



The Canadian Index of Wellbeing: *A New Approach to Measuring the Progress of Societies*

Presented by:
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Presented to:
IPAC, April 7, 2010





“What we measure affects what we do; and if our measurements are flawed, decisions may be distorted...what we measure shapes what we collectively strive to pursue – and what we pursue determines what we measure

*— Report by the Commission on the Measurement of
Economic Performance and Social Progress
Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, September 2009*



Measuring what Matters

- ✓ Indicators are powerful
- ✓ What we count and measure, influences how we make policy decisions

If we don't measure wellbeing, in all of its dimensions, it doesn't count...leaving Canadians to:

- ✓ Gauge wellbeing using a narrow set of economic indicators
- ✓ Misinterpret wellbeing or use surrogate measures
- ✓ Ignore policy options that will fundamentally improve wellbeing



"Say ... what's a mountain goat doing way up here in a cloud bank?"

What is the Canadian Index of Wellbeing?

A national index that will report on:


<u>Domain Name</u>	<u>Release date</u>
Healthy Populations	June '09
Living Standards	June '09
Community Vitality	June '09
Democratic Engagement	Jan '10
Time Use	June '10
Arts, Culture and Recreation	June '10
Education	Sept '10
Environment	Nov '10
<i>and</i> Composite Index	Nov '10

Why a New Measure of Wellbeing?

- ✓ **Promote** a shared vision of what really constitutes sustainable wellbeing and the elements that contribute to or detract from it;
- ✓ **Measure** national progress toward, or away from, achieving that vision;
- ✓ **Understand** and promote awareness of why society is moving in the direction it is moving;
- ✓ **Stimulate discussion** about the types of policies, programs, and activities that would move us closer and faster toward achieving wellbeing;
- ✓ **Give Canadians tools** to promote wellbeing with policy shapers and decision makers so as to account for why things are getting better or worse; and
- ✓ **Add momentum** to the global movement for a more holistic way of measuring societal progress.



Keys to Success – Leadership

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- ✓ R&D guided by team of national and internationally renowned experts
 - ✓ Independent, non-partisan Advisory Board
 - ✓ Advice and data sources from Statistics Canada
 - ✓ Civil society partnerships
 - ✓ International Advisory Network
 - ✓ International partners (e.g. OECD)
 - ✓ Funders' Alliance led by the Atkinson Charitable Foundation

Keys to Success – Leadership

CIW Advisory Board

Chair

- ✓ The Honourable Roy Romanow, P.C., O.C., Q.C.

Deputy Chair

- ✓ The Honourable Monique Bégin, P.C., FRSC, O.C.

Members

- ✓ Dr. Judith Bartlett
- ✓ Charles (Charlie) S. Coffey, O.C.
- ✓ Enrico Giovannini
- ✓ Allan Gregg
- ✓ Hugh Mackenzie
- ✓ Dr. Bob McMurtry
- ✓ Charles Ungerleider, Ph.D.
- ✓ Marilyn Waring, Ph.D.

International Advisory Group

- ✓ Jon Hall
- ✓ Hazel Henderson
- ✓ Thomas Homer-Dixon
- ✓ Dennis Trewin

Keys to Success – Technical Expertise

The following government agencies, non-governmental organizations and universities are working together to develop the Canadian Index of Wellbeing.

Canadian Research Advisory Group (CRAG)



BRITISH COLUMBIA
Faculty of Education,
University of British Columbia
<http://ecps.educ.ubc.ca>
Institute for Social Research
and Evaluation,
University of Northern
British Columbia
(Prince George)
<http://web.unbc.ca/isre>

ALBERTA
Anielski Management Inc.
(Edmonton)
www.anielski.com
Sustainable Calgary
www.sustainablecalgary.ca

SASKATCHEWAN
Community University Institute
for Social Research,
University of Saskatchewan
(Saskatoon)
www.usask.ca/cuisr
Prairie Wild Consulting Co.
together with Holden &
Associates
www.prairiewildconsulting.ca

MANITOBA
International Institute for
Sustainable Development
www.iisd.org

ONTARIO
Canadian Council
on Learning
www.ccl-cca.ca
Canadian Council
on Social Development
www.ccsd.ca
Centre for the Study
of Living Standards
www.csls.ca
Institute of Population
Health,
University of Ottawa
www.iph.uottawa.ca

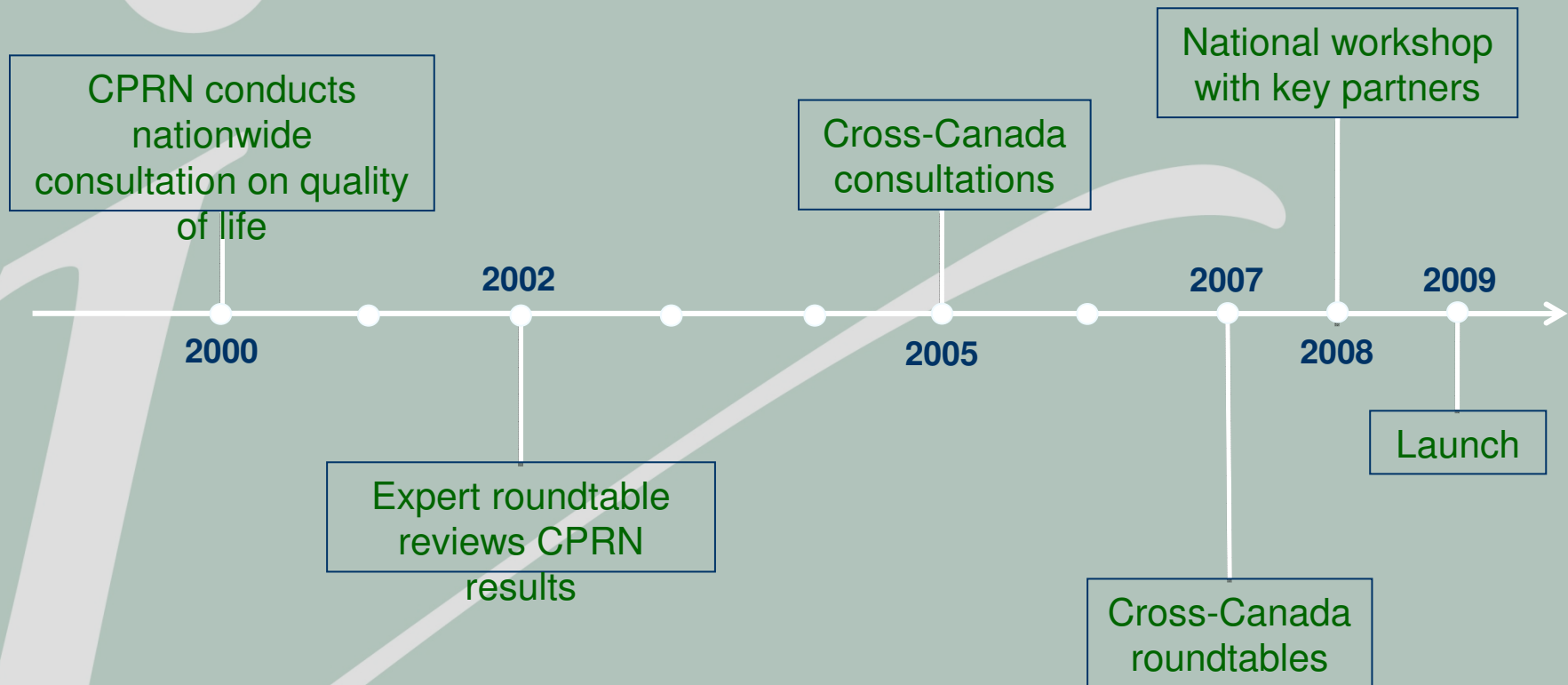
QUEBEC
Département d'études en loisir,
culture et tourisme,
Université du Québec
à Trois-Rivières
www.uqtr.ca
Faculté des sciences sociales,
Université Laval
www.soc.ulaval.ca

NEWFOUNDLAND
Memorial University
www.mun.ca
Newfoundland
Labrador
Community Accounts
www.communityaccounts.ca

NOVA SCOTIA
Genuine Progress Index
(GPI) Atlantic
www.gpiatlantic.org
Time Use Research Program,
Saint Mary's University
www.smu.ca/partners/turp

INSTITUTE OF WELLBEING
(housed at the Atkinson
Charitable Foundation)
www.ciw.ca
Lifestyle
Information Network
www.lin.ca
Statistics Canada
www.statcan.gc.ca
University of Toronto
www.phs.utoronto.ca
University of Waterloo
www.uwaterloo.ca

Keys to Success – Public Engagement



Keys to Success – Solid Evidence

Criteria for Indicator Selection

1. Relevant to Canadians
2. Easy to understand
3. Reliable and valid
4. Politically unbiased
5. Timely, easy to obtain and periodically update
6. Comparable across jurisdictions and groups
7. Objective or subjective
8. Positive or negative
9. A constituent or determinant of wellbeing, or both
10. Attributable to individuals or groups
11. Obtained through an open, transparent and democratic consultative review process
12. Going to contribute to a coherent, comprehensive view of the wellbeing of Canadians

Keys to Success – Solid Evidence

Research & Validation Process

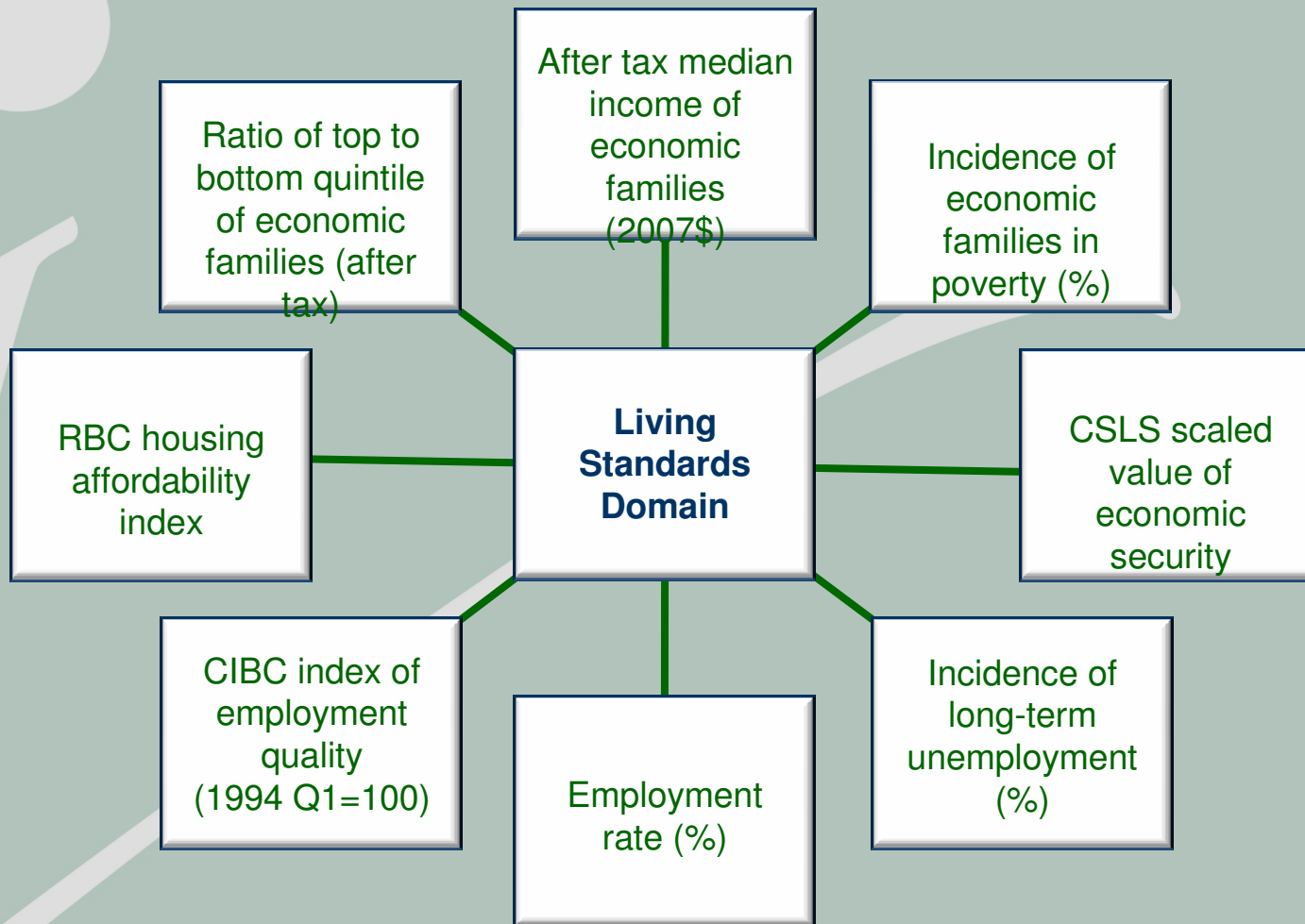
1. Expert literature reviews and/or environmental scans
2. Draft domain reports prepared
3. Project management team reviews
4. Domain reports revised
5. CRAG assessments
6. Draft final reports
7. Roundtable reviews
8. External reviews
9. Continuous validation

Keys to Success – Communication

The First Four Domain Reports


- ✓ **Living Standards**
Andrew Sharpe and Jean-François Arsenault, Centre for the Study of Living Standards, Ottawa
- ✓ **Healthy Populations**
Nazeem Muhajarine, University of Saskatchewan and Ronald Labonté, University of Ottawa
- ✓ **Community Vitality**
Katherine Scott, Canadian Council on Social Development, Ottawa
- ✓ **Democratic Engagement**
Lenore Swystun and Kelley Moore, Prairie Wild Consulting Co. *together with* Bill Holden and Heather Bernardin, HOLDEN & Associates, Saskatoon

Living Standards Headline Indicators

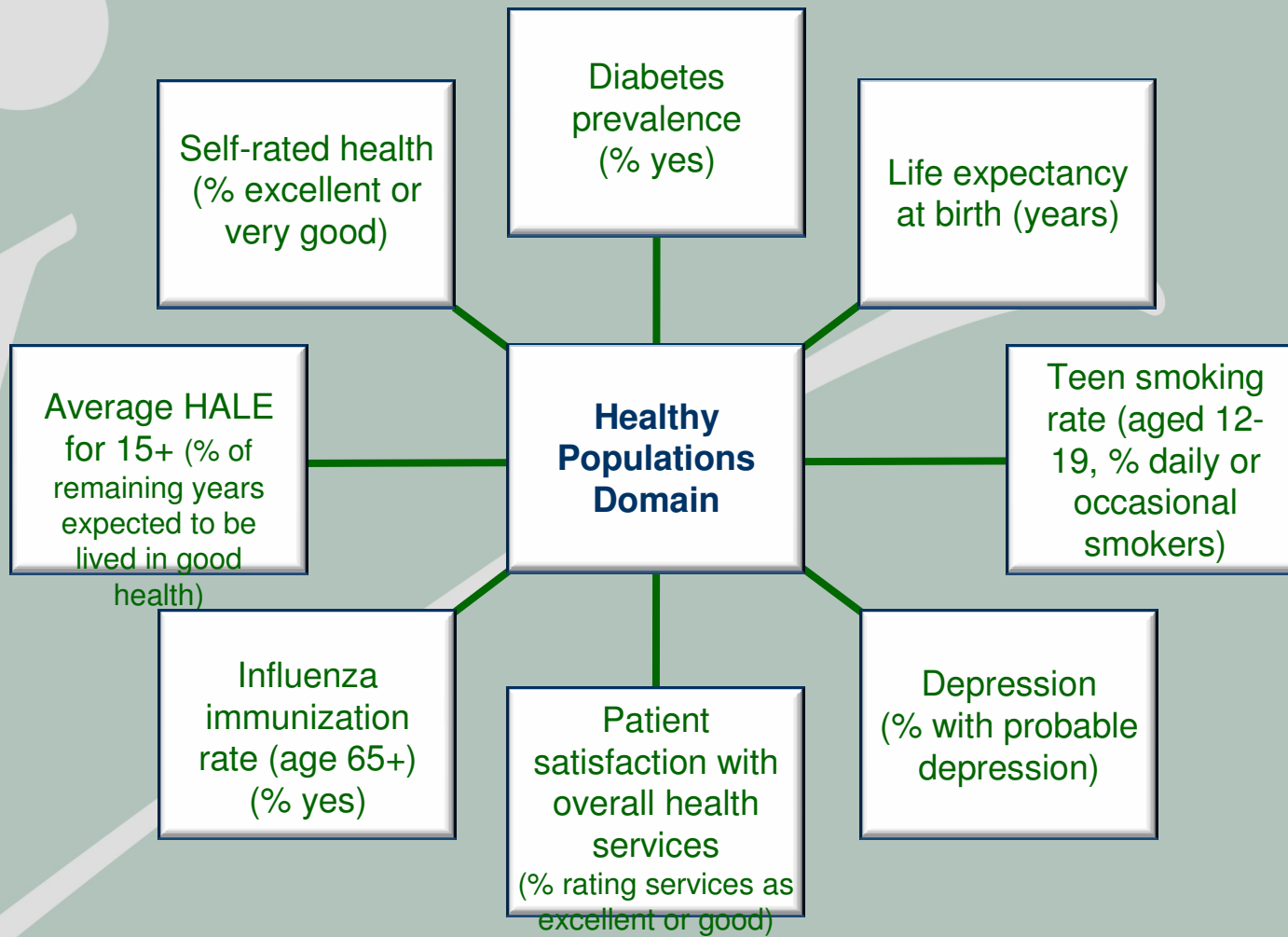




Report Highlights – Living Standards

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- ✓ The fight against poverty has stalled since 1981; some poverty reductions were not nearly as large as the increase in wealth inequality
 - ✓ Between 1981-2008, the incidence of long-term unemployment is higher now than in 1981
 - ✓ Since 1981, many dimensions of living standards in Canada have not improved, despite a 53.0% surge in GDP per capita

Healthy Populations Headline Indicators



Report Highlights – Healthy Populations

- ✓ Canadians are living longer but not better
- ✓ For more than a decade, merely 65% of Canadians have declared their overall health very good or excellent. Self-rated health is considerably lower than it was 10 years previously.
- ✓ This decline is most marked among Canadian teenagers - a drop of 11.9%.

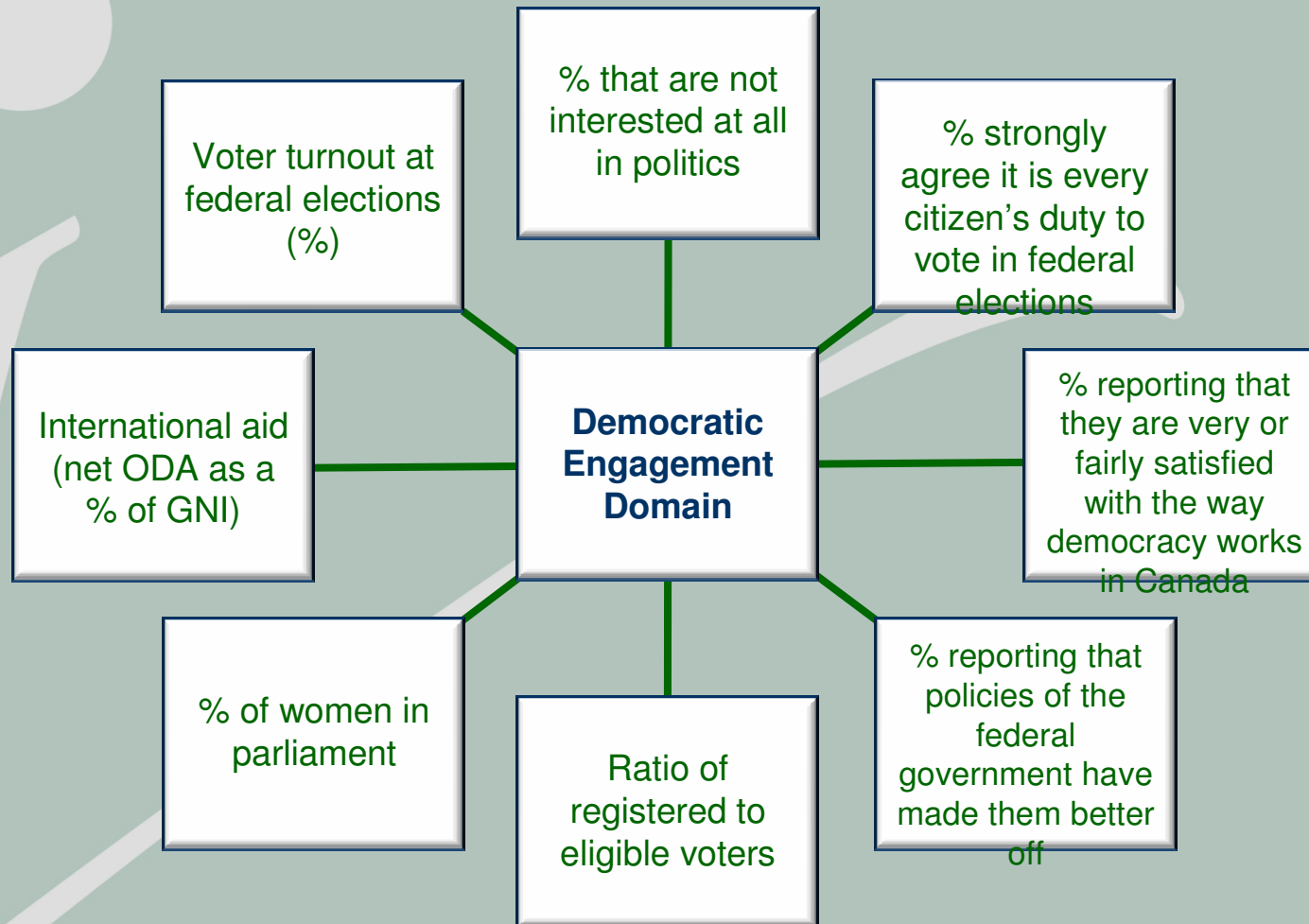
Community Vitality Headline Indicators



Report Highlights – Community Vitality

- ✓ Canadians have strong social relationships with their families and communities.
- ✓ A growing number of Canadians report that they provide help to others (83% of Canadians in 2004).
- ✓ In 2004, 4.1% of Canadians reported experiencing discrimination because of their ethnicity, race, culture, skin colour, religion or language, a decline from 7.1% in 2002; significantly higher for visible minorities.

Democratic Engagement Headline Indicators

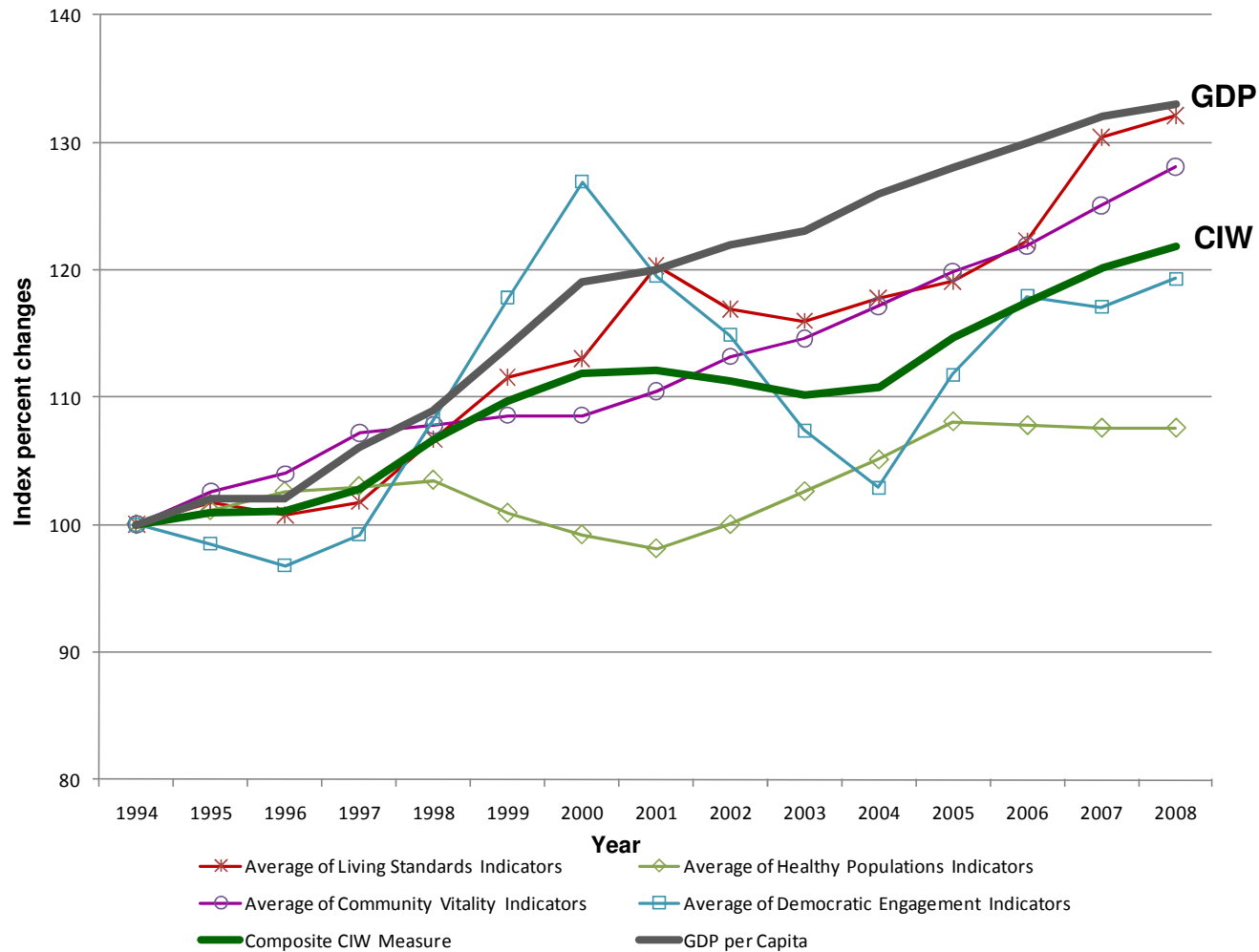


Report Highlights – Democratic Engagement

- ✓ Canadians aren't satisfied with their democracy. Between 40-45% said they were not satisfied with how democracy works in Canada. (2004 and 2006 surveys).
- ✓ An overwhelming majority of people say that federal government policies have not made their lives better. Only 12% said their lives had been improved by federal policies when last surveyed in 2006.
- ✓ Women and minorities are underrepresented in the political process. Since 1997, the percentage of women in Parliament has remained relatively steady – and low – at about 20%.

Data Trends

An illustration of CIW trends of four domains (Living Standards, Healthy Populations, Community Vitality, and Democratic Engagement) and CIW average compared with the GDP, 1994-2008



Notes

- Once the numbers in each domain are all converted into a common denominator, a single number (average) can be plotted
- Not necessarily comparing one number against another, but comparing one trend against another
- The CIW average has increased at a much slower pace than the GDP per capita over the same period

Recommendations for Policy Development

- ✓ Government and civil society partnerships focused on systems change
- ✓ Inter-sectoral collaboration with all aspects of wellbeing used as a lens
- ✓ Data collection by government agencies advanced by strategic partnerships with those who use the data and can inform its development over time
- ✓ Income insecurity and poor health outcomes and inequities lie in addressing issues of poverty and the exclusion of some of our community members
- ✓ Establish an integrated government-community, multi-level, health and social development framework for collecting, tracking, organizing, analyzing and disseminating data (e.g., National Social Data Strategy)



For more information:

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