

Importance of appropriate data

Developing and using community wellbeing indicators:

Lessons from *Community Indicators Victoria*

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- Importance of comprehensive, integrated, local area relevant data
- Centralised integrated data versus individual evaluations
- Need for centralized data bank/point – everyone has access to same comprehensive information eg. CIV



Overview

- What are community wellbeing indicators - and why are they important?
- Overview of *Community Indicators Victoria*
- Use by communities and governments
- Lessons for indicator platform development



What are community wellbeing indicators?

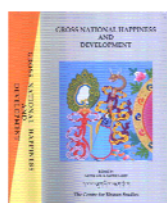
Community wellbeing indicators are statistical tools for translating broad community goals into clear, tangible and commonly understood outcomes and for assessing and communicating progress in achieving these goals.

- Tools for democracy
- Tools for evidence based policy making
- Tools for reporting and evaluation

Basis for new conversations about 'community', progress, wellbeing and sustainability



Growing international use of community wellbeing indicators as tools for discussing progress and making policy choices



Community wellbeing indicators in Australia



Local community wellbeing indicators...

- Spotlight issues and trends important to local communities
- Focus on a small number of headline wellbeing measures - not all local data
- Measure community trends and outcomes - not local government performance
- Include social, economic, environmental, cultural and governance trends and outcomes



How has local community wellbeing been measured in Victoria?

- No consistent understanding of community wellbeing
- Hundreds of different local indicators in use by Victorian local governments
- Data collection by local governments very costly and time consuming
- Some important data not available at an LGA level



Victorian context and drivers

- Local and State government initiatives and support for:
 - Evidence based policy making
 - Citizen engagement and community planning
 - 'Triple bottom line' planning and reporting
- VicHealth support for tracking community outcomes and strengthening local government capacity
- Victorian Community Indicators Project



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Community Indicators Victoria

Goal: To support the development and use of local community wellbeing indicators as a tool for informed, engaged and integrated community planning and policy making.

Partners: VicHealth, ABS, Community organisations (VCOSS) Local government (MAV,VLGA), State Government (all Departments), RMIT, Swinburne Universities

Products

- Framework of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and governance indicators
- Local community wellbeing reports: www.communityindicators.net.au
- Toolkits and training packages
- Research on development and use of community indicators



www.communityindicators.net.au



CIV community wellbeing framework

Five domains:

- Healthy, safe and inclusive communities
- Dynamic, resilient economies
- Sustainable built and natural environment
- Culturally rich and vibrant communities
- Democratic and engaged communities



23 policy areas: E.g. Personal health and wellbeing

74 indicators: E.g. Self reported health

Measures: E.g. People self-reporting health as excellent or very good



Data Sources



- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Victorian Government administrative data: eg. Library usage, Crime rates, Water quality
- Victorian government surveys: eg. Victorian Population Health Survey, Victorian Child and Adolescence Monitoring Survey; DVC Community Strengthening Survey
- Community Indicators Victoria Survey 2007



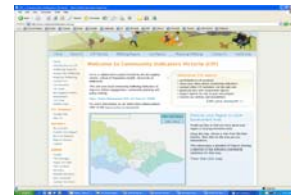
Community Indicators Victoria Survey 2007

- Purpose: Fill CIV framework data gaps
- Telephone household survey:
 - 24,000 adults.
 - 300 per Local Government Area
- Questions:
 - Data not currently available at local level: eg. Self assessed health, subjective wellbeing
 - Data not currently collected: eg. Transport access, Work-life balance, Arts participation, Citizen engagement
 - Demographics: Age, gender, employment, household type, parental status



Reporting

- Place based (Local Government Area level) with some population group data available
- Automated reports
- Tailor made reports
- Wellbeing maps



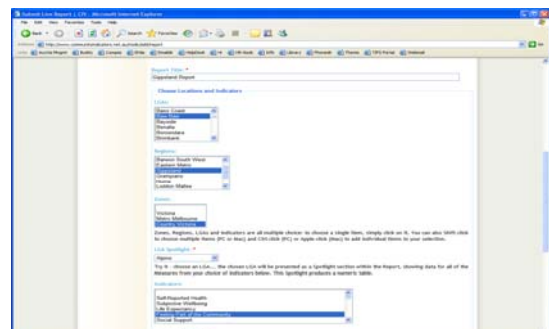
All free and publically available



Automated wellbeing reports



Tailored wellbeing reports



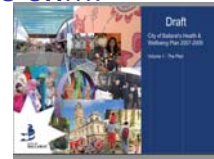
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Sixteen months on....

150,000 hits on the website

1,200 registered members

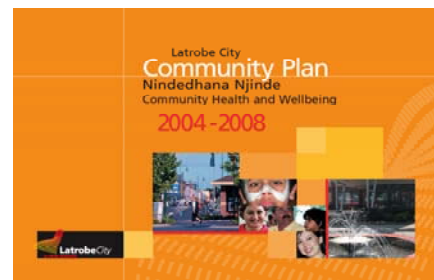
- All Vic State Government Departments and as many members from other state/territory governments
- 64 local governments (79)
- 48% of users are from NGOs
- Small number of private companies



Using community indicators to discuss local priorities



Using community indicators to inform Council planning



Using community indicators to report on progress



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Lessons

1. Key tasks and steps in the development of local community wellbeing indicator systems include:

- Agreement on governance and partnership arrangements
- Securing adequate and sustainable resources
- Development of agreed indicator framework
- Design and implementation of effective
 - Data collection strategies
 - Data dissemination platforms and strategies
 - Capacity building strategies
 - Policy and research linkages



Lessons

2. Key partners needed to develop and sustain a local community indicators system include:

- Local governments and local government peak organisations
- State government Ministers and agencies
 - Central Agencies
 - Community and Regional Development Agencies
 - Departments providing and using data
- Commonwealth government?
- Community organisations and NGO peaks
- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Universities



Lessons

3. Key data collection success factors:

- High quality project management for data collection, collation and analysis
- Well managed data warehouse systems
- Strong partnership relationship with ABS
- Data sharing agreements with State government
- Capacity to collect and analyse local survey data (nb. future issues re telephone surveys)



Lessons

4. Key data dissemination success factors:

- Clear understanding of audiences
- High level web design and web site maintenance skills
- Well designed communications strategy



Lessons

5. The effectiveness of local community wellbeing indicators as a citizen engagement, planning and policy making tools requires significant investment in building skills and capacity through:

- Online resources
- Manuals and toolkits
- Workshops and forums
- Short courses
- Applied research



Final comment.....

If local community wellbeing indicators are to be developed as a public good they need long term commitment from key data partners and from funding partners.

