

Final Report

Developing paradigms and discourses to establish more appropriate evaluation frameworks and indicators for housing programs

authored by

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for the

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POSTSCRIPT

As an Indigenous woman I would like to acknowledge the contribution made to this project by the two non-Indigenous researchers Roz Walker and John Ballard for creating the space for an Indigenous perspective. This has allowed an Indigenous co-author to assume a central position in knowledge generation and shared interpretation of the contents and process of this research paper. I welcome the opportunity of these two knowledges coming together. It is also important for me to acknowledge the contribution made to this project by other Indigenous stakeholders whose knowledge and experience has been invaluable in developing the process to this point. – *Cheryle Taylor*

AHURI FINAL REPORT SERIES

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Abbreviations

AAD	Aboriginal Affairs Department
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACMDP	Aboriginal Community Management and Development Program
ACSIP	Aboriginal Communities Strategic Investment Program
AES	Australasian Evaluation Society
AHURI	Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute
AIHWS	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Services
ANU	The Australian National University
ATR	Aboriginal Terms of Reference
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
AVCC	Australian Vice Chancellors Council
CAMS	Contract and Management Services
CAS	Centre for Aboriginal Studies
CAEPR	Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research
CDEP	Community Development Employment Program
CHINS	Community Housing Indigenous Needs Survey
CIRC	Curtin Indigenous Research Centre
CoAA	Coalition of Aboriginal Agencies
CRG	Critical Reference Group
CSHA	Commonwealth State Housing Agreement
CSWGIH	Commonwealth State Working Group on Indigenous Housing
DEETYA	Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs
DHW	Department of Housing and Works (formally Ministry of Housing & Contract and Management Services)
DoIT	Department of Industry and Technology
FACS	Family and Children's Services
F&Cs	Family and Community Services
HREOC	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
IFP	Indigenous Families Program
NBEET	National Board of Employment, Education and Training
NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NHS	National Health Survey
NSW	New South Wales
POE	Post Occupancy Evaluation
RAESP	Remote Areas Essential Services Program
RAIA	Royal Australian Institute of Architects
RCIADIC	Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody
SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
TAP	Transitional Accommodation Program
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
VSBI	Victorian Social Benchmarks and Indicators
WA	Western Australia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This Final Report presents the key findings and research outcomes of an investigation of the adequacy and appropriateness of existing evaluation methods and indicators used by government and community organisations in assessing Indigenous housing programs and interventions. Irrespective of purpose, all evaluations of programs and interventions have the potential to effect policy management decisions about the allocation of resources and funding. The literature confirms the need for innovative evaluation approaches and measures for housing assistance programs and broader interventions to achieve sustainable development and community wellbeing, especially in Indigenous housing where existing evaluation approaches and indicators do not adequately address Indigenous housing needs and aspirations.

The research discusses refinements and additions to the conceptual framework developed in the Positioning Paper based on stakeholder feedback, and a further literature review and the trial application of the operational framework also outlined in the Positioning Paper to specific programs and projects in various contexts. Further research and applications of the proposed frameworks is needed to adequately gauge its usefulness and appropriateness in supplementing or addressing shortcomings in existing evaluation approaches.

The Final Report reasserts the high level Indigenous disadvantage in comparison to the broader population. It suggests that many of the housing issues experienced by Indigenous people are the result of historical and contemporary political, social and economic factors. These factors need to inform any evaluation framework. Housing remains a high priority for Indigenous Australians requiring innovative Indigenous solutions to address existing issues and problems, highlighting the importance of identifying existing strengths amongst Indigenous groups, organisations and communities when carrying out research.

The pervasiveness of the current situation, together with arguments put forward by many Indigenous stakeholders, and confirmed in official government reports, has led us to propose that evaluation and research needs to be understood and enacted within a framework of human rights. It requires recognition by state, territory and federal governments of Indigenous peoples right to be self-determining in all areas affecting Indigenous well being in accordance with Article 1 of the *International Human Rights Covenant* and Article 23 of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* which asserts the right to housing as fundamental to Indigenous self-determination. A persistent theme among Indigenous stakeholders is that Indigenous housing is inextricably linked and fundamental to the achievement of the rights, principles and goals of self-determination. This requires a genuine commitment by governments to enhance the capacity of Indigenous communities to have access to opportunities to achieve their goals and aspirations and to share the same benefits as the rest of society. Although this idea was presented in the Positioning Paper <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/summary/project37.html> the complexities of implementation are explored further in this paper.

We began this research with the specific aim of identifying appropriate qualitative and quantitative evaluation and research methodologies to provide a comprehensive assessment of housing programs and interventions in Indigenous contexts. Initially we imagined compiling comparative lists of evaluation approaches, their main purpose, and the methods to obtain, analyse and compile and disseminate findings. However in the process of writing the positioning paper and undertaking further research it has become clear that project required something much more than that.

Our research draws on the work of Australian and New Zealand Indigenous academics and researchers whose writings encompass issues, principles and processes regarding ethically sound research and provides the basis for deriving a set of principles relevant to the conduct of evaluation in Indigenous contexts.. This is complemented in a range of national reports

and international covenants that support the position that research in Indigenous contexts should enhance Indigenous self-determination, empowerment and social transformation.

In addition, the literature highlights the need for both qualitative and quantitative evaluation and research approaches that can more effectively assess Indigenous identified issues, priorities, positives outcomes, and contribute to theoretical understandings about the various factors influencing community transformation and sustainability. A recurrent theme in the literature is that evaluation is an inherently value based and political activity. This means that the potential for all stakeholders to benefit from evaluation findings is largely dependent on existing power relations, access to resources and/or the interpretations, benevolence and good intent of those conducting or requesting the evaluations. Many Indigenous writers have emphasised the importance for Indigenous people to have control over the research agenda and to have Indigenous values taken into account in evaluations of policies and programs which impact upon Indigenous people. The need for this is also reiterated by the Commonwealth State Working Group on Indigenous Housing (CSWGIH)¹.

By employing qualitative and Indigenist research methodologies (that is research developed by, with and for Indigenous people) the evaluation approach involves an Indigenous theory building process. As such we have presented an evaluation paradigm, underpinned by a human rights discourse, provides a crucial resource/mechanism for Indigenous organisations/programs to negotiate on their own terms with government and funding bodies; to hold these bodies accountable to the principles of Indigenous self-determination, and to educate and decolonise governments to rethink the meaning of concepts such as equality and partnership. While the conceptual framework and associated principles framework transcend 'evaluation approaches' our argument suggests they need to underpin and thus inform Indigenous related research and/or evaluation.

Key findings

The key findings confirm there is a crucial need for a comprehensive conceptual and analytical evaluation framework encompassing housing and other social variables which:

- takes account of the historical and geographic context, cultural diversity and demographic trends in assessing how social, political, economic changes are likely to impact upon Indigenous communities in different urban, rural and remote contexts;
- provides a greater understanding of how system wide variables influence Indigenous participation in home ownership and rental markets and the imperative to maintain a distinctive Indigenous housing sector;
- further illuminates the interrelationship between shelter and non-shelter variables and their influence upon individual, family and community wellbeing in different geographic contexts;
- supports and supplements qualitative and quantitative risk assessment models related to current and future housing tenure policies and practices and their potential impacts, positive and negative, upon Indigenous peoples wellbeing.

Indigenous peoples' fundamental social, cultural and economic rights reinforce and substantiate the importance of developing an operational framework which encompasses Indigenous principles and *process* indicators essential for the conduct of evaluation in Indigenous contexts. The research findings confirm that such a framework needs to:

- provide greater understanding of existing program linkages between housing and other social programs designed to strengthen Indigenous families and communities and the extent to which existing structural and procedural mechanisms support or hinder such goals;
- more effectively measure the extent to which different types of housing assistance programs and interventions meet the diverse needs, aspirations and interests of Indigenous people;

¹ The Commonwealth-State Working Group on Indigenous Housing was a sub committee of the Housing Ministers' Council until mid-2001.

- assess the extent to which key principles and processes to enhance Indigenous self-determination such as equal partnership, dual accountability and negotiation are enacted in housing programs and interventions;
- assess how housing support programs in urban, rural and remote areas contribute to a range of social outcomes;
- serve as a set of criteria by which to assess/critique the appropriateness and usefulness of existing shelter and non-shelter indicators in measuring the effectiveness or success of housing programs and interventions in Indigenous contexts; and
- provide an inventory of different context-specific best practice examples to enhance program delivery in similar settings to more accurately inform policy decisions and resource allocations.

Project Outcomes

The argument presented in the Positioning Paper has already had an impact on policy at both national and institutional levels. AHURI has embraced the broad principles and developed a set of Ethical Principles and Guidelines for Indigenous Research which is available at www.ahuri.edu.au/research/agenda/ethical.pdf. These guidelines are now required for all research related to Indigenous housing conducted under the auspices of Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI). Moreover, because AHURI has now undertaken to ensure that all housing research is inclusive of Indigenous issues, unless it can be justified otherwise, these research principles and guidelines will be required in most research undertaken by researchers in the seven AHURI research centres throughout Australia. This is a considerable achievement as it not only gives Indigenous people greater control over the research agenda in Indigenous housing but also ensures greater Indigenous involvement in broader social research agendas that impact upon their daily lives.

Other key outcomes include the development of both a conceptual and analytical framework and an operational framework specifying principles and methodologies for conducting appropriate evaluations in Indigenous housing. The research also encompasses a qualitative methods and social indicators framework which will supplement AHURI research on quantitative and modelling approaches designed to measure and evaluate program effectiveness in achieving social outcomes. This will help to enrich and inform quantitative data analysis in reaching conclusions about programs.

The framework provides a preliminary set of indicators which can be used as a basis for evaluating housing outcomes and family and community wellbeing. Assessments of housing support programs designed to help evicted families highlight current deficiencies in the system related to overcrowding, homelessness and some of the interventions that are effective in overcoming them.

The research findings substantiate the link between housing variables and Indigenous health, education and social and economic wellbeing. They also support the need to establish more appropriate and meaningful indicators to plan interventions and measure outcomes. Existing indicators in these areas, derived on the basis of government policy paradigms and practices, have not only failed to achieve positive outcomes for Indigenous people, but when interpreted in isolation, often obfuscate the interrelationships, underlying causes or consequences and possible solutions. Similarly, quantitative analysis undertaken without reference to qualitative research can under-represent the links between health and housing or attribute any relationship to characteristics of the group(s) involved. This latter aspect has the potential to foster 'a blame the victim' mentality and impact negatively upon resource allocations and funding and policy decisions. It is important that Indigenous housing problems arising from deficiencies within the system to cater for the diversity of Indigenous needs, issues and aspirations are identified and properly understood to avoid their being misconstrued and/or inappropriately addressed.

In summary, this research presents a case for the establishment of more appropriate evaluation approaches, research principles and indicators in Indigenous housing contexts which recognize and promote:

- Indigenous self-determination;
- Social sustainability; and
- Social transformation.

We propose that Indigenous research principles and indicators need to be framed within a context of human rights and cultural democracy. Such a position challenges housing funding bodies to establish housing evaluation policies, processes and practices aimed towards Indigenous self-determination, social transformation and cultural integrity.

Importantly, final reflections on discussions with stakeholders and a further review of the literature highlight a number of key issues for coordination in future policy developments. Indigenous people continue to experience institutional racism (implicit or explicit, indirect or direct, unconscious or conscious) through the language, practices and processes of social policies and programs which impact upon every aspect of their lives. The establishment of processes to identify and eradicate institutional racism from the social policy arena is an area which requires serious and urgent action by policymakers and funding bodies.

On a more positive note there is increasing recognition of the need for whole of government approaches, the development of program linkages and partnerships between government service providers and Indigenous organisations and peak bodies in the delivery of Indigenous housing programs. However, the insights gained throughout the research confirm that both planning and evaluation frameworks are still primarily focused on assessing the efficient delivery of specific programs and the accountability of Indigenous program providers in doing so. While these are important components of evaluation there is a need for a substantial reframing of evaluation approaches to encompass these other policy parameters to gauge how well governments are successfully working towards Indigenous self-determination by maintaining partnerships, engaging in dual accountability and implementing effective program linkages.

1 INTRODUCTION: RESEARCH AIMS AND CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

This paper reports the research by the Australian Housing and Research Institute (AHURI): Western Australia Research Centre which investigates appropriate evaluation principles and indicators for Indigenous housing contexts.

Governments, Indigenous peak bodies and community organisations acknowledge the need to develop more integrated strategies and whole of government programs to address economic, health, social, cultural and housing issues in ways that strengthen community and build social capital within the broader society. This research responds to the need to evaluate the effectiveness of housing assistance programs and strategic interventions in achieving specific social outcomes and which enhance the capacity of Indigenous communities to access wider mainstream opportunities.

This research project was undertaken to investigate appropriate evaluation methods and indicators for Indigenous housing contexts. This has led to the development of a conceptual and analytical framework and a set of Indigenous principles and processes to support more relevant, meaningful and comprehensive and culturally appropriate research and evaluation in Indigenous contexts. It has also led to the compilation of a range of indicators which may assist in the assessment of both local and programmatic evaluation and research with broader application than Indigenous housing.

As part of this research we have written a Positioning Paper '*Investigating appropriate evaluation methods and indicators for Indigenous housing programs*', <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/summary/project37.html>; a progress report, a conference presentation, *Developing principles and indicators for evaluating housing in Indigenous housing contexts*. <http://www.housing.qld.gov.au/nhc2001/papers.htm#theme6> and a Research and Policy Bulletin. In the Positioning Paper we developed a research principles framework to facilitate culturally appropriate and transformative evaluations in Indigenous housing, as well as establish social indicators that take account of Indigenous rights, interests and agendas. This Final Report refines these elements.

1.2 Project Aims and Scope

This project aims were to address the following questions specific to housing evaluation and research Indigenous contexts:

- What qualitative and quantitative methodologies are required to provide a comprehensive assessment of housing programs and interventions?
- What qualitative and quantitative indicators are most useful and effective in measuring the impact of housing on non-shelter outcomes?

This research was undertaken with the support and in consultation with Indigenous community stakeholders in Western Australia, and the literature review draws on Australian and New Zealand housing experiences.

1.3 The Research Context

The 1996 census data confirmed that Indigenous people are still significantly disadvantaged in the area of housing with issues such as homeless, sub-standard housing, affordability high on the agenda (ABS 1996). In 2000 the Commonwealth State Working Group on Indigenous Housing (CSWGIH) identified a number of areas priority areas of research in Indigenous housing. High among these priorities was the need to determine Indigenous housing futures in light of changing Indigenous demographic profile and ways to improve housing for Indigenous people in urban, rural and remotes areas with regard to broader policy changes and existing structural and system-wide barriers. The *Commonwealth State Working Group Priorities and 10 Year Plan* (Ackfun, 2001) acknowledged the need for more appropriate evaluation approaches, measures and protocols to assist in achieving these priorities in order to monitor the implementation of new policy directions and to make appropriate decisions with regard to program delivery and funding allocations.

What also became evident in the second phase of our research, and which AHURI provide an excellent example of, is the need to prioritise Indigenous research. The contemporary socioeconomic situation of Indigenous people together with their particular needs justifies the argument for prioritising Indigenous research. Te Puni Kokiri (1999:2) puts forward a similar case with respect to research with Maori.

The argument presented in this Final Report reasserts that Indigenous research principles and indicators need to be framed within a context of human rights and cultural democracy. Such a position challenges housing funding bodies to establish housing evaluation policies, processes and practices aimed towards Indigenous self-determination, social transformation and cultural integrity.

1.4 The Positioning Paper

The Positioning Paper for this AHURI research project, *Investigating Appropriate Evaluation Methods and Indicators for Indigenous Housing Programs* (Walker, Ballard & Taylor, 2001) provides an overview of the contemporary social situation of Indigenous Australians. It highlights the levels of disadvantage and social exclusion experienced by a significant percentage of Indigenous population and the need to address both the physical housing needs as well as to examine and reframe the paradigm and discourse influencing Indigenous housing policies, programs and processes. In particular, it discusses these issues in relation to the need for the more appropriate evaluation approaches and measures in Indigenous housing.

The Positioning Paper outlines a conceptual framework of analysis (Appendix 1) and an evaluation framework (Appendix 2). The first framework of analysis encompasses both the contextual scope/breadth in which data needs to be collected and taken into account and the interrelationship between the various housing factors and a range of social outcomes. It suggests that contemporary housing policies, programs and interventions and their interrelationship with other social wellbeing outcomes, including building stronger communities need to be evaluated within a broader social, political and historical context than is usually recognised. The second framework, outlining principles for research and evaluation, was developed to operationalise both program level and wider social goals underpinned by Indigenous research principles, values and rights. It helps to inform how the evaluation ought to proceed as well as identify the types of measures needed.

The Positioning Paper contains a discussion of social indicators employed to measure the effectiveness of housing programs and interventions as they relate to broader social wellbeing outcomes for individuals, families and communities. It discusses existing qualitative and quantitative social indicators which are used to define Indigenous housing needs and socio-

economic situation in Australia. This section includes an analysis of the adequacy of information regarding Indigenous disadvantage for informing housing policy and the links between associated variables.

The social, historical and contemporary context of Indigenous Housing

The Positioning Paper reviewed and developed evaluation approaches with regard to social, historical and contemporary circumstances of Indigenous Australians including the broader state and national policy context of Indigenous housing. We stated that 'Contemporary housing programs and priorities for Indigenous people need to be understood within a historical context that involves the dispossession of land and the forced break up of families and communities.' (Walker et al 2001) The research showed that the majority of Indigenous people remain significantly disadvantaged in areas of employment, education, health and housing. In particular recent research by Ambler, (1999) and Shelter WA, (2000) emphasises the crucial role of housing with respect to poverty, employment and access to services including education, health and community building. The *Inquiry into 'Stolen Children'* (HREOC, 1997) highlights the socio-cultural, socio-economic and structural barriers still facing Indigenous people. And concludes that Indigenous social, political and economic circumstances fall far short of the rights alluded to in the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* which identify the right to housing as fundamental to Indigenous self-determination (HREOC, 1999).

This represents a serious challenge to policymakers, government and community based service providers to design and implement programs and sustainable and socially just interventions to improve Indigenous economic, social and cultural wellbeing in line with Indigenous needs, priorities, interests and aspirations. This challenge is more difficult given the changing policy trends from public housing provision to private rentals and purchase are being felt in urban and regional areas with serious implications for people already experiencing disadvantage (Tonts et al., 2000). As Ross points out housing 'needs to be contextualised within the general trends of government policy especially those that locate or relocate Indigenous people and Indigenous resistance to these policies (2000:4). The effects of economic rationalism, consumerism and globalisation have influenced most social policy areas, and program planning and implementation processes within government with impacts on Indigenous housing.

The literature confirmed that throughout Australia's colonial history Indigenous people have been largely at the mercy of state and federal government political agendas and policies toward Indigenous people. In turn these policies have influenced the nature and provision of Indigenous housing. Shifts in government policies from assimilation to self-determination have not resulted in corresponding changes in either the provision of housing for all Indigenous Australians or their social, economic and political circumstances. Details of current social demographic context of Indigenous Australians which explores the interrelationship between Indigenous advantage/disadvantage and a range of housing variables including location, housing standards, affordability, accessibility, cultural adequacy and Indigenous control are discussed in the Positioning Paper and will not be repeated here.

Conceptual and Analytical Frameworks

Based on the findings of our preliminary literature search we developed a conceptual and analytical framework (Appendix 1), which with the principles framework, assists in defining the parameters, scope and design of evaluation and research in Indigenous contexts. Beginning with housing as the primary element of research or evaluation the framework encompasses a range of widely recognised housing variables such as: location, security of tenure, affordability and habitability (ABS 1996; Jones 1999) together with other variables including Indigenous control and cultural adequacy or appropriateness. These latter variables (with an emphasis on Indigenous self-determination) differ from those generally used in existing evaluation

frameworks. The framework illustrates the interrelation between each or all of these housing variables and a range of non-housing variables (including standard ABS socio-economic indicators of social disadvantage and contextual factors).

The Positioning Paper emphasises the importance of locating all research within a broader social, historical and political context. It also asserts the need for Indigenous standpoints or perspectives to inform the collection, interpretation and analysis of data pertaining to this conceptual and analytical framework. The incorporation and recognition of Indigenous histories and contemporary standpoints encourage the researcher/evaluator to reframe and broaden the boundaries of their research.

This framework is intended to assist researchers/evaluators to contextualise evaluations as well as identify links between a specific set of variables, outcomes and indicators for a particular study. This is not meant to suggest that all of the variables will be involved and measured in all studies, it is intended as a conceptual tool to assist researchers to identify and negotiate the scope of an evaluation with all stakeholders involved.

While the framework holds the complex, multidimensional, inter-dependent relationships between housing and non-shelter outcomes and indicators it does not specify causal relationships between housing variables and Indigenous socio-economic disadvantage/advantage (Walker et al, 2001:14). Rather, we suggest that '[t]he interaction and resistance between community perceptions, government policies, economic/social/political/legal histories, and Indigenous responses to these, creates a fluid, reactive and responsive environment for overcoming or exacerbating Indigenous disadvantage' (Walker et al 2001:14). The dynamics operating in this environment need to be taken into account when developing an evaluation model and methodology even though ironically, it is precisely these dynamics that seem to defy description and measurement in program evaluation.

Working/Evaluating at the Indigenous/Non-Indigenous Interface

In the Positioning Paper we suggest that this dynamic environment constitutes the intersection of competing claims regarding Indigenous and non-Indigenous priorities, interests, goals, values, needs and aspirations. Importantly, this point of intersection also encompasses the potential opportunities for policymakers and service providers and Indigenous people/communities/organisations to develop partnerships and negotiate their respective positions, interests and goals. This intersection of competing claims and possibilities is described as the Indigenous and non-Indigenous Interface, which:

- Is the place of debate and dialogue regarding differences and commonality of needs, rights, interests and aspirations and future directions within and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.
- Holds the tensions between maximising community knowledge and institutional appropriation/misuse and accountability.

In the Positioning Paper we suggested that locating Indigenous rights within a human rights framework provides the basis for promoting the co-relational elements of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations with real possibilities for co-existence rather than opposition.

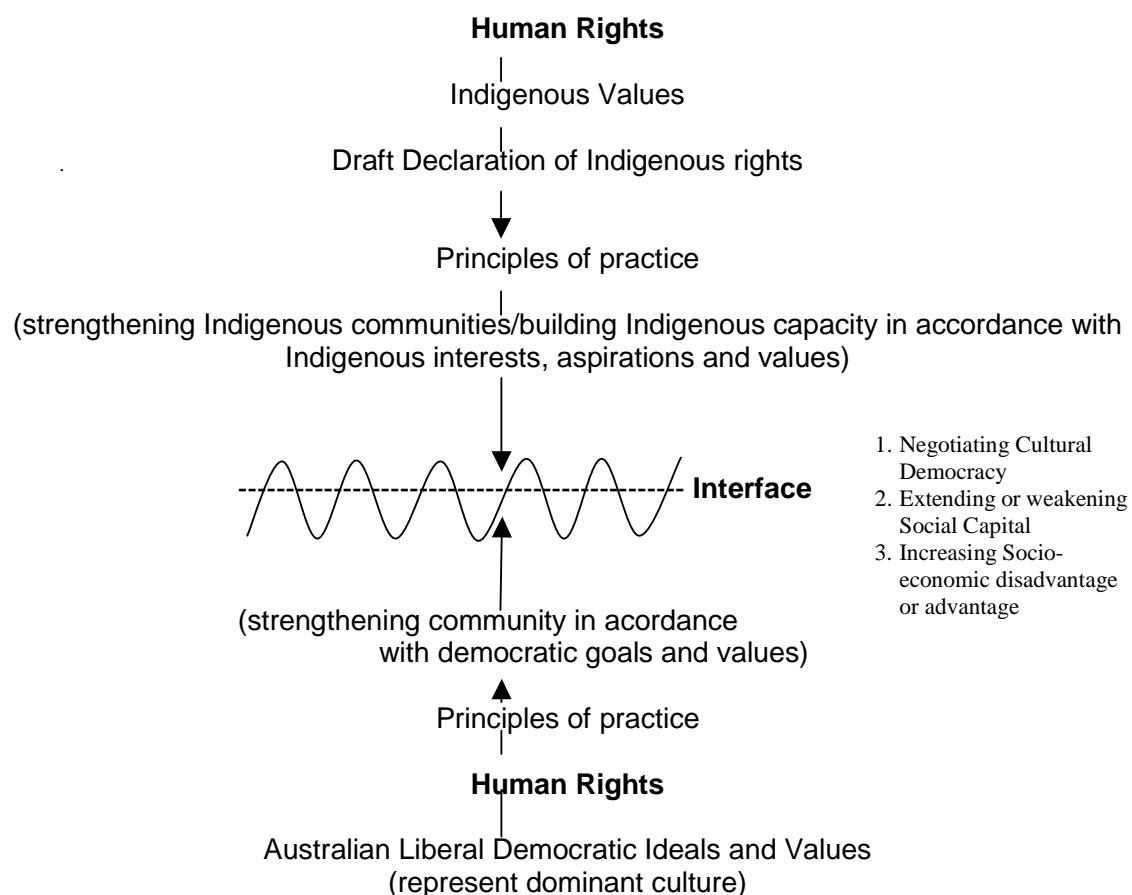
It is worth including Figure 2 from the Positioning Paper which illustrates 'how democratic ideals, values and human rights ought to inform principles of practice, programs, policies and processes employed by governments and relevant industry sector.' Further, 'the rights asserted by Indigenous Australians are consonant with and reflected within the ideals, values and rights of social democracy which underpin notions of community building in broader community contexts.'

We suggested that while this diagram 'somewhat over simplifies what happens at the interface between Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations it does suggest a site or space where cultural democracy can exist in accordance with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous values and ideals.' (Walker et al, 2001:24). The diagram attempts to illustrate the site of 'the complex negotiations, competing discourses and interactions which occur at the interface in Indigenous attempts to achieve equity and self-determination on Indigenous terms.' (loc.cit). The interface encompasses the various structures, policies, processes, practices and languages which can influence 'the outcomes of such negotiations' and function to 'either weaken or strengthen Indigenous social capital and overcome or exacerbate Indigenous disadvantage.' It is precisely these aspects which we examine further in this Final Report.

Creating/Reasserting a basis for engaging in a rights discourse

At the same time the diagram attempts to show the basis for working towards shared or common goals and rights between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. For example notions regarding capacity building, stronger communities and families are closely related to the goals of cultural democracy and strengthening Indigenous communities. (They are also linked to principles of research regarding strengthening Indigenous research capacity and ensuring that the outcomes of research and evaluation benefits and strengthens the community).

Figure 1: The interface between Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations



In the Positioning Paper we suggested that 'the recognition of rights outlined in the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* and the Australia Act (1986) provides the basis for cultural democracy'. Specifically Articles 31 and 32 of the Covenant delineate the right of Indigenous peoples to be self-determining 'in all matters relating to internal affairs and social welfare including housing without foregoing their rights to the same opportunities as all other citizens.' (Walker et al. 2001)

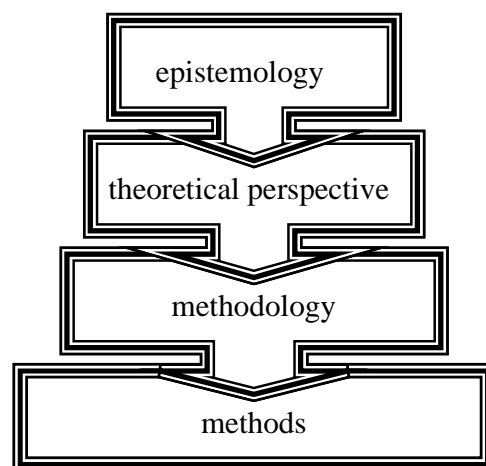
These rights have obvious implications for governments and agencies and how they negotiate their relationships and develop and deliver programs with, or for, Indigenous Australians. These rights also inform the principles and goals for actions specified in the framework to operationalise Indigenous research and evaluation (Appendix 2) and are discussed in further detail below. The next chapter highlights some of the conceptual complexities and issues surrounding this position and hence the need for paradigmatic shift in terms of government policy assumptions and practice in the provision of services for Indigenous people.

It is useful to refer to the distinctions between methodology and methodological issues identified by Sandra Harding as they are applied in this research to clarify any confusion over the terminology. According to Harding (as cited by Linda Smith, 1999:143) 'A research methodology is a theory and analysis of how research does or should proceed...' and, 'A research method is a technique for (or way of proceeding in) gathering evidence'. As Linda Smith points out:

Methodology is important because it frames the questions being asked, determines the set of instruments being employed and shapes the analyses.' Methodological issues entail broader political concerns and strategic goals of Indigenous research. It is at this level that researchers have to clarify and justify their intentions. Methods become the means and procedures through which the central problems of the research are addressed. (loc.cit)

As Michael Crotty argues in *The Foundations of Social Research* (1998) the decision to use, (or judgement/assessment of) a particular research methodology and methods is determined by the assumptions and theoretical perspectives we have about being in and knowing about the world. It reaches to the heart of our being and generates a number of epistemological questions. The diagram below borrowed from Michael Crotty (1998:4) illustrates the relationship between epistemology, theoretical perspective and methodologies and method.

Figure 2: Linking ideas, theories, methodologies and method



Crotty (1998)

While the conceptual framework and associated principles framework developed in our work transcend 'evaluation approaches' our argument suggests they need to underpin and thus inform Indigenous related research and/or evaluation.

As mentioned earlier a key aim of our was/is to identify appropriate methodologies for Indigenous housing evaluation and research. The conceptual and methodological frameworks we have developed are highly relevant in this context because, together, they address the broader political concerns and strategic goals of Indigenous Australians and at the same time support process principles as identified in the operational framework to ensure that the research interests and agenda or the researcher/evaluator acknowledge and support Indigenous research goals and priorities. The frameworks also inform the type of methods that might be employed, depending on the nature and scope of the issues involved, in a given research or evaluation project. What is apparent is that different qualitative and quantitative evaluation approaches may be appropriate but the test is whether they are in accordance with the principles and ethics outlined in the framework.

Establishing a Research Principles Framework

Both the literature review and discussions with Indigenous stakeholders confirmed that traditional, positivistic research and evaluation methodologies are not always appropriate for research with Indigenous people. At the same time an audit of relevant Indigenous literature (Arbon 1992; Brady, 1993; Nakata, 1997, 2001; Rigney, 1997; Smith, 1999a, 1999b) has revealed a range of essential principles, processes and tools advocated by Indigenous stakeholders/researchers to ensure evaluation and research is conducted for the benefit of Indigenous communities.

Building on this literature, as already indicated, we have developed an operational framework that links Indigenous Rights, Cultural Democracy and Indigenous research principles. The framework is established on the basis that Indigenous people have the right to take control of any research agenda that impacts upon Indigenous people. Drawing on the work of Indigenous writers and practitioners we have identified a set of research goals and principles which inform the scope, conduct and context of Indigenous evaluation and research.

On the basis of feedback and ongoing discussions with Indigenous stakeholders we have continued to revise these principles throughout the research. A refined version of this framework (Appendix 2) is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter where we revisit and refine the framework on the basis of further consultations with relevant stakeholders and also extended literature review.

1.5 Methodology

The methodology has involved an examination and assessment of primary and secondary data regarding the effectiveness of different evaluation approaches and methodologies currently being used to evaluate different housing program and interventions for Indigenous people in diverse contexts in accordance with the principles framework we have developed. This has not involved a checklist of approaches and methods —although such 'pros and cons' inventories are available in Patton (1990) and Wadsworth (1993) in general and (Moore, Russell, Beed, & Phibbs, (2001) for housing in particular— rather our assessment occurs at an epistemological and methodological level which has shaped both the Final Report and the Positioning Paper. The findings are based on stakeholder perspectives of the relevance and appropriateness of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and methodologies currently used to evaluate housing programs intended to achieve social and economic outcomes. The research also

assesses the efficacy of existing indicators in measuring these outcomes for individuals, families and communities within a broader social and political context in Western Australia as well as briefly discussing recent developments in this area.

This research project can best be understood as taking place in two phases, although we have been reflecting upon, refining and further developing our ideas, frameworks and processes throughout both:

Phase 1

- Identifying our position and developing preliminary conceptual, analytical and principles frameworks for research/evaluation/practice which draws on Indigenous community and stakeholder consultation and Indigenous perspectives in the literature. These frameworks were presented in a Positioning Paper.

Phase 2

- Presenting and discussing the potential of the frameworks in various forums and refining the Indigenous research principles frameworks on the basis of feedback and discussion. It has also involved a further literature search to develop social indicators consistent with our principles framework.

As indicated in the project aims the research set out to answer the following questions:

- What qualitative and quantitative methodologies are required to provide a comprehensive assessment of housing programs and interventions?
- What qualitative and quantitative indicators are most useful and effective in measuring the impact of housing on non-shelter outcomes?

Returning to our argument above, in order to answer these questions, particularly the first, we found ourselves as Crotty (1998:1) suggests needing to answer four questions:

Before being able to decide what are appropriate evaluation and research methodologies (and methods) in Indigenous housing we had to determine both our theoretical perspective or standpoint and the epistemology informing our theoretical standpoint. It was precisely this need that has informed the direction of our research.

As part of our own research methodology we undertook an extensive literature review of Indigenous research and evaluation approaches, which provided a basis for the initial analytical and conceptual frameworks developed to address these questions. These frameworks were put forward in the Positioning Paper to generate further comment among different stakeholder groups including Indigenous academic, Indigenous organisational staff and state and federal government agencies.

Throughout the research the literature review for the Positioning Paper has focused on four main areas: the contemporary socio-economic, political and historical context in which Indigenous housing policies, programs and interventions occur; evaluation approaches generally as well as Indigenous housing specifically and Indigenous perspectives relating to research principles and issues related to indicators. The Final Report extends the literature to look briefly at international policy issues specifically in relation to Indigenous peoples, development and substance of social indicators intended to measure wellbeing, social capital, community building and sustainability and to revisit Indigenous research principles and methods. In the second phase of the research we broadened the literature review to look at the evaluation and research being used in Indigenous housing contexts in New Zealand and to a lesser extent North America and the UK.

In addition, we applied these frameworks to existing community based programs operating in the Perth metropolitan area. As the case studies in Chapter 5 confirm we also examined and assessed the apparent effectiveness of different evaluation approaches and methodologies used in a range of different housing programs and interventions for Indigenous people in different contexts.

Through a series of small group presentations, community focus groups and one to one interviews (Appendix 3) we obtained stakeholder perspectives of the relevance and appropriateness of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and methodologies currently employed to evaluate program goals, objectives and strategies intended to achieve a range of social and economic outcomes.

We also identified existing indicators which are employed by key relevant government agencies such as State Housing Authorities, Australian Bureau of Statistics and Family and Community Services to measure housing and non-shelter outcomes for Indigenous people.

1.6 Report Structure and Contents

This Final Report is divided into five chapters. It outlines and builds upon the Positioning Paper which firstly frames the contemporary situation of Indigenous Australians with respect to housing and other social outcomes within an historical, social and political context.

This chapter has provided an overview of the research project, discusses the research aims, the context and policy relevance and significance for Indigenous people, community groups and organisations. This section also describes the main methodological tasks undertaken in the research and the outcomes of these.

Chapter Two provides an overview of Australia's policy context. It outlines some of the characteristics which create the distinctive policy environment and briefly discusses the implications for Indigenous housing and social wellbeing.

Chapter Three provides a review and refinement of the framework based on extended literature review and feedback from Indigenous academics and community members.

Chapter Four includes a broad overview of the current perceptions, discussions and projects regarding social indicators and benchmarks and the implications in operational terms for the aims of this research project. This process reviews the strategies, processes and resources (and commitment) which will be required to establish social indicators for housing for programs of projects or interventions/initiatives of different scope and purpose.

We define the meaning of indicators, benchmarks and give a brief overview of current housing indicators used for Indigenous and non-Indigenous housing; we discuss issues regarding wellbeing indicators and frameworks outlined in the recent ABS report. We also discuss the relationship and issues between Indigenous housing indicators and the links with well being indicators and wider community strengthening projects.

Chapter Five includes a discussion of the various findings of practical applications of the framework and policy implications and outcomes that have been achieved to date.

Chapter Six concludes that many existing housing evaluation approaches are inappropriate to effectively assess housing assistance programs or other interventions intended to meet broader social outcomes and community wellbeing and do not readily fulfil an Indigenous research and evaluation perspective/agenda. It suggests that there is sufficient evidence and theoretical

support for the development and deployment of new paradigms and discourses to establish more appropriate evaluation frameworks and indicators.

2 Review of Australia's Policy Context

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter we extend the literature review to consider some of the factors which contribute to Australia's unique policy context and the examples that we could draw on from overseas with regard to achieving Indigenous rights and social justice. In addition, we have drawn on a range of national reports and international covenants that support the position that research in Indigenous contexts should enhance Indigenous self-determination, empowerment and social transformation.

As already outlined in the Positioning Paper Australia has responded to a number of often divergent and even contradictory policy influences in recent years. These internal and external influences together with Australia's own historical, political and social circumstance contribute to a rather unique policy environment. Australian housing is dominated by the private sector with home ownership (69%) and private rentals (23%) accounting for the majority of housing compared with the public housing sector (5%) (Burke & Hayward 2000:3) . Unlike the UK and US public housing is provided and controlled by state housing authorities rather than local government or voluntary sector. As Burke and Hayward (2000:2) point out, Australia's 'pro-market liberal values' have limited the size of the public housing sector, 'ensuring the state was a never more than a 'reluctant landlord'. The SHA's control over 90% of long term accommodation provided in the public sector and the Commonwealth also provide the majority of funding for short term, crisis accommodation support services. Under the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) the Commonwealth provides funds to the states that are responsible for the management of social housing.

Given the limited stocks and role of the states in the provision of social housing the allocation of rental accommodation has become increasingly targeted to specific groups. Since the seventies these groups have included those on low income or with special needs. This has resulted in situation where today over 90% of tenants are socially disadvantaged and receiving social security benefits. (Burke and Hayward 2000:4) At the same time Australia is committed to developing and implementing policies to address individual and locational disadvantage.

Research by Wood, Randolph and Judd (2002) confirms the renewed interest by state and federal governments in community strengthening initiatives. This has rejuvenated the focus on community participation and capacity building from a policy perspective. However, as Wood et al acknowledge this has also generated questions regarding what these concepts really mean and how they will be measured (op.cit:35).

2.2 Australia's unique policy environment

Australia's particular fusion of ideologies — liberalism and social democracy and adherence to colonial legacies such as the role of the bureaucracy— have resulted in a unique social policy environment which has fostered a particular take on managerialism and the emerging influences of globalisation. In turn, these changes have had impact on the housing sector as Burke and Hayward (2000:5) point out 'the general thrust was that to be competitive, Australia, and its public agencies, had to be more market oriented and business like' These ideological shifts, dominated by economic imperatives, have provided a strong justification for corporatising state agencies responsible for the provision of health, education and housing (Marginson, 1997, Pusey 1991). State housing authorities have been unable to maintain their traditional role in the wake of these changes. Reviewed through the new managerial lens housing agencies did not

'perform' well. Burke and Hayward summarise the findings of reports undertaken in the early nineties thus:

They argued that state housing authorities were largely monopolistic organisations impervious to competitive pressures and unaware of customer needs; that they had multiple and at times conflicting roles; were unclear as to how their core business was and therefore were accordingly inefficient; and that they were neither accountable to government nor their clients for their performance. (2000:5)

The need for reforms to address these criticisms was compelling along side growing difficulties experienced within the social housing sector. There were significant areas requiring reform – large waiting lists, lack of relevant stock, poor housing standards, and poor management and administrative accountability. New managerialism offered a much needed solution to overcome the problems of an ailing housing sector. As Burke and Hayward point out at the core of new managerialism is a coherent and systematic method of administration, which has three key elements: clear specification of objectives, funding for the delivery of a set of outputs, which deliver outcomes that help achieve the original objectives. These elements are linked by a 'rigorous set of performance indicators' which 'enumerate objectives and outcomes, and which are crucial to evaluate a program's efficiency (outputs divided by inputs) and effectiveness (outcomes relative to outputs).' (Burke & Hayward 2000:7). While this sounds straightforward in theory the difficulties associated with these ideas and measures are discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

Responding to Shifts in policy focus

Several studies in related areas confirm the need for governments to pay greater attention to social, cultural and environmental dimensions in policy formulation, funding and resource allocations to regional and service agencies. Trends in Europe show a shift from narrow economic focus to grappling with the issues associated with social exclusion. Many of these studies highlight the inadequacy of planning and evaluation approaches which focus primarily on efficiency outcomes and indicators. As Gleeson and Carmichael (2001:xi) state in their final report, 'A more rounded focus on disadvantage recognizes the interdependencies of social resources such as housing, security, environmental quality, social participation and the importance of these relationships to individual and communal welfare.' Increasingly research which looks at strategies to overcome disadvantage emphasise the need to identify the factors which contribute to the sustainability of program outcomes and the links between economic and social development. Sustainability is an interesting area which straddles both economic and social dimensions and hence appeals to a range of different policy preferences.

A renewed emphasis on community participation combined with a focus on sustainability becomes a means of transferring the responsibility for housing and social cohesion and wellbeing to the community. Drawing the two ideas together allows governments to appear to be addressing issues of social and spatial disadvantage while maintaining or achieving goals of economic efficiency. The primary rationale remains one of engaging the community in addressing a range of issues which impact on social wellbeing with minimal cost and maximum effectiveness from all levels of government. This shift in emphasis to greater community participation also allows or engenders a shift in discourse of community control and a rekindled interest in community development. Although Wood et al note in passing, in Australia the government focus in disadvantaged areas has been directed towards asset performance, stock management through initiatives to change the tenure or increase the social mix. (op.cit :25).

Moreover in order to develop, implement and evaluate housing led strategies, interventions and programs they need to be described and situated within the broader social and political context

which attends to both historical factors, contemporary issues and future visions. Salvaris (1997) cites American sociologist Michael Land who he states

'pointed out an obvious but often overlooked practical precondition for measuring national progress we cannot measure something properly unless we first describe it. To develop an effective system to evaluate the health or wellbeing of society, we must first have a working plan of a good society in our head. To design social indicators, said Land 'one is faced with the necessity of spelling out some more or less explicit model of society.' (Salvaris 1997:3)

This helps to explain why it is that although we began our research by looking specifically at social indicators for Indigenous housing they are also linked to broader social goals of community wellbeing, democracy and social justice. What has become apparent is that evaluations which are looking at program or project level efficiency and effectiveness cannot be conducted in isolation from broader social issues and notions of society.

Housing linked to stronger communities

At a most basic level an appraisal of literature concerning stronger families and communities and community wellbeing it is clear that certain elements are essential to ensure that positive and sustainable change occurs. Black and Hughes (2001:33-35) outline an analytical framework which encompasses the interrelationship between processes and resources (and commitment) and the outcomes (positive or negative) that are attained. They point out that while resources (including natural capital, economic capital, institutional capital, social capital and human capital) provide a basis for processes, these processes can also have a creative or destructive influence on the resources necessary for community building.

The importance and nature of these elements required are widely accepted and unquestioned in non-Indigenous contexts. While these same elements are also crucial for programs to be effective in Indigenous contexts there is less understanding of and agreement about how the impact of existing 'colonial' processes and the lack of appropriate resources to address the complexities and levels of need in Indigenous contexts mitigates against the effective implementation of programs and the ability to bring about real and lasting change.

2.3 The Indigenous Context

A major theme in the Positioning Paper is that existing social and economic disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians in relation to housing and other related social outcomes needs to be understood within an historical, social and political context. Furthermore comparisons with countries such as New Zealand and Canada shed more light on these issues. Greater understanding of these circumstances can be obtained by examining and learning from the international experience of countries such as New Zealand which share a similar colonial history.

The Australian Experience

Several studies undertaken through AHURI reveal emerging patterns of increasing disparity between advantaged and disadvantaged suburbs and regions and between different groups within those suburbs and regions. ABS and other statistical data confirms that Indigenous peoples are the most disadvantaged groups on all social indicators in these diverse contexts.

Despite the endorsement of the policy of Indigenous self-determination in 1975 Indigenous people continue to experience the negative legacies of past policies. Successive governments appear to have been unable to establish the necessary structures, processes, mechanisms and resources to genuinely and effectively implement, support and actualise Indigenous self-

determination. Some of the reasons that help explain this include: a pervasive institutional and systemic racism (Brennan, 1998; Fourmille 1999; Pettman 1992); an adherence to a flawed notion of equality underpinning Australia's unique liberal democracy and the competing influences of new managerialism, corporatism and globalisation (Marginson 1997; Muetzelfeldt & Bates 1992; Peters 1997); and a lack of political and moral will (Adams, 1999; Langton, 1999). The net effect is an entrenched system-wide failure to fully recognise and support Indigenous social, political and economic rights. While some of these global and political elements are outside government control or power to address, institutional racism requires further consideration.

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism has been identified in the literature as one of the key factors contributing to the current situation of widespread disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians (Brennan, 1998; Fourmille 1999, HREOC 2000). According to Catherine Brennan '[t]he way Australian society has been constructed since European colonisation has set the foundations for a racist society.' (Brennan in Partington 1998:151). Drawing on Pettman's definition of institutional racism as the 'reproduction of systematic patterns of inequality correlating largely or in part with race or cultural origin (real or presumed)' (1987:67) Brennan suggests that institutional racism exists where 'the everyday practices, routines, rules and representations within an institution regularly reward members of one group to the detriment of others' (Brennan:loc.cit). Brennan highlights the fact that existing social, political and economic institutions in Australia are still largely dominated by middle-class white males whose beliefs and values contribute to Indigenous disadvantage (loc.cit). Repeated references to policy processes, practices and language imbued with institutional racism in our discussions with Indigenous community and organisation participants strongly suggest that implicit, indirect, unconscious institutional racism remains an area requiring serious consideration by policymakers and funding bodies. In particular many stakeholders claim that the extent to which existing evaluation, monitoring and reporting processes place greater scrutiny of Indigenous community organisations than mainstream organisations, and the reasons why this is so, need to be looked at within the context of institutional racism.

Several suggestions were made concerning the need for deliberate and ongoing strategies by relevant government departments to provide cross-cultural awareness training for staff and for all university courses ranging from public policy to architecture and planning to integrate specific Indigenous studies. Many of these ideas are not new. Research by Memmot (1989) and Ross (1987) for example, discussed the need for multi-disciplinary approaches in the conduct of housing evaluation and research. The AVCC have acknowledged the need for cross-cultural awareness training and in some professional areas (such as social work, public policy and environmental planning and mining) the need for dedicated units to enhance the capacity of agencies and professionals to work more effectively with Indigenous Australians (AVCC, 2000; Collard, Walker & Dudgeon, 1998). The importance of community development training (which encompasses principles of cross-cultural awareness) to support sustainable projects has been identified in other studies (Black & Hughes 2001; Hughes, P., Bellamy, J. & Black, A. 2000, Winter (ed), 2000).

Such strategies may go some way to improving the situation for Indigenous Australia but are by no means sufficient. According to Henrietta Fourmille (1999) until Indigenous rights are formally recognised institutional or systemic racism will remain the dominant feature, the organising principle of relations between Indigenous and other Australians.

While several Indigenous writers believe institutional racism is the primary reason that self-determination The broader policy context described above highlights the need for undertaking policy analysis in evaluation and research of housing programs policies.

The New Zealand Experience

By way of contrast both New Zealand has in place a Treaty which recognises the rights of Indigenous people. The Treaty of Waitangi defines the nature of relationship and provides the basis for dual-accountability and outcomes between Māori and the New Zealand government. It also provides the foundation upon which Māori housing agreements are negotiated. In turn this foundation provides the basis for the establishment of evaluation and monitoring frameworks and cultural audits. It also assists Māori people to negotiate equal partnerships and dual accountability with government in the formulation and implementation of social programs including housing programs.

A case for Indigenous rights

As the discussion in the Positioning Paper illuminated many Indigenous Australians continue to experience disadvantage on all social indicators despite an ongoing statement of commitment to Indigenous self-determination and endorsement of the principles and recommendations necessary to achieve this by all levels of government in Australia. A National Inquiry commenced in 1997, reemphasized the recommendations outlined in the '*National Commitment to Improved Outcomes in the Delivery of Programs and Services for Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders*' which was established in 1992, and in which all governments 'agreed on the need to achieve greater coordination of the delivery of programs and services by all levels of government to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders.' The same document also declares 'effective coordination in the formulation of policies and the planning and management and provision of services to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders by governments' to be one of the 'guiding principles' for governments (HREOC 1998:62)). This raises questions and concerns as to why this is so, which requires some deep and serious examination and further discussion if we are going to move beyond the rhetoric, reiteration and re-avowals towards the recognition of Indigenous rights to self-determination which are discussed in the next chapter.

3 Review of the Indigenous Principles Framework

3.1 Introduction

The chapter includes some of the key refinements and issues based on discussions and critique of the format and content of the evaluation principles framework presented to various different stakeholder groups including community members, Indigenous researchers, academics, Indigenous housing stakeholders and senior government policy and program managers. This chapter also includes the refined principles based on discussion of feedback of several Australian and New Zealand Indigenous academics and researchers whose writings encompass issues, principles and processes regarding ethically sound research.

Community and stakeholder feedback to the model we developed in the Positioning Paper was highly varied and useful, allowing us to reflect both on the efficacy and sufficiency of the principles we proposed and the importance of providing information in a range of ways appropriate to different audiences.

Goals of Indigenous Research

Discussions with community and other stakeholders using the proposed principles framework with respect to the goals of Indigenous research revealed that despite the widespread support from both community and government there are several factors which still mitigate against the realisation of Indigenous self-determination, which was also perceived as the most fundamental and overarching of goals.

Institutional racism was one of the key factors noted confirming some of the literature already cited. In addition the failure of governments to implement a genuine policy of self-determination with respect to organisational governance was also raised as a concern by several community stakeholders. Specific examples cited as evidence of institutional racism revolved around the lack of commitment to the notions of partnership and dual accountability by funding providers. They claimed that in reality there are no processes, limited resources which most attribute to a vast differences in the values and assumptions of policy makers, and an unquestioned adherence to economic rationalism.

3.2 Refining the Principles and Processes Frameworks

Based on discussions with individuals and groups and feedback from our positioning paper we have refined the principles, goals, elements and discussion relating to the framework. This refined version was presented at the Brisbane Housing Conference and has since been further elaborated upon. The extended version, which we regard as always remaining an ongoing work in progress is attached in the matrix outlining the operational principles framework at Appendix 2.

This matrix of goals and principles attempts to hold the multidimensional interrelationship of context and action principles and goals of Indigenous research. At the same time it is not meant to suggest a linear relationship where specific goals and principles intersect to produce one specific set of actions being prescribed for all evaluations or research projects. Rather, the framework is intended as a checklist or audit, a basis for discussion, decision and negotiation between all stakeholders about the 'what', 'how' and 'why' elements in existing programs for all research/evaluation projects. Importantly, Indigenous self-determination is both a goal and a non-negotiable right — as such it remains a fundamental principle and criteria of all research concerning Indigenous peoples.

The main components of the framework are as follows:

Goals of Indigenous Research

The goals of Indigenous research and evaluation are to

- Maximise Indigenous participation.
- Strengthen community/capacity building.
- Increase effectiveness & efficiency (as defined by Indigenous people).
- Increase empowerment (individual & collective).
- Ensure dual accountability and genuine partnership.
- Achieve appropriate representation.
- Gain Indigenous control and ownership (processes/outcomes).
- Realise gender equity and equality.
- Realise Indigenous self-determination.

Context Principles

- Recognise and work within an Indigenous cultural/political framework.
- Identify and overcome power differences in gender, cultural knowledge, colonial domination and other variables.
- Identify and work with diversity in culture, environment, language, experience, and background.
- Identify and work with variations in socio-economic and geographic disadvantage/advantage.

Action Principles

- Prioritise Indigenous knowledge and experience.
- Contribute to Indigenous interests, priorities and future's orientation.
- Disseminate research findings in appropriate forms for relevant stakeholders.
- Ensure research processes and outcomes benefit Indigenous people.
- Include, and be guided by, Indigenous people in all phases of the evaluation/research.
- Assist Indigenous capacity building.

Goals and Principles

The discussion which follows attempts to capture the interconnectedness of issues that came out of the discussions with stakeholders and only covering particular points pertaining to a specific principles where it is considered important or useful to do so. Discussions with various stakeholders highlighted the issues that both non-Indigenous and Indigenous researchers face in balancing and working in accordance with principles such as 'assisting in Indigenous capacity building' alongside need to acknowledge and integrate and the principle 'to prioritise Indigenous knowledge and experience'. The various issues raised confirmed the need for researchers/evaluators to assume an educative role to increase the capacity of Indigenous people to understand the possible benefits to be gained by individuals, organisations and client groups through the conduct of evaluation as well as the capacity to critique the relevance and appropriateness of evaluation methods in meeting their particular needs. We found the principles framework provided an effective framework to discuss the potential benefits. It was useful however in having these ideas listed as below in addition to operational matrix.

However to build capacity and involve community stakeholders, especially those intended to benefit from the research also means that all stakeholders need to have some understanding of the different types of, and purposes for evaluation, as well as some familiarity with the concepts and language of evaluation. There are some good resources around to assist evaluators in the

conduct of empowering participatory community evaluation, for example Wadsworth (1991, 1993) and Fetterman, Kaftarian and Wandersman (1996) and more recent materials can be found on several state and federal government community services websites. . But importantly we found the most important and problematic element in trying to engage in genuine capacity building and obtain feedback is trying to juggle community timeframes and funding body deadlines and the need to undertake activities that fall outside the categories of normal research process.

Ensure dual accountability and genuine partnership

In Chapter 1 we noted the repeated assertions that self-determination cannot be achieved without genuine partnership and a commitment to dual accountability as well as the considerable criticism regarding current practices in this area. The notion of partnership is deeply embedded in human rights and indigenous rights. And as indicated in the Positioning Paper is recognised as a necessary to the realisation of Indigenous self-determination in recommendations of the *Findings of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (1991), *Taskforce on Aboriginal Social Justice Report* (1994) and the *Bringing them Home Report* (HREOC, 1997) and many other government task force reviews.

Notions of dual accountability recognise that Indigenous organisations are accountable for the efficient use of funds in achieving program goals. At the same time dual accountability acknowledges that Indigenous people have fundamental rights to have access to funds and services which can contribute to their social and economic wellbeing. In New Zealand, Te Puni Kokiri (1999:2) claims that the Treaty of Waitangi provides a basis of Māori rights and a framework for accountability by both Māori and Government. This framework provides the basis for Māori to hold government accountable to answer the following questions:

- 1) Do government policies, programmes and services protect and enhance the right of Maori to live and develop in a Māori way?
- 2) Do government policies, programmes and services result in Maori achieving the same social and economic outcomes as non-Māori? Te Puni Kokiri (1999:2)

Te Puni Kokiri states that 'evaluations can play a key role in informing the government's response to these questions. The questions proposed above are the sorts of meta evaluative questions that have emanated out of exploring our key research questions:

- What qualitative and quantitative methodologies are required to provide a comprehensive assessment of housing programs and interventions?
- What qualitative and quantitative indicators are most useful and effective in measuring the impact of housing on non-shelter outcomes?

They also provide the basis of our operational framework, and hence inform the kind of methodologies that are appropriate in Indigenous housing research. Examples of methodologies used which are consonant with our framework include studies by Paul Memmot (1991) on Post-occupancy evaluation (POE) and Helen Ross (1987) on Indigenous housing needs analysis in the Kimberley.

Te Puni Kokiri (1999:3) states that evaluations need to give special attention to whether programmes or services have:

- Increased the accessibility of services
- Improved service delivery

- Improved outcomes and influenced positive change in disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

These are the broader questions which need to be answered and which serve as an overarching set of indicators as to the efficacy and integrity of programs for Indigenous people. These issues are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Context Principles

As already discussed evaluations need take account of the geographic, cultural, economic and social diversity of Indigenous people. An important point of discussion only touched on in the Positioning Paper concerns the fact that the context principles were largely derived from, and supported by, a commitment to the recognition of Indigenous terms of reference. The Centre for Aboriginal Studies defines Indigenous/Aboriginal terms of reference as encompassing

the cultural knowledge, understanding and experiences that are associated with a commitment to Aboriginal ways of thinking, working, and reflecting, incorporating specific and implicit cultural values, beliefs and priorities from which Aboriginal standards are derived, validated and practised. These standards will and can vary according to the diverse range of cultural values, beliefs and priorities from within local settings or specific contexts. (Centre for Aboriginal Studies Strategic Plan, 1995).

Darlene Oxenham is currently undertaking extensive research which explores and reinforces the position that the incorporation and recognition of Aboriginal Terms of Reference is an important and necessary paradigm to ensure Indigenous futures, and ultimately the future of this country. To recognise Aboriginal Terms of Reference as a paradigm is to acknowledge that it is a system of meanings, and as such there are several elements which constitute that system of meanings. According to Darlene Oxenham (2000:3-19) Aboriginal terms of reference is a complex set of elements including principles and values, operating as a framework guiding practice as well as a paradigm which recognises Indigenous self-determination. Moreover to recognise Aboriginal Terms of Reference as a paradigm is to make a commitment to a set of principles which can be derived from the definition above. (ACMDP Course Materials 1992-1997; Oxenham 2000). The principles outlined in the Positioning Paper and refined in this Final Report are just one example of an operational framework which derives from a commitment to Indigenous terms of reference as defined by the Centre for Aboriginal Studies.

Action Principles

These action principles were discussed in the Positioning Paper with the exception of Disseminate research findings in appropriate forms for relevant stakeholders. Moreover, we have worked in accordance with all of action principles throughout this phase of the research. The discussion below highlights how this has informed the direction of the research as well as some of the issues and outcomes in disseminating the information to different stakeholder groups.

Disseminate research findings in appropriate forms for relevant stakeholders

As we noted above discussions with stakeholders were both diverse and highly valuable in refining the frameworks and concepts developed in the Positioning Paper, and the way we presented them. These discussions confirmed the importance of 'ensuring that the information shared by the researcher is in a language that is understandable by the community' in order to 'maximize Indigenous participation'.

Based on feedback we developed a number of different ways of sharing information with the community, including the provision of information in different formats, clipart, short and direct sentences, a matrix and other diagrammatic formats. An example of our attempt to illustrate a complex analysis in a simple diagrammatic form can be found at Appendix 4. This illustration was used to assist in discussing a critique of the causal assumptions and measures underpinning an existing evaluation framework which formed Case Study 2. This format received positive feedback from the group involved, including the CoAA spokesperson who, referring to both the information in the paper and the format, stated,

It is the first time I have seen a framework that has transferred what is in our heads on to paper.

On the other hand, one person noted that the contextual framework was confusing for some people and was a very 'wadjella' or 'whitefella' way of presenting the material. This was not necessarily the experience or opinion of all community people, with some people stating that the contextual framework captured the holistic nature of Indigenous social realities. Frameworks only serve a limited purpose. We need to be able to represent ideas and concepts in meaningful ways to all stakeholders. In fact the dissemination of information in a clear and understandable manner is an ethical principle in its own right. (Walker et al 2001). It became apparent that we needed to clarify the intention/purpose of the contextual framework as providing a focus for a discussion to inform the scope of an evaluation or research project. As a consequence we refined the discussion in the paper presented at the National Housing Forum in Brisbane in October (Walker, Taylor and Ballard 2001).

Importantly, the discussions and workshops regarding appropriate evaluation approaches highlighted a level of suspicion and even reluctance of engaging in evaluation. Evaluation was seen as a tool of surveillance used mainly by government to monitor organisations and to make judgments (based on governmental measures) about the worth or effectiveness or inadequacy of the organisation and its staff. Responses by several community workers revealed a distinct preference for the concept of a cultural audit to be conducted with regard to the programs and practices of government funding bodies as a means to 'evaluate' how well they have met the departmental or organisational mission and goals.

3.3 Establishing a rights paradigm and discourse

As mentioned previously throughout the research we conducted several workshops and presentations with relevant government departments and Indigenous organisations outlining the findings of our Positioning Paper. Importantly the notion of rights provided an crucial/useful paradigm or discourse that obtained significant levels of support by several members of the government including program managers, funding providers and policy officers. It was also the focus of discussion at the Indigenous Researchers Forum in September 2001. It is apparent from these discussions that Indigenous rights cannot be divorced from the everyday machinations of government policy making and program implementation and evaluation or from the paradigms that inform the goals and strategies to achieve a socially just democracy. As already stated in the Positioning Paper the United Nations Commission on Human Rights has also resolved that a democratic society requires the recognition of Indigenous rights and the right of all people to self-determination.

Human rights and socially sustainable communities

In a working paper, *Model of Social Sustainability* by Barron and Gauntlett (2001) identify a set of principles and characteristics to measure the achievement of socially sustainable communities. They emphasise the recognition of both human rights and Indigenous rights as important to achieving an equitable and sustainable future.

With regard to human rights Barron and Gauntlett (2001:4) propose that the community ...

- has a shared understanding of the definition and inalienability of human rights and a commitment to acknowledging, respecting and enforcing these rights in a way that doesn't compromise the sustainability of the local community or other communities
- recognizes the importance of Indigenous rights
- recognizes that human rights is about creating equality not a society in which everyone is the same
- at a minimum, ensures that basic needs are met and provides structures and opportunities to meet other needs
- treats all members with respect and supports inclusiveness
- provides education and information about human rights
- promotes individual freedom to the extent that it does not impinge on the rights and freedom of others both now and in the future (Waitakere City Council cited in Barron & Gauntlett op.cit)

With regard to Indigenous rights Barron and Gauntlett (loc.cit) propose that the community ...

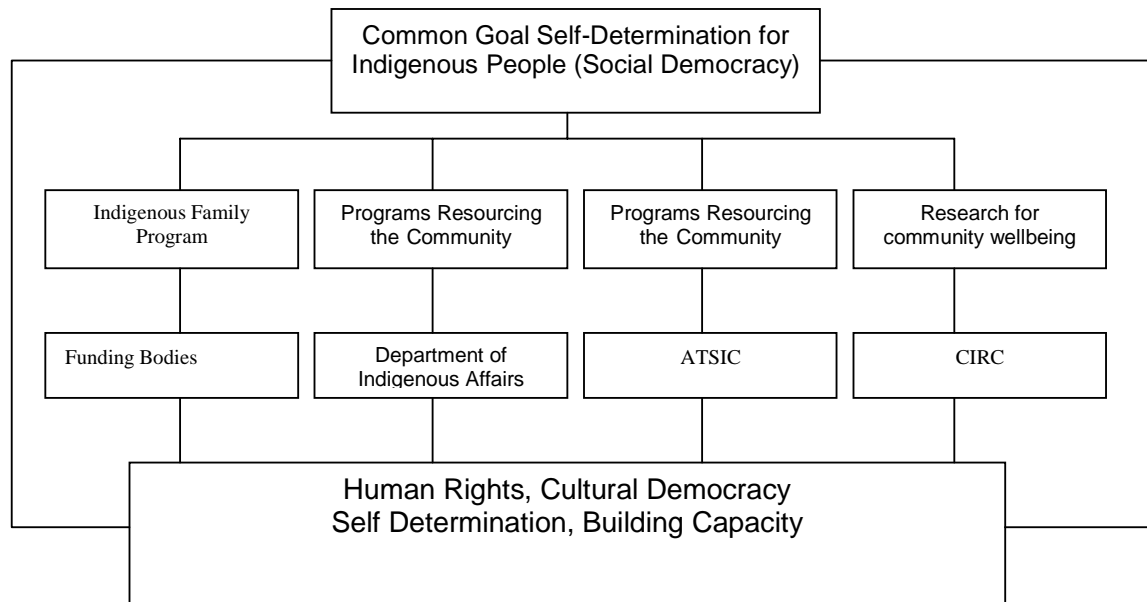
- acknowledges Indigenous people as the traditional owners of the land and their connection with the land
- supports and encourages connections and mutual respect between Indigenous and non Indigenous people
- provides services based on understanding and respect for Indigenous culture
- provides an apology for and ongoing recognition of the continuing oppression, dispossession and disadvantage perpetrated on Indigenous people
- encourages and supports actions aimed at decreasing and eradicating the gap between indicators of health and well-being for Indigenous communities and those of non-Indigenous communities
- integrates Indigenous culture into all educational, cultural and ceremonial activities to provide outcomes that are beneficial to the whole community and that advance the opportunities for people to get along in the long term
- at the direction of the Indigenous people, develops and implements policies to redress past wrongs and supports Indigenous people to achieve the outcomes they desire
- provides education and information about the Indigenous culture and history of the local area
- provides opportunities for Indigenous people to participate in local decisions. (Barron & Gauntlett 2001)

Although this is an important step forward, the framework locates the recognition of rights as an indicator that equity has been achieved. However, Indigenous rights research (Nakata 2001) and discussions with stakeholders make it clear that the recognition of human and Indigenous rights are higher order goals which are fundamental to the achievement of self-determination and equity. As Dalee Dorrough points out the right to self-determination is widely considered to be a peremptory (or inviolable) norm in International Law as well as a democratic entitlement. (Dorrough in Nakata 2001:116-117). Dorrough quotes Professor Stavenhagen who concludes 'Only if the people's right to self-determination is respected can a democratic society flourish'. What becomes problematic is translating these ideals into action or ensuring these goals remain in the picture of everyday policy and program evaluation.

In our own consultation and presentations to key stakeholders and government policymakers we have held the recognition of rights as a distinct entity along with self-determination, cultural/social democracy and building capacity. Diagram 2 below illustrates how the goals, principles and discourses underpinning existing policies can/ought to provide the complementary

links and paradigmatic justification to move beyond the existing economic rationalist/managerialist paradigms in order to realise these policy goals and principles and fundamental rights in practice.

Figure 3: Linking Policy Discourse, Principles, Goals & Indicators in Practice.



As indicated earlier notions such as capacity building are now firmly embedded in government policy frameworks. However, there is still a need for a paradigmatic shift in thinking about evaluation approaches and performance measures by governments to achieve such goals in Indigenous contexts in a way that recognises the importance of enacting principles and processes which contribute to Indigenous self-determination. Arguably a similar paradigmatic shift is both necessary and possible within mainstream social policy sector to both encompass indigenous terms of reference and contribute to broader societal goals.

In summary, in the Positioning Paper we argued that evaluation approaches to assess the extent to which programs, policies and practices strengthen community and build capacity (in both Indigenous and broader societal contexts) need to establish social indicators to measure the extent to which Indigenous goals, terms of reference, equitable processes and outcomes are achieved. The next chapter extends upon the issues surrounding indicators and how they link to rights.

4. REVIEWING THE ISSUES SURROUNDING INDICATORS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses some of the work being done in the area of both performance indicators and social indicators. Building upon the discussion in the Positioning Paper it examines some of the issues surrounding indicators and how they link to rights, wellbeing and fundamental needs as housing and social welfare.

The work being undertaken in Australia reveals a growing interest towards participatory, community-based approaches to establish social and community indicators to measure the well-being of Australian citizens. The growing interest in initiatives at different levels and across a range of policy sectors which transcend traditional social and fiscal differences has obvious importance and relevance in the development of indicators for housing.

It became evident throughout the research that there is widespread agreement that many of the assumptions underpinning existing indicator frameworks (including those used in housing research and evaluation) are flawed. A critique by Hayward and Burke (2001) reveals that current housing evaluations are driven by efficiency and effectiveness indicators which focus on accountability and monitoring processes and quantitative measures of outcomes, often at the expense of qualitative social indicators. However, with the increasing focus on whole of government approaches and integrated strategies to build stronger communities there is clearly a need for the development of indicators which can measure broader social goals. More specifically in the context of our research we have found that indicators need to:

- take account of Indigenous individual, family and community interests, needs and aspirations;
- be developed with regard to organisational vision, goals and objectives and broader social policy goals; and
- be interpreted and analysed in accordance with the analytical, conceptual, principles and rights frameworks introduced earlier.

The following section includes a discussion of both performance indicators used in program evaluation and social indicators which form the basis for considering broader social policies and interventions.

Definitions

It was apparent in our discussions that there is some confusion regarding the different meanings attached to performance indicators and social indicators, and other concepts regarding standards and measures. For the purposes of this research we have employed the following concepts.

A **Performance Indicator** may be defined as *Standardised information by which progress towards efficiency and effectiveness objectives may be measured.* (Spiller Gibbins & Swan 2000:4)

Social indicators are *summary measures which reflect on aspects of social wellbeing which, when produced repeatedly over time, can indicate how social conditions are changing.* (Trewin 2001:74).

A **benchmark** may be defined as: *The best available 'score' on the performance indicator based on the performance of organisations delivering a similar service under comparable conditions- thus representing 'best practice'.* (Spiller Gibbins & Swan 2000:4)

Benchmarks and indicators do not stand alone: They are critical tools for the larger process of planning, which includes goal setting, policy making and evaluation. Thus the effectiveness of indicators and benchmarks ultimately depends on, and to some extent predetermines, how effective these larger planning processes are. (Salvaris et al 2000b:52)

Indicators can be used to measure the effectiveness of projects, programs in achieving national, regional and/or local community or organisation goals. Indicators can monitor progress towards goals over varying periods of time from medium term to long term. Indicators are iterative.

4.2 Performance Indicators and project/program evaluation

As Spiller, Gibbins, Swan (2000:4) state '[f]or performance indicators to be useful they must have a clear purpose and this should be to measure whether clearly defined outcomes have been achieved.' With respect to housing indicators they state that:

The difficulty faced by program evaluators in framing performance indicators is that national housing assistance programs are applied in isolation from each other (eg rent assistance and public housing). In this environment it is not clear what outcomes are to be achieved. The 1999 CSHA, for example, is entirely focused on inputs and no clear outcomes are defined. Spiller, Gibbins, & Swan (2000:4)

The lack of clear outcomes is matched by unclear program objectives. They argue that while housing jurisdictions draw on research findings and strategic priorities in developing their program objectives, these objectives are not always clearly expressed. The existing emphasis on program inputs has implications for housing evaluation.

According to Spiller, Gibbins and Swan (2000:4)

Public rental housing program evaluation tends to focus on inputs; and gravitates towards testing the cost effectiveness solutions (making finite funding set by government policy go as far as possible) rather than whether a priori objectives have been achieved. Such objectives might refer to outcomes like the adequacy of supply of public rental (standards, type, location, etc.), affordability, reduced stigma on estates, and so on.

Assessing the sector cost benefit analysis Spiller, Gibbins and Swan (2000:8) suggest that 'project evaluation cannot be driven by a formula driven approach,' rather evaluators/analysts must be able to adapt evaluation techniques to the particular circumstances of any project. Looking at urban renewal programs Spiller, Gibbins and Swan (2000:14) have included the 'performance indicators' developed by the South Australian Department of Human Services which include 'social exclusion.' These programs provide a good example of where the effectiveness or otherwise of housing-led interventions are linked with broader social indicators of wellbeing. As they point out 'the indicators do not in themselves correlate with costs and benefits, but they potentially provide a basis for ranking the before and after situation.' The indicators they include are:

Table 4.1: An example of social policy performance indicators.

Physical environment	Social Environment
Proportion of public rental	Unemployment rate
Proportion of 'double units'	Proportion low income
Proportion of old stock	Proportion of transfer' payments
Economic Environment	ABS index of social disadvantage
Capital value movement	Child protection notifications
Vacancies	Domestic violence assessments
Education	Proportion of sole parent families
School leaving	Car ownership
Basic skills test	Age of population
Truancy	Housing turnover
Crime	Health
Housing theft	Community mental health clients
Assaults	Community mental health services
Adult imprisonment	Acute inpatient separation data
Juvenile detention	

These indicators are intended to highlight how specific program goals can influence or change social circumstances, particularly disadvantage. However, program indicators also invariably reflect dominant social values, norms and expectations. The indicators above are heavily weighed towards negative characteristics, against which decreases are expected to be achieved as evidence of effectiveness, often using or reliant upon aggregate data of broad social issues. Moreover often these indicators are expected to provide evidence of the effectiveness of program outcomes which may be unrelated to program objectives, or which may be one of several concurrent strategies (Walker & Oxenham 2001). Another difficulty with these indicators as measures of program success is that they include a range of diverse and not necessarily relevant measures. That is there may be no necessary correlation between existing program inputs and measurable outcomes or indeed the indicators chosen to measure either or both of these program elements.

Spiller Gibbins Swan (2000:23) state that in evaluating the cost and benefits of a program policymakers and program decision-makers will want to know who will benefit directly and indirectly and who will incur costs in any project. Those affected by cost or benefits may include the Authority, tenants, relocated tenants, prospective tenants, and other residents in the neighbourhood or society generally. Measuring such distributional costs and benefits becomes even more difficult where there are broader social justice issues. This is particularly likely where there are specific groups (Indigenous, low income etc) more likely to be affected in particular ways (either positive or negative) than other groups. They conclude that it is necessary to undertake research at the program level in order 'to go beyond simply identifying the winner and losers to appreciate the nature of the costs and benefits involved' (loc.cit).

Australia's unique social policy environment and indicator development

Terry Burke and David Hayward (2000) provide a critical analysis of performance indicators in social housing in Australia. They argue that the origins of performance indicators grew out of the new managerialist and economic rationalist ideas that shaped the public sector reform' in the nineties. They suggest that this context 'gave a particular form and direction to performance indicators' which has 'limited their capacity as useful indicators'. (Burke & Hayward 2000:1) In an article titled *Performance Indicators and Social Housing in Australia* Burke and Hayward examine the assumptions, and conceptual and methodical problems associated with social housing indicators.

The adoption of the performance indicators occurred in the context of 'new managerialism', which gained increasing legitimacy and widespread acceptance through the nineties. As Burke and Hayward (2000:2) points out increasingly 'public sector governance' modelled private sector principles' where the emphasis is on contractual agreements to deliver outputs. They point that

Performance indicators are crucial to this system, for they form the basis of contractual relationships as well as the benchmark against which performance is to be assessed. In many ways the success or otherwise of the new managerialism is dependent upon how well performance indicators work as a policy tool.

It was amid the unique policy context of the early nineties, described in the previous chapter, that the government established a think tank consisting of the Industry Commission and the Department of Social Security to develop housing indicators to establish national or agency level benchmarks. The use of performance indicators was officially adopted by the States under the 1996 Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA), along with nation-wide principles and practices, which included reporting on indicators. States and State Housing Authorities also established an array of indicators to enable them to evaluate their performance against the national indicators. These are outlined in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Layers of performance indicators

Level	Purpose
National	How well is social housing meeting its objectives? How well are state housing agencies performing? How does the performance of social housing agencies compare with other sectors, for example, private rental sector?
State Housing Agency	How well is the agency or federation (of agencies) meeting its objectives? How does its performance compare with other like organisations?
State Housing Agency Business unit	How well is a specific function or business performing, for example, housing finance, stock production, and rental housing management?
SHA regional offices	How well is a particular region performing, either overall or for a specific function/business?
SHA work unit (teams)	How well is a work unit achieving its objectives? How does its performance compare with other similar work units?
SHA employee	Does the individual's work performance meet agreed targets?

According to Burke and Hayward the status accorded to performance indicators in the social housing management in Australia remains problematic. They argue that given the fact that

performance indicators 'are as much creatures of political ideology as they are good management tools any use of indicators has to be placed under critical scrutiny.' (Burke & Hayward 2000:1). They do make the point, however, that despite the earlier limitations recent developments in performance indicators look more promising as 'effective performance measures' for the future.

Burke and Hayward's paper provides a critique of the performance indicators used by national and state housing agencies although they identify problems with indicators at all other levels listed in Table 4.1 above. With respect to specific problems with housing indicators Burke and Hayward suggest there is:

- *Lack of clarity as to the strategic objective for public housing to which indicators were to relate*
- *Lack of clear links between performance indicators and strategic objectives (however defined)*
- *Lack of clarity of purpose of indicators*
- *Data bases inadequate to the task of performance indicators*
- *Data not being particularly useful in part because they do not actually reflect performance*
- *Omissions*
- *Marginal benefit for the amount of work in collecting them. (Burke & Haywood 2000:9).*

As Burke and Hayward (2000:9) note 'there is a strong logic behind the [development] of a comprehensive system of performance indicators' which makes it 'difficult to see how and why anyone could see this as anything other than a positive development.' However, Shiel (1997) has also developed a critique of performance indicators and the way they have been interpreted and employed by management. He lists three main shortcomings. The first involves the specification of performance indicators can create a 'moral hazard for politicians and departmental heads, particularly if the goals they are expected to measure are highly and rightfully desired but unlikely to be achieved. They tend couch policies in generalised statements, which encompass but not necessarily focus on specific social issues. Homelessness, for example, is a case in point. They make statements such as providing more housing for those in need rather than specific statements aimed towards the eradication of homelessness where any reduction or otherwise in homelessness would serve as a clear indicator of government performance.

The second criticism of managerialism for Shiel involves the assumed linkage and measurability between outputs and outcomes of programs tied to social policy areas. Given the complex inter-causal relationship between social issues and causes and policy intervention it is widely accepted that is very difficult to tie specific social policy interventions/strategies with appropriate and meaningful performance indicators.

Another criticism of performance indicators is that existing accountability structures and processes encourage service providers to develop indicators, which focus on core business (efficiency factors) and their subsequent achievement at the expense of other activities. As Burke and Hayward point out this may actually make the 'original problem more severe' or create unanticipated consequences with greater costs to the community (2000:10). They explain it thus 'if the performance measure is, say, the proportion of dwellings allocated to those in most need, then the easy solution to achieve performance is simply to create a tighter definition of 'need.' (loc.cit). This still disadvantages many people in need. They also illustrate how tactics between SHA's (which were used in the late nineties) to reduce rent arrears can serve to increase evictions and the risks of homelessness and hence increase the demand on emergency and crisis housing services. They make the ironic point that while the performance

indicators for SHAs were being met or improved the costs across the sector may have exceeded the original rent arrears. (loc.cit)

There are other problems with several of the performance measures used in the housing area which were outlined in the Positioning Paper. These include tying performance indicators to the concept of special needs groups Neutze, Sanders & Jones (2000:17) highlight the limitations of using measures based solely on need. They conclude that using these indicators to allocate funds may perversely penalise programs or organisations which are effectively addressing housing issues.

Burke and Hayward (2000:13) conclude that the summary provided in their table (Appendix 5) shows that:

the objectives of housing policy are too vaguely specified to have any meaning; the performance indicators are systematically flawed and bear no relationship either to outcomes or outputs. Indeed so severe are the problems right across all of the indicators that it is difficult to understand why the performance indicator has been able to build up the momentum

Nevertheless despite these criticisms they did make the point that new indicators more promising. The area of most promise is the focus on broader social indicators. Cobb and Rixford (1998) are also more optimistic about the potential of social indicators to have greater relevance in informing public policy and ultimately program level analysis.

4.3 Social indicators and policy analysis

There has been a growing interest both in Australia and overseas in the development of 'social indicators sets', which can provide multidimensional views of community strengths or wellbeing. (Black, A., & Hughes, P. 2001). There has been a gradual increase in the number of community or social indicator projects in Australia over the past few years (Salvaris, 2000) which are reminiscent of earlier development movements in 1970's in Australia. This is supported by the establishment of a Senate Inquiry into National Citizenship Indicators which was conducted over three years and culminated in a Federal government commitment to the National Citizenship Project (Salvaris) to establish a national framework to measure progress towards social democracy and wellbeing. Salvaris (2000) describes the goals of the project as encompassing participatory, human rights approaches to develop benchmarks and indicators for the good community and the good society. Many of these projects parallel indicator research being undertaken in the United States and Canada.

There are different types of indicators used to measure social policy interventions in Australia and their impact on community wellbeing and sustainable development. The same social indicators can be used to describe the wellbeing of particular communities or whole populations. Examples of these include population growth rate; unemployment rate; crime rates; proportion of population in receipt of government allowances; number of doctors per population.

It is apparent that the shift to a whole to government perspective requires policymakers and program managers to think more seriously and critically about the likely impact of poorly conceived indicators upon another sector of government services. As Burke and Hayward point out linkages are an important part of the whole of government approach and yet they remain an 'unmeasured role of the public housing system' (2000:14)

Measuring Wellbeing

In a recent ABS publication, *Measuring Social Wellbeing*, Trewin (2001:54) has identified the main measurement issues as follows:

- How to measure extended family and other people providing care functions
- How to measure family formation and dissolution (including defacto relationships)
- How to measure community wellbeing including social capital, social cohesion and social exclusion.

As Trewin notes (2001:68) 'Defining the scope and boundaries of Australia's formal system of welfare and community services has always been difficult for policymakers and statisticians.' It is important to differentiate between welfare services and social security. Welfare services generally reflect state priorities and may involve services which are of direct benefit to particular groups and which link with other social services such as housing whereas social security relates mainly to payment of pensions or cash benefits at a national level. The former measurement issues relate to social security matters while latter relate to social wellbeing and welfare.

For the purpose of this paper the discussion is limited to considering the framework which links housing with non shelter outcomes that in some way or other contribute to strengthening family and community, contribute to self-determination and their interrelationship as identified in the Positioning Paper.

Families and communities are crucial to the wellbeing of individuals and to society. As Trewin states:

Families and communities are core structural elements in society – the basic building blocks of Australia's national life. Families take on a large proportion of the economic and physical burden of care for individuals in society, particularly for children, aged people or people with disabilities. If operating effectively, the family, as a self-contained welfare unit, is therefore a crucial mechanism in the health of society as a whole. (Trewin 2001:54).

Another useful approach for organising data to measure wellbeing involves an analysis of the transactions between families and communities in relation to support and care. Trewin suggests that data about the exchanges or transactions between families and communities are useful indicators of wellbeing. (2001:69) Trewin identifies three main forms of exchange: 'those that occur within households or families; those that occur between individuals and the wider community; and those that the family unit undertakes with the wider community.' As Trewin explains

When these exchanges take place, it is usually with the aim of maintaining, improving, or repairing the wellbeing of one or both parties involved. These exchanges are therefore useful indicators of wellbeing and how it is changing within the family and the community area of concern. (2001:69)

These indicators of wellbeing are particularly relevant in Indigenous contexts and the next chapter confirms the importance of integrating such indicators to measure the effectiveness or success of existing Indigenous housing programs.

According to Trewin to be useful to inform policy formulation and analysis indicators of wellbeing need to encompass two categories of change: Structural change which reflects policy shifts and responses to changes in the social and economic environment; and, life course change which encompasses changes in the social, emotional, financial, occupational situations of families or

households as well as changes in family dynamics and development phases that occur within families or households over time (Trewin 2001:70). It is apparent that these are important aspects which need to be considered within the government policy formulation, implementation and evaluation and funding allocation process. When families are unable to function well the social and financial costs are extended to wider community. Community organisations and voluntary groups can assist families and individuals who do not have access to sufficient resources or capacity. Communities can also contribute to the positive well being of individuals and families, providing social networks and creating a sense of belonging and cohesion. Conversely, however, communities experiencing social disadvantage or social exclusion, poor access to services and amenities, high crime rates can have a negative impact upon individual and family and community wellbeing. In their review of the studies regarding the links between housing and non-housing outcomes Mullins, Western and Broadbent (2001) concluded that while there was little evidence to show causal connections between housing and nine key socio cultural factors. Reporting on this same study Mullins and Western (2001) state that the associations that do exist between housing and a range of social outcomes (and which are predominantly negative) tend to pinpoint 'individuals or households with distinctive defining characteristics' (Mullins and Western 2001:17). However they also acknowledge that limitations of such research and the importance of panel studies over long periods of time to obtain more conclusive data.

In addition to identifying exchanges it is important that indicators of wellbeing can help to shed light on the different types of changes that individuals, families or communities may experience over time as well as identify levels of wellbeing in the contemporary situation. Community networks and neighbour and extended family support networks play a crucial role in individual and family wellbeing in Indigenous contexts. Trewin acknowledges that there is a growing need to understand the importance of social networks to the health and wellbeing of individuals and the larger community. Information is needed to inform policy and programs that will encourage and maintain supportive social networks and make these widely accessible. (2001:62). He points out that the '[e]merging interest in social capital and its role in maintaining the health of communities is linked with many of these issues.' (loc.cit). As mentioned in Chapter 2 the growing interest in community building and community renewal has spurred an interest in measures of social wellbeing, social sustainability and social capital. Black and Hughes have linked a range of characteristics which are used as measures and Eva Cox (n.d) has formulated a social capital audit.

Measuring social capital

The key elements identified as indicators of social capital by Black and Hughes (2001:36) are:

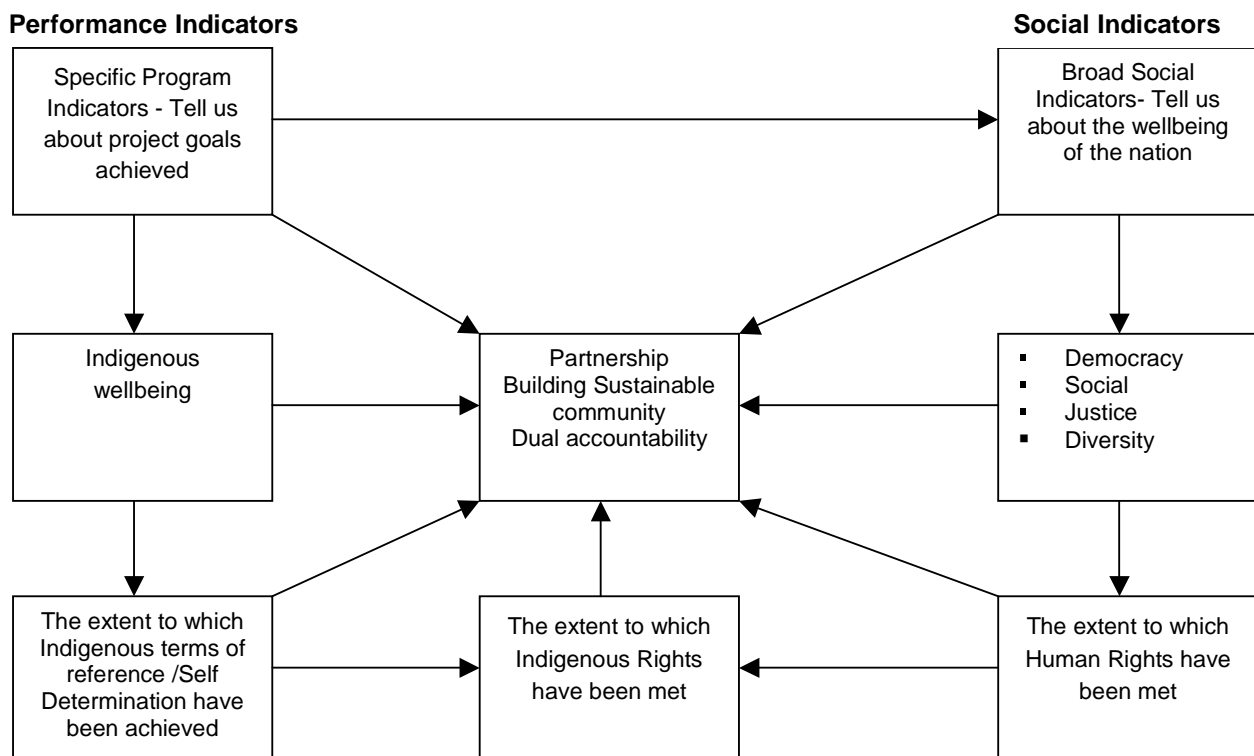
- Trust
- Reciprocity
- Shared norms and values
- Shared purpose and commitments
- Proactivity

There is also a need to have a greater understanding of the way in which individual groups are linked with family and community factors (interact with other variables (types of family – one parent families, families from rural or remote area and so on). Trewin also makes the point that understanding which families are at risk of disadvantage is crucial to ensure that their particular needs 'can be effectively targeted by government interventions, benefits and services.' (2001:63) Trewin states that:

Indigenous families have a high risk of disadvantage. They often face the same disadvantage that rural families face. Cultural and language barriers sometimes limit their full receipt of government or community services, and they may experience discrimination within the community. The very specific traditional family roles and networks of Australia's Indigenous peoples were disrupted during colonization. The extent to which these need protection and revitalization, and the means by which this might be effectively achieved, continue to be important social issues. (2001:63)

Dudgeon et al (1998) also highlight the importance of recognising cultural factors in developing indicators of social capital and the need to exercise caution that mainstream indicators which may reflect some different elements of familial responsibility, social linkages and building community (Cox n.d) are not inadvertently or unintentionally used to the detriment of Indigenous people. The dangers of this are even greater if it is assumed that group characteristics are greater determinants of poor health or even their housing circumstances (Mullins et al 2000), rather than firstly, acknowledging that housing related variables (location, standard etc) can play a major part in contributing to peoples health and or economic situation, and secondly, recognising the role played by structural and systemic impediments. Obviously, as the discussion in the Positioning Paper highlights housing plays an important role in contributing to the individual and collective health and wellbeing Indigenous Australians. Drawing on these discussions highlights the importance of bringing together the ideas in Chapter 3 and 4 to suggest that indicators in Indigenous contexts need to straddle both Indigenous and non-Indigenous wellbeing as suggested in the diagram below.

Figure 4: Indicators Linkages to Indigenous Wellbeing



The next chapter applies and refines the framework developed in the Positioning Paper. Importantly it also highlights the existing drift or slippage between the contemporary policy commitment to social wellbeing and the continued adherence to the legacy of economic rationalism and managerialism identified by Black and Hughes (2001) and discussed in Chapter Two.

4.4 Policy Mapping in Indigenous Housing Contexts

The 1999-2003 CSHA shifted from a multilateral to a unilateral agreement, which allows states to negotiate principles, practices and indicators specific to states or territories. According to Burke and Haywood (2000) this latest agreement has reduced the importance or relevance of some indicators for both the purpose of national reporting and for guiding the program implementation management at state level.

However, this is not necessarily the case in the area of Indigenous housing where it remains critical to obtain appropriate, reliable and robust data for both resource allocations and future policy directions. The CSWGIH has made recommendation to the Minister for Housing to support continued work on the development of performance indicators and data collection strategies for Indigenous housing(CSWGIH, 2001:29).

As identified in the Positioning Papers since 1997 there have been a number of significant and much needed changes in Indigenous housing policy, programs and infrastructure to address the urgent housing needs in urban rural and remote areas (see list Appendix 6). These have been formalised through State and Commonwealth Governments, Indigenous Affairs and housing departments. These infrastructure changes and program initiatives targeted for specific areas will have significant implications for the future. Many of the policy frameworks and guidelines which have developed for housing related activities ranging from planning through to monitoring, research and evaluation are encouraging when reviewed in accordance with criteria and principles outlined in the refined principles framework as outlined in Appendix 2. They also confirm the case for more appropriate evaluation approaches and indicators to measure self-determination, sustainability and social transformation.

As we concluded in the Positioning Paper there is widespread agreement that indicators need to be readily obtained by existing data, need to free of ambiguous or problematic interpretation and able to assist those who are the intended beneficiaries of any policy, program or intervention. In the case of Indigenous housing these conditions are not being met.

It is important that the outcomes of policy and program changes and restructuring can be critically and appropriately monitored and evaluated to more meaningfully inform all stages of the policy and funding process. It is also essential to carry out longitudinal research in different Indigenous contexts to identify links between housing and broader social outcomes.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Indigenous Housing Working Group

With respect to Indigenous housing the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Indigenous Housing Working Group (AIHWIHG) have developed performance indicators to assess the overall effectiveness (the extent to which outcomes and objectives are being met) and efficiency (the extent which resources are producing outputs) of housing assistance programs. The performance indicators identified include:

- Level of housing provision- proportion of actual provision to agreed targets
- Housing need status- proportion of Indigenous households in need being assisted
- Housing stock amenity/condition
- Customer satisfaction

- Cost of housing production; and
- Property administration and stock upgrade costs. (CSWGIH, 2001:26)

Preliminary trials of data collection revealed the need for greater coordination and the development and implementation of national data standards. From the perspective of the CSWGIH the value of performance indicators in assessing housing performance is expected to increase in relation to improved availability of useful and uniform data and the increased capacity of organisations to collect data. (CSWGIH, 2001:26-27).

The importance of Data Availability

Research currently examining links between health and housing conditions is somewhat constrained by the limitations of the data source available for the analysis. Most of the quantitative data to conduct research into the links between housing and other social determinants is drawn from ABS sources. The 1995 NHS provides valuable data to examine the links between housing tenure and overcrowding and health and material wealth. However, as Waters (2000:26) the limitations of the NHS mean it is not possible to impact of a wider range of housing variables. Waters points out the National Housing Survey 1995 does not include questions to obtain information related to factors such as housing affordability, receipt of housing assistance, and the adequacy and appropriateness of housing. While these variables are of enormous interest to policymakers in general they are crucial elements to develop baseline information to evaluate Indigenous housing programs and interventions.

The National Framework for Design, Construction and Maintenance of Housing

it is apparent that these guidelines are designed to ensure that safe, healthy sustainable housing. They encompass the following principles:

- Safety
- Healthy living practices
- Quality
- Sustainability

Furthermore, they specify that consultancy in design, building and maintenance should have regard for local cultural and social issues and geographic environment.

While these guidelines are welcome they still fall short of ensuring a greater degree of Indigenous control or encouraging capacity building and employment in Indigenous community contexts although there are examples where research in Indigenous community housing is being undertaken with a focus on capacity building through ATSIC.

Department of Family and Community Services Housing Indicators

The housing responsibilities of the Department of Family and Community Services are set out in The Housing Assistance Act which encompasses the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement whereby joint funding housing projects are negotiated with the States and Territories. 'The Housing Assistance Act 1996 is an Act to assist people to obtain access to housing that is affordable and appropriate to their needs, and to provide assistance for other housing-related purposes.' (Family and Community Services, 1999:73).

The Annual Report 1998-99 reveals a vision for mainstream and Indigenous housing that is congruent with the argument we put forward in the Positioning Paper and have further developed in this Final Paper. 'In 1997, Commonwealth, State and Territory Housing Ministers agreed to work towards providing safer, healthier and more sustainable housing for Indigenous

people' (Department of Family and Community Services, 1999:74). Furthermore, an increased proportion of funding was necessary for essential 'housing-health' related infrastructure, maintaining and upgrading houses and enhancing the housing management capacity of indigenous communities, e.g. asset management training. (Department of Family and Community Services, 1999:74).

The mismatch of indicators and program goals

However our review of actual programs confirms our previous discussions regarding the problems of indicators. It highlights how the intrinsic goals which shape the initial programs have become secondary to instrumental goals because of the emphasis on efficiency measures such of how much money was spent on assistance. The performance indicators used by Family and Community Services to measure these goals within the Aboriginal rental housing program are:

- Total amount of assistance provided;
- Targeting assistance to those most in need;
- Affordability of the assistance provided;
- Match of dwelling to household size;
- Timeliness of assistance;
- Efficient use of housing assets; and
- Value of housing assets. (Department of Family and Community Services, 1999:74).

As Table 4.3 below shows there is often very little fit between goals and the indicators established to measure a program's effectiveness or success. Those that are well developed tend to focus on efficiency outcomes rather than effectiveness outcomes. Many of the indicators that have been developed provide limited information regarding many of the goals set by the CSHA for Aboriginal housing programs. The goals set out by the above policy and agreements are outlined in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Goals and Performance Indicators for Aboriginal Rental Housing Program

Aboriginal Rental Housing Program goals	Existing F&Cs Performance Indicators
Affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability of the assistance provided
Appropriate to their needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match of dwelling to household size • Timeliness of the assistance • Targeting assistance to those in need
Assistance provided for other housing related purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total amount of assistance provided
Safer housing	
Healthier housing	
Sustainable housing	
Housing related infrastructure	
Maintaining houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient use of housing assets
Upgrading houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value of housing assets
Enhancing the management capacity of Indigenous communities	
Extrinsic economic goals	

The shaded areas are Family and Community Services broader goals for all housing programs

Some of these indicators may be used to assist in measuring one or more goals. For example 'match of dwelling to household size' may also assist in measuring 'healthier housing' due to the links between overcrowding and health although this indicator is not enough by itself as overcrowding alone does not specify the condition of a household's health. Furthermore the ambiguity of this indicator is difficult to assess housing-health intersections as it also refers to under-utilisation of housing which is more aligned with 'extrinsic economic goals'. Even with possible crossovers of some of the indicators they are still not sufficient to gain a full understanding of the progress made towards broader governmental goals for Aboriginal housing.

In comparison mainstream housing programs funded by Family and Community Services are listed in Appendix 7 with their goals and indicators. Indigenous people in Western Australia access some of these programs such as the Crises Accommodation Program. As the table in Appendix 7 illustrates there is significant variation amongst the indicators used to measure programs, some vary due to the type of program and the specific target group involved. Others however, such as 'consumer satisfaction' could, and arguably should, be used in all programs to assist in discovering if client needs are being met. Across all programs (except for the Crisis Accommodation Program) there is a heavier weighting of indicators to measure 'economic goals' of efficiency as opposed to programmatic goals. The problems that arise from this sort of weighting are discussed below in relation to Indigenous housing programs although they may have equal relevance to mainstream programs that also cater for Indigenous people.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that a high proportion of Indigenous people are accessing mainstream organisations especially in Perth and the surrounding districts. Some organisations such as an East Metropolitan Housing provider have recently employed an Indigenous support worker to assist cross-cultural support due to the rise in numbers of Indigenous clients. This provides a challenge to government in producing goals and indicators for mainstream providers who are servicing Indigenous people that are congruent with Indigenous programmatic goals.

The major difference between mainstream housing programs in Appendix 7 and the Aboriginal housing program outlined above at Table 4.2 is the far greater number of agreed goals in the Aboriginal Housing Program. Interestingly, however, there are no indicators developed to measure these goals. This means that programs cannot be held accountable to meeting these goals even though they are expected to report against all of the specified indicators. Furthermore, it means that programs which are often delivered through Indigenous organisations, such as those discussed in the case studies in the next chapter, may be meeting these goals are not recognised and so 'best practice' and program innovations are in danger of being overlooked. Moreover, organisational performance is being unrealistically measured against efficiency indicators which are is often to their detriment.

The matrix below incorporates the proposed indicators from Appendix 2 against the Family and Community Services goals for the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program. We suggest that these indicators provide more useful and appropriate measuring tools for identifying whether or not programs are meeting their goals and also encouraging developments in 'best practice'.

Table 4.4: Proposed Indicators to meet Government Goals

Government Goals For Aboriginal Rental Housing Program	Alternative Indicators based on Appendix 2
Affordable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability
Appropriate to their needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally adequacy • Maintenance of family and social networks • Location • Habitability • Accessibility • Security of tenure
Assistance provided for other housing related purposes	
Safer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety
Healthier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual/family and community health and wellbeing
Sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of incarceration and legal entanglement • Indigenous cultural practices and responses • Non-indigenous community perceptions and responses to the program • Changes in government policies effecting Indigenous people
Related infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate Education facilities • Appropriate Employment • Services and information • Adequate financial resources and management
Maintaining upgrading houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitability • Cultural adequacy
Enhancing the management capacity of Indigenous communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous control
Extrinsic economic goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These need to remain as secondary indicators as they are instrumental factors and are not directly related to programmatic goals

It is important to reiterate that the type of evaluation undertaken and the nature of the indicators developed depend on assumption as to whether evaluation is regarded primarily as a component of monitoring, accountability and governance or for empowerment, learning, capacity building, stronger families and communities. It also depends on the scope and level of the evaluation. There is a danger in isolating specific policy goals as Neutze, Sanders and Jones (2000:16) highlight with their example of overcrowding. 'If overcrowding is reduced through capital policy interventions, affordability need may well increase unless addressed through accompanying recurrent policy interventions'. We would also suggest that in such a broad policy arena that government intervention alone is not fully able account for whether all outcomes achieved or not.

There is considerable discussion taking place in recent literature with respect to the efficacy and usefulness and reliability or measures of such goals. The areas of particular interest to this research are: Affordability; Appropriateness to needs; Sustainability; and Enhancing the management capacity of Indigenous communities and impacts on health and wellbeing.

The efficacy of existing affordability measures

Affordability is recognised in all government programs as an indication of whether the programs are meeting the internationally agreed housing costs impact on a household's income of no more than 25%. Achieving affordable housing is used as both a goal and an indicator however there are some problems with this measure. According to the Aboriginal Housing Working Group (1999) currently there is as yet no officially accepted measure of affordability that is applicable to all housing tenures in Australia. In other AHURI research examining whether 'housing conditions impact on health inequalities between Australia rich and poor', Waters (2001:9) also makes the point that 'nor are there nationally agreed uniform standards, an official poverty line, or nationally accepted equivalence scales for adjusting income to account for the needs of households of different sizes or compositions.' As Waters states 'This means that alternative measures of housing problems such as affordability and overcrowding can produce different results, making comparisons difficult.' This is clearly an area that is crucial to achieve clarification and agreement in the future.

Interrelationship between housing and other factors on health and wellbeing.

There is a growing body of research in Australia which confirms a link between health and different housing variables. In particular, most of the research in Australia tends to focus on types of housing tenure (including homelessness), housing standards and degree of overcrowding and housing affordability. For example, Phibbs (2001) suggests there is a link between insecurity of tenure and health due to the stress involved with constant moves and the associated changes in medical service provision. They also suggests that housing affordability (or lack of it) can impact negatively upon health because it decreases the ability of individuals and families to purchase foods and medical support. Poor housing standards and amenities such as heating can lead to severe illness and 'excess winter morbidity' (Environment Epidemiology Unit 1999). And of course the links between homelessness and poor health are well documented (Dunn 2000).

In some cases these variables become considerably interwoven suggesting clear links but not necessarily clarifying causes. As Cobb and Rixford point out in *Lessons learned from the history of social indicators*, for indicators to be useful they need to be able to provide causal explanation not just descriptions of association which are then wrongly interpreted or acted upon as representative of reality rather than just measures of arbitrary elements of it. (1998:2). Qualitative indicators may play an important role in moving beyond confirming associations between variables to clarifying causal links. There are examples of some attempts that have been made to explain the interrelationship between income, housing and health, Waters (2000) draws on British research that suggests that there is a 'direct relationship between psychology traits such as self-efficacy and or self-esteem and health'. While research by McIntyre concludes that housing tenure may be a marker of the existence of such traits, others (for example Howden-Chapman Wilson (2000:37) cited in Waters (2000:12)) suggest that owning a home may contribute to health promoting psychological characteristics such as self-esteem.

Winter (1994) also suggests that having a sense of control over one's situation is essential to wellbeing. There are other studies in addition to these that emphasise the important link for individual and (community) health and wellbeing and having a sense of control over one's everyday lives. In our Positioning Paper we suggested that the exercise and recognition of Indigenous self-determination in Indigenous housing contexts is yet another equally relevant variable which is perhaps more important than home ownership in contributing to individual and collective self-efficacy and felt control among Indigenous people. At the same time achieving home ownership at affordable rate in a chosen location with other family members may be of evidence of achievement of self-determination.

5 Applying our framework to existing programs

5.1 Introduction

The opportunity to apply our evaluation principles framework (Appendix 2) came about through discussions with the spokesperson for the Coalition of Aboriginal Agencies (CoAA). He was working at the time with the Aboriginal Affairs Department (AAD) and Contract and Management Services² (CAMS) to develop an equitable and culturally appropriate evaluation process for a program that had been developed by the CoAA in collaboration and consultation with a range of government departments. His discussions with us highlighted his frustration as he felt that CAMS had not fully understood or accurately translated the needs of the CoAA and the Indigenous Families Program (IFP) – the operational arm of the CoAA. He gave us a copy of the CAMS developed framework and asked us to critique it to assist him in his next meeting with CAMS and AAD.

Shortly after we provided Indigenous community organisation stakeholders with the main findings of our Positioning Paper we were invited to apply our framework to an existing housing program. While the request to engage in this process represented a shift in the original methodology it also constituted both an ethical obligation and a timely opportunity to apply and test our research framework with an Indigenous community based organisation that has been involved in this research from its inception. It was an opportunity to apply many of the principles identified in Appendix 2 including: ‘to support the achievement of Indigenous futures and to benefit Indigenous people’, into practice in our own research. This process gave us the opportunity to fulfill both of these ethical principles and obligations at a community level with tangible outcomes. Furthermore, it allowed us to further critique and reflect on our own work.

5.2 Case Study 1

The CAMS Evaluation Framework - IFP

The IFP is the result of the CoAA’s strategy to achieve an ‘holistic’ approach to Indigenous community wellbeing. This case study involves a review of the evaluation framework and the indicators/measures developed for the Indigenous Families Program (IFP) by Contract and Management Services (CAMS). Our discussions with the spokespersons and reflections on our own framework raised a number of issues with the CAMS framework:

The spokesperson claimed that CAMS did not fully understand the needs of the CoAA or IFP. He questioned their ability or willingness to ‘listen and respond to the aspirations of the participants’ or to assist the organisation to achieve the goal of ‘Indigenous Self-determination’. From the organisation’s perspective CAMS were not able to identify and establish an evaluation process that would be acceptable at a community level.

Staff members of both the organisation and the program expressed concerns that the CAMS evaluation methodologies were not guided by culturally appropriate research/evaluation principles. They gave a number of reasons for this conclusion, but the most significant was the lack of consultation in identifying the scope of the evaluation and the lack of acknowledgement of indicators defined by program managers within the organisation. Staff members interviewed

² As of 30 June 2001 CAMS has been separated and merged with two other departments; The works based component of CAMS has merged with the Ministry of Housing to become the Department of Housing and Works (DHW). CAMS’ staff working in the online and e-commerce area have combined with the Department of Commerce and Trade to create the Department of Industry and Technology (DoIT). The strategic, contracting and industry support elements of CAMS now operate within this new entity.

expressed concerns that the existing evaluation approach overlooked many of the positive aspects of the program and was therefore in danger of further disadvantaging the CoAA, IFP and their clients.

As suggested in the Positioning Paper culturally appropriate methodologies have been developed to overcome a legacy of evaluation and research practices that have disadvantaged Indigenous people. Indigenous people have developed such principles so that the Indigenous community can benefit from research and evaluation.

The spokesperson for CoAA was very assertive about the importance of dual-accountability as being fundamental to an effective evaluation methodology. The CAMS methodology supports a 'bottom up', one-way accountability model whereby the agency is accountable to government funding bodies for outcomes but in turn the government is not held accountable for delivering appropriate resources, processes and/or procedures. According to managers interviewed this is highly problematical for Indigenous controlled organisations, not only do they feel set up for failure, but the level of accountability contradicts the notion of self-determination.

In addition concerns regarding the lack of partnership, negotiation and dual accountability within the evaluation processes were also reflected in the performance indicators and outcome measures established for the evaluation. While these indicators were developed on the basis of discussions between CAMS and the IFP and the CoAA the first draft of the measures raised significant concerns for the CoAA and the IFP. As a consequence we were asked to critique the CAMS evaluation framework using the framework we were developing through this project. The results of analysis of the CAMS indicator framework can be found in Appendix 4 & 4a.

Issues Facing CAMS

As already mentioned above the establishment of the IFP represented a whole of government approach to overcoming a range of interrelated social issues the CoAA sought and obtained funding from a number of different government bodies. Each of these funding bodies has specified the achievement different outcomes as one of conditions of their funding. This required a multi-dimensional evaluation model to measure the various outcomes being sought as well as critique the goals to ensure that they are both attainable and measurable. As the managing body CAMS had the main responsibility to develop measures that were both suitable to the community organisation and the funding bodies. The overall program goal of reducing the involvement in the criminal justice system of 10 extended families in the Perth Metropolitan area. The other agreed goals set out in 'Schedule One: Indigenous Family Program Description' are listed in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Government Funding Body Goals

Goals	Funding Bodies
Overall goal is: Reduced involvement in the criminal justice system of 10 extended families in the Perth Metro area	
Better social, cultural and economic outcomes for Indigenous people	Department of Aboriginal Affairs
A safe and orderly community	Ministry of Justice
A level of public safety and security in which individuals are confident to go about their daily activities	Police Department
Families achieve self reliance and are skilled care for their children. Individuals and children are protected from abuse in families and are supported through crises and where possible children remain with their families.	Family and Children's Services

Goals	Funding Bodies
Access to Housing	Ministry of Housing (Housing & Works)
Quality education for all Western Australians who choose Government schooling	Education Department
Improvement in health by a reduction in preventable disease, injury disability and premature death	Health Department
Reduce the extent and the impact of drug abuse	Drug Strategy Office

Except for the overall program goal CAMS incorporated the broad organisational goals or vision statements of the particular department or funding body. CAMS have incorporated these goals with quantifiable measuring techniques.

Table 5.2: CAMS Outcomes and Measures

Outcome	Measures
Primary Outcome Reduce the entry to the justice system of up to 10 Noongar extended family groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of extended families involved • No of people in families
'The Justice System'	Number of family members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under restraining orders • Under referrals • Under community work orders • On remand • On bail • In jail • Repeat offenders • Family members with no entry to the justice system
Associated Outcome Improved family responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible juveniles attendance at school in time available • Adherence to Family Contract • Reduction in substance abuse • Reduction in domestic violence incidents • Improvement in family management and leadership skills • Improvement in family health/hygiene • Reduction in family suicides • Appropriate referral of statutory issues • Stability of residential occupation • Employment achieved
Extrinsic operational measures of efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This equated to 24 different measures

There are a number of problems that arise from these measures. Twenty four peripheral operational measures were identified in the initial Partnership Agreements developed through CAMS. And although it is not necessary to list them here the sheer amount does highlight the extensive use of operational accountability measures which were not related to either the organisational goals or negotiated outcomes. They were to be collected via standard documents such as minutes from meetings and progress reports. Some staff believed these measures

emphasise the role of evaluation as a tool for organisational accountability and family surveillance rather than a mechanism for organisational capacity building or community development and sustainability.

In order to fully appreciate the problems associated with the development of performance indicators for evaluation it is important to look at some of the policy assumptions underpinning the program. The associated outcome 'improve family responsibility' problematises the family, lacks a framework of dual accountability and an understanding of the broader systemic issues. It implies the family is irresponsible and therefore 'the problem'. By starting from this premise the family are always going to be 'victimised' by the evaluation. Writers such as Cobb and Rixford (1998) have how highlighted this problem plagued program evaluation in the early indicators movements.

Another issue is that many of the measures focus on outcomes rather than causal factors. 'Reduction of substance abuse' assumes that there is substance abuse in the family and also assumes that if it is reduced that it will equate to 'improved family responsibility' and visa-versa. Therefore, placing an overemphasis on the 'family problems' and not taking into account the broader structural and socio-economic variables that may be associated with substance abuse. Randolph and Judd (2001) discuss similar issues with respect to evaluating housing renewal projects.

There are clearly a number of areas that could be improved when applying the principles framework. These include:

Incorporating a systems approach. The measures used by CAMS are not systematic. 'Stability of residential occupation' is very limited for measuring 'access to housing'. Again it places an emphasis on the individual family without taking structural factors into account and therefore it is in danger of producing data that implicates the family as a 'problem'. Furthermore, as a tool of measurement it will not offer the information needed to identify if the family has 'access to housing'. Accessibility and location are more useful for identifying 'access to housing' as they focus on structural issue that may impede on the families right to have access to housing.

However, 'access to housing' is not enough to ensure the families' rights are being met. To take a systematic approach one must first critique the goal to ascertain that it is both suitable and achievable. As a goal access to housing alone does not offer the full range of rights that a family should expect as it doesn't take into account cultural, familial and other structural factors such as appropriateness, standard and the location of the housing. The 1996 Housing Assistance Act offers a more suitable alternative; to provide 'access to housing that is affordable and appropriate to their needs, and to provide assistance for other housing-related purposes.' (Family and Community Services, 1999:73). This offers a goal consistent with Indigenous family needs and government policy which is also broad enough to take into account housing related needs. (see Appendix 7 for indicators)

Establishing achievable timeframes. The goals need to also be placed within achievable time frames and within the context of the program's capabilities. In this instance the overall program goal to 'Reduce the entry to the justice system of up to 10 Noongar extended family groups' is a part of a broader societal issue about reduction of Indigenous people into the justice system, which in turn relies on a 'whole of government approach' and the will and commitment of the broader society to reconciliation and social justice. While the program can work to address family and individual dysfunction there are a number of factors which are outside of either the family's or organisation's control in preventing Indigenous peoples entry into the justice system such as the broader societies attitudes towards Indigenous people and government policy responses. While the CoAA assert the right to establish goals and strategies to attempt to

identify Indigenous solutions to many of the problems being experience it is problematic to expect one organisation to reduce the entry of any group of Indigenous people into the justice system without the full support of government and the Australian people. However, it is imperative the Indigenous organisation's can work with families to assist in reducing some of the factors that lead to Indigenous people's entrance into the justice system.

Adopting a multi-generational approach. The spokesperson for the CoAA states that 'a multi-generational approach' is needed to deal with issues such as the reduction of Indigenous people within the justice system. This position is clearly supported by research of Indigenous approaches in both New Zealand and North America. A multi-generational approach acknowledges the necessity of both sufficient time and resources over and across several generations of Indigenous families to overcome the legacies of colonial policies and history. This raises a challenge for both the policy makers and evaluators as there needs to be short term achievable goals that are part of the broader vision for the program and policy makers. It also reinforces the importance of whole of government and interagency policy approaches and a commitment to the development of indicators which can measure both program level outcomes and the progress towards or achievement of broader social goals.

Using this level of analysis it is possible to suggest that the measures developed by CAMS to measure the IFP goals inadvertently individualise and problematise the behaviours of Indigenous families while the evaluation goals will inevitably set the program up for failure. An alternative is negotiating equitable evaluation goals and developing a full range of indicators that are equitable, transformative and ensure accountability for all stakeholders.

An Alternative to the CAMS Measures

Although they are not developed fully Appendix 4a shows the first draft of an evaluation criteria that starts to deal with the above problems. It is systematic and logical in its application as well as equitable, transformative and deals with issues of dual accountability. The ABS framework (Appendix 8) is also useful in that it provides a set of questions which acknowledge the links between program and system-wide levels.

The outcome of this process is that the spokesperson has placed a moratorium on CAMS work and has reentered into negotiations with AAD for a more culturally appropriate methodology. According to the CoAA spokesperson our work with the agencies assisted the process of empowerment through sharing knowledge/power and resources. In doing so the spokesperson has been able to reclaim the development of the evaluation process in accordance with Indigenous terms of reference. What is heartening is that government officers have been keen to try and alleviate this problem and to incorporate elements of an alternative framework. Subsequent meetings were held with the group and the evaluation has been conducted with greater regard to the principles.

5.3 Case Study 2

Audit of an Indigenous Community Based Organisation

We were also asked to apply the framework to assess the appropriateness of an audit being conducted for an Indigenous community organisation. The audit was undertaken in 'accordance with generally accepted accounting principles in line with Australian Accounting Standards'.

The objectives of the review was to ensure:

- *Controls exist to give assurance that expenditure was adequately supported by evidence, correctly recorded and classified in the financial information system;*

- *The financial management of the organisation was efficient and effective in supplying and supporting accurate financial information; and*
- *Compliance with conditions imposed by [Indigenous Organisation] Funding Agreements.*

The audit report was highly critical of the organisation's financial management processes. This led to a temporary suspension of funding and then conditional funding releases on a fortnightly basis. The organisation is now under constant surveillance with a funding provider's representative based at the organisation checking all financial transactions. This action has been totally disempowering. It has led to uncertainty about the organisation's future and also placed undue stress upon the workers and clients.

The audit findings were critiqued using the evaluation/research principles framework developed in the Positioning Paper. It was agreed that these principles have relevance in this context for two reasons. Firstly, the staff perceive financial audits as fiscal research which need to be guided by research principles. Secondly, as the organisation is managed and controlled by Indigenous people it was felt that Indigenous research principles framework would provide the basis for a 'cultural audit' (Taylor 2001).

Cultural Audit

A 'cultural audit' assesses the cultural appropriateness of practices, processes, language and ways of working in specific Indigenous contexts – it has particular relevance for evaluating how well funding agencies, government service providers as well as employees, employers (especially non-Indigenous employees) within the community organisation. Appendix 9 shows how the audit compares with the research principles established within this project. It highlights the limitations of the Australian Accounting Standards and Chartered Accountants – suggesting the need to reassess their principles when auditing Indigenous organisations. Furthermore, it offers a framework to begin a re-evaluation of auditing principles in Indigenous housing contexts.

Project Relevance

Indigenous housing organisations are subject to at least two types of evaluations, one of which is a programmatic evaluation and the other is a fiscal evaluation (annual audits). Both have the ability to assist with the capacity building of an Indigenous organisation and therefore assisting towards broader societal goals of strengthening communities.

A further relevance of this cultural audit is that it shows the versatility of the research/evaluation principles in Appendix 2. While we are not suggesting that all of these research principles are applicable for all Indigenous people in all situations they can provide a good starting point for discussion about undertaking research and evaluation with Indigenous peoples.

5.4 Case Study 3

Manguri Transitional Accommodation Program

Manguri is an Indigenous controlled community based organisation in the Perth metropolitan area. The staff consist of approximately sixteen people of which half are non-Indigenous. The organisation implements a number of different programs primarily for Indigenous people. These include an employment service, the Transitional Accommodation Program, management and support services, a school, housing maintenance and a community care project for Children at risk. The main aim of the organisation is:

To develop a comprehensive Aboriginal family Support system for Aboriginal people and Aboriginal lifestyle that integrates:

- Identity

- Autonomy
- Respect

This family support system will reflect:

- Individual differences
- Family obligations
- Social responsibilities

These organisation goals are consistent with the individual and collective wellbeing and the broader policy goals of stronger families and communities outlined in our earlier discussion and the attendant social indicators that have been proposed by ABS and proponents of social capital and support the TAP program. The aim of these services is to offer an holistic response to Indigenous people's needs (Appendix 2).

The TAP assists up to 15 Indigenous families at a time in the Perth metro area with the aims of supporting clients with both housing and non-shelter needs often by linking clients to other programs within Manguri but also other Indigenous services outside of Manguri.

Reporting and Evaluation Mechanisms

There are a number of reporting mechanisms that impact on the program:

- Progress Reports. Have to be presented every six months against the measures identified in Appendix 10. This has extensive criteria that is seen as being quite problematic by the TAP staff as they are very time consuming to complete and have little positive impact on the program (the indicators which are discussed below)
- Financial Audits. These are annual and are a requirement for all non-profit agencies. Audits are viewed as a form of financial surveillance by government that be unduly restrictive and time consuming with no positive outcomes for the organisation.
- Program Review. The Minister may require external annual program review to check that the service provider is meeting the service objectives, outputs and outcomes and to help the service meet these requirements. [FACs, 1998:75]
- Specific Program Evaluation. 'As part of the review of the Funded Service an evaluation of a Program forming part of the Funded Service may be conducted. Thirty day's written notification of the evaluation will be forwarded to the Service Provider.' [FACs, 1998:75]
- Annual Report. An annual report needs to be presented to the funding body every year.

Discussion

Apart from the Program Review (which is only required at the Ministers request and presumably when the organisation is deemed as not fulfilling its contract) none of the reporting mechanisms offer any supportive or transformative mechanisms for the organisation. The program Review is equally problematic as it does not work as a regular mechanism for assisting in the development of the organisation. The result of this is that all the reporting mechanisms become tools solely for accountability and surveillance of the Indigenous organisation. They are time-consuming and tend to highlight shortcomings and at the same time overlook positive programs outcomes that fall outside the specified performance indicators.

There are also no mechanisms or processes to ensure dual-accountability between the funding provider and service organisation. All the prescribed mechanisms place an emphasis on the organisation's accountability to government, without a corresponding means to gauge whether the funding body has established mechanisms and resources to support and ensure the organisation can adequately meet the prescribed administration, monitoring and reporting requirements. This creates difficulties for the Indigenous organisation as many of the government policies and procedures impact negatively on the organisation and their clients and

there is no mechanism where the organisation can negotiate with the department or funding agency. The TAP coordinator gave an example of where organisational concerns 'fall on deaf ears' and there is both little interagency linkage over policy and a distinct lack of accountability by government to the possible negative social effects of policy decisions for individuals or groups. The coordinator cited the Homeswest Domestic Violence policy to support her claims; while women in violent relationships are given priority for relocation the policy does not stipulate or recognise the preferences of women to remain in the local area, there are several cases cited where women have been offered housing in Northam, which is situated over 60 kilometres north-east of Perth. Indigenous women in these situations are either forced to move away from their family and other support networks or to stay in a property where they live in fear. Inevitably this impacts on the family and potentially the wider community. Importantly, such policy decisions also place additional strains on the resources of community organisations involved with these Indigenous families, who, under the current accountability model, are still expected to achieve policy and programs objectives regarding Indigenous family support. There is no two-way accountability process to gauge whether a failure to achieve objectives is due to poor policy assumptions, poor organisational management, a combination of both, or some other factors.

As previously discussed there are number of reporting mechanisms that impact on the Transitional Accommodation Program the Progress Reports being the most regular mechanism used for evaluating the program. The TAP program comprises both the goals and indicators established under the funding body program which we discuss in relation to Manguri's organizational goals and objectives as well as the indicator framework that we have developed.

The Progress reports have an extensive reporting requirements whereby the organisation has to report against output measures, SAAP objectives, strategies, financial and process data. Each of these are assessed in turn against SAAP's aim and goals. (see Appendix 10 for the Transitional Accommodation Program Measures as they relate to F&C's aims and goals).

'The overall aim of SAAP is to provide transitional supported accommodation and related services, in order to help people who are homeless to achieve the maximum possible degree of self reliance and independence. Within this aim the goals are:

- a) To resolve crisis;
 - b) To re-establish family links where appropriate; and
 - c) To re-establish a capacity to live independently of SAAP
- (FACs, 1998:75)

Discussions with the coordinator and workers in Manguri's Transitional Accommodation Program (TAP) highlighted the need to obtain a greater correspondence between local programmatic evaluation indicators and national goals and policy development and social policy trends. For example, in contrast to the emphasis placed on social, emotional and psychological wellbeing in many of the social policy statements TAP workers have found the emphasis on quantitative data in Progress Reports to be a form of surveillance with no regard for many of the qualitative examples which highlight the positive outcomes being achieved.

'They [the funding body] are only interested in the statistics and not the critical information we write.' TAP worker.

This has become a source of great frustration to the coordinator as she felt that the positive outcomes from their program are ignored. She claims that in reality

'No one is interested in our successes.'

This situation leaves TAP workers working with an almost impossible dual tasks of trying to fulfil the statutory and statistical requirements of government funding bodies while also trying to obtain the best possible outcomes for their clients/community. The strategies and time needed to achieve the latter can be detrimental to the statistical data and conversely the emphasis on quantifiable data (such as number of people spoken to by phone in the week) over the outcomes of those phone calls can place be to the detriment of care given to clients.

As part of the developmental focus of the research the community organisation stakeholders were invited to comment on the sorts of indicators they believed would be more appropriate. The coordinator suggested a number of indicators that she felt were reasonable for measuring success both for clients and the program. These are neither fully developed nor conclusive as it would need further negotiations and work with TAP staff members to develop a full set of programmatic indicators that would be useful to both organisation and the funding body. However, the indicators proposed (which have been linked to specific program goals in Table 5.3 below) include the following:

- Positive behavioural changes (eg. One of the clients mended the front gate. This was seen as being a positive change in the client's behaviour.)
- Moving into mainstream housing
- Entering into further education
- Sending children to school
- Receiving counselling
- Management of the extended family
- Moving out of a violent relationship
- Seeking /Acquiring levels of Safety for self and family
- Dealing effectively with government agencies

Another staff member discussing the above indicators claimed that 'mending the front gate' meant much more as an indicator than could be conveyed in one category such as positive behaviour changes.

You have to hold this simple but telling action within the broader historical context — as we keep telling you fellas— everything is connected. This fella who fixed the gate has been in and out of goal, he didn't used to feel good about himself or his situation, he also hasn't had a sense of security in housing before – for him to fix the front gate means he feels secure and settled, interested and motivated – it's a whole lot of things. That is why evaluations have to include qualitative data – they need to include people's individual stories in order to demonstrate whether and how a particular program is a success or not. (Indigenous stakeholder/Committee member)

Table 5.3: Linking Indicators with Program Goals

Program Aim and Goals	Proposed Program Specific Indicators
Self reliance	Dealing effectively with government agencies
Independence	Moving into mainstream housing Sending children to school Entering into further education
To resolve crisis	Moving out of a violent relationship Seeking or Acquiring Individual/family safety Receiving counselling
To re-establish family links where appropriate	Management of the extended family
Efficiency goals	

5.5 Conclusion

The application of both the analytical and principles frameworks in each of the above case studies has provided new information and insights to policy makers. The value of applying the framework is not confined to critiquing existing government monitoring and evaluation processes or highlighting their limitations, rather it illustrates many of the concerns expressed by writers such as Black and Hughes (2001), Cobb and Rixford (1998) and Randolph and Judd (2001) whose findings caution against the limitations or potential misuse of performance indicators in the areas of disadvantage.

6 Summary of Findings and Future Policy Implications

6.1 Policy Relevance

The key policy implications of our research reside in the potential to provide:

- a rights discourse as a starting point for negotiations between Indigenous community organisations and groups and government policy makers and funding bodies; as well as,
- a set of conceptual tools to assist in the development of evaluations and indicators in Indigenous contexts, which will support and reflect
- a paradigm shift essential to achieve broader social and public policy goals for a democratic society.

Our discussions and workshops with key policymakers and Indigenous community organisation stakeholders reveal widespread dissatisfaction, frustration and even a sense of helplessness regarding existing gaps between policy rhetoric and practice. We have received broad support, expressions of interest, and some immediate requests to further examine how the ideas and frameworks can be embraced in evaluation and research in housing and broader social policy areas by government agencies and Indigenous organisations.

An evaluation of such scope which can contribute to capacity building and social well being requires particular process-oriented research approaches, including models based around participatory action research and community education. It also requires moving the emphasis beyond purely efficiency and effectiveness measures. The frameworks put forward in the Positioning Paper and refined in this Final Report, informed as they are by Indigenous principles, values, rights and cultural democracy, attempt to encompass and operationalise this proposition.

Policy Discourses, Principles, Goals and Indicators in Practice

Throughout this project we have focused on achieving Indigenous community outcomes as well as developing frameworks to inform policy and funding bodies. A primary emphasis in the research has been to engage with Indigenous community groups and organisations delivering programs and services to explore how evaluation and research can have real value, worth and benefit for Indigenous individuals, groups, families, organisations and communities. An important message from Indigenous stakeholders is the need for government service providers and funding bodies to incorporate Indigenous perspectives in the development of indicators to more accurately measure genuine program effectiveness in achieving existing policy goals in Indigenous affairs.

A second outcome of this project has, in the broadest sense, involved the 'resuscitation' and reframing of human rights discourse within the social policy domain and the development of a set of conceptual, analytical and operational frameworks (as discussed in the Positioning Paper). Taken together these frameworks highlight the importance of adopting and enacting a set of principles which recognise and facilitate equal partnership and Indigenous self-determination in the provision of services at the intersection between Indigenous and non-Indigenous societies/communities. These frameworks also confirm the need for social indicators in evaluation and research which recognise and support Indigenous rights, interests and aspirations in accordance with policy goals and organisational purpose.

The role of Indigenous self-determination in housing evaluation

Findings from our research suggest that a key variable in any program evaluation should be the extent to which Indigenous control over program decisions and resource allocations is exercised

or facilitated in a given organisational or policy context. Indigenous control or the exercise of self-determination is both a performance indicator (in its own right) and a principle and goal of projects, programs and other interventions in Indigenous housing contexts which is often not recognised. Self-determination is also a fundamental right.

Indigenous people need to be able to identify and negotiate other project and program level outcomes and performance indicators with funding providers. Based on the findings of our research we suggest that negotiations about the parameters of the evaluation, the nature and method of data collection and the analysis of the effectiveness of programs outcomes need to be guided by the principles framework developed in this research and undertaken with regard to the broad economic, social, political, legal and historical context in which programs and policy interventions are situated.

This evaluation framework considers whether 'Indigenous control' and other principles such as 'dual accountability', 'equal partnership' and 'negotiation' of project and programs goals, objectives, outcomes and performance indicators are observed in dealings between Indigenous stakeholder groups and government funding bodies and service providers. Our research suggests that the evaluation principles framework provides a range of process indicators which, when taken into account, will increase the sustainability of Indigenous housing programs and enable outcomes measurements to reflect contemporary 'reality'.

Evaluation for Indigenous community and organisational empowerment

The approach presented in this report actualises Indigenous organisational and community empowerment in contrast to many existing evaluation approaches which are primarily monitoring and surveillance tools for government. It provides a means for Indigenous organisations to: broaden their governance role beyond the administrative functions required under dominant bureaucratic systems, and to use these structures and processes to encompass their own social/intrinsic goals and priorities; determine their own external and internal policy directions and initiate and retain control of organisation development and continuous program improvement; engage in capacity building; define and incorporate social indicators (effective) alongside performance measures (efficiency), and to identify and negotiate with funding bodies to move beyond the imposition of efficiency driven quantitative data to embrace a more appropriate/relevant form of information gathering required as evidence of the effectiveness of organisations and/or interventions and programs and their impacts upon the community. By employing qualitative and Indigenist research methodologies (that is research developed by, with and for Indigenous people) the evaluation approach involves an Indigenous theory building process. As such this evaluation paradigm, underpinned by a human rights discourse, provides a crucial resource/mechanism for Indigenous organisations/programs to negotiate on their own terms with government and funding bodies; to hold these bodies accountable to the principles of Indigenous self-determination, and to educate and decolonise governments to rethink the meaning of concepts such as equality and partnership. While the conceptual framework and associated principles framework transcend 'evaluation approaches' our argument suggests they need to underpin and thus inform indigenous related research and/or evaluation.

6.2 Project Outcomes

There have been several outcomes achieved which have positive implications for local, community groups as well as at a national level.

Local Community Outcomes

The principles and indicators have been endorsed by an Indigenous community based organisation, who have expressed a desire to apply the evaluation framework to their Indigenous housing program;

The principles and indicators have been applied to an existing evaluation of the Indigenous Family Program and as a result negotiations are underway to pilot this model; and,

Community organisations/leaders have reported that the framework provides a tool and discourse to enter into new negotiations and contractual arrangements with state government funding bodies.

National/State/Institutional Outcomes

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) has established a set of research ethics and guidelines which incorporate the principles outlined in the Positioning Paper and embrace the principles pertaining to funding bodies responsibilities outlined in the RIADIC. All research through AHURI Research Centres will be required to observe these guidelines which can be found at www.ahuri.edu.au/research/agenda/ethical.pdf

In addition, Curtin University of Technology have adopted the *AHURI Ethical principles and Guidelines* into their own Research and Development ethical clearance process. The AHURI principles have also been integrated into policy document the 'Role of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies at Curtin' which requires all educational and research activities involving Australian Indigenous people 'to be conducted in consultation with the Centre for Aboriginal Studies' (Policy Doc. A006: 2001).

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) in Western Australia have indicated strong interest in piloting the evaluation frameworks in cross sectoral programs.

Aboriginal Housing WA has expressed interest in developing and piloting an evaluation process that encompasses Indigenous principles and social indicators for their Management Support Program.

Participation in the Indigenous Research Forum held in Melbourne in September 2001, supported the implementation of the research principles at state and federal levels. In addition, discussions have commenced regarding collaboration on extending and applying the research framework to human rights projects.

6.3 Conclusion

The findings have relevance for future policy development and government approaches to project and program evaluation in a range of Indigenous housing contexts. In addition these findings provide a future direction in Indigenous research and evaluation and confirm the importance and relevance of the Governments commitment to the 10 Year Vision in Indigenous housing and the research agenda identified within it. Importantly the findings have already had

a practical impact in Indigenous research context by providing the basis for establishing AHURI's Indigenous research guidelines . These have also been endorsed and integrated into Curtin University's ethics clearance process for research in Indigenous contexts.

Although we have received positive feedback regarding the potential benefits of this framework for Indigenous communities and organisations it should be noted that some community groups have expressed concern that this process may become co-opted and used as another tool of surveillance of Indigenous organisations rather than to embed or institutionalise corporate responsibility and accountability. For this reason the outcomes identified above, while largely positive, need to be understood within the broader, more circumspect context of the Indigenous-non-Indigenous interface discussed earlier and with regard for genuine equity of relationship in partnership agreements.

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