

OUR **IMPACT** 2025

A series of **case studies** that capture the unique impact of the Southern NSW Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub



SOUTHERN NSW
Innovation Hub

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE,
LANDSCAPES AND COMMUNITIES



Making abstract concepts like community wellbeing & resilience tangible

The Early Insights for More Resilient Communities online dashboard gives Alpine Valleys Community Leadership (AVCL) an accessible, up-to-date source of evidence about what's happening in rural NSW communities — moving beyond anecdotal understandings of community sentiment.

BACKGROUND

Madeline Hines is the Executive Officer of AVCL, a regional not-for-profit delivering place-based leadership and capacity-building initiatives across Northeast Victoria and the Southern and Border regions of NSW. AVCL works alongside local communities to strengthen individual and collective capacity, create space for local action, and build confidence to lead change.

BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF REGIONAL WELLBEING

Madeline first encountered the Early Insights dashboard at a Shepparton forum hosted by the Gardiner Dairy Foundation, where Professor Jacki Schirmer from the University of Canberra presented findings from the Regional Wellbeing Survey — a key data source for the dashboard.

Professor Schirmer also leads the Early Insights for More Resilient Communities project. When she demonstrated the dashboard, Madeline immediately saw its potential.

"I saw how valuable the dashboard was and was keen to use it in a community forum we were planning in the Snowy Valleys later in the year," Madeline said.





TURNING COMPLEX LIVED EXPERIENCES INTO ACTION

What we find most valuable about the dashboard is that it makes abstract concepts like wellbeing or resilience tangible.

It shifts the conversation from assumptions to evidence, while still leaving room for local interpretation.

MADELINE HINES
EXECUTIVE OFFICER
ALPINE VALLEYS COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

AVCL often draws on specific resilience indicators, such as confidence in community leadership and local availability of tradespeople, as practical starting points for discussion — especially when designing place-based capacity-building initiatives.

GIVING COMMUNITIES ACCESS TO THEIR OWN DATA

In late 2024, AVCL hosted a community forum in Batlow exploring how innovation could boost local capacity to withstand dry times. A highlight of the workshop was introducing the Early Insights dashboard to community members, giving them direct access to their resilience data.

“The dashboard’s findings served as guideposts for discussion,” Madeline said. “They helped people reflect on what resonated with their experiences, and where further action might be needed.”

EXPANDING THE DASHBOARD TO EXPAND IMPACT

“I’ve been promoting the dashboard at every opportunity. For the future, it would be great to have a user-friendly toolkit to help communities explore and understand their own data and indicators.”

Madeline said, *“I’d also relish a version of the dashboard that includes Victoria. That way, we could use it for all the communities we work with, not just those in New South Wales.”*



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry



SOUTHERN NSW
Innovation Hub
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE,
LANDSCAPES AND COMMUNITIES

This part of a joint initiative by Southern NSW Innovation Hub, and forms part of the Australian Government's Agricultural Innovation Hubs Program



Charles Sturt
University



UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA



Australian
National
University



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA



STAY
IN
TOUCH



csu.edu.au/research/southern-nsw-drought-resilience-hub