

DROPPING OFF THE EDGE 2015

Newcastle Region – Friday 6th November 2015

Marcelle Mogg, CEO, Catholic Social Services Australia



Outline of Today's Program

- Overview of Key Findings from the Dropping off the Edge Report
- Time for Questions and Answers
- Our advocacy position
- 10.50 pm MORNING TEA – 15 minutes
- Facilitated Discussion

12 noon Finish

About our organisations

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.

Jesuit Social Services

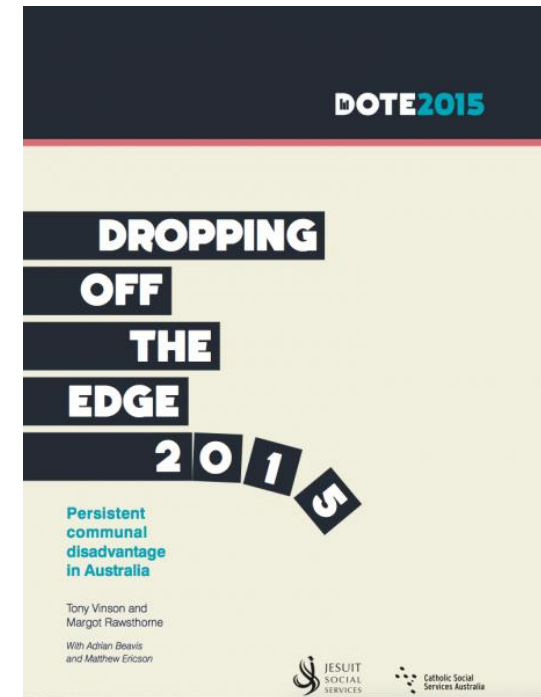
- We work to build a just society where all people can live to their full potential – by partnering with community to support those most in need and working to change policies, practices, ideas and values that perpetuate inequality, prejudice and exclusion.

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.

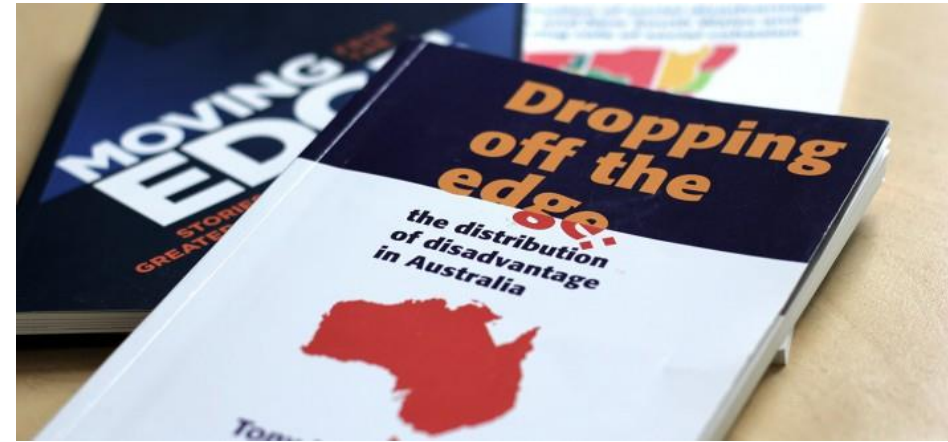
Overview of Report

Dropping off the Edge 2015 studies populations areas in every state and territory of Australia to identify pockets of location-based disadvantage and the unique web of challenges faced by these communities.



16 years of research

- 1999 and 2004 – NSW and Vic
- 2007 and 2015 – National



2015 Authors – Prof Tony Vinson and Assoc Prof Margot Rawsthorne (University of Sydney) with Dr Adrian Beavis and Dr Matthew Ericson.

What the research tells us

- Provides a picture of where disadvantage is concentrated
- Presents a snapshot of what attributes dispose an area to be highly disadvantaged
- Looks for patterns of connectedness between the indicators
- Devises a single social disadvantage score (ranking) for each locality within each jurisdiction
- Identifies highly disadvantaged communities warranting national as well as state and territory attention

Units of Study

As small as the available records permit:

- **Postcodes:** Victoria (667), NSW (621), ACT (26)
- **Statistical Local Areas (SLA' s) :** Queensland (475), South Australia (125), Northern Territory (16)
- **Local Government Areas (LGA' s):** Tasmania (29), Western Australia (140)

Indicators –National and State/Territory data

Variable name	Description
Internet access	proportion of households without access to the internet in each counting area
Housing stress	proportion of households allocating 30% or more of income to housing costs in each counting area
Low family income	proportion of households with an income less than \$600 per week in each counting area
Overall education	proportion of the population in a counting area aged 16-65 years who left school before 15 years of age
Post-schooling qualifications	proportion of population aged 18-64 years not possessing degree/diploma/grad diploma/grad certificate/postgraduate degree/certificate in each counting area
Unskilled workers	proportion of the workforce (ABS definition) classified as lowest skill (ABS definition) in each counting area
Young adults not engaged	proportion of 17-24 year olds neither engaged in full-time study or work in each counting area
Readiness for schooling	proportion of all children tested for language and cognitive skills (school-based) and assessed as being 'developmentally vulnerable' in each counting area
Disability Support	proportion of people aged 18-64 years in receipt of the Disability Support Pension in each counting area
Long-term unemployment	proportion of the workforce (ABS definition) aged 18-64 years in receipt of Newstart for one year or more in each counting area
Rent assistance	proportion of people aged 18 and over in receipt of rental assistance in each counting area

Unemployment	proportion of the workforce (ABS definition) aged 18-64 years in receipt of Newstart in each counting area
Y3 numeracy	proportion of year 3 students not "At or Above National Minimum Standard Percentage" on the numeracy assessment scales in each counting area
Y3 reading	proportion of year 3 students not "At or Above National Minimum Standard Percentage" on the reading assessment scales in each counting area
Y9 numeracy	proportion of year 9 students not "At or Above National Minimum Standard Percentage" on the numeracy assessment scales in each counting area
Y9 reading	proportion of year 9 students not "At or Above National Minimum Standard Percentage" on the reading assessment scales in each counting area
Child maltreatment	rate of confirmed maltreatment of a child per 1,000 of children and young people under 15 years of age living in each counting area
Criminal convictions	rate per 1,000 of people aged 18-49 years convicted of crime in each counting area
Juvenile convictions	rate per 1,000 of people 10-17 years convicted or found guilty of crime in each counting area
Domestic violence	rate of domestic/family violence orders per 1,000 population aged 18-64 years in each counting area
Prison admissions	rate per 1,000 of people aged 18-49 years admitted to prison in each counting area
Psychiatric admissions	rate of psychiatric hospital admissions per 1,000 of the population over 18 years of age in each counting area

Main findings – NATIONAL

- Assessment of 2125 discrete areas found disadvantage is concentrated in a small number of communities – 3% appx
- Web of disadvantage – prison admissions, unemployment, lack of formal education, domestic violence, mental health and low income are the most prevalent indicators
- In general, 8/9 out of the top 12 communities have been the most disadvantaged previously
- Regional/rural and Indigenous communities feature in the most disadvantaged – outer metro areas also vulnerable

Table 3–5: NSW's 40 highest-ranking postcode areas on the 'disadvantage' factor (listed alphabetically in bands)

Band	Localities arranged alphabetically	Estimated population	Top 5% (✓) / Top 10% (*) in 2007
1	2839 Brewarrina	1,254	✓
	2559 Claymore	3,308	✓
	2834 Lightning Ridge	4,500	✓
	2832 Walgett	2,300	✓
	2836 Wilcannia	604	✓
	2306 Windale	3,095	✓
2	2840 Bourke	2,047	✓
	2449 Bowraville	1,208	✓
	2717 Dareton	567	*
	2466 Iluka	1,739	✓
	2469 Northern Rivers MSC	n.a	✓
	2163 Villawood	5,304	*
3	2166 Cabramatta	20,780	-
	2829 Coonamble	2,998	*
	2440 Kempsey	28,134	✓
	2346 Manilla	2,550	-
	2502 Warrawong	4,770	✓
	2341 Werris Creek	1,437	-

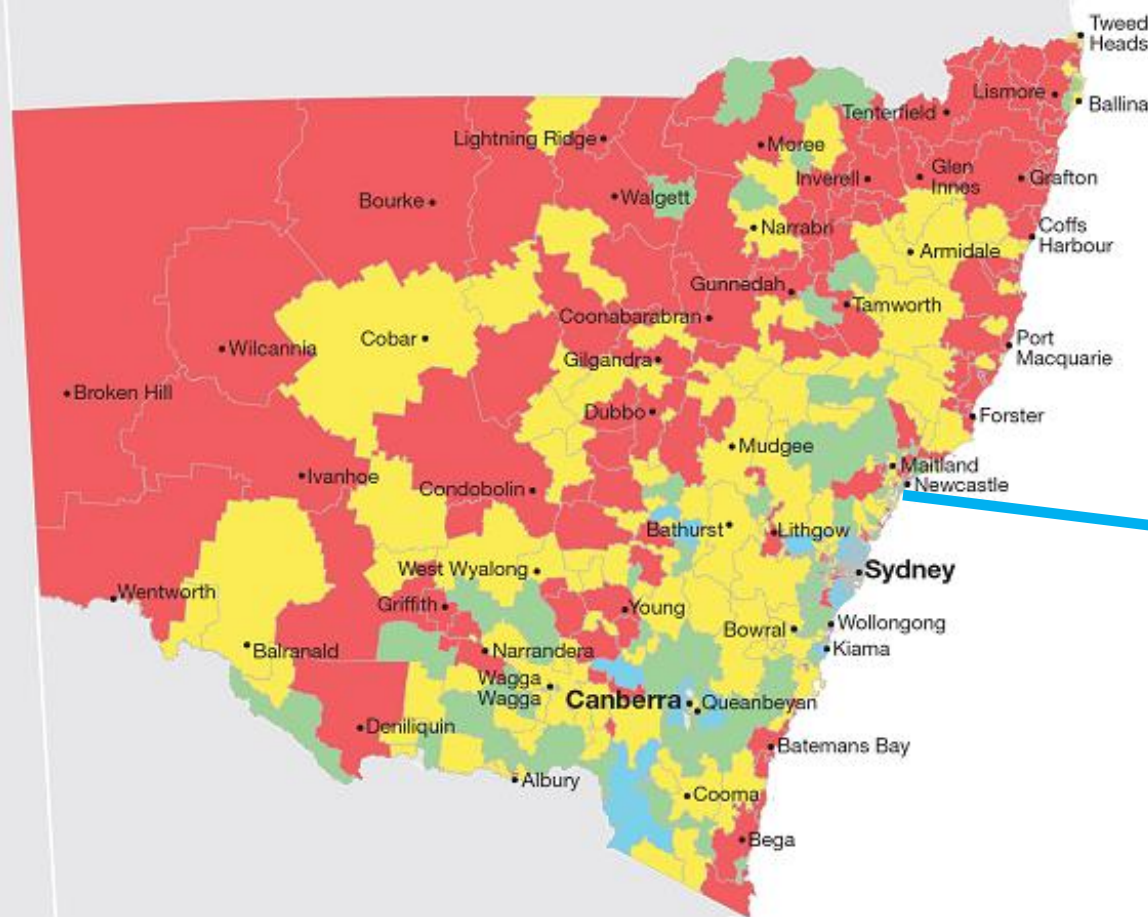
Band	Localities arranged alphabetically	Estimated population	Top 5% (✓) / Top 10% (*) in 2007
4	2471 Coraki	1,478	✓
	2165 Fairfield	17,032	-
	2443 Laurieton	1,931	✓
	2770 Mount Druitt	15,794	✓
	2448 Nambucca Heads	6,137	✓
	2462 Ulmarra	446	*
5	2470 Casino	11,000	✓
	2551 Eden	3,043	-
	2827 Gilgandra	2,700	*
	2427 Harrington	2,259	✓
	2505 Port Kembla	4,400	*
	2824 Warren	1,523	-
6	2506 Berkeley	7,427	-
	2880 Broken Hill	18,517	✓
	2453 Dorrigo	1,072	-
	2473 Evans Head	2,722	-
	2428 Forster	13,116	✓
	2360 Inverell	9,347	✓
	2400 Moree	9,346	-
	2430 Taree	20,000	✓
	2455 Urunga	3,020	✓
	2829 Wellington	4,540	✓

New South Wales Postcodes

- Most disadvantaged
- Disadvantaged
- Advantaged
- Most advantaged



0 100 200 300 400 kilometres



Mapping disadvantage NSW



Main findings – NSW – 621 postcodes

- Dominant features of multiply disadvantaged communities – criminal convictions, access to internet, unemployment, domestic violence, lack of qualifications, young adults disengaged, limited education
- In the 3% of most disadvantaged communities –
 - 3.6 x spent time in prison
 - 3 x long term unemployment
 - 3 x low level of education or suffered domestic violence
 - 2 x mental health or disability

Criminal convictions

Access to internet

Unemployment

Domestic violence

Lack of qualifications

Young adults disengaged

Limited education

Main findings – NSW

- 24/40 appeared in most disadvantaged in 2007 and earlier studies
- Regional/rural and Indigenous communities feature in the most disadvantaged – outer metro areas also vulnerable

Newcastle – Ranking on Indicators (621 postcodes)

Postcode N= 621	R.internet.access	R.housing.stress	R.low.family.income	R.overall.education	R.post.schooling.qualifications	R.unskilled.workers	R.young.adults.not.engaged	R.readiness.schooling	R.disability.support	R.long.term.unemployment	R.rent.assistance	R.unemployment	R.y3.numeracy	R.y3.reading	R.y9.numeracy	R.y9.reading	R.child.maltreatment	R.criminal.convictions	R.juvenile.convictions	R.domestic.violence	R.prison.admissions	R.psychiatric.admissions	Average Rank	Number of ranks
2300	419	188	526	509	559	531	501	146	283	147	144	188	473	521	372	380		263	147	118	120	16	312	21

Cardiff – Ranking on Indicators (621 postcodes)

Postcode N= 621	R.internet.access	R.housing.stress	R.low.family.income	R.overall.education	R.post.schooling.qualifications	R.unskilled.workers	R.young.adults.not.engaged	R.readiness.schooling	R.disability.support	R.long.term.unemployment	R.rent.assistance	R.unemployment	R.y3.numeracy	R.y3.reading	R.y9.numeracy	R.y9.reading	R.child.maltreatment	R.criminal.convictions	R.juvenile.convictions	R.domestic.violence	R.prison.admissions	R.psychiatric.admissions	Average Rank	Number of ranks
2285	324	272	387	368	251	175	229	321	265	269	313	330	149	304	44	105		317	246	204	305	332	262	21

Good news story – “Green Shoots”

- Windale is in the top 5% in 15 of the indicators.
- But has achieved good results in NAPLAN tests for Year 3 Reading and Year 3 Numeracy.
- Following the earlier DOTE reports the NSW Government established a “School as Community Centre”.
- This included parenting classes, pre-school establishment, social groups for isolated mothers, local scholarships, nutrition program and parent involvement.
- This early intervention in education means there are increased life opportunities for the upcoming generation and possible reduced social expenditure for the wider community.

Main findings – burden of disadvantage

Table 11-3: Ratio of 3% and 97% in various States

Remaining four States	Ratio 97% to 3% NSW	Ratio 97% to 3% SA	Ratio 97% to 3% TAS	Ratio 97% to 3% QLD
Overall low level of education	2.9	5.3	1.4	4.1
Absence of post school qualifications	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.5
Unskilled workers	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.0
Young adults not engaged	2.2	5.2	2.0	4.7
Disability support	2.0	2.3	1.5	2.4
Long term unemployed	3.3	5.1	1.4	2.3
Rent assistance	1.7	0.7	0.9	1.1
Unemployed	2.9	5.2	1.3	1.7
Child maltreatment	---	---	---	4.2
Criminal convictions	2.3	4.1	1.5	8.5
Juvenile convictions	2.3	2.4	1.8	6.1
Domestic violence	2.8	---	2.3	4.2
Prison admissions	3.6	10.0	1.6	5.2
Psychiatric admissions	1.8	3.5	1.1	---

Testing the impact of social cohesion – (Vic research by Tony Vinson)

- Social cohesion – Connections between people and between them and their wider community
- Do local social connections affect community resilience?
- Can the strengths of these connections lessen the impact of disadvantage?

Characteristics of social cohesion

- Volunteerism
- Membership of local groups
- Group action to help community
- Neighbours help in difficult times
- Feeling safe walking in neighborhood
- Agree people can be trusted
- Attendance at local community events
- Feel valued by society

Physical environment – supporting social cohesion

- Safe places to meet – libraries, parks
- Walking safely– lighting, activity areas
- Community facilities – recreation, halls
- Access to commercial, community & health services
- Public transport – to access services and social networks
- Housing – affordable, well designed for needs

Findings about social cohesion

- Strong social cohesion can “dampen” effects of harmful conditions
- But needs to be supported by other interventions – education, income, health, parenting skills etc
- Place effects have greatest influence on children & late adolescence (eg health, education, parenting support)
- Requires long term intervention

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.

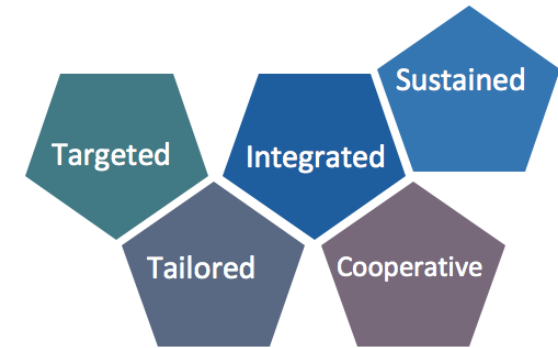
Confronting and overcoming disadvantage

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

**Morning Tea 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:

Catholic Social Services Australia

02 6285 1366

Jesuit Social Services

03 9421 7600

