DROPPING OFF THE EDGE 2015

Hobart 8th September 2015

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Marcelle Mogg, CEO Catholic Social Services Australia

A/Professor Margot Rawsthorne - Report co-author
OUTLINE OF TODAY’S PROGRAM

• Overview of key findings from the *Dropping off the Edge* report
• Time for questions and answers
• Our advocacy position
• Break - 15 minutes
• Facilitated discussion
• 12 noon finish
ABOUT OUR ORGANISATIONS

Jesuit Social Services
We work to build a just society where all people can live to their full potential - by partnering with community to support those most in need and working to change policies, practices, ideas and values that perpetuate inequality, prejudice and exclusion.

Catholic Social Services Australia
We represent a national network of 59 Catholic social service organisations that provide direct support to more than one million Australians each year. We develop social welfare policies, programs and other strategic responses that work towards the economic, social and spiritual well-being of the Australian community.
WHY WE COMMISSIONED THIS RESEARCH

- The 2007 *Dropping off the Edge* Report (and 1999, 2004) led to governments committing to a place based approach and the establishment of the National Social Inclusion Board.
- We received many requests for updating the data to provide a better evidence base.
- We cannot and should not turn away from the challenge of persistent and entrenched disadvantage.
- We hold hope that the young people in these communities will have a better outlook and life opportunities.
Findings from the research

A/Professor Margot Rawsthorne
GENERAL PERSPECTIVE

Where an accumulation of problems makes a serious impact upon the wellbeing of residents of a disadvantaged area, locality-specific measures may be needed to strengthen the community as an entity in its own right and supplement general social policy.
UNITS OF STUDY

As small as available data permits.

• Postcodes: Victoria (667), NSW (621), ACT (26)

• Statistical Local Areas (SLAs):
  Queensland (475), South Australia (125) Northern Territory (16)

• Local Government Areas (LGAs):
  Tasmania (29), Western Australia (140)
OVERALL SCOPE

Geographic distribution of social disadvantage
Use signposts (indicators)
Cooperation of governments and statistics generating agencies
ESTABLISHED INDICATORS OF DISADVANTAGE

- Low family income
- Disability support
- Confirmed child maltreatment
- Criminal convictions
- Prison admissions
- Unskilled workers
- Unemployment
- Access to Internet
- Unengaged young people
- Overall education
- Limited post-school qualifications
ADDITIONAL ANALYSES

Housing stress
Family violence
Psychiatric admissions
Readiness for schooling
NAPLAN results

Note: No data was available for confirmed child maltreatment
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Raw data received from relevant government body (including ABS)

Data converted in accordance with definitions outlined in Chapter 2

For example, low family income was calculated using ‘the proportion of households with an income less than $600 per week in each counting area’

Counting area then ranked from the highest to the lowest on each indicator of disadvantage

The data was also explored to establish correlations between indicators across a jurisdiction (when sufficient statistical strength). This enabled us to look beneath the surface for patterns of connectedness between indicators

A locations performance across all indicators was also analysed via an Average Rank calculation
BASIC QUESTIONS

a) Degree of concentration?
   *Which locations appear in the top ranked positions across a range of indicators?*

b) Recurring features of profiles?
   *What (if any) are the common features of the most disadvantaged locations?*

a) Persistence or otherwise of disadvantage?
   *If available, how have specific locations fared overtime?*
SPATIAL CONCENTRATION

Every jurisdiction marked degree spatial concentration;
SA appx. 6% SLAs = 50% or more of top ranks*
Vic and WA - 1.5% postcodes = 12-14% top ranks*
NSW 6% = 49.5% of most disadvantaged rank positions*

In Tasmania, 6 LGAs (20%) accounted for approx. 80% of 1st Ranking. The 5 Most Disadvantaged communities accounted for 64% (40/63) of 1-3 Rankings.

*3-5%
### TASMANIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Disadvantaged (ranked 1-3 at least 7 times)</th>
<th>Next Most Disadvantaged (ranked 1-3 at least 4 times)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Break O’ Day</td>
<td>Southern Midlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighton</td>
<td>Glenorchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Highlands</td>
<td>Circular Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Town</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tasman</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Only one of these LGAs in a highly urbanised area (Glenorchy)
- Band of disadvantage through central Tasmania (Central Highlands, Southern Midlands and Brighton)
• The Most Disadvantaged communities (n=5) had some common features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of LGAS (1-3 ranked)</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Prominent in 2007?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Criminal convictions</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Long-term unemployment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Juvenile offending</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Young adults not in full time work, education or training</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Disability support</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Low family income</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• But not uniform as revealed by average rank of Most Disadvantaged on indicators eg. Criminal convictions (median=8); juvenile offending (median=5); and long term unemployment (median=18)

• Points to the need for localised responses
## CHANGE OVER TIME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Disadvantaged (1-3 Ranking 7-9 times)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Break O’ Day</td>
<td>Break O’ Day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighton</td>
<td>Central Highlands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Highlands</td>
<td>Derwent Valley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Town</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tasman</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Next Most Disadvantaged (1-3 Ranking 3 or 4 times)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southern Midlands</td>
<td>Brighton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenorchy</td>
<td>George Town</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circular Head</td>
<td>Southern Midlands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasman</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Break O’ Day and Central Highlands have experienced persistent levels of social disadvantage. Brighton, George Town, Glenorchy, Circular Head and Tasman LGAs have experienced a deterioration of social circumstances.
## Average Rank Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0-9 average rank score</th>
<th>10-14</th>
<th>15-20</th>
<th>20+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brighton</td>
<td>Break O’ Day</td>
<td>Central Coast</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Highlands</td>
<td>Burnie</td>
<td>Circular Head</td>
<td>King Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derwent Valley</td>
<td>Devonport</td>
<td>Flinders</td>
<td>Kingborough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Town</td>
<td>Dorset</td>
<td>Kentish</td>
<td>Meander Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenorchy</td>
<td>Glamorgan/Spring Bay</td>
<td>Launceston</td>
<td>Western Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasman</td>
<td>Huon Valley</td>
<td>Northern Midlands</td>
<td>Sorrell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Southern Midlands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Waratah/Wynyard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Coast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Signs of Positive Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Positive changes?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Break O’ Day</td>
<td>Year 3 numeracy (22) Year 3 reading (29) Year 9 numeracy (19) Year 9 reading (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(average mostly around 10)</td>
<td>Juvenile convictions (25) Domestic violence (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derwent Valley</td>
<td>Low family income (14) Overall education (16) Readiness for school (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(average mostly around 7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mapping of disadvantage in Tasmania by quartile
WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?

- Demand action to ensure opportunities and wealth more evenly shared
- Data can help guide frontline services
- Findings can be invoked in social equity debates, policy formulation and inquiries
- Test whether it really is possible to ‘turn around’ persistently disadvantaged communities - authentic community strengthening over time
- Establishment of Commonwealth/state units - small but influential, secondments to drive strategy
- Learn from examples of what can be achieved against the odds.
LIFTING OUR GAZE:
Community appraisal and strengthening framework

Communities consist of four, inter-linked, sub-systems

- Substance and style of decision-making,
- Resource generation, allocation,
- Integration of people, groups and community organisations,
- Maintaining energy, direction and motivation.

These sub-systems shape the health and wellbeing of communities
SOCIAL COHESION

Connections between people and between them and their community

Defining characteristics:

- Volunteerism
- Membership of local groups
- Group action to improve community
- Neighbours help in difficult times
- Feel safe walking in neighbourhood
- Agree people can be trusted
- Attendance at local community event
- Feel valued by society
EXAMPLES OF IMPACT OF SOCIAL COHESION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>495 postcode areas</th>
<th>LOW social cohesion N=164</th>
<th>HIGH social cohesion N=155</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CRIME</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment/imprisonment</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHILD MALTREATMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low family income/child mistreatment</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON-ATTENDANCE AT PRESCHOOL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low family income/no preschool</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNEMPLOYMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early school leaving/unemployment</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment/psych. hosp. admissions</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment/domestic violence</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW BIRTH-WEIGHT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early school leaving/low birth-weight</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESOURCING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Victorian evidence supports the role of social cohesion in dampening the effects of harmful communal conditions.

But building cohesion needs to be accompanied by creation of other tangible opportunities in areas such as:

- Education and training/re-training
- Work and income generation
- Improving health
- Parenting skills
- Problem solving law enforcement
- Developing local leadership capacities
Questions and discussion on the findings
Advocacy position of Catholic Social Services Australia and Jesuit Social Services
URGENT ACTION NEEDED TO ADDRESS DISADVANTAGE

A small number of communities experience persistent and entrenched disadvantage.

It is not the responsibility of individuals alone to solve but for governments to work with the community to provide real opportunities for economic and social participation, and a cohesive community life.
We cannot and should not turn away from the challenge of persistent and entrenched disadvantage.

A new approach is needed so we don’t continue to fail the 3% of communities that bear the greatest burden of disadvantage.
STARTING THE CONVERSATION - WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ADDRESS ENTRENCHED DISADVANTAGE?

- Focus on most disadvantaged locations
- Develop solutions that are unique to each community
- Response is integrated - across silos and across governments
- Long term
- Involve communities
We need a multi-layered, cooperative and coordinated strategy that is **owned** and driven by the community.

It must involve all layers of government and the business and community sectors, reflecting shared responsibility and joint commitment to resolve this entrenched problem.

The strategy must take account of the unique characteristics and circumstances of local communities and must be sustained over the long term.
OUR ADVOCACY POSITION

We call on Government and the community to urgently give priority to changing this unacceptable situation and provide a better future for these communities through:

1. Sustained and long term commitment to change
   - minimum of 20 years
   - multiparty agreement across electoral cycles
   - at all levels - national, state and local
OUR ADVOCACY POSITION - CONT

2. Address economic and social disadvantage at the level of the:
   • individual - housing, income, education, employment, services and supports
   • community - culture and community norms, role models, social connections, access to services, peers, school and teacher quality
   • macro - economic growth, structural change and institutional functioning
OUR ADVOCACY POSITION - CONT

3. Working with the community, business and government on local solutions that are targeted, tailored and agile:

- harnessing resources, innovative ideas and strengths
- agreeing feasible local action plans - setting priorities, targets and allocating adequate resources
- establishing local governance mechanisms tailored to the circumstances of the communities
- providing expert assistance and guidance as required
Our Advocacy Position - Cont

4. Integrating government to support local solutions and effectively drive change:

- establishing a lead agency with authority nationally and in each state and territory to integrate and coordinate activity

- establishing performance targets for departments setting priority actions and resource allocation

- allocating adequate funds over required period to deliver change

- monitoring and evaluating effectiveness and developing the knowledge base of what is successful
Break
- 15 minutes
DISCUSSION:

1. What are the issues affecting disadvantage in your community?

2. What has worked well in your community to address disadvantage?

3. What are some further ideas to address disadvantage?
FURTHER INFORMATION

www.dote.org.au and #DOTE2015

- Report
- Summary Document
- State Fact Sheets
- Maps
- Advocacy Materials
- State Based Briefings
Thank you

Contact:

Jesuit Social Services 03 9421 7600

Catholic Social Services Australia 02 6285 1366