



Karratha

Case Study Evaluation Report

Colby Sidebottom (Intervention Officer)

Philippa Ives (Evaluation Officer)

November 2007

5.0 The Act-Belong-Commit Mental Health Promotion Campaign Karratha Case Study

5.1 Introduction

This report summarises the events and progress of the Act-Belong-Commit pilot campaign in Karratha from November 2005 to October 2007.

Act-Belong-Commit Karratha launched the campaign in November 2005 and hosted two Community Forums attracting over eighty participants. The community members that attended were very enthusiastic and many exciting ideas were shared. These formed the first twelve-month action plan, including a focus on building partnerships with community organisations to promote the Act-Belong-Commit message.

Following the launch and community forums, Act-Belong-Commit proactively formed partnerships with local community groups in the first six months. The community embraced the Act-Belong-Commit message, albeit with a few initial misconceptions regarding the campaign.

Year two of the campaign included a successful 'Year one celebration' event, with ideas tabled for future events and partnerships that formed the action plan for the following year. Organisations that formed partnerships in the first twelve months of the campaign continued to promote the Act-Belong-Commit message and co-brand events.

5.1.1 *Karratha community and demographics*

Karratha is located in the Pilbara region of Western Australia, approximately 1500km north of the capital city of Perth. The community is the largest in the Pilbara, with approximately 12,000 residents, with a young population and an average age of thirty-one years. Karratha is located in a cyclonic area with extreme summer temperatures averaging thirty-six degrees Celsius, and a temperate winter with temperatures averaging twenty-seven degrees Celsius.

The town of Karratha is heavily focused on resources, including major ports for the iron and gas industries, which produce twenty-six percent of the gross national product. Common to the resources industry are long working hours, high wages and transient residents. Residents have access to a range of natural icons, including Karijini National Park and the Dampier Archipelago.

Some confusion within the community regarding the Act-Belong-Commit message was noted in the early stages of the campaign advertising. Act-Belong-Commit project officers were contacted regarding how the campaign could help community members with a 'mental illness'. Overall, the community has absorbed the positive concept of improving your 'mental health' very well.

From observation, there are several strong community members highly committed to improving the social and environmental conditions of Karratha. Unfortunately, this is limited to a small number who do the majority of the work. Due to the transient nature of the Karratha community, a high turnover of community members in key roles manifests in difficulty in maintaining relationships with partners, management committee and other organisations.

5.1.2 *Staffing for the Campaign*

The staffing of the campaign had difficulties at times, though in the most part, remained consistent, with two Project Officers employed at 0.5 FTE, through WA Country Health Service and Curtin University of Technology. Initially, Karratha lacked an Evaluation Officer for the first three months of campaign preparation from August to November 2005. July 2006 also saw a three month gap whilst a replacement project officer was recruited for one of the positions.

The balance of the Project Officers' workload also differed. Initially, an even spread of work was seen between the Evaluation and Implementation Officers, with the development of evaluation templates and Campaign partnerships. As the Campaign progressed and gained momentum in the community, the workload of the Implementation Officer greatly increased. This was not equivalent for the Evaluation Officer, and, as a natural course of action, the Evaluation Officer also managed implementation projects.

Throughout the period of the Campaign all staff worked together well and efficiently. Originally the Implementation Officer and Evaluation Officers were not located together, which made some tasks difficult in terms of sharing electronic files and coordinating the project. In October 2006, when a new Project Officer was employed, both positions were based in the same office. This improved communication channels and reduced time spent relaying electronic files.



Jessica van Eer
Implementation
Officer
July 2005 – July 2006



Colby Sidebottom
Evaluation Officer
Nov 2005 – July 2006
Implementation Officer
Aug 2006 – Nov 2007



Philippa Ives
Evaluation Officer
Oct 2006 – Nov 2007

5.1.3 Launch and Community Forums

The launch of the Karratha Act-Belong-Commit campaign was held on 15 November 2005 after a lead time of three months planning. This event was well attended by fifty community members and involved entertainment by Healthway sponsored Karratha Youth Theatre. Addresses were made by Mr Bruce Larson General Manager of Community Affairs, Pilbara Iron, Healthway Director, Neil Guard and Campaign Chief Investigator Professor Rob Donovan.

The two community forums that followed attracted eighty participants who brainstormed ideas for events and partnerships for Act-Belong-Commit to develop in 2006. Prior to attending, approximately fifty percent of respondents knew about the campaign as indicated from the evaluation survey. Following the forums eighty-five percent indicated they had a strong understanding of the Mentally Healthy WA Campaign. The Management Committee then discussed the collated ideas, which formed the action plan for 2006 ([Appendix 1](#)).

5.1.4 Year One Anniversary Community Forum

A Year One Anniversary Event was held on 14 November 2006 to celebrate the achievements of the first year of Act-Belong-Commit and also explore ideas from community members for the future direction of the campaign in 2007. Karratha Youth Theatre provided entertainment, with attendees treated to African drumming, fire twirling and uni-cycling displays. This was followed with a networking session for partner organisations, the Management Committee and other interested community organisations. Subsequently, all partners presented on the past year activities and how this related to positive mental health in their partnership with Act-Belong-Commit. Lastly a brainstorming session facilitated attendees to generate ideas and discussion for Act-Belong-Commit in 2007. These ideas were then taken to the Management Committee, along with an Action Plan tabled for 2007 ([Appendix 2](#)). Approximately twenty-three people attended the event, with positive feedback received from participants.

From a quantitative survey of attendees, ninety-four percent indicated they had an understanding of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign and partner organisations. The same percentage responded they intended to participate in future Act-Belong-Commit events and activities.



Karratha Youth Theatre
with their African Drums

5.2 Management Committee

A Management Committee was established prior to the launch of the campaign to guide progress and contribute ideas for the implementation of the Campaign. This included representatives initially meeting monthly and transitioning to quarterly meetings in 2006 from the following organisations:

- WA Country Health Service – Pilbara
- Shire of Roebourne
- Department of Sport and Recreation
- Frontier Services (Migrant Support Services)
- Pilbara Iron
- Karratha Youth Theatre
- Pilbara Kimberley Care
- Pilbara Division of General Practice
- Pilbara Community and Aged Care Services.

The establishment of the committee was crucial in the initial stages of the project to gain contacts and key stakeholder support in the community. After the first six months of initial planning and set-up, the Management Committee began to dramatically decrease in size and there was a significant changeover of members within the first year of the campaign. Only five original members remained and some members left due to no longer having an interest in the campaign, or the member not being replaced when ceasing association with an organisation, common to the transient nature of Karratha.

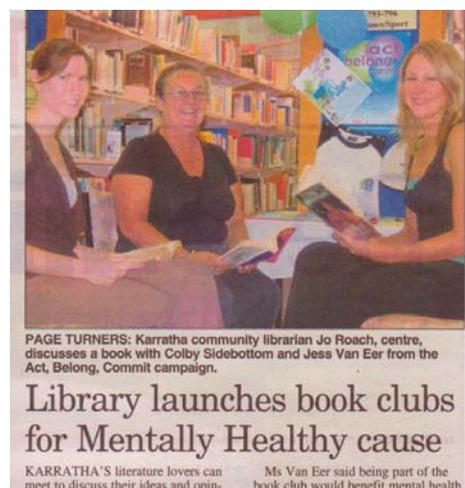
Attendance at meetings was variable with a few key members unable to attend on a regular basis. To counter low attendance, two members of each organisation were asked to join the committee to assist regular attendance. Whilst this was effective in the short term, attendance at meetings remained low, and after eighteen months, the Management Committee was disbanded.

5.3 Partnerships

The Act-Belong-Commit campaign in Karratha initially focused on building partnerships with key organisations in the community to promote the Act-Belong-Commit message through their organisation and activities. During year one of the Campaign, Karratha Community Library, Karratha Youth Theatre, Department of Conservation and the Environment, Soroptimist International – Karratha and Districts, Karratha Arts and Learning Centre and Saving Animals from Euthanasia all partnered with Act-Belong-Commit to promote positive mental health in the community. The second year of the campaign saw these partnerships continue to grow, and also the formation of a new partnership with a Pilbara Writers Group. [Appendix 3](#) lists the events and activities implemented in partnership with organisations and groups in the Karratha community.

5.3.1 Karratha Community Library (KCL)

In the initial Act-Belong-Commit forum a keen interest in an official Book Club was displayed by community members. Together with the community and Karratha Community Library librarian Joanne Roach, Act-Belong-Commit Project Officers assisted in the creation of a book club. Generous media coverage has seen this idea flourish into regular meetings on the second Thursday of every month at 7.30pm. The Book club embraced the Karratha Community Library's various visiting authors, including Markus Zusak of *The Book Thief* fame (Perth International Arts Festival One Book) on 27 February 2007. The library is well patronised with approximately seven thousand visitors per month.



Karratha Community Library

5.3.2 *Karratha Youth Theatre (KYT)*

KYT is an active community group focussed predominantly on young people in the Pilbara region between the ages of twelve and twenty, with special emphasis on youth considered to be at risk from negative social patterns, such as unemployment, drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence. KYT was one of Act-Belong-Commit Karratha's first official partners. The group also involves family and friends to promote a positive health message.

In January 2006, KYT received an annual grant from Healthway sponsored with the Act-Belong-Commit message. This has allowed KYT to offer youth a flare for something a little more daring with a range of activities and events to participate in. Club staples were weekly fire twirling and unicycling classes at Millars Well Oval. Other highly successful programs with visiting artists and performers included acrobalance with the Buzz Dance Theatre, a writing workshop with Phil Thompson from the Black Swan Theatre, African drumming with Chelsea Shanks and theatresports. Additionally KYT was industrious in taking advantage of visiting performing artists to offer singing and improvisation workshops.

KYT continued to receive Healthway funding, with Act-Belong-Commit as the sponsored message in 2007. This allowed for the group to continue providing positive theatre and youth activities.



Million Puppets Workshop, October 2007

5.3.3 *Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) formerly CALM*

A statewide partner of the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign, DEC Healthy Parks Healthy People initiative to encourage people to get out and enjoy themselves in parks was postponed. This initiative was anticipated to be a key ingredient in the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign to promote the physical, mental and social health benefits of spending time with nature. Unfortunately this project ceased to operate in the Pilbara, and thus the partnership with DEC was very limited throughout the two-year pilot period.

5.3.4 *Soroptimist International – Karratha and Districts (SI-KAD)*

Soroptimist International is an international volunteer organisation for women to improve the lives of females in their local community and throughout the world through empowerment and education. SI-KAD are a very energetic partner with President Glen Slee advocating for the Act-Belong-Commit message at every possible opportunity. Glen promotes the organisation in the following way:

*“We are a group of like minded women, **committed** to making a difference. We **belong** to a network of friendship and we contribute through Awareness, Advocacy and **Action**.”*

Hence, SI-KAD has networked the Act-Belong-Commit message with other Soroptimist Clubs worldwide.

From the beginning, SI-KAD embraced the concept of co-branding all activities and events conveying the Act-Belong-Commit message. The introduction of monthly market days at various locations in Karratha has increased Act-Belong-Commit exposure with merchandise and signage displayed. Another initiative of SI-KAD has been the Community in the Garden, encouraging the community to

come and participate in beautifying a garden in need of some TLC, as well as creating good community relations.

SI-KAD continued promoting the Act-Belong-Commit message with co-branded events including, Australia Day Awards, Tidy Towns, International Woman's Day, brArt to raise breast cancer awareness and UNIFM (United Nations Development Fund for Women) Spring walks.



5.3.5 Karratha Arts and Learning Centre (KALC)

KALC has been active in Karratha for twenty-five years and continues to offer a range of regular activities including pottery, quilting, craft, belly dancing, drawing, scrap booking, sewing and more. In addition, visiting instructors are welcomed to hold special classes that are always extremely popular. Robyn Rayson, KALC President promotes their centre as:

“A friendly place to learn a new skill or share your skills with others. It is also a fantastic way to meet new people and improve your well being.”

The Act-Belong-Commit message is promoted by KALC with signage displayed at the centre and co-branding on promotional material. KALC market days are locally renowned for their welcoming atmosphere from all participants canvassing their work. This has been a key tool in attracting new members for the current social groups and also new bookings for the Centre. Another highlight for the centre was the successful grant application through the Shire of Roebourne's Annual Community Sponsorship Grants Scheme for 2006/07 to give the centre a face-lift.

5.3.6 Saving Animals from Euthanasia (SAFE)

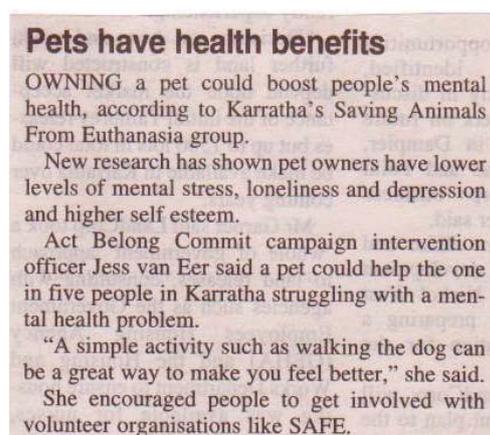
Sue Hedley, founder and coordinator of SAFE has a passion for animals that she has pledged her life to the rescue and re-homing of animals to provide them a future. SAFE reaches out to the community to get involved by caring for a pet, volunteering in the office or assisting with a donation to ensure the animals well looked after. Sue professes:

“SAFE has played a big part in my mental health as having something so important to get up for every morning soon overrides any difficulties I may be having. I have put much time and effort into my personal growth over the years and the philosophy of SAFE is based on awareness.”

The partnership between SAFE and Act-Belong-Commit was initiated by existing partner, SI-KAD, with the complementary principles apparent. SAFE has wide community exposure through a range of local media. Regular coverage includes the SAFE Pet of the Week in the Pilbara Classifieds, Friday morning thirty-minute 'the SAFE show' on Sprit Radio and the Volunteer of the Month recognises community involvement in the monthly Act-Belong-Commit newsletter.

In 2007, Act-Belong-Commit and SAFE solidified their ongoing partnership with a number of significant collaborations. Act-Belong-Commit was instrumental in assisting SAFE founder Sue Hedley to obtain funding to attend, design and present a poster at the Kindling the Flame Mental Health Promotion Conference in Perth. The other main event in the Act-Belong-Commit SAFE partnership was the community supported SAFE Dog's Breakfast. This event held in August 2007

was driven by Act-Belong-Commit to acknowledge and thank the community for volunteering with SAFE and caring for pets without permanent homes.



'Pets have health benefits' article in Pilbara News



Sue Hedley, Philippa Ives and Colby Sidebottom at the Kindling the Flame Mental Health Promotion Conference, 21 February 2007

5.3.7 Pilbara Writers Group (PWG)

The Pilbara Writers Group started as an informal sharing network for those with a passion for writing. Dee Pfaff, a member of the group approached Act-Belong-Commit to assist with a funding application for Writing Workshops with a visiting author and with promotion of the workshops. Two current partners, Soroptimist International and Karratha Community Library, prompted contact by the Writers Group with Act-Belong-Commit.

Funding was successful and visiting author John Harman held writing workshops on the 5–6 May 2007. In addition to the workshops John held a “meet the author” night at Karratha Community Library and a scriptwriting workshop with existing Act-Belong-Commit Partner Karratha Youth Theatre. All sessions displayed Act-Belong-Commit signage and merchandise was given to participants.

Since their initial instalment, the Pilbara Writers Group has gone on to hold local writing workshops with local writer Jan Teagle Kapetas including the “Imagine Writing” and “Cossack Fossick” workshops.

5.4 Major events

Throughout the two year intervention period, Act-Belong-Commit Karratha also worked with partner organisations and other community groups to coordinate major events. Many of these, including the Cultural Celebrations, Act-Belong-Commit SAFE Dogs Breakfast and PhotoVoice would not have eventuated without support and dedication from Act-Belong-Commit.

5.4.1 Cultural celebrations

Act-Belong-Commit was instrumental in the organisation of Karratha Cultural Celebrations held on 10 June 2006. This very successful event was an inclusive celebration for migrants and included children’s games, a shared multicultural meal and entertainment. Nine ethnicities including Indian, Filipino, New Zealander, Japanese, Thailand, Scottish, Macedonian, Australian and Torres Strait Islander took part in the event. An overwhelming amount of positive feedback for this event has led to the formation of the Pilbara Multicultural Association.

5.4.2 FeNaCING Festival volunteers and display

FeNaCING is Karratha’s Annual weekend festival equivalent of the Royal Show held in August. It is pronounced Fee – Knack – Ling, which represents the major industries in the Karratha area. Fe is for iron ore, NaCl is for salt and NG is for Natural Gas. Act-Belong-Commit worked collaboratively with the Lions Club of Karratha to promote and recruit volunteers to participate in the festival activities. A total of fourteen volunteers were recruited to assist with various tasks including becoming a festival ambassador, puppet and kite making, chauffeuring guest entertainers and more. The Act-Belong-Commit message was promoted at the information stand with merchandise and photographs of campaign events and activities. In the second year of association with the festival, Act-Belong-Commit The Act-Belong-Commit Mental Health Promotion Campaign Karratha Case Study

Commit was able to assist partner organisation SAFE to have an interactive stall to increase their exposure and volunteer base. Sponsorship was also received to the value of \$320 by the FeNaCING Festival Committee to have a 6mx10m stall at the 2007 FeNaCING Festival, 2007, with all partners participating in the display.

5.4.3 Mental Health Week October 2006

The Act-Belong-Commit message was promoted during Mental Health Week with a display in the Centro Karratha shopping centre. Other key events included:

- Northwest Mental Health morning tea for all service providers
- A presentation by Lenice Murray from ARAFMI (Mental Health Carers and Friends Association) at the Karratha and Districts Chamber of Commerce and Industry Business After Hours meeting
- Life and Soul Health Fitness Club Special Body Balance class followed by a healthy morning tea and a presentation of Act-Belong-Commit
- Northwest Mental Health Roebourne Community BBQ.

All events had Act-Belong-Commit merchandise and signage and were well received.

5.4.4 Kindling the Flame Conference

Act-Belong-Commit Project Officers Colby Sidebottom and Philippa Ives, with Sue Hedley from SAFE attended the Kindling the Flame: Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing International Conference held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Perth from 21–23 February 2007. The conference brought together health professionals and consumers from all over the world to learn of innovative mental health promotion programs and create discussion around future directions.

Act-Belong-Commit Karratha presented the progress of the local Campaign, detailing its inception in 2005 and its ongoing partnerships. Sue Hedley also displayed a poster at the conference detailing of the positive mental health benefits of caring for a pet and volunteering. The SAFE poster also received accolades, being voted best poster by fellow delegates and getting a special mention by the Tyrrell Squirrel Puppet Show.

5.4.5 International Women's Day

Soroptimist International, Karratha and Districts together with Act-Belong-Commit celebrated International Women's Day in March 2007. International Women's Day is a global day of recognition and celebration of women, the improvement in the status of women, and, most prominently—has helped women to have real choices in all aspects of life.

The evening was a wonderful opportunity to enjoy friendship and discover the diverse range of activities in our local community. Glen Slee of SI-KAD shared the values of Soroptimists and the club's global and local projects.

Sue Hedley from SAFE spoke about her story and where she finds the strength and commitment to continue her animal rescue service. Cancer Council WA had a colourful and artistic display of bras with breast awareness information. A special item for the evening was a performance by the Damali Bellydancers who showed the femininity of dance with no age or size barrier.

5.4.6 brArt

On Sunday 21 October 2007 SI-KAD launched *brArt* to raise awareness and support the many women who have been affected by breast cancer globally. The initiative of decorating bras started in June 2007 when more than twenty local women met at the Karratha Arts & Learning Centre to enjoy friendship and explore their creative side. Many groups and individuals have contributed with a wide variety of imaginative designs to support breast cancer awareness in the local community. KALC, Karratha Cancer Support Group, Baptist Church Create n Connect Group, and the ladies residing at Roebourne Prison all contributed decorated bras for the cause.

5.4.7 Dog's Breakfast

Act-Belong-Commit organised with SAFE a Dogs Breakfast to raise the profile of SAFE in the community and the mental health benefits of caring for pets. Funds raised on the day were directed to veterinary costs of the animals in SAFE's care. The breakfast was also an opportunity for residents

who are carers of SAFE dogs, or who have adopted a pet to be acknowledged for their ongoing contribution.

5.4.8 PhotoVoice

PhotoVoice digital photography workshops were initially offered to multicultural women to encourage the development of new skills and confidence. Due to the overwhelming interest, the project was expanded to include all women in the community. This was extremely advantageous, as women from diverse backgrounds were able to interact and share a common interest.

The concept of PhotoVoice stems from the use of digital photography, and allows us to perceive our surroundings from another viewpoint. A photograph alone considered outside the context of its own voices and stories can be misinterpreted. Therefore, it is important that the photographer describes the meaning of their image as a way of giving their photograph a voice.

Local Photographer Lesley Simpson shared her broad experience to assist participants to understand their digital camera and encourage thought about the key components in photography composition. Lesley's Scottish origins and recent relocation to remote Australia complemented the experiences of women involved in the workshops. Participant Rawia BouChebli enthused:

"Thanks for a great course. I really enjoyed it and learnt a lot, now I can take photos that I am actually happy with!"

Upon completion of the photography workshops, participants were asked to submit a photograph reflecting what was important to them in the community. An exhibition was held at the Karratha Community Library on Tuesday 9 October 2007 to coincide with Mental Health Week. PhotoVoice participants, family, friends and the community enjoyed a collection of sixty photographs from local community members. Attendee Sharyn Sturzaker commented:

"The exhibition reflected the diversity of our community. The photos had a voice, as the sentence that accompanied the photos told a story that reflected on the photographer's personalities, environments, families and cultural backgrounds. I enjoyed the exhibition, congratulations to all the photographers."

PhotoVoice was successful in encouraging people to connect within their community while simultaneously learning a new skill. Individuals found confidence in their voices to record and reflect their community.

5.5 Act-Belong-Commit newsletters

A key component of promoting Act-Belong-Commit in Karratha has been the distribution of a bi-monthly newsletter via email. The newsletters have become a local staple with detailed information about the campaign, partners, events and volunteer profiles. They were very effective in promoting events and positive feedback was received, including:

"I have just read the Act-Belong-Commit newsletter and as a new person to Karratha, I have found it very informative and very welcoming, well done." Jennifer McMahon

Partners of Act-Belong-Commit were also appreciative of the exposure the newsletter brought them, with Karratha Arts and Learning Centre President, Robyn Rayson commenting: "Thanks for the wonderful article on the Centre in your Act-Belong-Commit Newsletter, it was really great to read it."

The newsletter was also successful in engaging the interest of other community organisations in promoting local activities, with Pippa Davis, Manager of the Walkington Theatre remarking:

"Very interesting newsletter, well done. I was wondering if you would like to put an article in about the Friends of the Theatre volunteers next time." (A copy of the newsletter can be viewed at www.actbelongcommit.org.au/pdf).

5.6 Media and marketing strategies and perceptions

Over the course of the Campaign, unpaid media coverage was primarily through the *Pilbara News*, a weekly newspaper which is delivered free to all homes in Karratha. Changeover of journalists, however, resulted in reduced community focus in the newspaper, notably, the newspaper's lack of attendance at local events and decreased numbers of published media releases. Additionally, regular

contact with the newspaper has been arduous, with many press releases not published, and events covered and photographed by the paper, but not printed. This was limited to certain journalists. The last six months of the campaign did receive positive press, due to continued relationship building with the newspaper. Consequently, paid press seems to be the best means to publish the Act-Belong-Commit message. However, continual requests for specific placement location of these advertisements in the newspaper were ignored, and layouts of submitted advertisements altered without permission prior to publication. [Appendix 4](#) and [5](#) lists the amount of media items published throughout the pilot period.

Other methods to promote the Act-Belong-Commit message and events included email distribution lists; newsletters; flyers; community announcements on Spirit Radio and radio interviews on Act-Belong-Commit Northwest. The Act-Belong-Commit partner organisations have been instrumental in sharing the Act-Belong-Commit message through co-branded events, their contacts, and newsletters. Karratha's bi-monthly Act-Belong-Commit newsletter also received many positive comments. Overall the most successful distribution of the Act-Belong-Commit message has been via email networks.

Healthway sponsorship was an important aspect of the two-year pilot, with additional exposure through sponsored groups beneficial to the campaign. Karratha Youth Theatre and the Shire of Roebourne received Healthway funding allocated to the Act-Belong-Commit message during the campaign for youth based activities which proved popular with local residents.

Some negative feedback was received from community members regarding over-exposure of the Act-Belong-Commit logo. Feedback received indicated that some community members felt over-exposed to printed press advertisements, and receiving the same merchandise available at events associated with Act-Belong-Commit. Contrary to this, there has been good community support for most events.

5.7 Concluding reflections

The positive interest in the Act-Belong-Commit message from the initial launch was overwhelming. This resulted in a multitude of ideas to kickstart the campaign and instigate Karratha's twelve-month action plan. On reflection, implementation of all these ideas was overambitious with only half truly achieved. A major downfall was that much of the original interest of the representatives of particular community groups present was not reflected generally by their group. It would have been advantageous to revise the yearly action plan to be more attainable once this was identified. This initial lesson has been acknowledged and was prominent in the preparation of the next phase of the campaign.

Of the community groups with a genuine interest in collaboration with Act-Belong-Commit, six key partnerships were formed. The enthusiasm of these partners was the positive and successful aspect of this project, cooperatively expanding the campaign in the local community. The key representatives have a real affinity with the message 'Act-Belong-Commit' that has strengthened the delivery of the message within the community. Inadvertently, it is pleasing to comment that the campaign partners were very supportive of each other and formed new links through Act-Belong-Commit. Glen Slee from SI-KAD summed it up beautifully:

*"We **act** locally, nationally and internationally, because we **belong** to a global community and we **commit** to making a difference."*

Partners SI-KAD, KALC, Karratha Community Library, KYT and PWG were very proactive in the community and co-branded effectively with Act-Belong-Commit. SAFE promoted volunteering using the Act-Belong-Commit message and successfully recruited and retained volunteers. Of the six partnerships Act-Belong-Commit formed in the first twelve months, DEC was the least active. This is due to being a statewide partner, and thus activities coordinated locally by the Department were not as relevant to link in with Act-Belong-Commit in Karratha compared to other sites.

The positive response from partners and the community for the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign's first Year Celebration was 'stupendous' and the ideas from partners and community directly formed the 2007 Action Plan. The support of our partner organisations is also evident in letters of support they have written for the sustainability of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign beyond the two year pilot period, with excerpts below.

“The name—Act-Belong-Commit—Mentally Healthy WA is a fantastic mantra, ethos, slogan; and the Act-Belong-Commit logo is brilliant—it is colourful uplifting vibrant, and we splash it around with gay abandon. I’m sure you have seen the newsletters produced by Colby and Philippa, which illustrate some of the places/adverts where we have co-branded our numerous public activities.” Glen Slee, Soroptimist International.

“The ABC program and its work with us has provided us with practical experience and guidance that will be of value to the organisation for many years. It has also improved our profile and exposure within our community and highlighted to everyone here the connection between mental health, involvement within the community and how pet ownership can aid mental well being by encouraging companionship, exercise and getting out and about daily.” Jess Bass, SAFE Dogs Breakfast Coordinator.

“SAFE and Act-Belong-Commit are close allies in the positive message that is presented to our community. The project officers from Act-Belong-Commit are very active and enthusiastic in their work and have made a commitment to making a difference. The extreme value in working towards the prevention of mental health problems far outweighs the difficulty of experiencing a mental health issue.” Sue Hedley, Founder of SAFE.

The research compiled by the MHWA Hub was substantive and allowed for a strong basis to implement the campaign locally. Limited reporting guidelines and templates made reporting difficult at times, with a lack of consistency throughout the regions and streamlined definitions for reporting mechanisms. The MHWA Hub was supportive in providing training and opportunities to access agency funding. Project Officers were employed to deliver other health promotion programs which periodically were compromised due to increased demands and workload for Act-Belong-Commit, above the annual plan.

The Act-Belong-Commit campaign has been beneficial to local Karratha organisations in increasing capacity, although measures were required to ensure that Act-Belong-Commit did not become the capacity of the organisation. Act-Belong-Commit has proved to be beneficial in Karratha, empowering local organisations and encouraging community members to become involved with local events and groups