

Leveraging on population mobility to generate local solutions to community needs and issues.

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Overview of today's presentation (1)

- **Describe the case study communities.**
- **Briefly outline the demographic changes reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for each community.**
- **Discuss some of the drivers of population changes and their impact on essential functions and services delivery to certain groups.**

Overview of today's presentation (2)

- **Consultation methodology.**
- **Issues for resourcing of the volunteer-based delivery of essential services within each community.**
- **Recommendations for improvements and examples of innovation.**
- **Questions.**

Case study communities (1)

- **Focus is on three case study rural communities in Western Australia.**
- **Communities are located in the Great Southern and in the Central Wheatbelt.**
- **Wagin, Mount Barker and Wongan Hills.**

Case study communities (2)

- **Case study communities – traditionally have been centred upon agriculture.**
- **This reliance has influenced the demographic mix in each community.**
- **Coinciding with ABS data collected over the period 2001 to 2008 are key economic and social developments affecting the populations in these communities.**

Case study communities (3)

- **The effects of social and economic developments on populations of case study communities discussed in terms of:**
 - ❖ **ABS 2006 Census data showing population numbers within age range categories.**
 - ❖ **ABS total population comparisons (i.e. + or – %) between 2007 and 2008.**

Methodology

- **Focus groups conducted in 2005 and 2006 participants asked to define ‘essential functions and services’.**
- **Focus group participants expressed views about the local level actions needed to ensure that policy makers and services providers understand these local issues and needs.**

Methodology (cont).

- **Using ABS data from the Censuses in 2001 and 2006, and more recently this research:**
 - **looked at changes in population numbers and in the demographic mix of these communities**
 - **identified the impact on essential functions and services delivery.**
 - **identified outcomes with a view to proposing innovative solutions centred upon population mobility.**

Case study No.1: Wagin - Statistics

- **ABS (ERP) data – population decline in the Wagin (SLA) of -2.8% (2007-2008).**
- **ABS 2006 Census – population of Wagin (Urban Centre/Locality) of 1,427 people.**
 - **508 residents or 35.6% in the 25-54 years age range.**
 - **427 residents or 29.9% comprised the 0-24 years cohort.**
 - **497 residents or 34.8% in the 55 years and over category (includes 65 years and over).**

Case study No.1: Wagin - Issues

- **Anecdotal –mature aged and elderly persons residing in Wagin has contributed to population ageing.**
- **Along with population decline, these issues put pressure on community-based organizations delivering health care services.**
- **These organizations rely heavily upon volunteers and there are limited resources.**
- **Local government been called upon to play a crucial role – community sustainability.**

Case study No.1: Wagin - Proposals

- **Local government could:**
 - **consult with community-based organizations to develop a skills survey of residents.**
 - **survey residents to gauge willingness to participate in volunteering activities; and to identify training needs.**
 - **establish relationships with head office level policy-makers of the community-based organizations and peak body organizations.**
 - **liaise with community-based organizations to mobilize existing and new residents within the 25-54 years and 55-64 years age ranges.**

Case study No.2: Mount Barker - Statistics

- **ABS (ERP) data – population increase in the Plantagenet (SLA) of 2.7% (2007-2008).**
- **ABS 2006 Census – population of Mount Barker (Urban Centre/Locality) of 1,761 people.**
 - **644 residents or 36.6% in the 25-54 years age range.**
 - **589 residents or 33.5% in the 0-24 years age range.**
 - **529 residents or 30.0% in the in the 55 years and over category (includes 65 years and over).**

Case study No.2: Mount Barker - Issues

- **Residents are opting in greater numbers to remain in Mount Barker post-retirement age.**
- **New residents within this older age group may have been enticed to Mount Barker as part of the ‘tree change’ phenomenon.**
- **These potential residents might look to aligning lifestyle aspirations with environmental goals.**
- **NRM and Landcare programs have allowed some rural communities to engage a wide range of stakeholders and to embrace broader community environmental initiatives**

Case study No.2: Mount Barker - Proposals

- **Local government could:**
 - **explain to the wider Mount Barker community, the purpose and scope of the contemporary Landcare program.**
 - **leverage on this enhanced understanding of Landcare to recruit new residents as volunteers.**
 - **consult with the Landcare group and the wider Mount Barker community to identify the priority environmental activities.**

Case study No.2: Mount Barker – Proposals (cont):

- **Local government could:**
 - **Prepare applications for Commonwealth and State government funding grants on behalf of the Landcare group.**
 - **Providing administrative resources to facilitate the Landcare group's adherence to legislation and its fulfilment of grant funding conditions.**

Case study No.3: Wongan Hills - Statistics

- **ABS (ERP) data – population decrease in the Wongan Ballidu (SLA) of -0.1% (2007-2008).**
- **ABS 2006 Census – population of Wongan Hills (Urban Centre/Locality) of 745 people.**
 - **335 residents or 45.0% in the 25-54 years age range.**
 - **263 residents or 35.3% in the 0-24 years age range.**
 - **149 residents or 20.0% in the in the 55 years and over category (includes 65 years and over).**

Case study No.3: Wongan Hills - Issues

- **Essential functions and services delivery issues linked to community's sustainability strategy centred upon 'bush change'.**
- **Enticing new populations to Wongan Hills difficult without an adequate standard of community infrastructure and basic services.**
- **Contemporary governance environment, vertical relationships - devolving responsibility and resources to local actors (community-driven development). Wongan Hills applied this in creating housing stocks.**

Case study No.3: Wongan Hills - Proposals

- **Local government could engage with commonwealth and state government entities to continue the use of the community-based development group model across a broad range of infrastructure projects and essential services, as the need arises.**

Conclusion

- **Population mobility – influences community factors - community sustainability.**
- **Commonwealth and state government policies – impact on essential functions and services delivery and on rural populations.**
- **Rural communities seek innovative strategies aimed at leveraging population mobility.**
- **Devolution of roles and responsibilities from the commonwealth and state governments to local government.**
- **Rural local governments – key to the strategy.**

Questions?
