DISASTER RESILIENCE
Through Women’s Eyes

Resilience - Disaster Impacts on Women

Watching & Waiting: One of the worst things was watching and waiting and wondering when it was going to come and get you. It was almost a relief when it actually got to you.

When you have something to do you are more in control. Had I been screaming at the fire, come get it & get it over & done with if you are going to burn!

Dramatic & Shared Bond
Disasters also described as ‘exciting & awesome’ when experienced during childhood i.e., no school, new experience, confident adults would take care of them & ‘missing’ the floods during the CPA school camp.

Just like women ‘watching the fires’ of London during the war in Europe with feelings of ‘terror, boredom, excitement & adrenaline’ and wondering ‘what will we talk about after the war?’

Everyday, everything is before the fires or after the fires. Everybody alike has been in it too, and it comes up in conversation all the time. It’s not something you dwell on but there is a constant reference to it.

The fire brought this community together so much more than all the other social things that happened before it. I’ve met more people since the fire, felt like belonged to a community.

Kids & Family: My daughter got very scared on the night, and so after we got all the cats in and everything I took her to town. I think I should have left her at home, but she got very upset so I ended up staying with her. I spoke to my husband the whole time.

Future Plans:
My plan now is to leave after experiencing the 2009 fires, future plans is simply to GET OUT!
Now realise how important it is to plan, 2009 was very close because a fire has been busy, but also an old one, it made me think of the house and the deck. The deck must be rebuilt so there can be a view again. I think the deck helps me feel better.

Back into gender roles:
Without actual plan most likely to fall back into usual role. I want to travel, I want to go to the beach and buy new clothes — that’s what women do.

Loss & Memories: Yeah, we lost stock, we lost fences. We lost all our fences and trees.
Queensland floods brought it back, snarky, bringing back memories of bushfires and floods, looking for green seeing black all the time; wind was edgy, touchy, every time I see smoke I freak out.

If I brought back horror memories for me, from years back, when someone close to me died in the fire. I found it very hard for a while. I think getting out there and doing stuff helped me, all I could think about was feeding people to help.

Even after the first year, the day before the anniversary and the big get together we had in the field the day before, it rained, and that made a huge difference. There were a lot of people said that night that if it hadn’t rained they probably wouldn’t have come because someone was still thinking ‘is something going to happen again?’