

# Effective Communication: Communities and Bushfire

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**Effective communication is dependent upon the degree of social cohesion or fragmentation that characterises the community**

## Aims

- Increase community resilience to bushfires by developing a robust and analytic understanding of cohesion and fragmentation.
- Shaping communication strategies, preparedness education, messages and delivery modes to increase bushfire preparedness.

## Themes to be addressed via 12 case study sites across 4 States

Diverse localities and needs:

- Permanent households, non-permanent/newly arrived households, holiday-home owners and tourists, traditional farming, rural/urban interface, groups with special needs

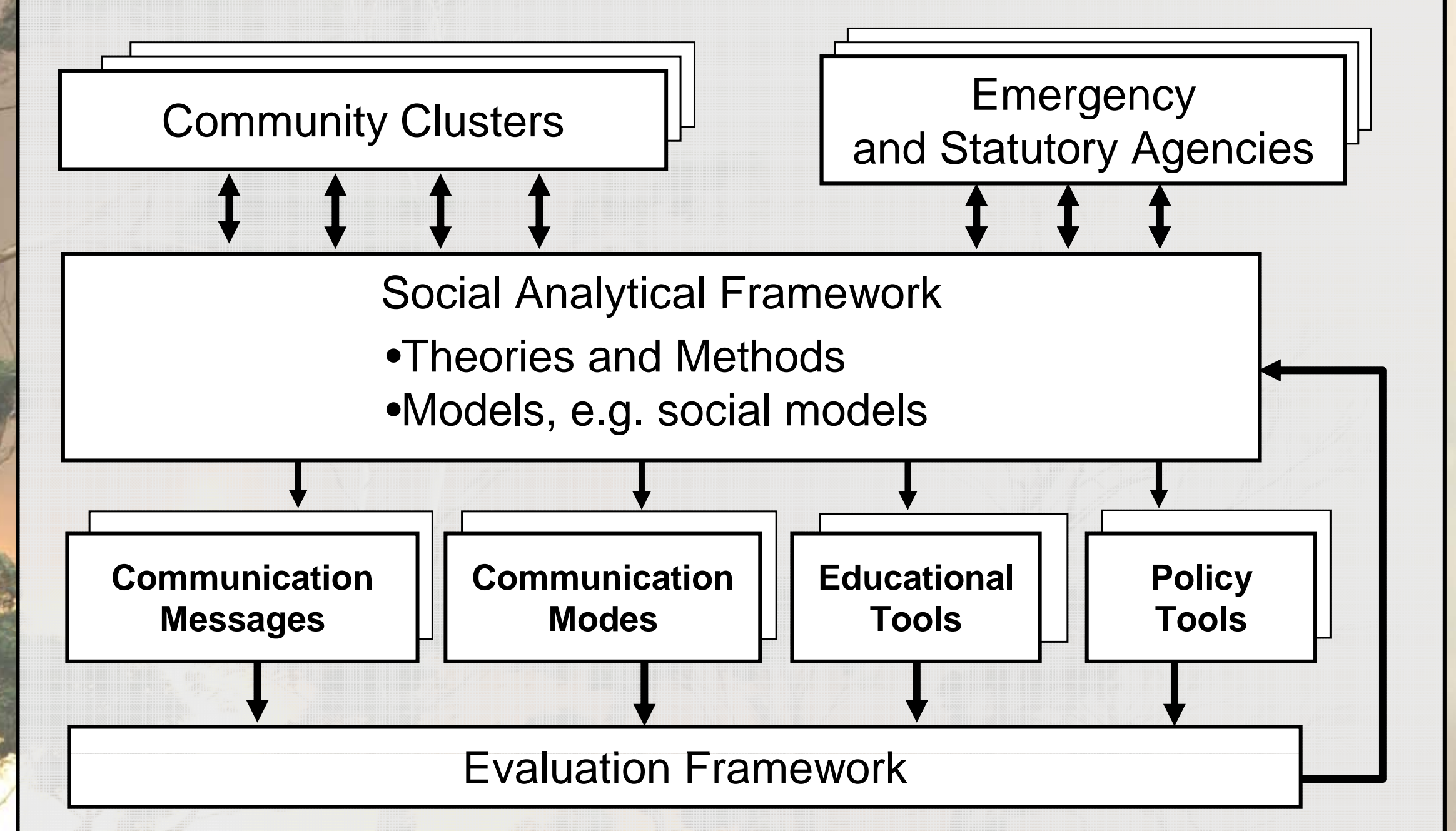
Cohesive networks

- Networks (coordination, degree of integration/fragmentation, inclusiveness)
- Level of participation and degree of organisation
- Relationship with emergency services and government agencies
- Structured or informal

Communication Effectiveness

- Positive and negative reaction to messages
- Mixed or conflicting messages
- Acceptance, complacency, resistance
- Reliance on community advocates
- Disorientation of responses and actions
- Formal and informal rules
- Who has what authority (power, responsibility and functions)

## The Research Framework



## Issues to be Addressed Nationally

Localities organise and operate to respond to fire and fire threats in complex ways

Communication is effected in both positive and negative ways

Communication can depend on social context, life experience, status and position of both the communicators and receivers.

Communication strategies should be tailored to the various community groups at risk and supported by appropriate guidelines

**The outcome will be a suite of appropriate and tailored communication strategies that respond to community diversity in Australia, and enable local people to manage bushfire risk more effectively.**