

ADDRESSING DISADVANTAGE IN THE G21 REGION:

A PLACE BASED COLLECTIVE IMPACT APPROACH

OCTOBER 2013



G21 is the formal alliance of government, business and community organisations, working together to improve people's lives in the Geelong region.

BACKGROUND

- Addressing Disadvantage has been a G21 priority project since 2011.
- The G21 Board was concerned that, despite opportunities presented by population and industry growth, access to social and economic benefits are not evenly distributed.
- The Addressing Disadvantage Taskforce was commissioned by the G21 Board in March 2011 to examine models for addressing disadvantage that might be applied to the G21 region.
- The Taskforce comprised representatives from local government, education, community and business organisations and has explored different approaches.

On the positive side:

- The G21 region is diverse and innovative.
- There are many opportunities for families, businesses and communities.

However:

- There are places in the region where opportunities are not evenly available.
- Seven areas in the G21 Region are identified as decile 1 on the SEIFA Index of Relative Disadvantage.

SEIFA decile 1

- Corio
- Norlane
- Thomson
- Colac (Central and East)
- Whittington
- Bell Park
- Parts of St Leonards

SEIFA decile 2

- Winchelsea, Breakwater, Newcomb, Central West Golden Plains.

HOW PLACE BASED DISADVANTAGE PLAYS OUT

For individuals:

- Lower levels of education.
- Higher levels of unemployment.
- Higher youth unemployment than the State average.
- Lower levels of income.

For the place:

- Capital investment flows away.
- People flow away.
- The impact or failed impact to change one place will flow on to all others.

EVIDENCED BASED ACTION:

- Joblessness is the consistent feature of disadvantage.
- Disadvantage and unemployment overlap with lower education and skill levels.
- Persistent place based disadvantage is complex.
- Issues are multi-causal, multi sectoral and involve multiple stakeholders.
- The most successful models internationally:
 - ✓ Take a systems approach;
 - ✓ Work in places with local people; and
 - ✓ Adopt and develop a cross-sector capabilities and partnerships in a **collective impact model**.

WHAT IS COLLECTIVE IMPACT?

- A model of social change being used internationally.
- Aims to solve substantial impacts on complex, large scale social problems.
- Based on structured collaborative efforts across multiple and often cross sector stakeholders.
- Seeks to draw together and build on existing initiatives within an agreed and structured framework of collaboration and measurement.
- Formal agreed focus increases the likelihood of achieving change to common targets.

THE COLLECTIVE IMPACT MODEL

1. **Common Agenda** – shared vision, common problem understanding and joint approach to agreed actions.
2. **Shared measurement system** – consistent and transparent data and measurement that set goals and track progress;
3. **Mutually reinforcing activities** – provides the space for differential activities that are coordinated through a shared action plan;
4. **Continuous communication** – consistent and open communication; and
5. **Backbone structure** – an independent entity with staff and the right skill set to coordinate participating organisations and support implementation.

SIMPLIFYING COMPLEXITY

- Ingrid Burkett's approach to applying collective impact focusses on addressing joblessness.
- It recognises that job creation and economic growth do not always 'trickle down'.
- Private, public and civic investment are **all** needed to achieve change.
- Sometimes the problem is not that there is nothing available to assist – rather what is there is not well coordinated.
- Sometimes the problem is that the things that should be connected or done at the same time remain fragmented.

RINGS OF RESPONSE

Ingrid describes 5 rings of response that all address place based disadvantage:

1. The people experiencing disadvantage are in the centre and should be involved in co-design.
2. People based responses include employment, training, education, family, health, community and specialist services that wrap around individuals.
3. Place based responses include connectivity, physical regeneration, safety, community, cultural, environmental and economic development.
4. Regional integration and innovation includes investment, diverse industry and employment base, asset development and measurement.
5. Broad goals –infrastructure, pathways and advocacy

FRAMING ACTION

Based on Ingrid's work, the Taskforce is recommending that 4 core strategies could grow and target jobs in the G21 Region through a collective impact approach:

1. Social procurement;
2. Place based investment;
3. Demand-led employment brokerage; and
4. Tracking and measuring job outcomes.

GOING FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH IN LOCAL PLACES

The single most common event to trigger an exit from poverty is an increase in the household's earnings, including movement from unemployment to employment or increases in working hours or pay ... Employment is also the most robust factor for keeping people out of poverty.

Smith and Middleton 2007.