



Local Government Association
of South Australia

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
COMMUNITY MANAGERS NETWORK



Anti-Poverty Initiatives in Councils

*This document has been produced for information only
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the past, South Australian Councils have actively supported Anti-poverty Week with promotions and community events. This is the first time that Councils in South Australia have come together to create a database of the collective work undertaken by Councils throughout the year to support and build the capacity of those people in their communities who may otherwise be at risk of poverty and homelessness.

In order to survey what Councils do to prevent poverty, a framework was developed around the determinants of poverty as identified by The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS). The five primary determinants of poverty which need to be addressed to alleviate the levels of poverty in Australia, as identified by ACOSS are:

1. Access to work and income
2. Education and lifelong learning
3. Affordable housing and shelter
4. Health and Wellbeing
5. Affordable services

Of the 27 Councils that responded to the survey- all indicated that they contributed to poverty alleviation in some way through activities and initiatives that address one or more of the 5 determinants of poverty. Councils are most active in the area of programs and initiatives that are broadly categorised as '**health and wellbeing**'. This category includes infrastructure related to recreation and aquatic centres, sports fields, bike paths and rail-trails as well as activities that encourage social inclusion and connectedness such as community services programs delivered through Council (including Community Centres and Men's Sheds), health promotion programs, outreach programs and community events.

Council programs tend to predominantly be targeted to those at either end of life: children and youth, or the elderly, demonstrating that Councils place an emphasis on programs that serve those sections of the community that are deemed most at need, where funds can have the most impact. It may also be the case that these are service areas where there is limited prospect for profits so Council's service model suits, often with a strong emphasis on well-trained volunteer support and partnerships.

Councils demonstrate a commitment to innovative capacity-building programs for new migrants, refugees and people living with disability, overcoming perceived barriers to tailored service delivery and navigating potential obstacles. A program of note in this category is the City of Marion's Migrant Women's group. City of Marion reports that using a community capacity building approach in the initial stages of the program quickly empowered the participants to reach a point where they are now self-reliant and able to manage the program themselves.

While Council efforts are largely focussed on the determinants that build community capacity to **prevent** poverty, rather than alleviating poverty at crisis points, examples of Council services which may deal directly with the most disadvantaged in our communities at critical points include: providing safe refuge during extreme weather events for community members who would otherwise be without suitable shelter, delivery of Home and Community

Care services, community legal service, and the completion of a specific anti-poverty strategy. An exceptional example of dealing with those at risk of homelessness or unstable housing options can be found in the case study submitted by City of Salisbury detailing their role in the Assistance with Care and Housing program (ACHA). ACHA assisted 184 older people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness to gain secure accommodation last financial year.

Access to work and income was the primary outcome achieved through the Employment Works project delivered by Charles Sturt Council. Relatively few Councils indicated programs and initiatives directly related to this theme, however many Councils run volunteering programs which may sometimes be used as a stepping stone to employment or as a way of expanding networks and skills which lead to improved employability.

Affordable services are rare in a world that trains children to become consumers from a young age. City of Onkaparinga provides a welcome reprieve for parents through their nature play project Our Big Backyard which consists of a children's play map of the Aldinga Sellicks region with a list of 50 things to do that are outdoors, free, and involve exploring significant local places.

In recent years some Councils have received program funding (under the National Partnership Agreement on Preventative Health) from State and Federal Governments to run programs such as OPAL (obesity prevention and lifestyle program for school-aged children in conjunction with SA Health) and Healthy Communities Initiative (funded by the Australian Department of Health and Aging). These funds are effective as a catalyst to get activities running on the ground. However, it is where the philosophies, principles and goals of these programs are systematically embedded into a Council's operations that ongoing, long-term impacts on determinants of health and wellbeing (and therefore poverty) can be achieved.

The Healthy Murraylands project which was awarded the National Heart Foundation Award in 2013 delivered a comprehensive program to increase awareness and access to healthy eating and physical activity for unemployed (and underemployed) adults in the region. The project was established as a partnership between 5 Murraylands Councils: Mid Murray, Rural City of Murray Bridge, Coorong District Council, Southern Mallee and Karoonda East Murray. It is an exceptional example of Council collaboration to tackle **health and wellbeing** (and therefore poverty) determinants on a regional scale.

A policy project of note in this category is the "Healthy Local Food in the City of Playford 2013-2017" report commissioned by the City of Playford which addresses the issue of food security for the region, as well as methods of hands-on education for the community regarding how to use healthy, local food. The City of Playford also identified the need to create ongoing roles for two Health Project Officers to build on the strategies of their OPAL program and Healthy Communities Initiative Project, once funding from other levels of government was due to cease.

On a similar note several Councils have adopted the idea of community gardens as a method of social integration and education- prime examples include the Adelaide City Council's Whitmore Square verge project and City of Charles Sturt's Magic Harvest project. Another variation on this theme is the edible gardens project established through the OPAL program across the Mid Murray Council area. The project in conjunction with surrounding Councils and NRM Education establishes edible gardens in schools and kindergartens in the region for students and the wider community.

Social and health indicators show that there is still some way to go in closing the gap between life expectancy and health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations and other Australians. An award-winning program in Port Augusta City Council modelled great partnerships, community capacity-building, use of volunteers and education pathways while providing healthy school lunches through the “Carlton School Tuckshop”.

Mental illness and depression are major issues that affect health and wellbeing at a population level, and are of particular concern in rural areas. The CORES EP Suicide Prevention program was an initiative led by the community in Cleve and the Eyre Peninsula more broadly to improve awareness of the signs to assist members of the community to help each other to prevent further loss of life from suicide. This project is an example of community-driven initiatives designed to address targeted issues.

Most Councils manage, fund and/or partner with other agencies, NGOs and levels of government to undertake a wide variety of programs and initiatives that promote “**education and lifelong learning**”. Through their libraries, Community Centres, Neighbourhood Centres, volunteering programs, community gardens and partnerships with non-government organisations Councils provide opportunities for education and lifelong learning.

In rural and regional areas distance can be an additional barrier to education, lifelong learning and opportunities for employment and social connection. An excellent example of the ways that Councils outside the metropolitan area can respond to these barriers can be found in the Geared2Drive program which mentors young people in the District Council of Grant toward gaining their provisional driver’s licence. Meanwhile Loxton Waikerie Council is ensuring that those at the other end of life aren’t getting left behind in the technology revolution by keeping them connected to their families and community through a seniors iPad training course.

The Hon. Kelly Vincent Dignity for Disabilities MP advises that more than 40% of people living with a disability live below the poverty line. While the Anti-Poverty Initiatives survey of Councils did not explicitly cover the matter of services and infrastructure to address universal access and inclusion, this is an area on which the LGA’s Disability Champion Cr Jill Whittaker has recently requested input from Councils to gauge the level of awareness and preparation across the sector. The City of Marion Life Skills Program (featured in the case studies) is a leading example of a community services program which succeeds in assisting people living with disability to improve their independence and self-reliance.

Funding arrangements for Council projects that address the determinants of poverty include combinations of all three spheres of government as well as partnerships with non-government organisations and other grant funding. Where projects are delivered with external funding, they are often initiated as pilot projects or short term contracts, with an emerging theme around embedded project sustainability. The primary role of Councils in intergovernmental projects is to facilitate access to established networks in the community, and in some cases Councils partner with NGOs to ensure required targeted outcomes.

Councils play an important role in the alleviation and prevention of poverty for vulnerable community members. Services such as libraries are open to everyone in the community which reduces the stigma sometimes associated with services targeted to disadvantaged population groups. While many people enjoy the fact that the library is free, for some in the community it is the fact that it *is free* that makes it accessible.

Most, if not all Councils manage, fund and/or partner to deliver a range of anti-poverty programs and initiatives that include free library services, bicycle and walking networks,

community information services and rates rebates as well as volunteering programs. However, the case studies submitted did not document any examples of these types of programs, possibly because these things are just considered to be part of what is expected of Councils- and their links to lifelong learning, health and wellbeing and affordable services outcomes as key determinants of poverty alleviation is not widely acknowledged or celebrated.

To further explore the Study outcomes, the detail of this Report provides:

- An Introduction with background and context to the aims and process of the Study
- An overview of key programs, projects and initiatives conducted by the 27 responding Councils – and link to a Summary Table of all survey responses
- A summary table of a range of case studies affecting the “determinants of poverty”
- Links to further descriptive information on the case studies and key contacts.

2 INTRODUCTION

A report by the Australian Council of Social Services in 2013, indicates that, *...in 2010, after taking account of housing costs, an estimated 2,265,000 people or 12.8% of all residents in Australia, including 575,000 children (17.3% of all children), lived in households below the most austere poverty line widely used in international research.* (ACOSS Poverty in Australia Report 2013)

In a 2012 update to their report ACOSS identifies five primary causes or determinants of poverty which need to be addressed to ameliorate the levels of poverty in Australia. The five causes are:

1. Access to work and income
2. Education and lifelong learning
3. Affordable housing and shelter
4. Health and wellbeing.
5. Affordable services.

In 2013 Wendy Campana, CEO of LGA, was co-patron of Anti-Poverty Week which aims to:

- strengthen public understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty and hardship around the world and in Australia; and
- encourage research, discussion and action to address these problems, including action by individuals, communities, organisations and governments.

The idea for this Local Government Anti-Poverty Initiatives Report grew out of discussions during Anti-Poverty Week 2013 between the LGA and Local Government Community Managers Network (CMN), where it was highlighted that while it is important to set aside a week for special activities and initiatives to raise awareness, Councils have programs all year round that help to prevent the impact of poverty. This report brings together outcomes of a survey of Councils and case studies gathered to present an overview of the range of significant anti-poverty Council activities in South Australia, to be released during Anti-poverty Week 2014.

2.1 Background

Councils support a wide range of activities that contribute to the prevention or amelioration of the impacts of poverty in their communities, often without acknowledgement of the direct correlation between the services they provide and poverty alleviation. Councils, in partnership with the community, other Councils, organisations, agencies and spheres of government, provide education and tools for capacity building, relief support, advocacy and programs that effectively address factors that impact on poverty.

While Councils have traditionally contributed in a variety of ways to the amelioration of poverty, supporting those in need and helping build the capacity of their communities to help themselves, and each other, a collective view of the activities of Councils is timely given the increased statutory responsibilities afforded to South Australian Councils under the Public Health Act 2011. Under the Public Health Act a Council is the local public health authority for its area and has responsibility for identifying public health risks and is required to take action to preserve, protect and promote public health within its area. Public health is defined as the health of individuals in the context of the wider health of the community. Poverty, homelessness and other factors which can lead to such disadvantage and hardship are a significant public health concern.

Through this project, the LGA and CMN have combined to better inform Councils and their communities, other stakeholders and partners, of the significance and variety of ongoing and one-off “anti-poverty” programs, policies and initiatives undertaken by Councils.

2.2 The survey

To inform the summary report, Councils were invited to undertake a survey to discover information about anti-poverty initiatives delivered, facilitated or funded. This was also seen as a great opportunity to seek case studies of leading practice deployed in Councils often with other key partners and collaborators.

The survey framework was formulated around the five determinants of poverty:

1. Access to work and income
2. Education and lifelong learning
3. Affordable housing and shelter
4. Health and wellbeing
5. Affordable services

The survey included an extensive list (formulated in consultation with the members of the Community Managers Network) outlining the types of anti-poverty initiatives and programs that Councils deliver. For each type of initiative, Councils were asked to indicate via multiple choice selections:

- a) whether or not their Council provided that type of initiative;
- b) the primary poverty determinant addressed by the initiative;
- c) any secondary theme or outcome the initiative addresses;
- d) the scale on which the initiative operates (e.g. local, regional);
- e) the level of Council's involvement in the initiative (e.g. manager, partner, facilitator, funder); and
- f) the nature of funding to the program (e.g. project based or ongoing/operational).

Approximately 40% (27) of South Australia's 68 Councils participated in the survey, with around 30 case studies, and representation from metropolitan, regional and rural Councils.

It is intended that the collective data and case studies in outcomes, initiatives and programs, large and small, will be shared and celebrated across the local government sector, and build capacity of Councils to address poverty by learning from shared experience. Chapter 4 in this report summarizes in a table a representative sample of the case studies, and links are shown in the table to more detailed case study information where available.

2.3 The process

The challenges faced in attempting to collate the survey information highlight some of the hurdles that Councils encounter when trying to measure all that they do toward anti-poverty initiatives, programs, assistance, support, capacity building and poverty prevention. A number of (mainly smaller) Councils indicated they didn't feel they provided services or programs in that space, however when prompted by the list of services included in the survey they realised that a number of Council activities contributed to poverty alleviation by addressing the determinants of poverty. One key example is the provision of free library facilities and services which contribute toward access to education and lifelong learning.

The process of data collection from some larger Councils indicated that there is often scope to build awareness within Councils (across departments) as well as across the sector and to the community more broadly. A secondary benefit being that information gained through this process may help to inform the design of evaluation frameworks to collect indicators and data for the purposes of public health plan reporting in the future.

It is anticipated that the case studies provided will demonstrate that big budgets, although helpful, are not necessary to make a difference in the lives of those in our communities who are experiencing times of hardship, struggle and disadvantage. You are encouraged to refer to the case studies and adapt concepts for your own Council or organisation context. By sharing from our experiences and learning from each other we can further build the capacity of the sector to address the determinants of poverty.

A key motivation to distribute details of the survey and examples collated is to share and celebrate leading examples with the sector and our partners to inspire, educate and build capacity and awareness across the sector.

2.4 Anti-Poverty Week

Participation by Councils and involvement of local communities are essential ingredients of Anti-Poverty Week. Councils are encouraged to do something, however small it may be. For ideas on how your Council can get involved in Anti-Poverty Week please review the case studies listed in the table of this report and refer to the Anti-Poverty Week website: <http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au>.

A community celebration or event is a great way to show public support for the cause of Anti-Poverty Week, however if costs are prohibitive, as a minimum, Councils are encouraged to publish a statement of initiatives undertaken to address the five key determinants of poverty. This will help to raise awareness and celebrate the considerable effort that Councils invest in poverty alleviation through the year.

3 COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT

3.1 Background

A full description of all 27 Council responses to the survey can be found at **Appendix A: [Anti-Poverty Survey Results Matrix](#)**

This shows in its basic form, the activities chosen by each Council.

The following sections highlight key aspects of the responses including:

- numbers of Councils conducting or managing each activity
- numbers of activities and initiatives supporting each of the five social determinants of poverty
- scale of the Initiatives (from local to state wide)
- most common type of Council responsibility (manager, key financial partner, minor partner, facilitator)
- most common types of activity (project, recurrent program or ongoing).

Of the 27 Councils responding 100% indicated they contributed to poverty alleviation in some way.

- More than 92% of Councils had conducted or offered:
 - free library services
 - bicycle/walking networks
 - community information services
 - festivals and community events
 - rate rebates assistance
- 80-90% of had conducted or offered:
 - active ageing programs
 - children's holiday programs
 - community transport
 - recreation and aquatic centres
- 63-73% had conducted or offered:
 - home and community care (elderly)
 - youth development
 - free computer/internet training
 - free immunisation
 - youth activities/hubs
 - neighbourhood centre activities
 - extreme weather safe refuges
 - galleries/community art centres
 - men's/community sheds
 - health and wellbeing programs (e.g. OPAL)

- 40-55% had conducted or offered:
 - community gardens/allotments
 - disability services
 - assistance for people living in squalor
 - employment/training programs
 - healthy food and meals on a budget
 - parenting groups/training

- 25-33% had conducted or offered:
 - affordable rental housing initiatives
 - refugee/new migrant social/education programs
 - food cooperative/exchange
 - leadership training programs
 - magic harvest – small gardens

- 10-20% of responses indicated they had conducted or offered:
 - community housing/cooperatives
 - personal finance and energy management
 - collection and delivery of clothing, food
 - school to work transition program
 - anti-poverty strategy/policy
 - community legal service

3.2 Health and wellbeing

262 Council activities that were noted in the survey listed health and wellbeing as a primary theme and 104 nominated it as a secondary theme. Common examples include:

- cycling/walking networks (26)
- active ageing programs (23)
- recreation/aquatic centres (23)
- festivals and community events (21)
- community transport (19)
- extreme weather safe refuges (18)
- free immunisations (18)
- health and wellbeing (e.g. OPAL) programs (17)
- HACC programs (17)
- community gardens/allotments (16)
- children's holiday programs (15)
- men's/community sheds (15)

Galleries/community arts centres; youth activities/hubs; assistance for people living in squalor; and youth development were examples reported less often.

3.3 Education and lifelong learning

106 Council activities recorded in the survey showed education and lifelong learning as a primary theme and 96 noted it as a secondary theme. Common examples included:

- free library services (22)
- computer and internet training (15)
- children's holiday programs (14)
- youth activities/hubs (13)
- men's/community sheds (13)
- galleries/community arts centres (12)
- youth development (12)
- neighbourhood centres (10)
- employment/training programs (9)

OPAL health and wellbeing activities as well as parenting groups/training were nominated in this category less often, while two progressive Councils had prepared an anti-poverty strategy/policy.

3.4 Affordable housing and shelter

18 Council activities indicated affordable housing *and* shelter as a primary theme, while 10 indicated it as a secondary theme. Key examples in this category ranged from:

- rate rebate assistance (6)
- affordable rental housing (5)
- community gardens/allotments (4)
- assistance for people living in squalor
- extreme weather safe refuges; and;
- food cooperatives/exchanges

3.5 Access to work and income

12 Council activities showed access to work and income as the primary intended outcome, while a further 19 activities showed these as secondary outcomes. Common examples included:

- employment and training programs (11)
- computer and internet training
- free library services
- neighbourhood centre activities
- leadership training and school to work transition
- community transport
- affordable rental housing

3.6 Affordable services

61 Council activities nominated affordable services as the primary theme or outcome with a further 107 activities showing this as a secondary intended outcome. Most common examples were:

- community information (24)
- libraries (22)
- rate rebates (17)
- community transport (16)
- galleries and community art (13)
- youth development and activities (10)

And, in fewer examples:

- free computer/internet training
- immunisation
- active ageing
- HACC
- festivals/community events
- healthy food on a budget
- affordable housing and
- men's/community sheds.

3.7 Scale of initiatives

Councils were asked to identify if initiatives undertaken were primarily local, neighbourhood, district, Council-wide, regional or state wide. Some key responses for most common activities follow:

- Over 50% of surveyed Councils that offered the following activities delivered them on a "Council wide" scale: active ageing programs, assistance for people in squalor, bicycle/walking networks, children's holiday programs, community information services, community transport, disability services, extreme weather safe refuges, festivals/community events, free computer/internet training, free immunisation, free library services, home and community care, neighbourhood centre activities, rate rebate assistance, recreation and aquatic centres, youth activities/hubs, youth development.
- More than 40% (and at least five in number) of Councils that offered the following activities, delivered them at a "local" or "neighbourhood" scale – community gardens/allotments, employment and training programs, healthy food and meals on a budget, magic harvest/small gardens, men's/community sheds, recreation/aquatic centres.

3.8 Council responsibility

Councils were asked to identify if their involvement in nominated activities was as “**manager**”, “**key financial partner**”, “**minor partner**” or “**facilitator**”. Key responses for most common activities follow.

In the majority of responses, where the following activities were listed, Council was shown to be the **manager** of the initiative:

- Bicycle/walking networks, children’s holiday programs, community information services, community transport, free computer/internet training, free library services, home and community care, neighbourhood centre activities, rates rebates assistance, recreation/aquatic centres, youth activities/hubs, youth development.

3.9 Continuity of activities

Surveyed Councils were asked whether their activities were delivered as a “**project**”, “**recurrent program**” or “**ongoing**”. Key responses for most common activities follow:

- 70% of the Health and Wellbeing activities such as OPAL, were delivered as “projects”.
- In over 80% of cases when the following activities were listed they were shown to be “ongoing”, indicating they are largely considered part of core Council business and not subject to the uncertainties of external funding: bicycle/walking networks, community information services, extreme weather safe refuges, free computer/internet training, free library services, galleries/community arts centres.
- Between 50% and 79% of the following activities, when listed, were shown to be “ongoing”, indicating they are not as established in core Council business as those activities listed above and therefore budgets for these initiatives/services may be less secure:
 - active ageing programs, children’s holiday programs, community transport, festivals and community events, , free immunisation, men’s community sheds, neighbourhood centre activities, rates rebates assistance, recreation and aquatic centres.,

3.10 Additional survey comments

Key additional comments included:

- The City of Marion has recently completed the 3 year federally-funded project, "Healthy Communities Initiative", which encouraged people who were not in the paid work force to participate in healthy and active lifestyles and increase their consumption of healthy food choices. This was a comprehensive program run across the Council area. In addition City of Marion provides rebates for dog registrations, if a person is a pensioner or has a health care card.

In City of Mitcham:

- Council is manager of ongoing volunteering opportunities on a Council wide basis which addresses education and lifelong learning as well as health and wellbeing determinants of poverty.
- Council manages an ongoing Council-wide program of community development grants which addresses poverty determinants including, health and wellbeing as well as affordable services.

Naracoorte Lucindale Council

- Naracoorte Lucindale Council hosts the Volunteer Resource Centre for the Limestone Coast. This service helps to place unemployed people and disadvantaged people in volunteering opportunities.

City of Onkaparinga has:

- Developed a wonderful resource to help kids and families discover all of the best places to explore in Aldinga, Port Willunga and Sellicks Beach. This project supports the concept of nature play encouraging families to get out and interact with their natural environment. It offers families a list of free things to do in their local region and supports the healthy development of children and builds positive relationships with their families. Families can collect a map with 50 things to do that are fun, free, and easy to do.
- Through the Hoarding and Squalor working group (led by the environmental health team) a toolkit has been developed for workers that are supporting community members deal with hoarding and squalor standards. The toolkit assists workers to identify the issue and offers guidance for engaging with people, referral services and other supports necessary.

City of Playford:

City of Playford has developed a Healthy Local Food Council wide plan as well as web pages, fruit and vegetable distribution project, food coops, magic harvest and once a year hosts an anti-poverty program. The City of Playford also collaborates with a large number of other agencies running expos.

City of Port Adelaide Enfield delivers:

- Local ongoing seniors' groups, to address active aging, health and wellbeing.
- Ongoing Council-wide Aboriginal development program to promote health and wellbeing.

City of Port Augusta:

City of Port Augusta has an array of programs to assist with the complex and unique challenges experienced in their area, including: Substance Misuse Program, Sobering Up Unit, Mobile Assistance Patrol, Exceptional Needs Program (Homeless Support / Case Management), Assertive Outreach (checking on people, advocacy, transport to appointments and assistance to obtain & maintain housing), and City Safe Patrol (which supports homeless to find suitable shelter overnight and support with transport to return to country).

City of Port Lincoln:

City of Port Lincoln advises that where Council does not manage programs, Council financially supports organisations that provide many of these services and as such does not run specific programs unless as a facilitator or financial partner.

City of Tea Tree Gully reports that:

- Anti-Poverty Week events have been held each year focusing on awareness of poverty throughout the community. The 2013 event centered around problem gambling and the impact on individuals and families. Approximately 80 people attended this event.
- The Resourceful Living Booklet was developed in 2009 sharing residents' ideas about living on a low income and sharing information on low cost or no cost activities. This was then distributed throughout the local community.

- Council supports the North East No Interest Loan Scheme Inc. through staff participating on the board of management.
- City of Whyalla has a healthy communities program and sports and recreation program.

4 CASE STUDIES

4.1 Introduction

Case studies were submitted by rural and metropolitan Councils that provided a summary of their project and described outcomes, partnering relationships and costs. Most projects applied community development methodologies to engage residents in finding solutions to poverty issues such as food security, employment and social isolation. The case studies illustrate the practical, hands on support Councils can provide to relieve the impact of poverty on residents.

Funding arrangements for projects included all three levels of government, often as pilots or short term contracts with a theme emerging around embedding project sustainability. The primary role of Councils in intergovernmental projects included accessing established community networks and building on relationships already in place to facilitate residents, agencies and funding partners to work collaboratively to develop solutions in the local context.

It is acknowledged that there are many more projects and programs delivered by Councils and that the list provided is by no means exhaustive.

Below you will find case studies listed under headings relevant to preventative determinants of poverty, with a short summary of each project. Full details of each case study including contacts will be linked to this Table, and you are encouraged to contact your colleagues in the relevant project Council for further information on the strengths and challenges of any project listed.

Council practitioners, who wish to add an example of an anti-poverty case study to the database from their Council's experience, are encouraged to submit a brief synopsis of the project for consideration of the Community Managers Network to be added to the examples listed on the web page.

4.2 Education and lifelong learning

Case study	Key outcomes	Council	Project description
Geared 2 Drive	Improve access to employment, education, training, sport and recreation. Reduction of financial barriers and poverty.	District Council of Grant	A learner driver mentor program that supports disadvantaged young people to gain their provisional driver's licence.
iPads for seniors	83 seniors completed the course and were more able to stay connected to their families and community.	District Council of Loxton Waikerie	A six week training course for seniors to learn how to use an iPad.

4.3 Affordable housing and shelter

Case study	Key outcomes	Council	Project description
Assistance with Care and Housing (ACHA)	184 older people on a fixed income and excluded from the private rental market were assisted to secure housing last financial year.	City of Salisbury	ACHA supports older people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness gain secure accommodation.
Hoarding and Squalor	Development of a toolkit assists workers to identify the issue and offers guidance for engaging with people, referral services and other supports necessary.	City of Onkaparinga	The establishment of a consultative forum that can effectively address the hoarding and squalor issues arising in the City of Onkaparinga and other southern Councils with particular reference to the requirements of the South Australian Public Health Act, 2011.
Southern Housing Roundtable	The aim of the Round Table is to use a collaborative approach to provide leadership and development, and facilitate promotion, advocacy and coordination of housing and related services.	City of Onkaparinga	The Southern Housing Round Table was established in 1999. It is made up of community and affordable housing providers, non-government community service agencies and local, state and federal government agencies. The network meets monthly and the work has a strong focus on emergency and longer term affordable housing for people with complex needs throughout the southern region.

4.4 Access to work and income

Case study	Key outcomes	Council	Project description
Employment Works	Strengthening of participants existing skills and abilities by reinforcing their self-esteem using a process of self-assessment and strong motivational techniques. Establishment of mutually agreed goals and actions that empower participants to make positive choices to attain their goals.	City of Charles Sturt	A demand driven training-to-employment model that augments the existing national training system with actual 'live' work experiences for training participants connected to local industry and contractors.
Life Skills (for people with a disability)	Some participants are now able engage in part time work and live independently for extended periods.	City of Marion	A program that enables people with a disability to develop communication and social skills, improve independence and quality of life.

4.5 Affordable services

Case study	Key outcomes	Council	Project description
Our Big Back Yard	Confident adults as enablers, capable children interacting with nature and local cultural assets. Generational knowledge of place and culture increases to become a perpetual positive cultural movement specific to the local area.	City of Onkaparinga	Our Big Back Yard is a nature play project that uses a suite of resources developed specifically for the Aldinga Sellicks region and consists of a children's play map of the area with a list of 50 things to do that are free, outdoors and involve exploring significant local places.
Migrant Women's Group	Migrant women learn new skills and share their experiences and knowledge. the women have commenced a cooking group and sewing group with the help of community volunteers and have engaged foodbank, where they are able to access fruit, vegetables and other food items which are either free or of low cost .	City of Marion	The group was established for women who are isolated, low income, limited resources and who struggle to connect into the community. Women identify their own needs, work together and build a local community.

4.6 Health and wellbeing

Case study	Key outcomes	Council	Project description
A New Place to Taste	Capacity building- asylum seekers and recent migrants.	Adelaide City Council	More than 200 asylum seekers and recent migrants have attended group cooking, gardening and supermarket shopping workshops since the Australian Red Cross launched the program with a community development grant.
Whitmore Square Verge Project	Community governance of open access productive and recreational garden.	Adelaide City Council	A verge garden reinvigoration project in the City's South West involving community co-visioning, design, creation and evaluation of a new local productive and recreational garden with open access.
Magic Harvest	Measured with the RBA framework, using social outcomes measures relevant to health and wellbeing.	City of Charles Sturt	People in Charles Sturt come together to learn how to plant, grow and cook their own produce.
The Big DishUp	A free crèche is provided for participants attending the group, making it easier for young families to participate.	City of Charles Sturt	The Big Dish Up is modelled on the grass roots movement of Mamabake and involves a group of participants coming together to do big batch baking.
CORES EP Suicide Prevention	Two Team leaders were trained and four one-day workshops held in different locations.	Cleve	A community capacity building program which revolves around prevention and intervention of suicide. The aim is to teach people within the community to watch out for each other.
Edible School Gardening	Six kindergartens/schools established new edible gardens. Three kindergartens/schools extended existing garden or garden programs/initiatives.	Mid Murray (with Murray Bridge, Alexandrina, Coorong)	Schools and kindergartens with the support of OPAL and NRM Education, established edible school gardens and deliver programs and initiatives to students and the wider community.
Carlton Aboriginal School Healthy Tuckshop	Healthy food available for students. Parents engaged as volunteers. School pride - the tuckshop and parent volunteers won the NAIDOC awards.	Port Augusta	Establishment of Carlton School Tuckshop through partnership with OPAL.

Healthy Initiatives Project Team	Improved access to affordable, nutritious meal packs and other grocery items. Increased community knowledge around health and nutrition. Embedded health focus across all Council programs, policies and projects.	City of Playford	Improve food security and community education and information on healthy eating and physical activity. Playford Food Coops developed “healthy meal packs” now used across S.A. Two Health project officers ensure embedding healthy communities focus across all of Council.
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4.7 Conclusions

A review of the case studies submitted confirms that Councils plays a significant role in the reduction of poverty for vulnerable community members. It is worth noting that the previous chapter 3 “Council services” lists a range of anti-poverty programs and projects including free library services, art galleries, bicycle and walking networks, community information services and rates rebates and many others, which are offered by most if not all Councils. However these were not documented in the case studies submitted, probably because they are ‘just what we do’ not because they are not valued. The fact that services like libraries are available to everyone eliminates the stigma often attached to accessing targeted services. We all go to the library, for some the fact that it is free is what makes it accessible.

There will be many Council officers who read this report who will think ‘we do that’ but they didn’t consider it worthy of being written up as a case study because it is part of daily service provision. It is important that we acknowledge the importance of the role of our services in alleviating poverty and prioritize their ongoing provision.

The case studies illustrate the range of services offered from learning to drive, to housing support to learning to grow and cook healthy food. This range demonstrates the capacity of Councils to engage, innovate and develop local solutions in collaboration with stakeholders, generally at a low cost.

The abundance of health and well-being services is to be commended; however it would be worth exploring whether a different service mix would improve the impact of our service provision on the reduction of poverty. This is something each Council could explore as a stand-alone provider or collaboratively with neighbouring Councils.

In summary Councils do much to reduce the impact of poverty, should continue to do so and should review their mix of services strategically to ensure maximum impact.

APPENDIX A:

Table of Anti-Poverty Activities of Councils

To access descriptions of each activity for a Council, highlight the column from the chosen Council and the column to its right. Right click on the selected columns and select “unhide”.

To find which Councils are involved in each activity, simply look across the relevant row. For example when looking across the “anti-Poverty strategy/policy” row, you will find two Councils: Whyalla and Playford.

[Anti-Poverty Survey Results Matrix](#)

Thank you to all the Council staff that submitted case studies and images, and those that participated in the survey; LGA staff and Members of the Community Managers Network on the project team- who contributed to development of the survey and report, analysis of the survey results, and production of the Anti-poverty Initiatives report- especially:

- Cam Opie- Vice Chair Community Managers Network, and
- Terra Lea Ranson- Member of Community Managers Network (City of Onkaparinga)

For further information on individual case studies please contact the person or Council listed on the case study, for more general queries about the report, survey findings or submitting your own case study, please contact:

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