emergency planners to translate seven principles for disability inclusive emergency management into practical actions for a nationally consistent approach.

The maturity development framework integrates three practice standards (inclusive planning, strategic partnerships, accessible resourcing) to increase the effectiveness of disability inclusive emergency management. Twelve indicators and three maturity levels provide benchmarks against which practices can be measured and improved. Six steps guide emergency planners to engage with the principles and maturity levels to advance practical action. Maturity development roadmaps, case studies and planning templates guide the development of goals, practical strategies and monitoring.

The **Organisational Emergency Preparedness Profile** is for community and disability organisations to self-assess and document their current level of emergency preparedness, capabilities and potential to contribute to disability inclusive emergency management. It prompts organisations to identify areas of strength and plan future actions to strengthen their emergency preparedness.

By evaluating their readiness, organisations can lay the groundwork for forming strategic partnerships with emergency planners, enhancing collaborative efforts and driving progress on inclusive planning and accessible resourcing. As part of a comprehensive self-assessment of disability inclusive emergency management, it helps emergency planners to build strong relationships and more effective responsibility-sharing with community and disability organisations.

The **Resource Map** shares good practice resources for disability inclusive emergency management developed in Australia.

Assessed for their inclusivity and collaboration mechanisms, these resources act as catalysts, sparking innovation and efficiency in emergency management processes. The resources are organised by sector (e.g., disability, community emergency, government). Each is catalogued according to its primary purpose, format and phase of the emergency management continuum. It can be used as an interactive and conversational tool to promote cross-sector learning and shared planning.

Ministerial Foreword

As the frequency and intensity of natural hazards escalate, all governments are evolving our approaches to support communities as we prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. These approaches must be inclusive and accessible. Disasters do not discriminate and their impacts can be disproportionately severe for people with disability.

The Disability Inclusive Emergency Management (DIEM) project was commissioned by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), and delivered in partnership with the University of Sydney's Centre for Disability Research and Policy.

The project aims to reduce the additional challenges faced by people with disability in emergencies and disasters. By ensuring that they play an integral part in the conversation about disaster risk and planning for emergencies, we can build a resilient society where everyone is empowered and protected.

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031 emphasises the physical and mental wellbeing of people with disabilities, including during emergencies. The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability also highlighted significant gaps in the safety of people with disability during emergencies and disasters.

The DIEM project represents a significant step forward to addressing these concerns and offers an opportunity to ensure the actions we take across the emergency management continuum leave no one behind.

On behalf of the Albanese Government, I extend my gratitude to all the partners, stakeholders, and advocates who have contributed to this vital project.

Together, we are forging a path towards a safer, more inclusive future for all Australians.

Senator the Hon Jenny McAllister
Minister for Emergency Management

Preface

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) initiated the Disability Inclusive Emergency Management project to address the heightened risk that people with disability face in emergencies, seeking to develop more consistent and effective planning for disaster that is disability-inclusive.

NEMA commissioned the Collaborating4Inclusion research team at the University of Sydney Centre for Disability Research and Policy to undertake research which has led to the development of the Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit.

The research team employed an integrated knowledge-to-action methodology to co-produce principles, practice standards and actionable guidance on disability inclusive emergency management.

The research took part in three phases:

Phase 1 involved a three-part scoping study to present evidence of emergency management capabilities in disability inclusive disaster risk reduction. It included:
- a scoping study of the international peer-reviewed research to understand the role, capacity, tools and training needs of emergency planners
- document analysis to examine the extent to which Australia's emergency management plans and guidance documents recognise disproportionate risks and make provisions for the support requirements of people with disability
- identification and mapping 'good practice' resources in Australia that met criteria for disability inclusive disaster risk reduction.

Phase 2 provided a picture of Australia's progress toward disability inclusive emergency management through national engagement with 92 representatives from the government, emergency, disability and community sectors to reflect on the Phase 1 scoping study findings and identify priorities for development.

Phase 3 involved national engagement with 113 stakeholders from government, emergency services, disability and community sectors to collaboratively develop the Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit containing the Principles and Practical Action Guide, Organisational Emergency Preparedness Profile and Resource Map. It was field-tested in New South Wales and South Australia to assess its effectiveness in evaluating current practices and guiding strategic improvements in disability inclusive emergency management.

The research was supported by a national Expert Advisory Panel, including diverse representation from peak disability advocacy organisations, who provided expert advice and oversight across all three phases.

Acknowledgement

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Introduction

The Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit aims to develop capabilities and advance excellence in disability inclusive emergency management planning and practice.

Australia is making strides in developing effective practices for including people with disability in emergency management. However, much more needs to be done to translate human rights principles into meaningful practices that positively impact safety and well-being outcomes for people with disability nationwide.

Disability inclusive emergency management requires a comprehensive approach to ensuring that emergency management information, planning and practices address the needs of people with disability. It involves integrating supportive mechanisms at all stages of emergency management to ensure safety, accessibility and shared responsibility.

Emergency planners have faced challenges in the development of disability inclusive emergency management. The prevailing practices have unfortunately resulted in unequal participation, limited involvement of people with disability, advocates and their supporting services, and lack of data to drive measurable changes [1].

People with disability have often been excluded from emergency management planning. When their support needs have been considered, emergency management plans are insufficient because they:
- are assumed by people without disability with inadequate consultation [2]
- focus narrowly on one aspect of disability [3]
- are limited to the response phase of emergency management [4]
- emphasise doing for, not with, people with disability [5]

These actions demonstrate how systemic abelism discriminates and marginalises people with disability in emergency management. This situation has perpetuated inequity for people with disability because their support needs are not fully understood and planned for. This is a global challenge [6].

Research consistently highlights the disproportionate risks experienced by people with disability during disasters. They face increased mortality rates, higher risks of injury and property loss, evacuation difficulties, and greater dependence on health and social services after disaster events [7-11]. The international research confirms that people with disability are the most neglected during disaster events [11].

The 2019-2020 Black Summer Bushfires that devastated Australian communities and the COVID-19 pandemic have pointed to Australia's deficiencies in realising protections for people with disability during emergencies. These events have shown both disproportionate impact of disaster for Australians with disability and the challenges faced by community and disability service providers who support them [12,13]. These groups have not been effectively integrated into the emergency management system [2, 14].

Australia, as signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction must ensure that every member of the community is well prepared and supported. This includes people with disability and their support networks.

The Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit builds on the progress Australia has made toward the development and implementation of person-centred and capability-focused approaches to disaster risk reduction [16]. It aims to broaden these achievements by focusing on national consistency in delivering disability inclusive emergency management, ensuring that no Australian with disability is left behind.

Needs for action

Consolidating a decade of research on disability inclusive disaster risk reduction in Australia identified the following needs for action [1,14,15]:

- Improving how people with disability and their support needs are profiled in emergency management plans
- Using lived experience input to identify barriers and plan for the supports people with disability require for their safety and well-being
- Providing access to person-centred emergency preparedness support for people who need help to make a tailored personal emergency plan
- Ensuring everyone has access to emergency risk information, planning resources, emergency warnings, timely disaster risk communications and ongoing information about the unfolding emergency in formats that they can understand and use to take effective action
- Providing safe, timely and accessible evacuation and shelter options during and after disaster. This includes increasing universal accessibility of emergency shelters, places of refuge, relief and recovery hubs
- Providing timely, secure and accessible transport options during emergencies, including evacuating individuals, equipment and necessary support, as well as accommodating assistance animals
- Including people with disability and their support services in inclusive emergency and disaster recovery planning and exercising
- Providing access to mainstream and disability-specific emergency and disaster information, services and supports that people with disability need before, during and after disasters.

National consultations, undertaken with representatives from the government, emergency, disability and community sectors, called for the adoption of uniform, policy guidelines to develop a consistent approach that:
- addresses the needs for action
- increases equitable access for people with disability to disaster risk reduction
- supports emergency planners with practical implementation of disability inclusive emergency management [17].

Requirements for action

Aligning with Australia's Disability Strategy 2021 - 2031 (ADS), this Toolkit aids in fulfilling Australia's human rights commitments under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) and priorities outlined in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR).

Designed for use by governments working in partnership with disability representatives and service providers from the community, health, disability, aged care and social welfare sectors, this Toolkit supports the implementation of Australia's Second National Action Plan to implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework (NDRRF).

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD)

The CRPD is a human rights treaty. Five Articles form the basis of ensuring the rights of people with disability to inclusive emergency management planning and practices:

- **Article 9 Accessibility:** Ensures that people with disability can live independently and fully in all aspects of life by promoting access to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications, including during emergencies.
- **Article 11 Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies:** Specifically requires nations to take all necessary measures to protect the safety of people with disability in situations of risk. This means providing people with disability the additional support necessary to ensure they have equitable opportunities to participate in emergency management planning and access services that increase their resilience to disasters.
- **Article 19 Living independently and being included in the community:** Emphasises the right of all people to live in the community, with equal choices to others, which includes being provided with the necessary support during emergencies.
- **Article 21 Freedom of expression and opinion and access to information:** Ensures that people with disability can seek, receive and impart information on an equal basis with others, including during emergencies.
- **Article 30 Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport:** Ensures that safety measures, emergency services and facilities are available to people with disability. In the context of disaster, increasing the accessibility and safety of cultural and recreational venues is important in planning and responding to emergencies, as these places can serve as shelters or gathering points for the community to facilitate disaster recovery.

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR)

The SFDRR calls for:
- emergency management data to be collected, analysed and risks addressed through a disability-inclusive lens.
- active involvement of people with disability in developing policies and processes related to emergency management, disaster response and recovery.
- person-centred planning for the support requirements of people with disability in all plans and operations, ensuring access to emergency information and services before, during and after disaster.

Australia's Disability Strategy (ADS)

Under the ADS Health and Wellbeing Outcome Area, a key priority for all governments is ensuring that disaster preparedness, risk management plans and public emergency responses are:
- inclusive of people with disability
- support their physical and mental health and well-being.

State and territory governments have primary responsibility for protecting life, property and environment within their jurisdiction. They are required to have established plans in place to respond to and recover from emergencies.

Local governments also have an important role in emergency management coordination, including risk assessment, planning, asset management and mitigation.

Emergency plans at all levels of government must include provisions for people with disability who may require:
- additional assistance to plan and prepare for an emergency
- targeted and accessible information and communication before, during and after emergencies
- additional assistance and appropriate support in the event of evacuation or physical isolation
- support through the recovery process.

Australia's Emergency Management Arrangements

Australia's approach to emergency management is one of shared responsibility. State and territory governments have responsibility for coordinating and planning the response to, and recovery from, disasters within jurisdictions.

NEMA is responsible for supporting states and territories through the Australian Government's longer term disaster risk reduction and resilience building activities.

Built on the foundation of Australia's National Strategy for Disaster Resilience, the NDRRF advocates for the development of defined responsibilities so that individuals and community organisations can contribute to disaster risk reduction within their capabilities.

The Second National Action Plan guides implementation of the NDRRF and aims to mature Australia's disaster risk reduction system to enable actions across all of society and empower all Australians through coordinated and collaborative action.

Australia's emergency management arrangements:
- enable plans across different levels, from individual and household plans through to community, regional, state and national plans
- work to ensure that disaster management arrangements are inclusive, and supported by meaningful partnerships.

Measuring progress

A critical step forward in maturing Australia's emergency management system is to measure the extent to which emergency management information, planning and practices are disability-inclusive, and what effect they have on the resilience and well-being of people with disability.

It is important to devise action plans that are both specific in their targets and effective in monitoring outcomes. They must be built on a foundation of exemplary initiatives, ongoing development and leadership at all tiers of emergency management.

Nationwide, the successful deployment of a strategy for maturity growth and accountability in disability inclusive emergency management aligns with a key system and policy priority outlined in the ADS Outcomes Framework. It will facilitate tracking of Australia's contributions and advancements in reducing disaster risks for individuals with disability.

This toolkit will lay the foundation for developing data-driven insights needed to guide policy development and resource allocation to strengthen the rights of people with disability in emergency management and increase disaster resilience.

Getting Started

This Toolkit contains the Principles and Practical Action Guide. It was co-designed to assist emergency planners to develop disability inclusive emergency management actions that positively impact safety and well-being for all Australians with disability. The Action Guide offers a structured framework with standards, indicators and tools that step emergency planners through the self-assessment process. Maturity roadmaps, case studies and planning templates facilitate planning, implementation and monitoring progress.

The Action Guide works together with the Organisational Emergency Preparedness Profile and Resource Map to support emergency management arrangements to be inclusive and enabled by meaningful partnerships with people with disability, their representatives and supporting organisations.

(?) Who are emergency planners?

Emergency planners are involved in roles defined by both legislation and organisational responsibilities. While focusing on the protection of life, property and the environment, emergency planners are responsible for:
- developing, coordinating and implementing emergency management plans and procedures across the emergency management continuum
- working across multiple sectors and levels including national, state and territory governments, emergency service agencies, local councils, non-government organisations and private sector entities
- engaging with a wide range of stakeholders to cater to the diverse needs of the community and build whole-of-community disaster resilience.

Addressing the challenges that people with disability face during disasters requires more than one person or sector alone. It requires collective effort from people with different expertise, skills, networks, and resources.

Disability inclusive emergency management involves developing partnerships across diverse sectors to foster shared responsibility and effective outcomes for people with disability. It requires emergency planners to collaborate with disability representatives, advocates and service providers to increase the effectiveness of disability inclusive emergency management strategies.

Enhancing effectiveness through collaboration

Collaborative learning is key to improving emergency strategies across organisations and sectors within all levels of government. This approach not only helps to identify and remove barriers for people with disability during emergencies, but also builds trust and accountability. Such initiatives help to advance shared responsibility for disability inclusive emergency management and maturity at the individual, organisational and community level.

For disability and community organisations to contribute to effective disability inclusive emergency management, they need:
- to be aware, capable and prepared for emergencies themselves
- have organisational-level plans in place that support continuity of services and supports that people with disability rely on.

These plans must also cover their staff and volunteers.

Overcoming collaboration challenges

The challenge for emergency planners is that they have little information about the level of preparedness of disability and community organisations, which limits their ability to integrate these groups effectively into the emergency management continuum.

To collaborate effectively, emergency planners need to:

- understand the level of emergency preparedness of individuals and their supporting organisations
- know where to target their community engagement efforts to increase emergency preparedness capabilities across the community and disability sectors
- address the support requirements of people with disability that cannot be met through personal and organisational emergency plans
- mobilise resources for timely and accessible emergency management practices
- co-design systems that support and sustain communication, shared learning and decision-making for the safety and well-being of people with disability.

Emergency preparedness of community and disability organisations

The Organisational Emergency Preparedness Profile was co-designed to facilitate collaboration with community and disability organisations.

Aligned with the three Practice Standards outlined in the Action Guide, this tool supports assessment of organisational emergency preparedness and recognises the unique contributions that diverse community organisations can make to disability inclusive emergency management.

The Organisational Emergency Preparedness Profile has 6 sections:
- **Organisation Profile:** Captures publicly available information about the organisation, its size and the communities where they operate
- **Organisational Preparedness Self-assessment:** Invites reflection on 9 actions relevant to service continuity and measures the organisation has taken to increase safety of staff/volunteers and service recipients
- **Personal Emergency Preparedness Support:** Encourages reflection on 8 ways organisations can facilitate personal readiness and the factors influencing their ability to promote emergency preparedness with others

- **Gaps, Information Sharing, and Collaboration:** Prompts reflection on gaps, successes, challenges and preferences for working with government and emergency services to address identified challenges
- **Accessible Resources:** Invites consideration of organisational capabilities and material resources that could be mobilised for inclusive emergency management purposes
- **Disaster Experience:** Prompts the organisation to consider expertise they have gained through lived experience of disasters and disaster recovery.

The Organisational Emergency Preparedness Profile can be used to:

- profile organisations, including their scope of operations and the communities they serve to facilitate understanding and knowledge sharing about how community groups contribute to disability inclusion
- support emergency planners to obtain a comprehensive and more accurate understanding of the emergency management capabilities of the diverse range of community and disability organisations across their community
- map capabilities and accessible resources across the community
- set a benchmark for accessible resource planning and mobilisation in partnership with community and disability organisations
- design tailored community engagement strategies to increase levels of emergency preparedness
- enhance cross-sector capability and contributions to disability inclusive emergency management.

Roles and responsibilities of collaborators

Working well together requires knowing what different community and disability groups do and who they serve.

Below are clear outlines of:
- role and responsibility of Disabled People's and advocacy organisations
- role and responsibility of community-based service providers
- insight into individuals using these organisations' services and supports.

What is a Disabled People's/Advocacy Organisation?

Disabled People's Organisations (DPO) are uniquely characterised by being both led and composed of individuals with disability. They operate under the ethos of 'nothing about us without us.' They are distinguished from advocacy organisations by having at least 51% board and members who are people with disability.

Disability Advocacy Organisations are entities that support and champion the rights and interests of people with disability, as well as their families and carers. The leadership composition may or may not include individuals with disability.

DPOs and advocacy organisations can play a significant role in disaster policy, planning, and interventions. Through their lived experience and leadership roles as disability advocates, these organisations engage in individual and systemic advocacy to protect the rights of people with disability.

DPOs have in-depth understanding of the factors that increase risk for people with disability in emergencies. They also have access to informal networks of support and communication. This information is not readily available within mainstream emergency management.

Key roles include:
- Promoting and safeguarding the human rights and dignity of all individuals with disability
- Representing and advocating for an appreciation of the diverse experiences within the disability community
- Nurturing and facilitating the active engagement of people with disability in decision-making processes and all facets of community life
- Providing counsel to government bodies and other stakeholders on matters affecting people with disability
- Collaborating synergistically with other disability and human rights entities and groups, aligning efforts with shared interests, objectives, and strategic priorities and opportunities.

Importantly, peak bodies operate at a state or national level to provide representation, advocacy and support for member disability/advocacy organisations. So, state and national governments should engage with peak organisations to expand their reach across their jurisdiction.

What is a Community-Based Service Provider?

A wide range of individuals and organisations who provide care and support to people in their local communities, including people with disability.

These individuals and organisations are distinguished by their local-level roles and connection through their service to communities. Organisations may include for example, non-government organisations, charities, faith-based groups, neighbourhood centres, First Nations services and community groups.

Included in this category are those providing disability support services, health, mental health, rehabilitation and allied health services across a range of practices such as public health, children and youth services, aged care, LGBTIQ+, and housing/homelessness, social justice, corrections, community development and social welfare.

The overarching roles of these service providers and organisations involve:
- Identifying and responding to the needs and preferences of the individuals/groups they support
- Empowering and enabling people to participate in and contribute to their communities
- Collaborating and coordinating with other service providers and stakeholders to deliver services
- Advocating and raising awareness of the issues and challenges faced by the individuals they serve
- Building and strengthening the capacity and resilience of their communities.

These service providers and organisations are deeply woven into their local community, playing an integral role in the health and social care system. They hold valuable insights into the functional support needs of individuals and groups they support. They have extensive local knowledge and understanding of community strengths, resources, needs and disaster risks.

Due to their close care and support roles, community-based providers have a fundamental understanding of the personal needs of people with disability. They often serve as a bridge between individuals with disability, their families and the broader community, playing a vital part in their social networks. These connections place these providers in a unique position to foster the inclusion of people with disability in emergency preparedness and provide tailored support during and after disasters.

Importantly, peak bodies operate at a state or national level to provide representation, advocacy and support for each sector. So, state and national governments should engage with peak organisations to expand their reach across a sector or jurisdiction.

Who is a Service Recipient?

A service recipient is an individual or group who avails themselves of community, disability, health and social welfare services and supports, designed to enhance quality of life, foster independence, and ensure equitable access to resources necessary for well-being. Service recipients include, but are not limited to, people with disability, individuals experiencing socio-economic challenges, those requiring medical or therapeutic interventions, and members of marginalised communities seeking social inclusion and support.

Service recipients have unique backgrounds and identities, which can include their culture, age, gender and sexual identity, socio-economic status and other characteristics that make up who they are. Recognising these intersectional identities is important because it affects how they experience the world and what kind of services they might need or choose to access.

In the diverse landscape of service provision, service recipients are referenced by various organisations and entities using a range of terms that reflect the nature of the interaction and the ethos of the service provider.

These terms include for example:
- **Clients:** Commonly employed in professional and clinical settings, denoting a formal relationship centred around service provision
- **Consumers:** Indicates an individual's choice and autonomy in selecting and utilising services, frequently seen in contexts where services are seen as products that can be chosen or purchased
- **Members:** Suggests a sense of belonging to a community or program that is membership-based, highlighting the reciprocal relationship between the individual and the collective group
- **Participants:** Often used by programs emphasising active engagement and collaboration in the service delivery process
- **Patients:** Typically used in healthcare settings, where individuals are receiving medical care and attention
- **Residents:** In supported accommodation, assisted living or long-term care facilities, individuals are often referred to as residents
- **Service User:** Often used by programs that provide a range of services to individuals and communities
- **Stakeholders:** This term is occasionally used, especially in policy-oriented services, to emphasise the vested interest and active role that service recipients have in the service ecosystem.

Resources supporting collaborative action

The Resource Map is the third practical component of the Toolkit. Tools guide how we work. If we want to foster shared responsibility for disability inclusive emergency management, the tools we use must incorporate inclusivity and collaboration mechanisms.

The Resource Map is structured to provide easy access to resources that were assessed for their inclusivity mechanisms. It serves as a comprehensive guide to support cross-sector planning and development of shared responsibility for disability inclusive emergency management.

Each entry in the Resource Map includes the following components:
- **Title:** Each resource is listed with a title that includes a hyperlink for quick access
- **Description:** A brief overview of the resource to give users an idea of its content and purpose
- **Primary Purpose:** This indicates the main goal of the resource, such as to inform, educate, facilitate, showcase, advocate, evaluate

- **Delivery Format:** Explains the format of the resources including video, case study, preparedness tools, preparedness support services, training module, guidance document and resource hub
- **Sector:** Identifies which sector – disability, community, emergency services, government, or research – leads the resource or practice
- **Stage of the Emergency Management Continuum:** Specifies whether the resource focuses on preparedness, response, or recovery.

A chart overviews the information contained in the Resource Map. It can be used as an interactive and conversational tool to promote cross-sector learning and shared planning. For example,
- View the resources by row to explore:
  – the purpose of the various resource types
  – which sector is leading work to develop those resources/practices
  – the potential use of a resource for different purposes or by different sectors
- View the resources by column to explore:
  – different types of resources/formats available that fulfil a similar purpose
  – where different sectors are focusing their efforts on resource development/ practices
- View the resources by sector to explore:
  – how different sectors are working toward disability inclusive disaster risk reduction
  – whether and how different sectors are working together
  – how resources might promote cross sector effort
- Explore gaps and consider:
  – where resources/collaborative efforts are most needed
  – what types of resources are missing (e.g., recovery).

Using the Resource Map can offer numerous benefits for advancing disability inclusive emergency management:

- knowing what resources are available so that effort isn't unnecessarily duplicated
- having ready access to available resources that can be applied, combined, implemented and evaluated
- fostering collaboration in the development of disability inclusive emergency management strategies
- identifying where to focus effort on the development of new resources
- making decisions about modifying existing resources to be suitable for additional purposes or by different stakeholder groups.

It is through the collaborative development of practical action plans for disability inclusive emergency management that these tools will be implemented, translated, or adapted to different contexts so that they are fit for purpose.

Summary

The Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit aims to develop capabilities and advance excellence in disability inclusive emergency management planning and practice.

Disability inclusive emergency management requires a comprehensive approach to ensuring that emergency management information, planning and practices address the needs of people with disability.

It involves:
- working in partnership with disability representatives, advocates and service providers to increase the effectiveness of disability inclusive emergency management strategies
- co-developing and integrating supportive mechanisms at all stages of emergency management to ensure safety, accessibility and shared responsibility.

In addition to this Overview, the Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit has three practical components that support collaboration and targeted action planning:
- Principles and Practical Action Guide
- Organisational Emergency Preparedness Profile
- Resource Map

The Toolkit was co-designed and field-tested to evaluate its effectiveness in assessing current practices and guiding maturity development in disability inclusive emergency management.

This Toolkit lays the foundation for capturing baseline maturity levels and developing data-driven insights needed to track Australia's contributions and advancements in reducing disaster risks for people with disability.

Successful implementation of this Toolkit will support maturity growth and accountability in disability inclusive emergency management nationwide.

Key messages:

- Research consistently highlights the disproportionate risks experienced by people with disability during disasters. They face increased mortality rates, higher risks of injury and property loss, evacuation difficulties and greater dependence on health and social services after disaster events
- Australia, as signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk reduction must ensure that everyone is well prepared and supported. This includes people with disability and their support networks
- The Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit builds on the progress Australia has made toward the development and implementation of person-centred and capability-focused approaches to disaster risk reduction. It aims to broaden these achievements by focusing on national consistency in delivering disability inclusive emergency management, ensuring that no Australian with disability is left behind

- Designed for use by governments working in partnership with disability representatives and service providers from the community, health, disability, aged care and social welfare sectors, this Toolkit:
  – aligns with Australia's Disability Strategy 2021 – 2031
  – supports the implementation of Australia's Second National Action Plan to implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework
  – aids in fulfilling Australia's international human rights commitments to protect the safety and well-being of people with disability in emergencies
- The Toolkit contains:
  – an Overview that should be read first to understand the context and use of the Toolkit
  – the Principles and Practical Action Guide for emergency planners to self-assess their current maturity level and develop practical actions
  – the Organisational Emergency Preparedness Profile for community and disability organisations to self-assess their level of preparedness and contributions to disability inclusive emergency management
  – a Resource Map that shares good practice resources for disability inclusive emergency management developed in Australia
- Nationwide, the successful deployment of a maturity growth and accountability strategy for disability inclusive emergency management will facilitate tracking of Australia's contributions and advancements in reducing disaster risks for individuals with disability.

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