

How the Core Set of Indicators for the Waikato Regional Community Outcomes was Developed

Introduction

The monitoring and reporting community outcomes (MARCO) team developed an initial list of over 200 proposed indicators or measures to track progress towards achieving the regional community outcomes (refer to document '[Original List of Proposed Indicators](#)')¹. A smaller number of key measures are desirable for effective reporting on progress to the community. A core set of 72 indicators was therefore developed (refer to document '[Core Set of Indicators](#)').

Generally, indicators comprise two types: output and outcome indicators. Output measures relate to actions and activities to be undertaken such as reports produced, budgets met, number of meetings held, or actions completed in time. Outcomes indicators relate to the actual results achieved as a consequence of these actions and activities, for example clean air, good water quality, healthy people, or reduced unemployment. The core set of indicators are all outcome indicators.

How were the proposed indicators prioritised?

The initial list of about 200 proposed indicators was prioritised and ranked based on:

1. Regional relevance (Community Outcomes Working Group workshop, 15 November 2005).
2. Local relevance (survey of Hamilton City Council and all 11 district councils in the Waikato).
3. Technical evaluation (measurability, cost effectiveness, understandability; by MARCO team).

A separate scoring was obtained for each of the three assessments. Scoring is from 5 (highest/most relevant) to 1 (lowest/least relevant). A total scoring for each indicator was obtained by adding the three scores, giving a maximum overall score of 15, and a minimum score of 3 (actual scoring values ranged from 13 to 5.5).

The technical evaluation used the following criteria to assess the proposed indicators:

i) Measurability

- *Can the indicator be quantified and measured?*
- *Is it repeatable and when measured over time reflecting a trend?*
- *Is the indicator sufficiently sensitive or responsive to be able to show changes and trends?*

ii) Cost effectiveness

- *Is the indicator simple to monitor, i.e. can the data for the indicator easily be measured (eg. requires only a limited number of parameters to be measured)?*
- *Can the data be obtained at a realistic and reasonable cost, both in terms of financial cost and time or other constraints?*
- *Can the data be used for a variety of purposes or in a variety of reports?*

iii) Understandability

- *Can the indicator be presented in an easily understandable way and is it meaningful (i.e. intuitively reasonable and clear what it's measuring)?*
- *Is it simple to interpret and clear which direction is good or bad?*
- *Is it interesting, exiting and does it resonate with the public?*
- *Does it provide enough information to give an adequate picture but not too much information to be incomprehensible?*

¹ This does not yet include indicators currently being developed by the Iwi in the region (coordinated by Kowhai Consulting). It does also not include Output Performance Measures (related to actions, activities), such as reports produced, budgets met, number of meetings held, actions completed in time etc.

Furthermore, to assist the selection of a core set of indicators information was also collated on:

- Data availability - Do we have existing data?
- Disaggregation – Are the data available at the regional level only, or also per district, city?
- Comparability – Can the data be standardised across all cities and districts (at least in the Waikato)? Can the indicator be accurately compared with the same or similar indicators from relevant other regional and national monitoring projects?

How the Final Core Set of Indicators was Selected

1. The proposed indicators were grouped into the 38 outcomes and listed in order of their overall score from the combined assessment of regional relevance, local relevance and technical evaluation.
2. The top 50 scoring indicators were all included in the proposed core set.
3. For outcomes that had no indicators ranked in the top 50, the highest scoring indicator for that outcome or, if more suitable, other indicators were added. For any added indicators some comment outlining the reason(s) for their inclusion was provided.
4. This resulted in a final list of 72 core indicators to track progress and report towards achieving the regional community outcomes (refer to document 'Core Set of Indicators').