



# Canadian Index of Wellbeing: *Measuring what matters*

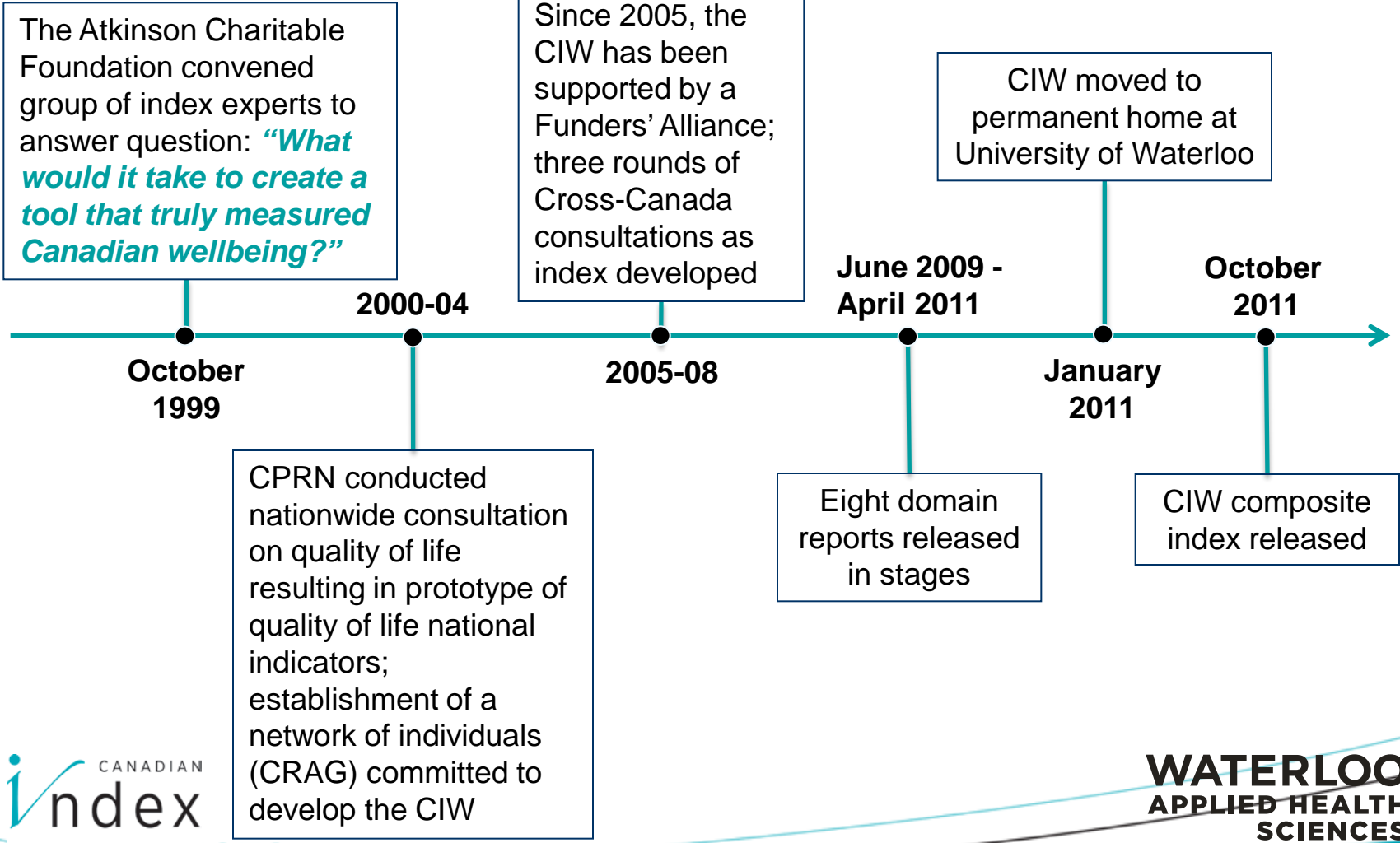
Lynne Slotek, Associate Director, Knowledge Mobilisation

to

City of Barrie Community Services Committee

May 16, 2012

# Where it all Began





# CIW Vision

To enable **all** Canadians to share in the highest wellbeing status by identifying, developing and publicizing statistical measures that offer clear, valid and regular reporting on progress toward wellbeing outcomes Canadians seek as a nation.



# CIW Mission

- ✓ to conduct rigorous research related to and regularly and publicly report on the quality of life of Canadians;
- ✓ to encourage policy shapers and government leaders to make decisions based on solid evidence; and
- ✓ to empower Canadians to advocate for change that responds to their needs and values.

# The CIW is Rooted in Canadian Values



*“Values provide us with a sense of connectedness and stability that enables us to deal with an ever-changing world.”*

The Honourable Roy J. Romanow  
CIW Advisory Board Chair,  
April 7, 2011

**\* fairness, diversity, equity, inclusion, health, safety, economic security, democracy, sustainability**

# CIW Objectives (Why we need the CIW)

- ✓ **promote** a shared vision of what really constitutes sustainable wellbeing and the elements that contribute to or detract from it;
- ✓ **measure** national progress toward, or movement away from, achieving that vision;
- ✓ **understand** and promote awareness of why society is moving in the direction it is moving;
- ✓ **stimulate discussion** about the types of policies, programs, and activities that would move us closer and faster toward achieving wellbeing;
- ✓ **give Canadians tools** to promote wellbeing with policy shapers and decision makers;
- ✓ **inform policy** by helping policy shapers and decision makers to understand the consequences of their actions for Canadian wellbeing; and
- ✓ **empower Canadians** to compare their wellbeing both with others within Canada and those around the world

# Definition of wellbeing adopted by the CIW

The presence of the highest possible quality of life in its full breadth of expression, focused on but not necessarily exclusive to: good living standards, robust health, a sustainable environment, vital communities, an educated populace, balanced time use, high levels of democratic engagement, and access to and participation in leisure and culture.

The CIW is focused on two pillars:

***Research and Knowledge Mobilisation***  
***(i.e. research into active use to benefit society)***

# CIW Leadership

## CIW Advisory Board

### Chair

- ✓ The Honourable Roy J. Romanow

### Deputy Chair

- ✓ The Honourable Monique Bégin

### Members

- ✓ Dr. Judith Bartlett
- ✓ Enrico Giovannini
- ✓ Allan Gregg
- ✓ Hugh Mackenzie
- ✓ Dr. Bob McMurtry
- ✓ Charles Ungerleider
- ✓ Marilyn Waring

### Ex Officio Member

- ✓ Susan J. Elliott

## International Advisory Group

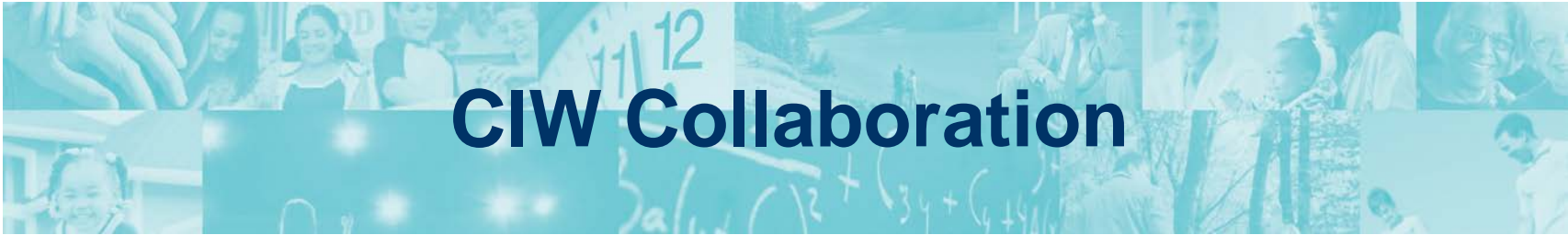
- ✓ Jon Hall
- ✓ Hazel Henderson
- ✓ Thomas Homer-Dixon
- ✓ Mike Salvaris
- ✓ Dennis Trewin

## Canadian Research Advisory Group (CRAG)

- ✓ 30+ members

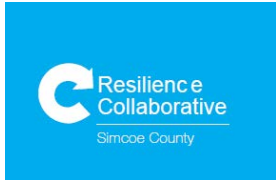
## CIW Staff

- ✓ Bryan Smale
- ✓ Linda McKessock
- ✓ Lynne Slotek
- ✓ Margo Hilbrecht
- ✓ Students



# CIW Collaboration

Measuring what matters



ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT



## Building relationships with Canadian and International organizations



Statistics Canada

Statistique Canada

Ontario Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario



United Way of Canada



Centraide Canada



Canadian Council on Social Development  
Conseil canadien de développement social

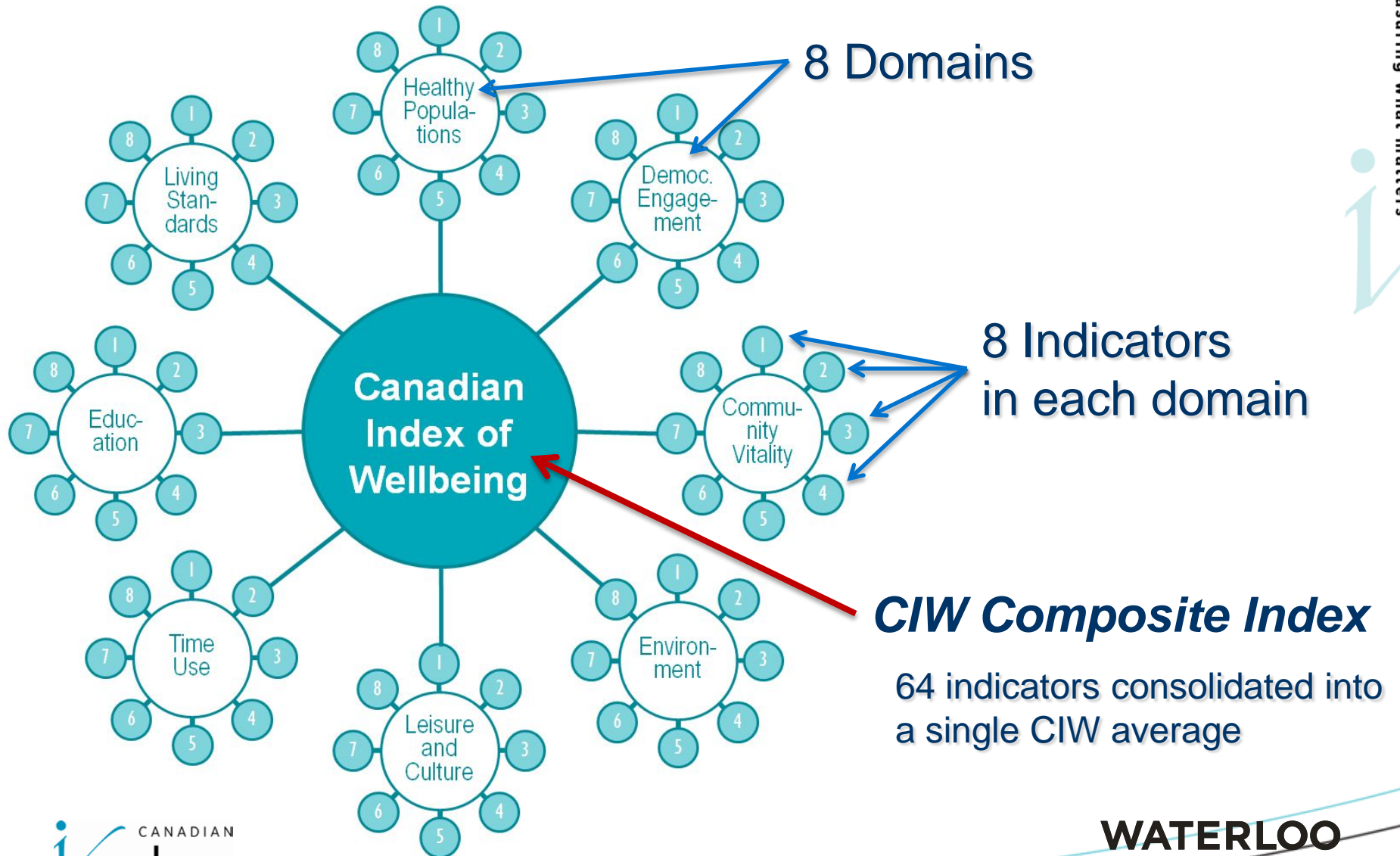




# Criteria for Indicator Selection

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

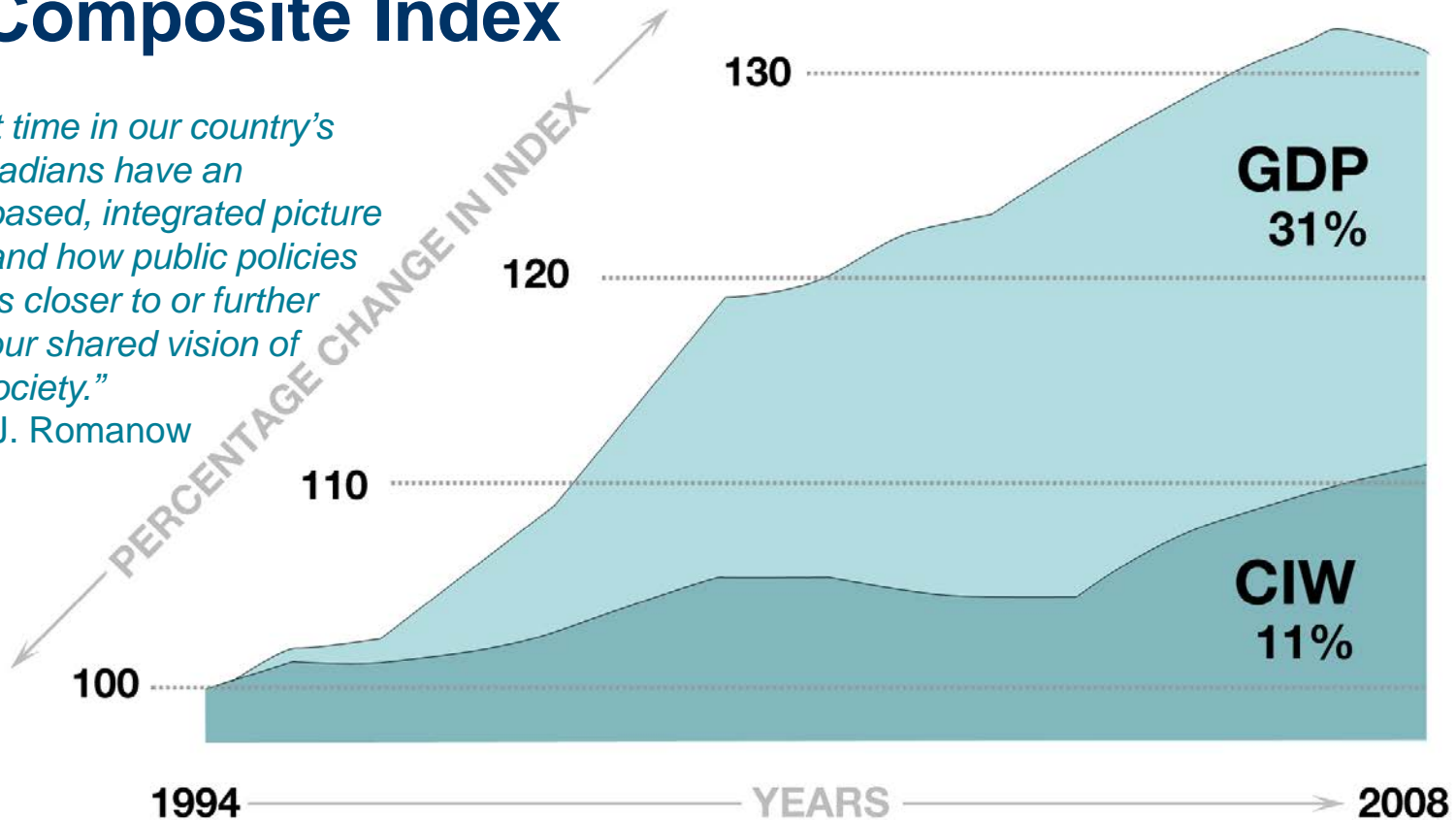
# CIW Framework



# CIW Composite Index

*"For the first time in our country's history, Canadians have an evidenced-based, integrated picture of whether and how public policies are taking us closer to or further away from our shared vision of Canadian society."*

Roy J. Romanow



- ✓ indicators consolidated in each Domain, then into a CIW composite measure
- ✓ the CIW composite has increased, but at a much slower rate than GDP per capita over the same time period

# Value of CIW Composite Index...

We release a **single** number, using plain language and compelling visuals, to make it easier *to inform and educate* the general public – including media and elected officials – on the concept of **wellbeing** in their lives

OCTOBER 2011

## How are Canadians Really doing?

HIGHLIGHTS: CANADIAN INDEX OF WELLBEING 1.0

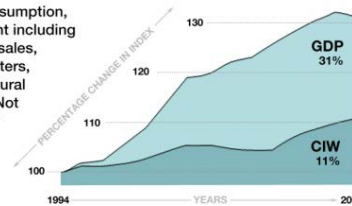
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OF WELLBEING  
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### HOW ARE CANADIANS REALLY DOING?

As a measure of economic consumption, GDP adds up every penny spent including on harmful activities. Tobacco sales, natural and human-made disasters, crime, war and depletion of natural resources all make GDP soar. Not surprisingly it provides a rather overly rosy view of how well Canadians are doing.

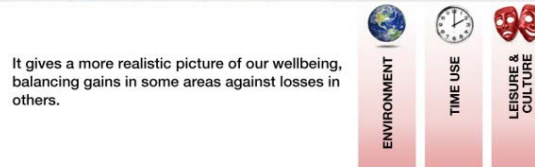


GETTING BETTER



The CIW adopts a much broader view of progress, adding activities that are beneficial and subtracting activities that are harmful to our society.

GETTING WORSE



It gives a more realistic picture of our wellbeing, balancing gains in some areas against losses in others.

[FIND OUT HOW CANADIANS ARE REALLY DOING »](#)

**index** CANADIAN  
OF WELLBEING  
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### HOW ARE CANADIANS REALLY DOING?

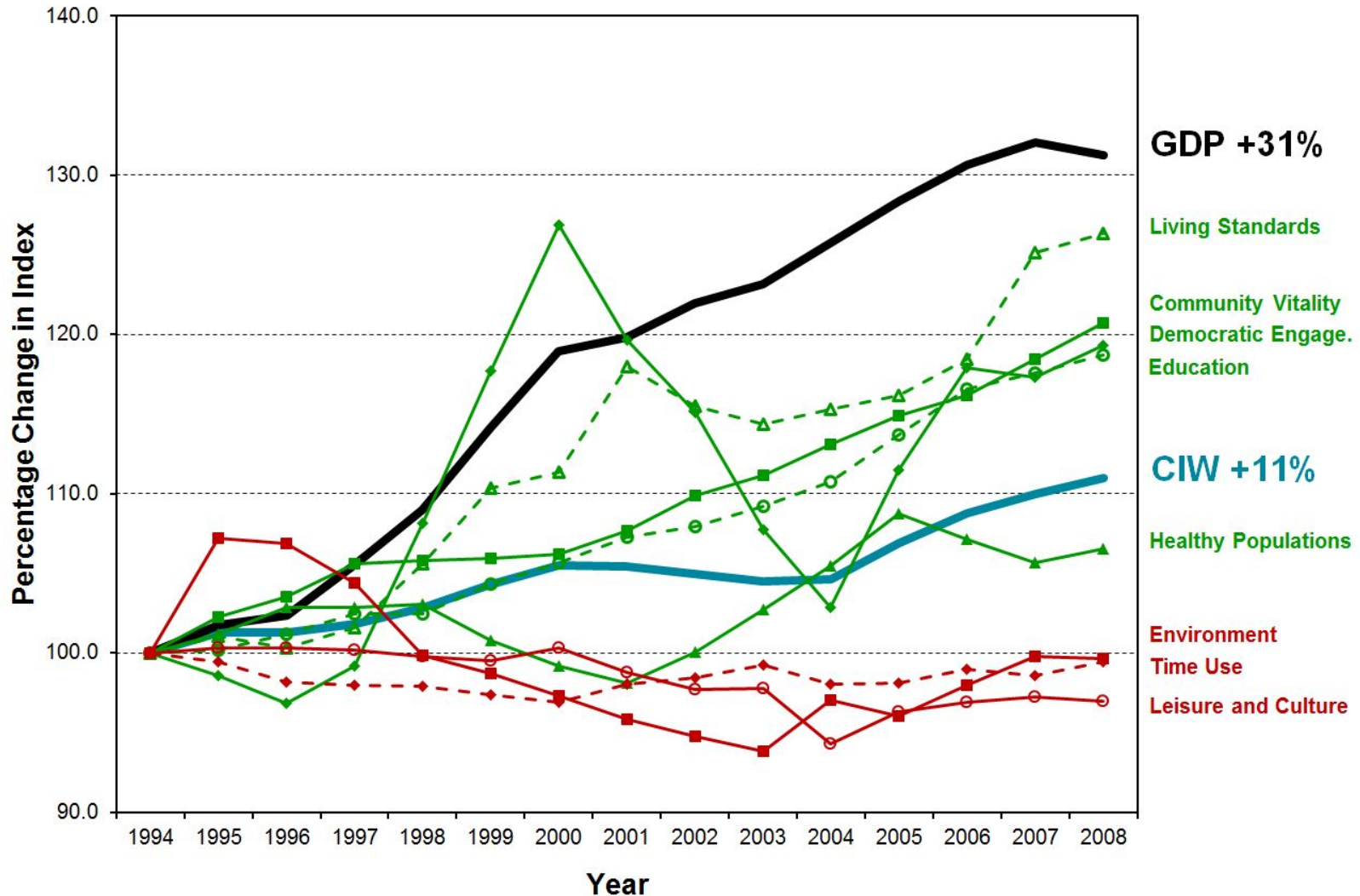


#### LEISURE & CULTURE -3.0%

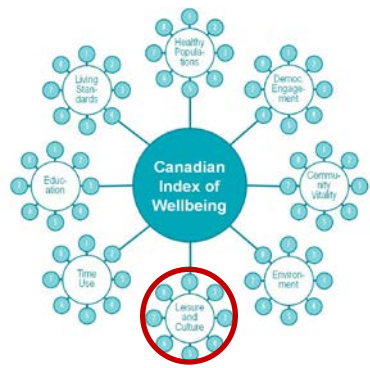


**WATERLOO**  
APPLIED HEALTH  
SCIENCES

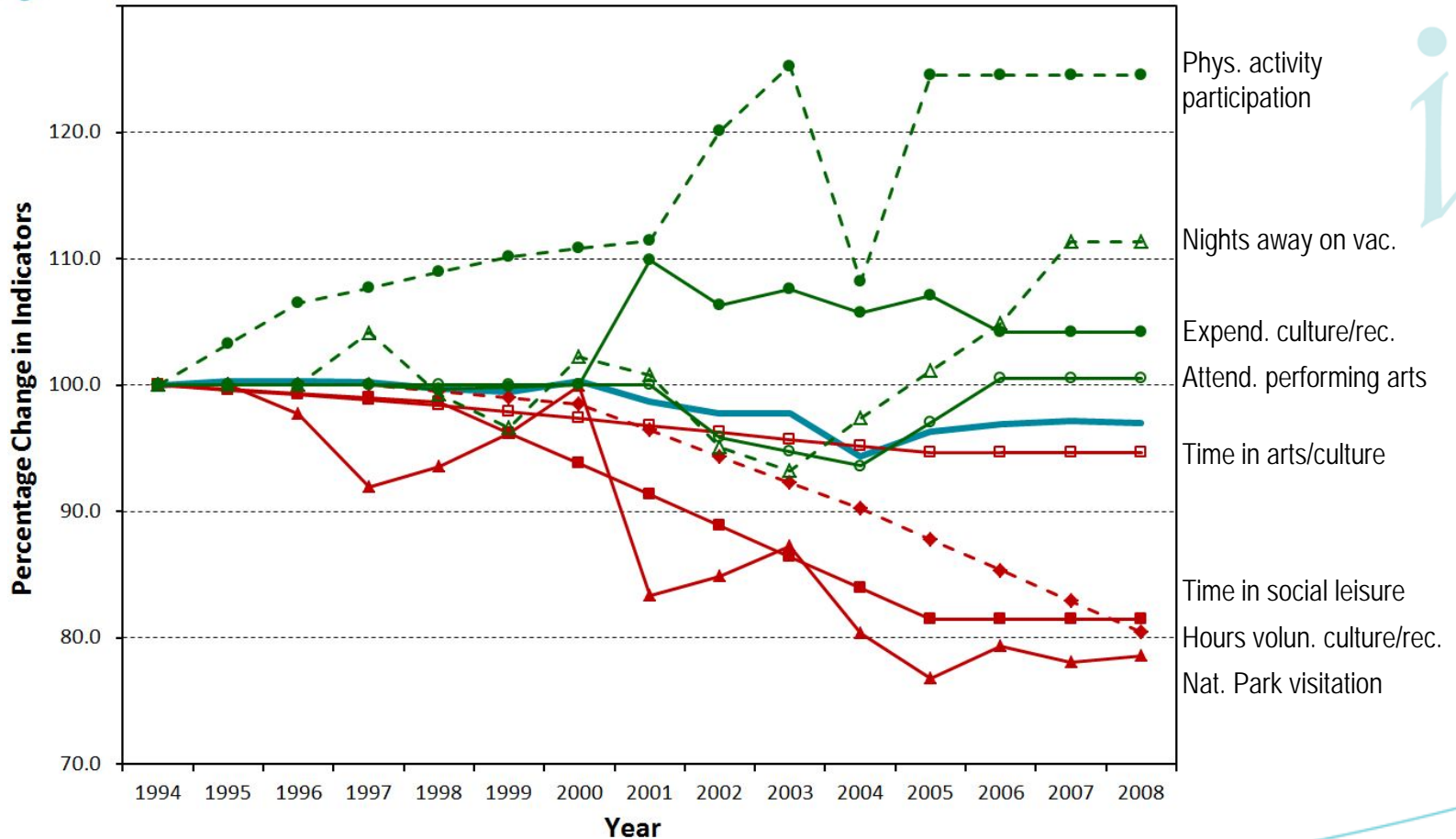
# CIW Framework: The Domains



# CIW Framework: The Indicators



Trends in Indicators of *Leisure and Culture* from 1994 to 2008



# Leading to greater societal understanding...

- ✓ Canadian national newspaper picked up our October 2011 release and used the composite index to explain and describe the concept to their readership

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It's time to transform the global war on drugs

[BACK TO ARTICLE](#) New index pinpoints inequalities in Canadians' quality of life

## Comparing the GDP to the Canadian Index of Wellbeing

Published Wednesday, Oct. 19, 2011 10:55PM EDT

While Gross Domestic Product has been used to determine the prosperity of a country based on economic success, it alone has never been able to accurately reflect quality of life. The Canadian Index of Wellbeing takes into account eight factors, ranging from how tightly knit our communities are to how we use our free time, to more accurately reflect the quality of life in Canada.

Year	Gross Domestic Product (%)	Canadian Index of Wellbeing (%)
1994	100	100
1995	102	101
1996	105	102
1997	110	103
1998	115	104
1999	120	105
2000	122	105
2001	123	105
2002	124	105
2003	125	105
2004	126	106
2005	127	107
2006	128	108
2007	131	110
2008	131	111

**GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT +31%**

**CANADIAN INDEX OF WELLBEING +11%**

<p><b>COMMUNITY VITALITY</b> <b>+20.7</b></p> <p>Most of the community indicators are positive, a "heartening" sign that the quality of Canadians' relationships with each other has improved.</p>	<p><b>DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT</b> <b>+19.3</b></p> <p>Voter turnout is sliding and women remain under-represented in Parliament. Satisfaction with democracy in Canada is "modest."</p>	<p><b>EDUCATION</b> <b>+18.7</b></p> <p>University and high-school completion rates have risen and the number of child-care spaces has climbed. Basic education scores are still above the international average.</p>	<p><b>ENVIRONMENT</b> <b>-0.3</b></p> <p>Air quality remains problematic, particularly in cities, while greenhouse-gas emissions are rising. Water supplies are shrinking and many species struggling.</p>
<p><b>HEALTHY POPULATIONS</b> <b>+6.6</b></p> <p>Life-expectancy rates are among the world's best. But that doesn't mean we're living better – diabetes rates are growing and the likelihood of depression increasing.</p>	<p><b>LEISURE AND CULTURE</b> <b>-3.0</b></p> <p>We seem to be having less fun. Canadians – particularly women – are spending less time on leisure and cultural activities, a reflection of growing time pressures.</p>	<p><b>LIVING STANDARDS</b> <b>+26.4</b></p> <p>Canadians are better off on average in terms of income and wealth, but inequality in this sphere has increased. Economic security has diminished.</p>	<p><b>TIME USE</b> <b>-0.6</b></p> <p>More people are suffering from a time crunch and more offering unpaid care to seniors. Children are involved in more organized activities, and spending more time in front of a computer or TV.</p>

MURAT YUKSELIR/THE GLOBE AND MAIL | SOURCE: CANADIAN INDEX OF WELLBEING

# Why Use the CIW at the Local Level

- ✓ An organizing framework to guide indicator selection
- ✓ A wide array of indicators that are *valid, reliable, sustainable and flexible, and that shows change over time*
- ✓ A data repository with all CIW national, provincial, and local data will make it easy for communities to share information about their own wellbeing (in development)
- ✓ Working papers exploring relationships among interconnected indicators, sub-populations, and sub-regions in Canada (in development)
- ✓ Workbook and training compendium for partners and communities using the CIW framework (2013)
- ✓ Promotion of better data collection by identifying gaps in knowledge relevant to the measurement of wellbeing

# From National to Local



✓ The *Resilience Collaborative* is comprised of citizens and stakeholders from the voluntary and public sectors

*The CIW's first community user*

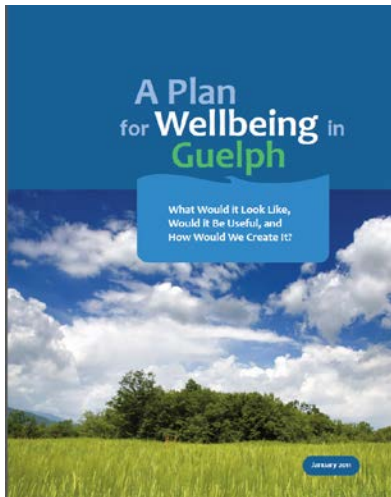
✓ Using the CIW framework, its primary aim is to serve as a catalyst to engage the community, stimulate discussion, and develop strategic responses aimed at building higher levels of community resiliency and wellbeing

**Simcoe County:**

- 16 member municipalities and 2 cities
- Population: 446,000
- 100km north of Toronto

✓ Whenever the CIW releases a report, they hold a parallel event (e.g., release a report that makes recommendations for local policy change or hold a celebration event or workshop)

# From National to Local



## City of Guelph:

- Population: 134,000
- 90km west of Toronto

- ✓ The City of Guelph commissioned a *Wellbeing Plan* that used the CIW as a guiding framework
- ✓ In partnership with the City, the CIW is currently creating a subjective wellbeing survey, *based on the CIW Framework*, that will be administered later this spring to a representative sample of residents
- ✓ The survey will be used with a wide range of engagement tools to learn about residents' perspectives on wellbeing. The results in turn will inform and improve services, policies, advocacy, and community-wide action focused on increasing the wellbeing of residents

# From National to Local



COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATIONS  
OF CANADA

**VitalSigns**<sup>®</sup>

Community foundations taking the pulse of Canadian communities.

- ✓ Community Foundations are in over 180 communities across Canada and more than 30 have experienced the *Vital Signs* programme. The programme is a Canadian success story with other countries launching similar programmes.
- ✓ The CIW is exploring how it can combine its data and research strengths with the community engagement and mobilisation strengths of Community Foundations of Canada, in order to ***translate data into action and impact.***

# CIW BIG Vision...



*“Can we imagine a national project that uses this Index in communities all across Canada with the aim of showing an upward trajectory year by year?”*

His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston  
—Governor General of Canada  
April 7, 2011

- ✓ Rigorous and academically grounded National CIW report released annually
- ✓ Provincial and local data for sharing best practices
- ✓ Working papers on vulnerable subgroups of the population



For more information, please contact:

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All CIW reports are available for free  
download at [www.ciw.ca](http://www.ciw.ca)