



# Evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy



**Sustainability  
and Legacy of  
Strategy  
Projects**



Other consortium members



TII PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT



**RMIT  
UNIVERSITY  
CIRCLE**

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## Summary

This study is part of the evaluation of the Australian Government's Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2000-2004 ('the Strategy'). Sustainability was an important issue for the Strategy and a factor in assessing proposals for funding. This study draws on a conceptual framework for understanding project sustainability and legacy developed in an issues paper previously prepared - *Sustainability and Legacy*. That paper distinguished five aspects of sustainability relevant to the Strategy, discussed factors influencing sustainability and legacy, and provided illustrative examples from the Strategy.

These five aspects of sustainability, and the stages of the project when they are most relevant, are shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Aspects of sustainability and related project phases**

<b>PLANNING PHASE</b>	<b>Sustainability of participation</b> (of clients, staff, partner organisations and the community) during the planning of the project
<b>IMPLEMENTATION PHASE</b>	<b>Sustainability of participation</b> (of clients, staff, partner organisations and the community) during the implementation of the project
<b>POST-PROJECT PHASE</b>	<p><b>Sustainability of capacity</b>, both pre-existing capacity and that built during the project, including resources and infrastructure (physical and organisational)</p> <p><b>Sustainability of the outcomes</b> (and possibly augmentation) achieved for individuals, families and communities during the projects</p> <p><b>Sustainability of activities</b> (often, but not always, linked to securing ongoing funding)</p> <p><b>Sustainability of the service model</b> exemplified during the project</p>

The main focus of this report is on the sustainability of project activities and the sustainability of capacity. It draws on project questionnaires, contract management documents and a telephone survey of a random sample of 113 completed projects.

The sustainability of the Strategy in terms of continuing activities was significant. A high proportion of projects in the sample (84%) had continued their activities in some form after Strategy funding had ended – a third had expanded and a third had contracted the scale of activities. Project activities continued through a diverse range of funding sources, in many cases with multiple sources of funding. FaCS was a funding source in about a third of the cases interviewed. The sustainability of the Strategy in terms of capacity development was also significant, including the production of booklets, videos, CDs and DVDs, websites and training manuals, and building institutional capacity in funded organisations. However this rate of sustained activities may not have been achieved by projects that were not contactable in the survey (which included a higher proportion of projects in remote areas and projects with lower ratings of overall success) or large Stronger Families Fund projects (few of which were completed at the time of the survey). Also, the rate of sustained activities may not be carried into the future, as project activities continuing at the time of the interview may not continue in the long-term.

Quantitative analysis of the data has shown that projects that achieved sustained activities after Strategy funding ended, and those that expanded their activities, were more likely to have had several different sources of funding, to have engaged in a number of different activities undertaken to engage community support, to have received effective support from their auspice organisation during development, and to have had a more successful project.





When selecting projects to receive short-term funding, it is important to assess their likely long-term sustainability and legacy – but also to ensure that communities with fewer resources are supported to achieve sustained services and enduring legacy. Seven implications for future projects are set out below.

### **A realistic strategy for sustainability is needed for each project**

A realistic strategy includes understanding the type of sustainability that is sought (of outcomes, of services, of organisations), how this might be achieved, and what will be needed to achieve this. In many cases, ongoing funding will be needed, and securing this should be built into the project plan. Different models for sustainability might include:

- Links for participants from short-term projects to ongoing services;
- Demonstration projects leading to expanded provision;
- Organisations/projects not relying on external funding;
- Seed funding to become self-sufficient;
- Financial sustainability of services and organisations through accessing other funding;
- Sustainability of organisations;
- Building capacity that can be maintained and used – whether physical capital (eg a playground), human capital (eg training), economic capital (eg funding for rotating credit) or social capital (eg development of supportive networks among families);
- Research policy, model development for wider application.

### **Funding decisions need a longer-term planning focus**

A history of short-term projects can lead to understandable scepticism and reluctance by communities to become involved. This presents a challenge to projects such as those funded under the Strategy, which need to build and repay trust with the community. Short-term projects can also have difficulty attracting and retaining suitable staff.

In disadvantaged communities in particular, it is important that the role of proposed short-term projects are considered in the context of longer-term planning frameworks that include strategies for sustaining gains in skills, knowledge and different types of capacity achieved by Strategy projects.

### **A staged approach can be appropriate.**

Several of the more successful projects under the Strategy 2000-2004 received funding for a subsequent project that built on the initial project. In some regions, a number of projects were developed as a result of, or strategically built on, previous work by FaCS and other agencies.

There can be problems with short-term projects that lack a critical mass. This was particularly a problem in the Strategy in cases where funding was received for the first stage of planned two-phase projects but no funding was available by the time of the second stage. The answer may be to plan for a series of funded projects in one area, or to strategically fund projects that build on previous work.



**Short-term funding may be effective for projects with a focus on transition followed by links to ongoing support.**

Projects with a focus on a particular transition (such as initial socialising of children through playgroups, transition to school, transition of migrants and refugees into the wider community) have much to commend them as long as they do have those links to other services. Some more active follow up of participants at various future transition points may also be useful.

Conversely, effectiveness in achieving short-term outcomes such as immediate increases in skills, confidence and reduction in isolation will not necessarily be sustained and lead directly to stronger families in the long term especially where risk factors are deep seated and chronic rather than transitional and acute. Links to ongoing support can be critical but it has been difficult to test the effectiveness of those links given the time bounded nature of the Strategy funded projects and the lack of follow up of participants either for purposes of continuing support or for evaluation of longer-term impacts.

**Many projects will need to secure ongoing funding after Strategy funding ends**

Many projects and organisations identified the need to secure ongoing funding as a challenge. Almost all projects that expected the project to continue saw that further funding would be needed for this. Few projects were expected to be self-funding.

There are obvious implications for service delivery projects, and also for projects that aim to improve the integration and coordination of existing services.

Short-term funding, such as that provided through the Strategy, can be a useful way to support demonstration projects that, if successful, can then seek ongoing funding from other sources, or to support projects that build capacity (such as physical infrastructure, or training resources) that then need much smaller levels of on-going funding to maintain.

**Funding agencies need to recognise and address any barriers to self-funding and ongoing funding**

There are two potential barriers to self-funding. Firstly, conditions of contracts can prohibit organisations from selling products developed through a project – even though this can be a source of ongoing funding to support further development and use of the resource. Secondly, transaction costs associated with marketing, producing and/or delivering products can make their sale unprofitable. Transaction costs could potentially be reduced through providing a central site for purchasing such resources.

**Funding agencies need to recognise and address differences in communities' access to alternative sources of income**

Communities vary considerably in their access to sources of funding – and this is a problem if there is, for example, a requirement for matching funding. This requires a safety net provision and a commitment to both upstream and downstream capacity building. The absence of any significant private sector in many rural and remote areas poses a particular difficulty for Indigenous projects. While there was not a requirement for matching funding in the Strategy, projects were encouraged to develop partnerships during implementation, including joint funding, and to seek ongoing funding from other sources where this was needed after Strategy funding ended.



# 1 Sustainability and legacy

## 1.1 Summary of sustainability concepts

Five different aspects of sustainability were important for the Strategy:

1. Sustainability of participation (of clients, staff, partner organisations and the community) during the project;
2. Sustainability of capacity, both pre-existing capacity and that built during the project;
3. Sustainability (and possibly augmentation) of the outcomes that were achieved for individuals, families and communities during the projects;
4. Sustainability of activities (often, but not always, linked to securing ongoing funding);
5. Sustainability of the service model exemplified during the project.

This study focuses particularly on the sustainability of activities, and also provides some information about the sustainability of capacity in terms of institutional capital.

When choosing which projects to fund, it is important to be clear about the types of sustainability that are relevant for a given project and whether plausible strategies are in place to achieve them.

### 1. Sustainability of participation

Strategy projects required the sustained participation (involvement and support) of many different groups during implementation – participants (the intended users of a service, or participants in an activity or project), the broader community, project personnel (including paid staff and volunteers), and partner organisations. There can be challenges in initially engaging these different individuals and groups, and in maintaining their active participation. Achieving and sustaining the participation of participants is critical to the success of projects and has been a focus of much activity. For some projects reviewed as part of this paper, this participation has meant sustained involvement by particular individuals and families; for others it has meant sustained involvement by the target group as a whole while actual clients have moved through the service.

The Strategy funding procedures required organisations to involve the community in some way during the planning and development of project proposals. Almost all projects reported involving the community, in ways ranging from brief consultations to lengthy processes involving communities in identifying issues to address and strategies for doing this. Little information is available, however, about the extent to which this community participation was sustained during the project.

Sustaining the participation of paid staff and volunteers has implications for lead times and continuity of funding – since it can be difficult to find appropriate people – and also in terms of the ongoing support needed for these people, who can be at risk of burn-out in short-term projects that do not provide sufficient staff development and support, including formal debriefing where appropriate. The recruitment, retention and professional development of staff is not just an issue for Strategy projects, but also for many projects and programs in rural and remote regions.

Developing and sustaining partnerships with other organisations was important for many projects. Some projects saw benefits in working with an auspice organisation that already had these partnerships in place.



This study does not report on the sustainability of participation, which has been covered in other reports.

## 2. Sustainability of capacity

A key focus of the Strategy was to build the capacity of individuals, families, organisations and communities to undertake future activities and respond effectively to future challenges and opportunities.

One useful way of thinking about capacity is in terms of different types of capital:

1. Human capital – skills and knowledge;
2. Social capital – norms of trust and reciprocity that support co-operation;
3. Economic capital – including physical resources (including the environment) and infrastructure;
4. Institutional capital – processes and systems within organisations and products that can be re-used.

The issue in terms of sustainability is, firstly, whether capacity has been built during the project, and, secondly, whether it is used and maintained afterwards. These issues apply across all types of capital.

In terms of sustained capacity, this study focuses primarily on institutional capacity – impacts on the auspice organisation, and resources developed through the project.

## 3. Sustainability of outcomes for families and communities

The sustainability of outcomes achieved through projects is very important, particularly given the short-term nature of the projects. Many projects reported achieving important outcomes. Projects working with families reported outcomes including improved parenting skills, improved psychological wellbeing, and improved relationships between parent and child. Projects working with communities reported greater levels of trust and involvement in the community, and greater participation in community activities. Many projects reported outcomes related to economic and social participation, including participants commencing work, study or volunteer activity.

Longitudinal follow-up of participants would be required to fully investigate this aspect of sustainability.

The principle of early intervention is based on the premise that early intervention in problems or in life transitions can lead to lasting benefits – to outcomes that are sustained over time, or that even increase over time. However, as the issue paper on *Early Intervention, especially in early childhood* made clear, early intervention by itself is not always sufficient. In many cases, some level of ongoing support is needed to maintain these outcomes.

In some cases this can be achieved by linking participants to ongoing services run by other organisations. In some projects, especially those working with recently arrived migrant and refugee families, this was an appropriate strategy. In some other projects this was not appropriate due to the lack of ongoing services in the area. This leads to the understandable focus on the next aspect of sustainability – the sustainability of the activities of the project.

This study does not report on the sustainability of outcomes for families and communities.



#### **4. Sustainability of activities**

Even where a project has focused on building capacity, there can be an ongoing need for the activities or services of the project.

This paper discusses the projected and actual level of continued activities, the strategies used to sustain these activities including resourcing activities, and the factors associated with the achievement and scale of continued activity.

It is important to recognise that if the sustainability of activities is measured only in terms of whether activities are continuing at a certain time, it can leave out the effects of discontinuities caused by gaps in funding. Some projects experienced a gap in funding, sometimes a lengthy gap of several months, between the time when funding under the Strategy (2000-2004) ended and another funding source began.

Some of the negative implications of funding gaps identified by those interviewed included the loss of momentum built up during the project, the loss of partners and the loss of prospective participants in project activities. In some cases, the gap in funding meant a temporary scaling down or suspension of project activities.

To avoid these negative impacts, in some cases the auspice or some other organisation filled the gap with financial or in-kind support to enable some or all of the project activities to continue until further funding was in-hand.

This study focuses on the sustainability of activities.

#### **5. Sustainability of service model**

Another way in which sustainability can occur is through documentation, diffusion and adoption of the service model. This can be an important function played by short-term projects.

Tracking evidence of this kind of wider adoption of service models is more difficult, since it can be done by organisations which are not connected to the Strategy and do not report to it.

Some projects commented that their approach had been taken up by other organisations, but this aspect of sustainability was not systematically investigated in the evaluation and is not reported on in this study.



## **1.2 Emphasis on sustainability in the Strategy**

The issue of sustainability was recognised as important from the beginning of the Strategy, including during processes of developing project proposals. Two of the eight principles underpinning the Strategy related to sustainability:

*Building community capacity: Capacity-building is about increasing the personal and collective resources of individuals and communities so that they can respond to challenges and seize opportunities that come their way.*

*Making the investment count: It is important that the benefits delivered by a project are sustainable and comparable with the benefits delivered by other projects of a similar cost. Projects should contribute to community strength not just in the short term but should also help communities build the skills to deal with any future issues.*

Information provided to prospective applicants for Strategy funding (through Stronger Families and Communities Strategy Community Kit Fact Sheets) focused on sustainability in terms of developing the capacity of communities to deal with challenges and take advantage of opportunities.

*It [the Strategy] aims to help families and communities develop the skills and resources they need to meet the challenges of economic and social change and to grasp opportunities that come their way.*

Within the detailed description of their project, applicants were advised to provide detailed information on: "The short and long term impact of the project" and "How the impact of the project or its effect would be sustained".

Organisations developing proposals for Indigenous Strategy projects were directed to

*... give priority to initiatives that encourage self-reliance, and sustainable economic and social development.*

Organisations developing projects for CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) families and communities were advised that

*The Stronger Families and Communities Strategy aims to help multicultural communities build the skills, resources and knowledge they need to be able to solve their own local problems and take advantage of any opportunities that come their way.*

Sustainability was a factor in selecting projects for funding. The Department of Family and Community Services also provided guidance for the State and Territory Advisory Groups (involved in reviewing project applications and making recommendation for funding) about how sustainability was to be understood within the Strategy. Those assessing project applications were encouraged to think of sustainability more broadly than whether a project was likely to obtain ongoing funding and remain operational, to also include the project "legacy", the ongoing impacts of the project and sustaining the Strategy's broader principles after project funding ceased.



## **2 Methodology of the study**

### **2.1 Summary of methodology**

This study drew on the range of data collected as part of the 3-year evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy, including project questionnaires and contract management documentation, together with a review of the research literature on project sustainability and a telephone survey of a sample of completed projects. Data analysis included multiple regression to identify predictors of project sustainability and thematic analysis of qualitative data. This chapter describes the methodology briefly; further detail is provided in the three technical appendices of this report.

### **2.2 Data collection**

This study draws on the following sources of data:

1. Initial Questionnaires;
2. Final Questionnaires;
3. Contract management documentation;
4. Follow-up telephone interviews with a sample of completed projects.

#### **1. Initial Questionnaires**

Initial Questionnaires were completed by funded organisations soon after projects started, and provided information about the activities undertaken in developing the project proposal, some of which included factors associated with sustained activities. They were completed by Project Officers or other persons significantly involved in the projects. Initial Questionnaires were completed by 451 of the 635 projects (71% response rate).

#### **2. Final Questionnaires**

Final Questionnaires were completed by organisations as soon as possible after project funding ended. Projects that were not completed at the time of the final data collection for the evaluation completed a slightly modified version that collected interim data. They were mostly completed by Project Officers or other persons significantly involved with the project. In some cases, project management committees contributed to the questionnaire responses.

Final Questionnaires provided information about factors associated with sustained activities; the respondent's expectations about continued activities after funding ended; steps they had already taken to support continued activities; and the impact of the project in terms of institutional capital (impacts on the auspice organization). Final Questionnaires were completed by 429 of the 635 projects (68% response rate).

#### **3. Contract management documentation**

Additional information was drawn from contract management documentation which, for most projects, recorded the planned next stage at the time of project completion and recorded details of resources produced during the project.



#### 4. Follow-up telephone interviews

Data from follow-up interviews came from two rounds of interviews, an initial study undertaken mid-2004 and a larger study undertaken in mid-2005. The sample of projects to call was randomly selected from the 200 projects where Strategy funding had ended, an Initial and a Final Questionnaire had been completed, and where there was some likelihood of ongoing project activities. A small number of projects were discrete capacity-building projects only, such as providing funding to build a playground or a website, where, apart from some maintenance of the resource, there was not an expectation of ongoing activities. These were not the focus of the follow-up interviews.

The person interviewed was someone who had been significantly involved in the implementation of the project, often, but not always, the Project Officer. The follow-up telephone interviews provided information about the actual continuation of project activities, and the factors identified by the project as having been important. The overall response rate for the follow-up interviews was 78%. The first round had an 86% response rate (19 of 22 projects); the second round 78% (94 interviews from 120 projects).

Despite a high response rate, and coverage of small, medium and large projects, there are three important caveats in the findings of the study. Non-response was higher among projects located in remote areas, and may have reflected a lower level of activity that was not documented. It was also lower among projects with lower rates of success – and project effectiveness is a predictor of sustained activities. In addition, very few of the large Stronger Families Fund project were completed at the time of the survey, and therefore could not be included. The sustainability of the activities of these projects was of particular concern in some studies conducted as part of the evaluation, and the survey's results cannot be confidently generalised to these projects. Further follow-up would be required once these projects' funding ends to ascertain the sustainability of their activities. Further detail of the characteristics of the sample compared to the total population of projects is included in Appendix 1.

### 2.3 Data analysis

Data analysis for the study involved:

- A summary of relevant questionnaire and interview data in a quantitative form where appropriate;
- Quantitative analyses to identify predictors of sustained activity and the scale of activity (from the follow-up interviews);
- A thematic analysis of qualitative data from the questionnaires and interviews;
- Illustrative examples and quotes from particular projects.

The quantitative analysis included exploratory bivariate analysis of likely factors, and multiple regression, using optimal scaling techniques to allow the incorporation of nominal and ordinal variables. The methods for analysis were initially developed and tested on data from Final Questionnaires about projected sustainability (Savaya, Elsworth and Rogers, 2004). Details of the variables used in the analysis, and how they relate to factors identified in the research literature, are outlined in Appendix 3.

For the outcome variables of 'Continued activities' and 'Scale of continued activities', block-wise regression analyses were conducted in which the sets of predictor variables that had been identified were entered in sequence. Details of the multiple regression analysis are provided in Appendix 2.





## 3 Sustained activities

### 3.1 Summary of findings about sustained activities

The main focus of this section is an analysis of data about the projected and actual continuation of project activities after the Strategy funding agreement ended. At the time when Strategy funding ended, 75% of projects judged it as likely or very likely that the project would continue or develop further – in the follow-up survey an even higher percentage (84%) were actually continuing activities in some form.

This chapter discusses the sustainment of activities in terms of:

1. **actual continuation of activities after Strategy funding ended** – expressed as a dichotomy yes/no;
2. **scale of activities if continued** - same/smaller/bigger; and
3. **scope of activities if continued** - same activities with the same target group in the same location, or changing activities, target group or location.

Chapter 4 discusses the factors associated with whether activities were continued and the scale of continued activities. Four factors were prominent:

- diverse funding sources;
- diverse activities to engage community support during project development;
- effective support from the auspice organisation during project development; and
- the effectiveness of the project.

### 3.2 Projected and actual continuation of project activities

#### Projected continuation

Over three-quarters of the 344 projects responding to this question in their Final Questionnaires thought it was likely or very likely that their project would continue or further develop after their Strategy funding agreement ended. Quite a high proportion, 45 per cent, thought this was very likely. Projects included in the follow-up survey had had similar expectations at the time of the Strategy funding ending, with three-quarters of them rating continuation as likely or very likely.



**Table 1: Expectation that the project would continue or further develop after completion of the Strategy funding agreement**

Likelihood of continuing	Number of projects completing Final Questionnaires	Percentage of all projects answering this question	Number of projects in follow-up survey	Percentage of projects included in follow-up survey
Very likely	156	45%	50	53%
Likely	108	31%	23	24%
Unlikely	50	15%	13	14%
Very unlikely	30	9%	8	9%
All projects responding to this question	344		94	

### Actual continuation

The project or project activities continued for most of the 113 projects interviewed (84%). This reported rate reflects the situation at the point in time the telephone interviews were undertaken, which could have subsequently changed. For example, after these interviews were conducted, at least one other project received funding under the Local Answers initiative of the new Strategy 2004-2009.

**Table 2: The project or project activities continued after Strategy funding ended**

Activities continued	Number of projects	Percentage of projects included in follow-up survey
Yes	95	84%
No	18	16%
Total	113	100%

### Actual continuation compared to projected continuation

Projects that had expected to continue were more likely to have continued activities, but more than half of all projects in the sample had continued activities – including 69% of those that had thought it ‘unlikely’ and 63% of those that thought it ‘very unlikely’.

**Table 3: Comparison of projected and actual continuation of activities after Strategy funding ended**

Reported likelihood of continuing	Did continue		Did not continue		Total
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Very likely	46	92%	4	8%	50
Likely	19	83%	4	17%	23
Unlikely	9	69%	4	31%	13
Very unlikely	5	63%	3	37%	8
Did not answer question	16	84%	3	16%	19
TOTAL	95	84%	18	16%	113



## Nature of continued activities

In almost all cases, continuing activities involved the delivery of some kind of ongoing service (for example, training or support services). This was expected as projects had been selected for the follow-up survey on the basis of their potential for ongoing activities. Projects that were expected to only involve the use and maintenance of some resource or infrastructure were not included in the sample.

Six projects that were classified as having continuing activities were not providing ongoing services, but were using, or making available, resources that had been developed during the project or had resulted from the project (for example, a CD, website, video, assessment tool, etc).

**Table 4: Continued as an ongoing service or development or use of resources**

Type of service	Frequency	Per cent
Ongoing service only	58	61%
Combination	30	32%
Using resources only	6	6%
Developing resources only	1	1%
Total	95	100%

If these six projects were removed from the number of projects reporting ongoing activities, the continuation rate would be reduced to 79% of projects.

### 3.3 Scale of continuing activities

Where project activities had continued, their scale varied. For about a third of projects (32%), activities were continuing on a larger scale; 30% were on a similar scale; and 39% were on a smaller scale than during Strategy funding.

**Table 5: The scale of project activities that continued after Strategy funding ended (as judged by the project)**

Scale of activities	Frequency	Per cent
Continued on a smaller scale	37	39%
Continued on a similar scale	28	30%
Continued on a larger	30	32%
Total	95	100%



### 3.4 Projected scope of continuing activities

The Final Questionnaires asked organisations about the form(s) that their project was likely to take if it was to continue or develop further after their Strategy funding ended:

- Continue the project with the current activities and target groups;
- Run a similar project with new target groups;
- Run a similar project at a different location or in a different community;
- Run a similar project with new activities and the same target groups, building on the previous work.

Multiple responses were possible, and 10% of projects responded that all of these options were possible.

62% of projects indicated that if the project were to continue or develop further it would be with the current activities and target groups. Over half of these projects also indicated they were likely to change it in some way – new activities, new location and/or new target group.

**Table 6: If the project were to continue or develop further, what form would it take?**

Likely form of the project if it were to continue (multiple responses possible)	Number of projects	% of responses
Continue the project with the current activities and target groups	206	62%
Run a similar project with new target groups	90	27%
Run a similar project at a different location or in a different community	87	26%
Run a similar project with new activities and the same target groups, building on the previous work	149	45%
Number of projects answering this question	330	



## 4 Factors contributing to, or inhibiting, sustained activities

### 4.1 Summary of factors associated with sustained activities

For most projects the ability to continue activities after Strategy funding ended was dependent on success in securing further funding, discussed further in the next chapter. This chapter discusses the range of factors associated with continued activities, drawing on a review of the sustainability literature, and multiple regression analysis to identify predictors.

Four factors were identified as strong predictors of actual continuation of activities and the scale of continuation:

1. diverse funding sources;
2. diverse activities to engage community support during project development;
3. effective support from the auspice organisation during project development; and
4. the effectiveness of the project.

These four factors, when combined using multiple regression, accounted for half the variation in the rate and scale of continued activities. A full regression model, including where possible data for all nine factors identified in the literature review, accounted for close to 75% of the variance in actual continuation and scale of continuation. This is a substantial explanation of the factors associated with continuation of activities after Strategy funding ended.

### 4.2 Overview of factors

A previous review of the sustainability literature (Savaya, Elsworth and Rogers, 1994) identified nine factors that had been identified, and clustered them into three groups – those relating to the project, to the organisational setting and to the community.

**Table 7: Factors associated with the sustainability of project activities after funding ended**

<p><b>Factors relating to the project</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Financial resources during the project</li><li>2. Non-financial resources during the project</li><li>3. Project effectiveness</li></ol> <p><b>Factors relating to the organisation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Organisational stability</li><li>5. Organisational flexibility</li><li>6. Incorporation of the project into the organisation during implementation</li></ol> <p><b>Factors relating to the broader community</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. Community support for the project</li><li>8. Partnerships with other organisations</li><li>9. Sense of community ownership</li></ol>
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### 4.3 Findings in relation to these factors

The following table summarises the findings from two sources of evidence – the literature review and the quantitative analysis of data. It describes the relationship between sustained activities and the variables used in this study to indicate the 9 factors listed in Table 7. Appendix 2 provides more detail about the quantitative analysis. Appendix 3 provides more detail about the indicators of the 9 factors used in this study.

**Table 8: Summary of findings in relation to factors associated with sustained activities**

<p><b>1. Financial resources during the project</b></p>
<p><b>Amount of funding</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i> This factor was not covered in the literature review.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i> Looking at the relationship between this factor and ‘sustained activities’ in isolation from the other 8 factors, projects that had higher amounts of Strategy funding were slightly more likely to have ‘sustained activities’ than those with lower amounts of funding. However, when the other 8 factors were taken into account, ‘amount of funding’ was found to be <b>not an important factor</b> contributing to ‘sustained activities’.</p>
<p><b>Diversity of funding sources</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i> The greater the ‘diversity of funding sources’, the greater the likelihood of ‘sustained activities’.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i> This study used ‘number of funding sources’ to indicate ‘diversity of funding sources’. Looking at the relationship between this factor and ‘sustained activities’ in isolation from the other 8 factors, the more sources of funding that projects had, the more likely they were to have ‘sustained activities’. This factor was also found to be <b>an important factor contributing</b> to ‘sustained activity’ when the other 8 factors were taken into account.</p>
<p><b>Project leaders plan to raise resources for the future</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i> When ‘project leaders plan to raise resources for the future’, project activities are more likely to be sustained.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i> This factor was <b>not covered</b> in the quantitative analysis as insufficient data relating to this were available.</p>
<p><b>Fund-raising starts early on</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i> When ‘fund-raising starts early on’, project activities are more likely to be sustained.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i> This factor was <b>not covered</b> in the quantitative analysis as insufficient data relating to this were available.</p>



<p><b>2. Non-financial resources during the project</b></p> <p><b>Diversity of non-financial support</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i> This factor was not covered in the literature review.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i> 'Diversity of non-financial support' was found to be <b>not an important factor</b> contributing to 'sustained activities' when looking at the relationship between the two variables in isolation, or when the other 8 factors were taken into account.</p>
<p><b>3. Perceived project effectiveness</b></p> <p><b>Perceived project effectiveness (included in initial analysis)</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i> Where projects were perceived to be effective, project activities were more likely to have been sustained.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i> Looking at the relationship between this factor and 'sustained activities' in isolation from the other 8 factors, where projects were perceived to be effective, activities were slightly more likely to have been sustained. However, when the other 8 factors were taken into account, 'perceived project effectiveness' was found to be <b>not an important factor</b> contributing to 'sustained activities'.</p>
<p><b>Rated project effectiveness (included in later analysis)</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i> This factor was not covered in the literature review.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i> Looking at the relationship between this factor and 'sustained activities' in isolation from the other 8 factors, the higher the rate of project effectiveness, the greater the likelihood of 'sustained activities'. When the other 8 factors were taken into account, the influence of this factor was found to be <b>a somewhat important factor</b> contributing to 'sustained activities'.</p>
<p><b>4. Organisational stability</b></p> <p><b>Organisational stability</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i> When projects operate in a stable organisational context, project activities were more likely to have been sustained.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i> This factor was <b>not covered</b> in the quantitative analysis as insufficient data relating to this were available.</p>
<p><b>5 Organisational flexibility</b></p> <p><b>Organisational flexibility</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i> When projects operate in an organisational context that is flexible, project activities were more likely to have been sustained.</p>



<p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i></p> <p>This factor was <b>not covered</b> in the quantitative analysis as insufficient data relating to this were available.</p>
<p><b>6. Incorporation of the project in the sponsoring organisation during implementation</b></p>
<p><b>Incorporation of the project in the sponsoring organisation</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i></p> <p>When projects are incorporated into the sponsoring organisation, project activities were more likely to have been sustained.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i></p> <p>This factor was <b>not covered</b> in the quantitative analysis as insufficient data relating to this were available.</p>
<p><b>Source of the idea for the project</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i></p> <p>This factor was not covered in the literature review.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i></p> <p>'Source of idea for the project' was found to be <b>not an important factor</b> in either the analysis looking at the relationship between this factor and 'sustained activity' in isolation from the other 8 factors, or when they were taken into account.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness of auspice support during project development</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i></p> <p>This factor was not covered in the literature review.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i></p> <p>Looking at the relationship between this factor and 'sustained activities' in isolation from the other 8 factors, where auspice support during project development was perceived to be effective, activities were more likely to have been sustained. When the other 8 factors were taken into account, the influence of this factor was found to be <b>a somewhat important factor</b> contributing to 'sustained activities'.</p>
<p><b>Direct involvement of auspice in the project</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i></p> <p>This factor was not covered in the literature review.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i></p> <p>'Direct involvement of auspice in the project' was found to be <b>not an important factor</b> in either the analysis looking at the relationship between this factor and 'sustained activity' in isolation from the other 8 factors, or when they were taken into account.</p>
<p><b>7. Efforts to enlist support from the community</b></p>
<p><b>Diversity of efforts to enlist community support</b></p> <p><i>Literature review</i></p> <p>When projects enlisted support from the community, project activities were more likely to have been sustained.</p> <p><i>Findings from the quantitative analysis</i></p> <p>The 'number of sources of community support' was used as an indicator of 'diversity of efforts to</p>





enlist community support' in this study. Looking at the relationship between this factor and 'sustained activities' in isolation from the other 8 factors, the more sources of community support, the more likely activities were to have been sustained. The 'number of sources of community support' was also found to be **an important factor contributing** to 'sustained activity' when the other 8 factors were taken into account.

## 8. Efforts to establish partnerships with different community groups and bodies

### Diversity of partnerships

#### *Literature review*

The greater the 'diversity of partnerships' with different community groups, the greater the likelihood of 'sustained activities'.

#### *Findings from the quantitative analysis*

Looking at 'diversity of partnerships' and 'sustained activities' in isolation from the other factors, this factor was found to be **not an important factor** contributing to 'sustained activities'. When the other 8 factors were taken into account, the findings were inconclusive about the nature of the relationship. The relationship may be a more complex than one where the likelihood of 'sustained activities' consistently increases or decreases as 'diversity of partnerships' increases or decreases.

### Perceived importance of partnerships

#### *Literature review*

Where projects had established partnerships with different community groups, activities were more likely to have been sustained.

#### *Findings from the quantitative analysis*

'Perceived importance of partnerships' was found to be **not an important factor** contributing to 'sustained activities' in either the analysis looking at the relationship between this factor and 'sustained activities' in isolation from the other 8 factors, or when they were taken into account.

## 9. Sense of community ownership

### Sense of community ownership

#### *Literature review*

The greater the 'sense of community ownership' over the project activities, the greater the likelihood of 'sustained activities'.

#### *Findings from the quantitative analysis*

The responses to 4 questions in the Initial Questionnaire were used to indicate this factor (see Appendix 3). When 'sense of community ownership' and 'sustained activities' in isolation were considered in isolation from the other factors, the greater the 'sense of community ownership', the greater the likelihood of 'sustained activities'. When the other 8 factors were taken into account, the influence of this factor was found to be **a somewhat important factor** contributing to 'sustained activities'.

Not all the factors identified in the literature were included in the quantitative analysis. The quantitative analysis used project questionnaires which were developed to meet a range of purposes in the evaluation, not only to investigate factors involved in sustainability, and did not collect information about all these factors.



## **4.4 Summary of quantitative analysis of factors**

### **Main findings**

There were positive correlations of actual continuation with the following four variables:

1. Diversity of activities to engage community support (indicated by the number of different types of activities undertaken to involve the community or enlist support for developing and setting up the project) (Correlation = 0.378);
2. Diversity of funding sources (indicated by the number of different sources of funding received by the project) (Correlation = 0.367);
3. Rated overall success of the project (as rated by the evaluation team based on available information about the project) (Correlation = 0.216);
4. Perceived effectiveness of auspice support during the development of the project (as rated by the project in the Initial Questionnaire) (Correlation = 0.211).

These four factors, when combined using multiple regression, accounted for half the variation in the rate and scale of continued activities (Correlation = 0.727,  $R^2=0.528$ ).

Projects that achieved sustained activities after Strategy funding ended, and those that expanded their activities, were more likely to have had several different sources of funding, to have engaged in a number of different activities undertaken to engage community support, to have received effective support from their auspice organisation during development, and to have had a more successful project.

### **Other findings**

'Perceived project effectiveness' was one of the factors identified in previous studies as contributing to the continuation of project activities. The bivariate analysis of the relationship between these variables for this study showed some association between these variables but it was not strong.

'Sense of community ownership' (a variable constructed from several community-related variables) showed a significant correlation with both 'continuation of project activities' and 'scale of project activities'. Much of this effect, however, appeared to be mediated by other variables in the regression model, so it has been excluded from the above list of significant variables.

The results also suggested a possible non-linear relationship between 'diversity of partnerships' and 'continuation of project activities' and 'scale of project activities', but further investigation would be needed to clarify the relationship.

The full regression model explains close to 75% of the variance in actual continuation of project activities and in the scale of continued activities ( $R^2$  is 0.742 for continuation and 0.746 for scale of continuation). This is considered quite impressive by social research standards. Further details of the multiple regression analysis are set out in Appendix 2 of this report.



## 5 Resourcing continuing activities

### 5.1 Summary of issues related to resourcing continuing activities

Resourcing ongoing activities is a major issue in the sustainability of project activities. As previously outlined, there are three main ways of resourcing continued project activities:

1. Securing ongoing funding;
2. Incorporating project activities within the activities of an ongoing program (sometimes through capacity building in terms of training or resource development, and sometimes through routinisation);
3. Developing self-supporting activities (such as self-help groups or mutual support networks).

A combination of these strategies was also possible.

Most projects saw ongoing funding to be necessary to continue activities. Even where the project had been designed to build capacity, there was a need for some level of ongoing resourcing for most projects. For example, where the project selected and trained volunteers, there was often an ongoing need for resources to support the ongoing co-ordination and support of existing volunteers and recruitment and training of new ones,.

### 5.2 Resources expected to be needed

Many projects and organisations identified the need to secure ongoing funding as a challenge. Almost all projects that expected the project to continue saw that further funding would be needed for this. Few projects were expected to be self-funding. In addition most projects saw a need for additional resources, particularly community support, in-kind support and specific expertise. Half the projects saw a need for support from an Indigenous community organisation or corporation, indicating that many projects that were not classified as specifically Indigenous projects were working with Indigenous families and communities.

**Table 9: Will any of the following support and resources be needed to continue or build on the achievements of the project?**

Support and resources needed (multiple responses possible)	Number of projects	% of responses
Funding	309	90%
Community support	267	78%
In kind support	268	78%
Specific expertise or skills, including professional services	257	75%
Volunteer time	243	71%
Support of existing networks, linkages and referrals	200	58%
Indigenous community organisation or corporation	174	51%
Employment and training programs	120	35%
Other	47	14%
Total projects answering this question in Final Questionnaire	344	



Securing funding to support ongoing activities was an important issue for most projects. When projects that had continued activities were asked in the telephone survey to identify the factors they saw as having been important in the sustainability of activities, many specifically referred to the importance of having obtained further funding:

*The funding. Trying to get the resources without funding is very difficult.*

*Funding made it possible.*

*That we received ongoing funding and then everything else just falls into place.*

*Successful application for further funding without which it would have closed.*

*The ongoing funding provided for a project component (training of parent volunteers) that will lead to sustainability – and this was an important factor in actually continuing the project activities.*

When projects were asked in the telephone survey what they had learned about how to achieve sustainability, many of them raised the issue of securing funding early.

*You need to gear up towards funding!*

although this added to the workload of project staff:

*You can't give a 100% of your time to the project when at least 30% is taken up with written reports to try and secure ongoing funding.*

### **5.3 Strategies for resourcing continuing activities**

#### **1. Obtaining further funding**

Many projects mentioned applying for further funding and some had already been refunded by the time they completed the Final Questionnaire.

Further funding came from various sources, including from the auspice organisation:

*[What factors have contributed to the continuation of project activities?] Subsidy by other aspects of our services.*

#### **2. Incorporating project activities within an ongoing program**

Some projects described how by the end of the Strategy funding, steps had been taken to incorporate some or all of the project activities into an ongoing program:

*The community playgroup [one of the project activities] will be supported by our organisation for the next few years.*

*The council has allocated one full-time employee in the 2004/2005 budget for the position of Community Planning Officer.*

*Allocated hours in the 2005-2006 [Council] budget to employ a community builder.*

*Project activities became part of the auspice agency's strategic plan in the health development area.*



### 3. Developing self-sustaining activities

Some projects described the steps they had taken during the project to develop self-sustaining activities:

Increasing financial self-sufficiency through a fee-for-service, community fundraising, membership subscription or sale of resources developed during the project:

*CD sales to raise funds*

*Having sponsorship for [project] membership for families in need.*

*Community groups have taken (or been given) membership to [the project].*

*Current members preparing to begin fundraising activities in order to achieve a level of self-sufficiency for the group*

Project participants becoming responsible for the running of project activities:

*Self-management of the group*

*Increased responsibilities taken on by current group members in order to sustain the project after funding.*

In-kind support or volunteer involvement to enable project activities to continue:

*The young parents steering group has taken on more voluntary work to enable the support groups to continue past the funded period.*

For many projects, however, it was considered unrealistic to expect that networks and activities could be completely self-sustaining, as the following comments from the follow-up survey illustrate:

*The program needed a coordinator to facilitate the activities, but no funding to continue, could not attract new funding. The funding was a pretty big issue. Even if you think about the [volunteers] running it, the high risk, sensitive nature of the project needed a more professional coordinator. There would also have been a problem for [volunteer] dynamics to have one of them taking it over, could create tensions and difficulties. It would involve more time than a volunteer could manage to put in.*

*[What have you learned about how to achieve sustainability/]That in reality, it's very difficult to sustain a project without funding. Ultimately, it needs coordination and you need to pay people for it – the coordination.*

### 5.4 Steps taken during the project to support continuation of activities

Various other steps were mentioned that would contribute to the continuation of project activities. These are detailed below with illustrative examples from projects.

**Maintaining existing or establishing new management committees or partnerships** (including linking to other organisations or services for various purposes – for financial support, in-kind support, political support, expertise, collaborative input into service delivery or other practical support)

*We have established a National Steering Committee of influential Indigenous and non Indigenous people*



*Commitment from ... Youth Service to continue supporting the youth advisory group in partnership with CDP ... Commitment [from State government department] to support generation of employment opportunities (stated in their action plan). Commitment from Council to run a series of community management workshops for shire wide residents.*

*Sustainability is being built in by finding a community organisation such as the ... Association to continue to be a driving force for the community.*

*A linkage has been made with a service in the ... area to share ongoing training arrangements.*

**Maintaining existing or establishing new links to services to ensure access to services** (particularly relevant for project participants needing ongoing services), **or opportunities** (particularly relevant for participants in Potential Leaders in Communities Projects) **for target groups**

*We are in negotiation with three universities regarding the accreditation of [the Course]. Once this is finalized, it will provide pathways and advanced standing in a number of courses participants may wish to pursue.*

*Linkage to other supporting organizations and local service providers to give resources and support for local initiatives undertaken by graduates.*

**Promoting the project to maintain/attract support** (of the community, private sector, public sector or other community-based services)

*Presentations have been made by members of the management committee to the State Minister ... and Federal Minister ... with a view to building on the achievements, and expanding the project. Also in response to requests, presentations have been made to the [several community-based organisations] in other areas.*

*Contact with community television stations being established.*

*An initial library opening/launch.*

*Local paper, local community awareness, to help support new funding (government or private).*



## 5.5 Funding received after Strategy 2000-2004 funding ended

### Sources and diversity of funding

Table 10 shows the sources of funding for continuing project activities. Organisations tapped into a diversity of funding sources, with many organisations reporting multiple sources. The State or Territory Government was also frequently mentioned, followed by the auspice organisations itself. While around one-third of the continuing project activities were being funded through FaCS, two-thirds were being funded through other sources.

**Table 10: Sources of funding for continuing project activities**

Source of funding	Frequency	Percentage of all answering this question
FaCS	31	34%
State Government	28	31%
Auspice organisation itself	20	22%
Local Government	16	18%
Other Australian	14	15%
Fundraising, community financial support	11	12%
User pays, revenue from sales or services	9	10%
Private sector	7	8%
NGO(s)	5	5%
Philanthropic foundation(s)	5	5%
Local community service(s)	3	3%
Unspent money from SFCS 2000-2004 funding	3	3%
Other not specified	3	3%
Indigenous organisation (not the auspice)	1	1%
All continuing projects for which funding source(s) were reported by organisations or FaCS	91	

22 of the 31 projects reporting FaCS as a funding source for continuing project activities had been refunded under the SFCS 2004-2008 Local Answers initiative. A further 2 reported having been refunded under other SFCS 2004-2008 initiatives. In addition, in one case where project activities were reported as having just finished due to lack of funding, FaCS data indicated that project activities had been refunded under Local Answers. It is assumed that at the time of the interview, the interview respondent was not aware that funding had been secured through Local Answers.

Having multiple sources of funding during the project has been found to be a significant factor in the sustainability of project activities. Table 11 shows that nearly half of those interviewed who provided details of funding sources reported 2 or more sources of funding for continuing project activities. Of the 47 reporting one source only, 13 were being funded only through FaCS (9 of these through Local Answers).



**Table 11: Number of funding sources**

Number of funding sources	Frequency	Percentage of all projects answering this question
1	47	52%
2	29	32%
3	11	12%
4	3	3%
5	0	0%
6	1	1%
All continuing cases for which funding sources were reported	91	100%

The average number of sources across continuing projects for which funding sources were reported was 1.7.

### **In-kind support**

A number of the interview respondents referred to in-kind support for continuing project activities. Sometimes this was when referring to sources of funding and sometimes in reference to factors that were considered important in the continuation of project activities.

The types of in-kind support received included volunteer involvement, rent-free premises (private sector and local government providers mentioned), and support from other services.





## **6 Sustained institutional capital**

### **6.1 Summary of Capacity**

Capacity-building was one of the principles underpinning the Strategy and capacity-building occurred at different levels of Strategy implementation. For instance, FaCS project officers were often involved in building the capacity of partner organisations while projects were involved in building the capacity of families and communities.

Capacity can be defined in terms of types of capital:

Human capital – skills and knowledge

Social capital – norms of trust and reciprocity that support co-operation

Economic capital – including physical resources (including the environment) and infrastructure

Institutional capital – processes and systems within organisations and products that can be re-used

Assuming they had not displaced existing services or activities of equivalent value, the Strategy projects in themselves represented additional community capacity through the additional services and other activities they provided. The sustainability of capacity in the form of continuing project activities post-Strategy funding, discussed in the previous section, is a significant Strategy outcome.

This section focuses on other forms of capacity, particularly institutional capacity and the tangible products that projects produced with Strategy funding.

### **6.2 Tangible products developed during the project**

The legacy of the Strategy includes the resources produced by Strategy projects that can now be used by other families, communities and organisations.

Assuming they are of reasonable quality, the tangible products produced by projects increase the institutional capital of organisations and services. They may also increase human, social or economic capital depending on their purpose.

240 projects reported producing a tangible resource as shown in the following table.



**Table 12: Resources produced**

Type of resource	Number of projects
Information kits/brochures	149
Training material	101
Videos, CDs, DVDs	46
Newsletters, articles, bulletins	22
Books, magazines, publicity	19
Websites and other online resources	10
Community registers	6
Map and directory	6
Libraries	6
Databases	5
Playground resources	2

### **6.3 Other institutional capital built during the project**

A small number of projects (66) completed an earlier, longer version of the Final Questionnaire, which asked specifically about impacts on the auspice organisation.

Many of them reported a legacy from the project in terms of building institutional capital:

- Better ability to respond to the target group or project participants (71%);
- Better ability to find and work with partners (61%);
- Better infrastructure and facilities (34%);
- Better management, systems and processes (33%).

For half of these projects, the project meant that the auspice was very likely to take on new activities:

**Table 13: Given what has happened with this project, how likely is it that the auspice organisation will take on new activities?**

	Number of projects	% of responses
Very likely	35	54%
Likely	14	22%
Unlikely	11	17%
Very unlikely	5	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	65	



## **6.4 Steps taken during the project to maintain, use or further develop the capacity built during the project**

### **Sustaining the service model**

*Workers in the northern suburbs have met and are looking for ways to support and implement the program in their region.*

### **Maintaining, using or further developing resources that could be used within the project or by others**

*Producing another 100 copies of the training manual and putting the resource on line.*

*Another survey concerning the birth of multiples has been sent to members who have children under the age of 5 years, to enable us to compare data already received.*

*Develop a website that provides education on bridges and relationships, resilience, community strengthening and AOD issues; profiles the work, activities and ideas of participating community members and agencies; and provides links to relevant websites.*

*Safety plan. Family Support Kit. PND Awareness Package.*

*Launching kit to get information out.*

*Developing team leader training package.*

*The manual and video have already been distributed.*

*Analysis of feedback from agencies who received the materials. Advocacy to [government agency] to produce similar pamphlets.*

*Using the ... project to expand the use of the website.*

*The resources library will be ongoing and maintained by community groups.*

*Responsibility for the skills register has been given to the [another service] to maintain the database.*

### **The organisation using the knowledge gained through the project in future activities**

*[The organisation] plans to use its experience to develop more integrated responses to other current issues. This will be invaluable to avoid the mistakes made previously and use the knowledge acquired.*

### **Sharing knowledge developed through the project**

*Writing and publishing further articles.*

*The evaluation has been shared throughout other agencies and regions. A presentation on partnership processes was also prepared for the ... conference ... to inform other community agencies of the barriers and facilitators.*

### **Project participants (individuals or groups) using the capacity they developed through the project to further develop community capacity**

*Efforts by the participating business operators to form a business networking organisation, similar to a Chamber of Commerce.*

*The fruits of the project were made available to all participants and as a result of this 3-day conference, many have been resourced to go back to their own communities and develop their own responses.*



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## Appendix 1: Representativeness of the sample in the follow-up study

### Summary of analysis of representativeness of sample of projects in follow-up survey

The sample of projects studied in the follow-up study underrepresented three types of projects:

1. large projects funded under the Stronger Families Fund initiative,
2. projects that were rated as having achieved mixed or low success, or where there was insufficient information to assess their overall success; and
3. projects located in remote and very remote locations.

All of these groups might be expected to have had a lower rate of sustained activities after Strategy funding ended. Therefore the overall rate of sustained activities found in the study cannot be generalised to these groups of projects, and the overall rate for Strategy projects is likely to be lower than the rate of 84% found for the sample.

The sample was representative in terms of

4. the amount of funding received,
5. whether the project was based in a targeted community; and
6. whether it was classified as an Indigenous project.

#### 1. Large projects funded under the Stronger Families Fund

The sample under-represented large projects funded under the Stronger Families Fund.

Table 14 shows the representativeness of the sample of projects across primary initiatives. Some primary initiatives were expected to have more projects meeting the eligibility requirements for inclusion in the sample than others, for instance, Early Intervention and Stronger Families Fund projects. While Early Intervention projects have a strong representation in the sample, the Stronger Families Fund projects are under-represented. This is because many of the Stronger Families Fund projects had not been completed for at least three months prior to the follow-up interviews being conducted, which was one of the requirements for inclusion in the sample.

**Table 14: Representativeness of sample in terms of primary initiatives**

Primary initiative	% of all projects	% of sample
Early Intervention	31%	50%
Stronger Families Fund	8%	4%
Leadership	23%	20%
Local Solutions for Local Problems	33%	20%
National Skills Development	4%	4%
Can Do Communities	2%	1%
Number of projects	635	113



Table 15 shows how representative the Early Intervention and Stronger Families Fund components of the sample interviewed were, in terms of the funding received. The Stronger Families Fund projects included in the sample were not representative at the highest funding categories (over \$500,000).

**Table 15: Representativeness of sample of EI and SFF projects in terms of amount of funding categories**

Amount of funding	Early Intervention		Stronger Families Fund	
	All EI projects	EI sample	All SFF projects	SFF sample
Under \$5,000	2%	0%	0%	0%
\$5,000 to <\$20,000	8%	5%	0%	0%
\$20,000 to <\$50,000	10%	14%	2%	0%
\$50,000 to <\$100,000	23%	21%	4%	0%
\$100,000 to <\$250,000	41%	44%	29%	40%
\$250,000 to <\$500,000	16%	14%	43%	60%
\$500,000 to <\$1,000,000	1%	2%	18%	0%
\$1,000,000 plus	0%	0%	4%	0%
Number of projects in initiative	195	57	49	5

## 2. Projects rated as low or moderate/mixed success or unclear

The sample has a much higher proportion of projects rated as 'high' to 'very high' and a much lower proportion of projects rated 'low' and 'unclear'. This may have provided a bias towards projects that were more likely to have resulted in sustained project activities.

**Table 16: Evaluation rating of projects**

Project rating	% of all projects	% of sample
Very high	10%	17%
High	40%	54%
Mixed	20%	8%
Low	3%	1%
Unclear	28%	10%
All coded projects	445	93

## 3. Projects located in very remote areas

The sample under-represented projects located in very remote areas.

Table 20 shows the representativeness of the sample in terms of accessibility-remoteness categories. Apart from 'very remote' areas, where the sample had proportionally half as many projects as the total set of projects, the sample was fairly representative of all projects. Ideally the sample would have included a few more very remote projects.





**Table 17: Representativeness of sample in terms of accessibility-remoteness (based on ARIA Classifications)**

<b>Accessibility/remoteness</b>	<b>% of all projects</b>	<b>% of sample</b>
Highly accessible	62%	66%
Accessible	16%	16%
Moderately accessible	8%	9%
Remote	5%	4%
Very remote	8%	4%
Number of projects	635	113

#### **4. Amount of funding received**

The sample was roughly representative of all projects in terms of the amount of funding received under the Strategy, for all but the smallest categories.

Table 18 shows how representative the sample of 113 projects followed up with an interview was of all projects, based on the amount of funding and disaggregated by primary initiative. The sample is close to representative or more so for all but the lowest categories of funding (below \$20,000).

**Table 18: Representativeness of sample in terms of amount of funding categories**

<b>Amount of funding</b>	<b>% of all projects</b>	<b>% of sample</b>
Under \$5,000	3%	1%
\$5,000 to <\$20,000	16%	11%
\$20,000 to <\$50,000	22%	20%
\$50,000 to <\$100,000	19%	19%
\$100,000 to <\$250,000	27%	32%
\$250,000 to <\$500,000	12%	14%
\$500,000 to <\$1,000,000	3%	3%
\$1,000,000 plus	1%	1%
Number of projects	635	113



## 5. Targeted communities

The sample was roughly representative in terms of the proportion of projects from targeted communities.

Table 19 shows projects in the 'targeted community' category as somewhat underrepresented in the sample but not by much. Correspondingly, sample projects are somewhat over represented in the other two categories.

**Table 19: Representativeness of sample in terms of targeting type**

Targeting type	% of all projects	% of sample
Targeted community	39%	32%
Both targeted community and self-identified	28%	32%
Self-identified	34%	36%
All projects for which this data recorded	633	113

## 6. Indigenous projects

The sample of projects followed up had a reasonable representation of indigenous projects. While the proportion of indigenous programs in the sample was a little lower than for all projects, the difference was only 4 percentage points.

**Table 20: Indigenous projects**

Indigenous project	% of all projects	% of sample
Yes	22%	18%
No	78%	82%
All projects for which this data recorded	635	112



## Appendix 2: Quantitative analysis of factors associated with sustained activities

### ***Correlation between ‘Rated Success of the Project’ and ‘Actual Continuation’***

There was a significant association between rated project success and the dichotomous variable ‘did not continue’ vs ‘continued’.

Unfortunately, there was only one project rated ‘low’ in this selected data set, leading to a large proportion of cells with an expected frequency of less than 5, which violates the assumptions of the test.

**Figure 2: Correlation of actual continuation and rated global success of project (4 category classification)**

**Act\_Cont1 \* Rating\_Recode\_1 Crosstabulation**

			Rating_Recode_1				Total
			Low	Medium	High	Very High	
Act_Cont1	1.00	Count	1	3	8	0	12
		Expected Count	.1	2.4	7.0	2.4	12.0
		% within Rating_Recode_1	100.0%	17.6%	16.3%	.0%	14.3%
		Std. Residual	2.3	.4	.4	-1.6	
	2.00	Count	0	14	41	17	72
		Expected Count	.9	14.6	42.0	14.6	72.0
		% within Rating_Recode_1	.0%	82.4%	83.7%	100.0%	85.7%
		Std. Residual	-.9	-.1	-.2	.6	
Total		Count	1	17	49	17	84
		Expected Count	1.0	17.0	49.0	17.0	84.0
		% within Rating_Recode_1	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

### **Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.157 <sup>a</sup>	3	.027
Likelihood Ratio	9.441	3	.024
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.725	1	.030
N of Valid Cases	84		

a. 4 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.



As there was only one project in this data set rated 'Low success', the following analysis combined this category with 'Mixed/moderate success'. Results when a three category scale was used were, however, at best only marginally significant – see following analysis.

**Figure 3: Correlation of actual continuation and rated global success of project (3 category classification)**

**Act\_Cont1 \* Rating\_Recode\_2 Crosstabulation**

			Rating_Recode_2			Total
			Low_Medium	High	Very High	
Act_Cont1	1.00	Count	4	8	0	12
		Expected Count	2.6	7.0	2.4	12.0
		% within Rating_Recode_2	22.2%	16.3%	.0%	14.3%
		Std. Residual	.9	.4	-1.6	
	2.00	Count	14	41	17	72
		Expected Count	15.4	42.0	14.6	72.0
		% within Rating_Recode_2	77.8%	83.7%	100.0%	85.7%
		Std. Residual	-.4	-.2	.6	
Total		Count	18	49	17	84
		Expected Count	18.0	49.0	17.0	84.0
		% within Rating_Recode_2	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.832 <sup>a</sup>	6	.046
Likelihood Ratio	16.531	6	.011
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.567	1	.010
N of Valid Cases	84		

a. 6 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.43.



## **Optimal Scaling Regression Modelling of ‘Actual Project Continuation’**

Actual project continuation was regarded as ordinal and scaled as follows: 1 = Project Ended; 2 = Project Continued. Using ‘Rated Project Effectiveness’ as an Explanatory Variable

The bivariate ‘optimal scaling’ correlation between ‘rated project effectiveness’ and actual project continuation is statistically significant – suggesting a modest positive association between rated success and project continuation.

Unfortunately we lose a lot of cases by the time rated project effectiveness is entered into the blockwise regression, such that the standard errors become very large and no single variable is statistically significant- the coefficients also look quite unstable.

**Table 21: Optimal scaling regression modelling of actual sustainability – full model**

<b>Explanatory Variable</b>	<b>Correlation</b>	<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Step 5</b>
<i>Overall funding</i>	0.171	0.100	0.278	0.027	0.038	-0.173
<i>Diversity of funding</i>	0.367	<b>0.338</b>	<b>0.434</b>	0.408	<b>0.377</b>	0.824
<i>Diversity of non-financial support</i>	0.033	0.028	0.094	0.102	0.127	-0.303
<i>Diversity of community support</i>	<b>0.378</b>		<b>0.292</b>	<b>0.505</b>	<b>0.451</b>	0.711
<i>Diversity of partnerships</i>	0.151		<b>-0.287</b>	0.139	0.195	0.355
<i>Importance of partnerships</i>	0.104		0.047	-0.041	-0.100	-0.323
<i>Source of project idea</i>	0.100			-0.189	-0.161	-0.556
<i>Perceived success of auspice support</i>	<b>0.211</b>			<b>0.468</b>	<b>0.427</b>	0.207
<i>Direct Involvement of Auspice Organisation</i>	<b>0.128</b>			0.147	0.115	0.412
<i>Sense of Community Ownership</i>	<b>0.203</b>				0.114	0.289
<i>Rated project effectiveness</i>	<b>0.216</b>					0.272
N	75-114	75	56	37	34	23
R <sup>2</sup>		0.145	0.431	0.723	0.745	0.871



Taking the three significant predictors in the second last step of the above model as 'control' variables for 'Rated Project Effectiveness' gives the model in the table below – Diversity of Funding and Diversity of Community Support remain significant in these models, however, net of these three most plausible explanatory variables for actual continuation, rated project effectiveness is not significant.

**Table 22: Optimal scaling regression modelling of actual project continuation – four variable model**

<b>Explanatory Variable</b>	<b>Correlation</b>	<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Step 2</b>
<i>Diversity of funding</i>	<i>0.367</i>	<b><i>0.391</i></b>	<b><i>0.469</i></b>
<i>Diversity of community support</i>	<b><i>0.378</i></b>	<b><i>0.646</i></b>	<b><i>0.780</i></b>
<i>Perceived success of auspice support</i>	<b><i>0.211</i></b>	0.177	-0.058
<i>Rated project effectiveness</i>	<b><i>0.216</i></b>		0.148
N		53	40
R <sup>2</sup>		0.478	0.528



### **Correlation between 'Rated Success of the Project' and 'Scale of Continuation'**

There was a significant association between the three-category 'rated project effectiveness' variable and Scale of Project Continuation. No standardised residuals are <2.0, but the pattern of the larger ones suggests that those projects that were rated 'Very High' were likely to continue on a larger scale and unlikely to end, while those projects rated Low-Medium were less likely to continue on a larger scale.

**Figure 4: Correlation of scale of continuation and rated global success of project (3 category classification)**

**Q4\_Scale \* Rating\_Recode\_2 Crosstabulation**

			Rating_Recode_2			Total
			Low_Medium	High	Very High	
Q4_Scale	Ended	Count	4	8	0	12
		Expected Count	2.6	7.0	2.4	12.0
		% within Rating_Recode_2	22.2%	16.3%	.0%	14.3%
		Std. Residual	.9	.4	-1.6	
Smaller	Count	Count	8	12	7	27
		Expected Count	5.8	15.8	5.5	27.0
		% within Rating_Recode_2	44.4%	24.5%	41.2%	32.1%
		Std. Residual	.9	-.9	.7	
Similar	Count	Count	5	15	2	22
		Expected Count	4.7	12.8	4.5	22.0
		% within Rating_Recode_2	27.8%	30.6%	11.8%	26.2%
		Std. Residual	.1	.6	-1.2	
Larger	Count	Count	1	14	8	23
		Expected Count	4.9	13.4	4.7	23.0
		% within Rating_Recode_2	5.6%	28.6%	47.1%	27.4%
		Std. Residual	-1.8	.2	1.6	
Total	Count	Count	18	49	17	84
		Expected Count	18.0	49.0	17.0	84.0
		% within Rating_Recode_2	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Std. Residual				

#### **Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.832 <sup>a</sup>	6	.046
Likelihood Ratio	16.531	6	.011
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.567	1	.010
N of Valid Cases	84		

a. 6 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.43.



### **Optimal Scaling Regression Modelling of ‘Scale of Project Continuation’**

We get a very similar result for the four category ‘Scale of Continuation’ variable. The N of cases is reduced to 23 at the last step and the regression coefficients appear to become wildly unstable.

The reduced table is shown below, showing that net of the three most important explanatory variables for Scale of Continuation, rated success is positive but not significant. This model explains about half the variance in the scale of continuation

**Table 23: Optimal scaling regression modelling of scale of continuation – four variable model**

<b>Explanatory Variable</b>	<b>Correlation</b>	<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Step 2</b>
<i>Diversity of funding</i>	0.388	<b>0.384</b>	<b>0.441</b>
<i>Diversity of community support</i>	<b>0.415</b>	<b>0.642</b>	<b>0.762</b>
<i>Perceived success of auspice support</i>	<b>0.229</b>	<b>0.186</b>	0.076
<i>Rated project effectiveness</i>	<b>0.329</b>		0.155
N		53	40
R <sup>2</sup>		0.484	0.534





## Appendix 3: Matching of variables in the project questionnaires to factors identified in the research literature

These descriptions draw from the analysis of projected sustainability conducted by Savaya, Elsworth and Rogers (1994) in the early stages of this study, which provided for the foundation for the analysis reported in this paper:

**Table 24: Operationalisation of identified factors**

Factor identified in the literature	Variables for which data were available	Description
1. Financial resources	Amount of funding	Amount of Strategy funding received (from Strategy database)
	Diversity of funding sources	The number of sources selected by project in the Final Questionnaire in response to a list of possible sources (Local, State and Australian Government, NGOs, private sector, self-funding and other)
2. Non-financial resources	Diversity of non-financial support	The number of types of non-financial support selected by project in the Final Questionnaire in response to a list of possible types (volunteer time, community support, in-kind support, professional services)
3. Perceived project effectiveness	Perceived project effectiveness (used in initial analysis)	Project response to question in the Final Questionnaire 'How much has the project achieved of what you wanted it to?' using a five point scale from 1= Made some progress towards what we wanted to 5 = Exceeded what we wanted.
	Rated project effectiveness (used in later analysis)	Rating by the evaluation team of the global success of the project using a four point scale: Low success; Mixed/moderate success; Generally successful; Highly successful.
4. Organisational stability	No quantitative variables included in the project questionnaires, although some comments were made in open-ended responses and interviews.	
5. Organisational flexibility	No quantitative variables included in the project questionnaires, although some comments were made in open-ended responses and interviews.	



**Table 25: Operationalisation of identified factors (continued)**

<b>Factor identified in the literature</b>	<b>Variables for which data were available</b>	<b>Description</b>
6. Incorporation of the project in the sponsoring organisation during implementation	Source of the idea for the project	Project response to Final Questionnaire item about the source of the idea for the project – 1= from inside the organisation, 2 = from both inside and outside, 3 = from outside the organisation.
	Effectiveness of auspice support during development	Project rating in Initial Questionnaire of how well support from the auspice organisation had worked during the development of the project proposal, using a four point ordinal scale from 1= Worked very poorly to 4 = Worked very well.
	Direct involvement of auspice in project	Project response to Initial Questionnaire item asking whether or not the auspice organisation would be directly involved in implementing the project.
7. Efforts to enlist support from the community	Diversity of efforts to enlist community support	The number of sources selected by project in the Initial Questionnaire in response to a list of possible activities to engage community support (eg holding public meetings, speaking or working with community members, other community groups, local government, local businesses etc).
8. Efforts to establish partnerships with different community groups and bodies	Diversity of partnerships	The number of types of organisations selected by project in the Final Questionnaire in response to a list of possible partners (eg community groups, Indigenous organisations, government agency, private sector).
	Perceived importance of partnerships	Project rating in the Final Questionnaire of the importance of partnerships to their project, using a 3 point ordinal scale from 1 = Unimportant to 3 = Very important.
9. Sense of community ownership	Sense of community ownership	Composite variable created from four questions asked in the Initial Questionnaire (see below for details).



The variable 'Sense of community ownership' was a composite variable created from responses to four questions in the Initial Questionnaire:

1. Did the idea for the project come from the community?
2. Were community members or groups involved in identifying local issues or possible ways of addressing them?
3. Did community members or groups take key roles in developing and setting up the project?
4. Overall, how much has community involvement contributed to the project?

The first three questions were answered dichotomously; the fourth on a four-point ordinal scale from 1 = Did not contribute to 4 = Contributed a lot.

A principal component factor analysis performed on the four items yielded a single factor, with loadings ranging from .52 for the third variable to .82 to the fourth variable.



## **Appendix 4: Reports and issues papers produced as part of the evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2000-2004**

### ***Issues papers***

Partnerships and Networks  
Community Capacity Building  
Early Intervention – particularly in Early Childhood  
Sustainability and Legacy  
Economic and Social Participation  
Service Integration and Coordination  
Evidence Based Policy and Practice

### ***Case Studies***

Mandurah Targeted Region  
Gillies Plains Community Garden  
Early Intervention and Early Childhood Initiatives  
Stronger Families Fund Initiative  
Sustainability of projects  
Lessons Learnt about Strengthening Indigenous Families and Communities: What's Working and What's Not?  
Potential Leaders in Local Communities initiative  
Qualitative Cost Benefit Analysis

### ***Final Report***

Evaluation of the SFCS 2000-2004 Final Report

Available at [http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/aboutfacs/programs/sfsc-evaluation\\_reports.htm](http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/aboutfacs/programs/sfsc-evaluation_reports.htm)

