A SCAN OF DISADVANTAGE IN QUEENSLAND 2010

a report overview

By
Fiona Caniglia
and Pam Bourke

UnitingCare Centre for Social Justice
PamBourke consulting

contents

1	introduction	page 1
2	the scope of the report and action plan	page 2
3	report findings	page 3
4	discussion of the results	page 6
5	solutions	page 7
6	recommendations	page 8

1 introduction

The *Scan of Disadvantage Project* was commissioned by UnitingCare Queensland's (UCQ) Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) and resulted in two key documents:

- *A Scan of Disadvantage in Queensland 2010: from analysis to innovation in place-based practice* (Report)
- *A Scan of Disadvantage in Queensland 2010: Action Plan (UCQ Internal Document)* (Action Plan).

The *Scan of Disadvantage* in Queensland 2010 updates a report published in 2006 by UnitingCare Queensland's (UCQ) Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) which identified concentrations of poverty and disadvantage in particular places using the Socio Economic Index for Areas, Index of Relative Socio Economic Disadvantage (SEIFA IRSD).

The 2010 version uses the SEIFA IRSD based on the 2006 Census to look at the extent of disadvantage in all Statistical Divisions in Queensland. The report then identifies smaller areas within these Statistical Divisions as a basis for understanding in greater detail which areas are more relatively disadvantaged than others.

The report overall demonstrates that disadvantage persists in Queensland and that responses to disadvantage need to address the spatial patterns that are evident. Some people experiencing multiple indicators of disadvantage may live in areas where a higher proportion of residents experience those same indicators which may in turn have impacts on their capacity to address entrenched community problems and issues.

The *Action Plan* outlines strategies and actions aimed at assisting UCQ to address the issues raised in the main report. The *Action Plan* recommends achievable strategies and actions that build on current strategic directions, research and projects, and on the creative ideas and aspirations of UCQ staff and managers.

2 the scope of the report and action plan

The updated *Scan of Disadvantage Report* includes:

- A review of literature with a focus on possible solutions
- An analysis of the Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) using the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) for Statistical Divisions
- Detailed examination in certain indicators that impact on spatial disadvantage
- An emerging framework for responding to spatial disadvantage
- Recommendations

The *Action Plan* includes the following strategies:

- Strengthen internal coordination and collaboration
- Build organisation capacity
- Pilot new initiatives and support existing good practice in place-based responses
- Build partnerships with local communities
- Improve external coordination and collaboration at local, regional, state and national levels
- Develop supportive organisation arrangements
- Advocate to and partner with government to address entrenched disadvantage in Queensland
- Enhance evidence based practice

3 report findings

The report uses the following hierarchy of areas that are the statistical building blocks used by ABS:

• Queensland Statistical Divisions	14
• Local Government Areas	159
• Statistical Local Areas	479
• Queensland State Suburbs	1965
• Census Collection Districts	7673

The graph below illustrates Queensland's Statistical Divisions and their ranking on the SEIFA IRSD.

Each Statistical Division is then analysed in the report[1] to show:

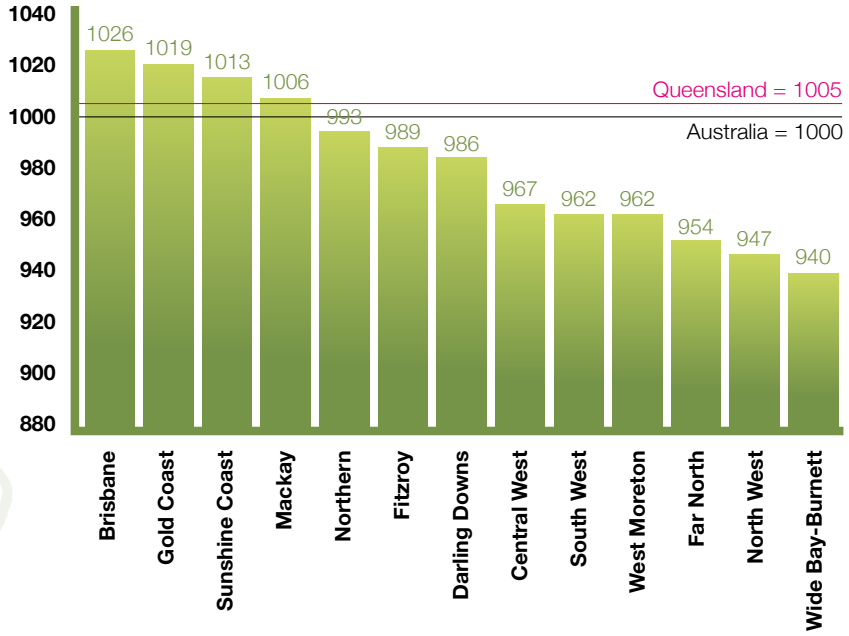
- The most disadvantaged Statistical Local Areas (SLAs)
- The most disadvantage Local Government Areas (LGAs)
- The most disadvantaged suburbs and Census Collection Districts (CDs)

Various indicators of disadvantage are also analysed including:

- Income
- Unemployment
- Education
- Household type
- Families
- Older people
- People from non-English speaking background
- People with a disability
- Housing
- Private dwellings without a motor vehicle
- Health including premature mortality by cause

A web-based document is available which outlines the 60 most disadvantaged SLAs in relation to each indicator which may serve as a resource for service planning and area profiling[2].

Figure 1. Queensland Statistical Districts ranked on the SEIFA IRSD



To provide an overview and summary, tables 1 and 2 outline the most disadvantaged Statistical Local Areas and Census Collection Districts in Queensland overall:

Table 1. The 30 most disadvantaged SLAs in Queensland in 2006

Rank	SLA	IRSD Score 2006	Rank	SLA	IRSD Score 2006	Rank	SLA	IRSD Score 2006
1	**Palm Island (S)**	480	11	**Aurukun (S)**	538	21	**Lockhart River (S)**	572
2	**Yarrabah (S)**	485	12	**Warraber (IC)**	543	22	**Erub (IC)**	586
3	**Umagico (S)**	492	13	**Dauan (IC)**	545	23	**Hammond (IC)**	600
4	**Cherbourg (S)**	506	14	**Iama (IC)**	547	24	**Pormpuraaw (S)**	601
5	**Injinoo (S)**	507	15	**Saibai (IC)**	549	25	**Poruma (IC)**	601
6	**Napranum (S)**	511	16	**Hope Vale (S)**	554	26	**Ugar (IC)**	619
7	**Kowanyama (S)**	513	17	**Mornington (S)**	561	27	**Bamaga (IC)**	620
8	**Boigu (IC)**	525	18	**Woorabinda (S)**	564	28	**New Mapoon (S)**	622
9	**Mer (IC)**	525	19	**Badu (IC)**	567	29	**Mabuiag (IC)**	625
10	**Wujal Wujal (S)**	532	20	**Yorke (IC)**	570	30	**Kubin (IC)**	627

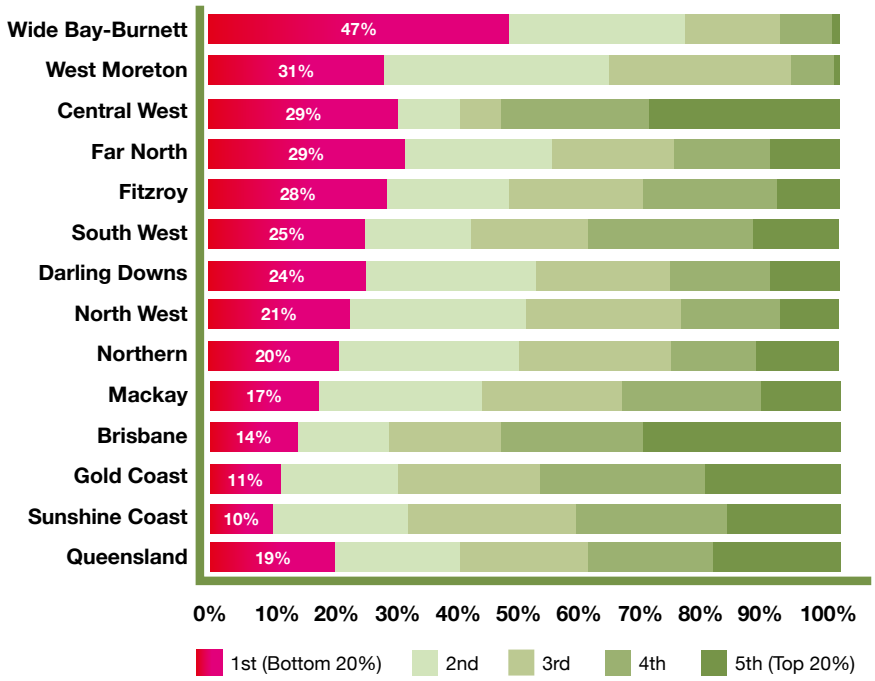
Table 2. 20 suburbs containing the most disadvantaged Census Collection Districts in Queensland in 2006

QLD Rank	CD by Suburb	CD by SLA	CD by LGA Reform	Remoteness	Score	URP
1	Mossman Gorge	**Douglas (S)**	Cairns (RegC)	Outer Regional	439	145
2	Palm Island	**Palm Island (S)**	Palm Island Aboriginal (ShireC)	Remote	480	1982
3	Yarrabah	**Yarrabah (S)**	Yarrabah Aboriginal (ShireC)	Outer Regional	485	2372
4	Umagico	**Umagico (S)**	Northern Peninsula Area (RegC)	Very Remote	492	229
5	Dajarra	**Cloncurry (S)**	Cloncurry (ShireC)	Remote	506	179
6	Cherbourg	**Cherbourg (S)**	Cherbourg Aboriginal (ShireC)	Inner Regional	506	1128
7	Injinoo	**Injinoo (S)**	Northern Peninsula Area (RegC)	Very Remote	507	416
8	Mission River	**Napranum (S)**	Napranum Aboriginal (ShireC)	Very Remote	511	831
9	Kowan-yama	**Kowanyama (S)**	Kowanyama Aboriginal (ShireC)	Very Remote	513	1019
10	Murray Islands	**Mer (IC)**	Torres Strait Island (RegC)	Very Remote	525	483
11	Boigu Island	**Boigu (IC)**	Torres Strait Island (RegC)	Very Remote	525	284
12	Wujal Wujal	**Wujal Wujal (S)**	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal (ShireC)	Remote	532	325
13	Aurukun	**Aurukun (S)**	Aurukun (ShireC)	Very Remote	538	1042
14	The Three Sisters	**Warraber (IC)**	Torres Strait Island (RegC)	Very Remote	543	246
15	Dauan Island	**Dauan (IC)**	Torres Strait Island (RegC)	Very Remote	545	152
16	Yam Island	**Iama (IC)**	Torres Strait Island (RegC)	Very Remote	547	312
17	Saibai Island	**Saibai (IC)**	Torres Strait Island (RegC)	Very Remote	549	337
18	Hope Vale	**Hope Vale (S)**	Hope Vale Aboriginal (ShireC)	Remote	554	765
19	Wellesley Islands	**Mornington (S)**	Mornington (ShireC)	Very Remote	559	990
20	Woorabinda	**Woorabinda (S)**	Woorabinda Aboriginal (ShireC)	Remote	564	851

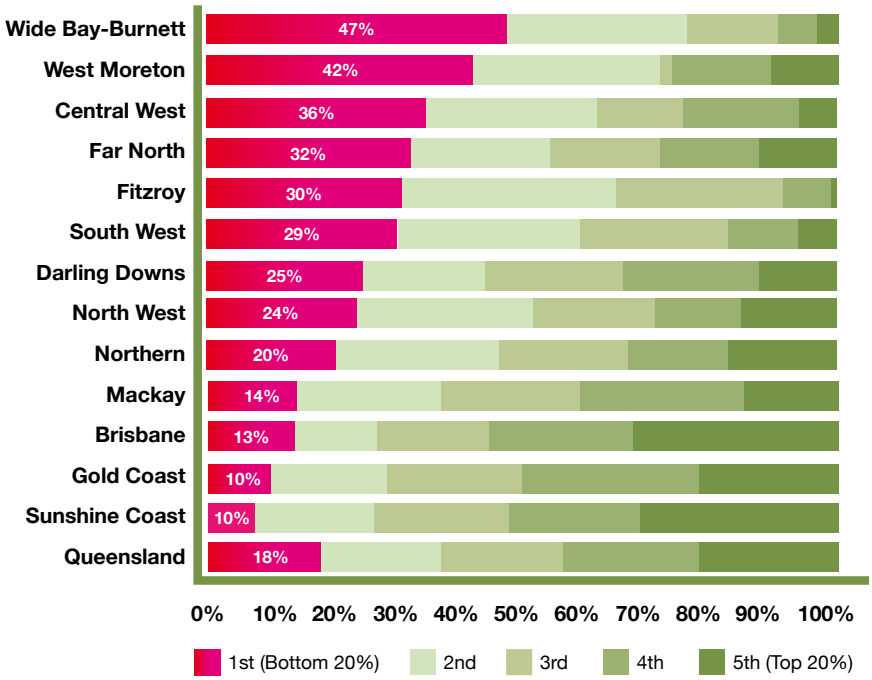
Figure 2 illustrates the proportion of the population in each Statistical Division who reside in the disadvantaged 20 per cent of areas (Quintile) compared with other Quintiles. These graphs highlight that some communities have very high population levels in Quintile 1 areas and very low population levels in Quintile 5 areas (the least disadvantaged areas) which can have implications for the resources and levels of resilience available to harness as part of the process of addressing disadvantage.

Figure 2. Proportion of CD population in Queensland SDs by Quintiles

(a) Proportion of CDs by SD and Quintiles



(b) Proportion of total population by SD and Quintiles



4 discussion of the results

- The report findings highlight the persistence of disadvantage in Queensland and that certain locations are more disadvantaged than others.
- The report shows that disadvantaged people live across all areas in the State which is why universally available services and supports are important regardless of where you live.
- Areas have been ranked at the larger area level to show an overall picture for Statistical Divisions as a starting point. However the report also shows that smaller pockets of disadvantage exist across all of the divisions which is very important to understand when you are working out a response.
- It is significant that this is a snapshot from 2006 which was before the Global Financial Crisis. Queensland had experienced a period of sustained economic growth until this point, however the benefits of that growth were not evenly distributed. The report shows that rates of unemployment increased in Queensland since the census which may be a result of the GFC. While income is only one variable contributing to disadvantage, it is a key factor affecting people's capacity to access services, and participate fully in all aspects of society. When unemployment increases, even more people are struggling.
- We can conclude from the data that some areas that appear less disadvantaged overall such as the Gold Coast and Brisbane, include a proportion of people who are struggling to afford their rental housing or to pay their mortgages which can contribute to the factors pushing people from some areas into other areas that are more relatively disadvantaged. A critical part of the solution needs to include a concerted effort to reduce these push factors so that the spatial divide in Queensland doesn't worsen.
- Where the overall proportion of disadvantaged residents is lower, such as in Brisbane, it is important to note that:
  - This can still represent a significant number of people experiencing disadvantage (in Brisbane 13% or 236 000 people live in Quintile 1 areas)
  - There may also be implications for certain individuals and groups experiencing minority status and marginalisation within a broader community when that broader community has the capacity and resources to participate in a range of social and economic opportunities. These processes of marginalisation within broader communities may have serious implications for social cohesion.
- The report shows that premature mortality rates are higher in the most disadvantaged 20% of areas (Quintile 1) areas than other areas highlighting the impacts of low income, poor education levels, exclusion from employment and poor access to services.
- More disadvantaged communities also recorded lower increases in median incomes compared to areas such as Brisbane. Although we also know that the costs of housing increased more in cities which can impact on the capacity of some households to remain in locations where there is better transport, more employment and better access to health and other services.
- UCQ is also concerned that some communities have a very high proportion of residents in the lowest 20% of areas which highlights that an area may have fewer overall resources to respond to local issues.

5 solutions

The report highlights initiatives that demonstrate the importance of the following key elements:

- Universal policies and programs focused on people and their needs are important because they are accessible to people regardless of where they live
- Harnessing existing resources and actively facilitating the integration and coordination of those resources in relation to households and places is important. This includes actively facilitating various inputs such as universal health services, income support, schools etc towards better 'place' level outcomes
- Generating new programs and resources with a focus on 'places' and which create the opportunity to undertake focused work in particular places that have been identified in the report
- Flexibility and innovation that allow for creativity and responsiveness at the community level
- Leadership and facilitation helping to drive solutions with a strong focus on good outcomes that can be measured
- Prevention and early intervention strategies have demonstrated considerable benefits compared to remediation activities and crisis driven responses
- The involvement of local communities and harnessing the strengths and assets of a place helps to generate important resources and build hope, participation and a vision for the future
- Community Economic Development can help to generate new resources and create opportunities for economic participation by more households
- Various roles are important including:
  - Facilitators who help with coordination and integration of all available resources in relation to a particular place
  - Service providers and community workers in direct contact with households and whose roles are relevant to the solutions
  - Managers and leaders can help to advocate solutions and drive changes that are needed within and across agencies and government departments.

6 recommendations

The report identifies a number of recommendations to address spatial disadvantage in Queensland including:

- That the Federal and State Governments in collaboration with non-government partners, adopt integrated strategies to reduce social exclusion
- That the Queensland State Government in partnership with the Commonwealth, Local Government and non-government partners, expand and/or replicate successful state level, place-based programs, such as Community Renewal
- Areas targeted for place-based responses to disadvantage should include urban communities with a high number of people in Quintile 1 SLAs as well as communities where the proportions of people in Quintiles 1 and 2 are very high compared to the overall population
- That the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments work in collaboration with non-government partners, to implement more flexible funding and service delivery arrangements
- That the Queensland Government continues to improve the integration of health, education and social and community services planning in relation to localities or regions
- That the Queensland Government in collaboration with the community services sector, with non-government partners, develops a web-based clearing house for sharing practice about strategies aimed at reducing disadvantage with a strong focus on success and measurable outcomes
- That the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments implement specific, targeted responses to Indigenous disadvantage in all urban, regional, and remote areas that show high Indigenous disadvantage. Governments should continue to ensure that such responses are grounded in partnerships with Indigenous people
- That UCQ work with government (all levels) and local communities to prioritise a small number of disadvantaged locations for new strategic and integrated interventions aimed at measurably reducing spatial disadvantage
- That UCQ develop a research consortium involving government agencies, non-government services and universities to undertake targeted small area level analysis of disadvantage
- That UCQ, the Queensland Government and academic partners convene a summit for researchers and practitioners to present and debate place-based responses to poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion
- That UCQ develops partnerships with community development finance institutions, government and the private sector to investigate the formation of a Community Development Corporation or a Community Economic Development Foundation
- That UCQ continues the development and implementation of an Indigenous Reconciliation Strategy
- That UCQ work with the Commonwealth and State Governments to pilot flexible multi-purpose services to respond to the needs of ageing and disabled people in rural and remote communities.

1 See chapter four of the report available at:
http://www.ucareqld.com.au/SocialJustice/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=133&Itemid=20
and also summary fact sheets at:
http://www.ucareqld.com.au/csj/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=134&Itemid=20

2 60 SLAs for each indicator available at:
http://www.ucareqld.com.au/SocialJustice/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=214

UnitingCare Queensland

Level 5
193 North Quay
Brisbane QLD 4000

GPO Box 45
Brisbane QLD 4001

www.ucareqld.com.au

UnitingCare Centre for Social Justice

t: 07 3025 2013
f: 07 3025 2099
uc.socialjustice@ucareqld.com.au
www.ucareqld.com.au/SocialJustice

The Centre for Social Justice commissioned Pam Bourke consulting to prepare the full report *A Scan of Disadvantage in Queensland 2010: from analysis to innovation in place-based practice*. It was researched and written by Fiona Caniglia, Pam Bourke and Angkana Praphakom Whiley

UnitingCare
Centre for Social Justice

Design: Liveworm Studio