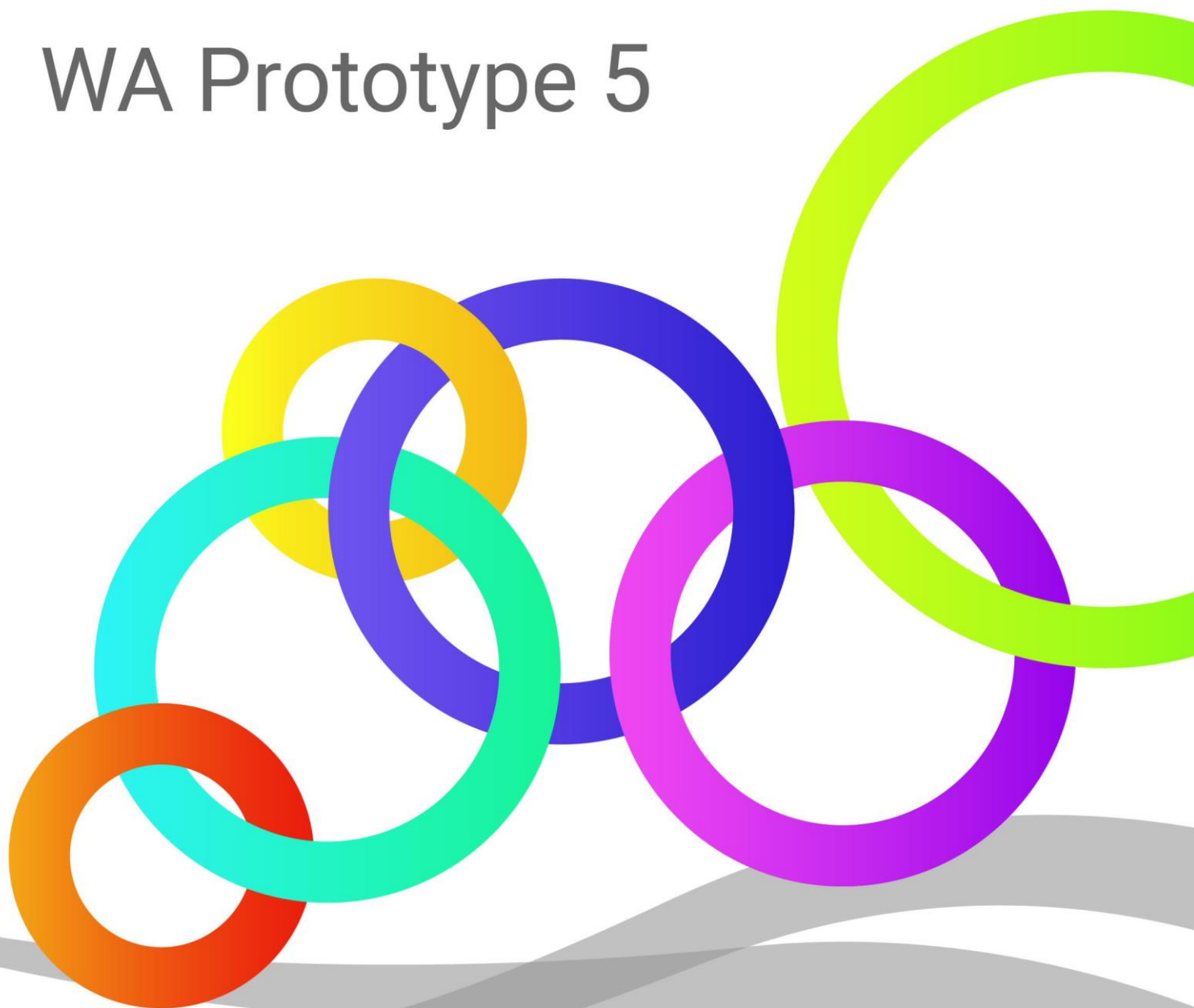




# Outcomes Measurement Framework

WA Prototype 5



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# Introduction to the WA Outcomes Measurement Framework

## Rationale and Purpose

The WA Outcomes Measurement Framework is a hierarchy of outcomes and associated indicators, providing the architecture for a whole-of-government and a whole-of-sector approach to service delivery across agencies and organisations. The intent of the Framework is to orient our focus to the outcome, rather than the output; and to the person, rather than to the program.

There is increasing recognition that shared outcomes are vital to drive a unified vision for the wellbeing of all Western Australians. However, there are significant differences in the way in which the language of outcomes is currently used across government and the community services sector.


This Framework provides the scaffolding to support the move to an outcomes focus in community service delivery. A shared Framework, co-developed by both sectors to evaluate outcomes for the community is imperative to inform evaluation and investment in community services. Evaluation and investment must be rigorous and targeted to ensure we have improved community outcomes.

It is of the utmost importance given that traditional service models and siloed funding programs have repeatedly failed to make inroads to support those most vulnerable and experiencing complex and entrenched disadvantage.

## History and Context

The concept of a whole-of-sector outcomes framework is not new, and has been considered since the implementation of the Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy (DCSPP) in 2011. The concept of an agreed-upon framework to measure community services was a 2017 election commitment by the State Government, and WACOSS had also proposed the development of a Framework to support cross government and community-sector service integration and outcome measures in May 2017.

Given the considerable number of strategic reforms happening across government, including the Service Priority Review and other machinery-of-government activities, as well as the development of Our Priorities, a decision was then made to re-frame this Project as a partnership with Department of Premier and Cabinet, and to include oversight and guidance from the Supporting Communities Forum Outcomes Working Group.



The development of the Framework, the engagement and consultation with the sector, and the incorporation of feedback was led by WACOSS in partnership with the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The first phase of the project was completed in June 2019.

The Outcomes Measurement Framework consists of:

- An illustrative Framework, on page x (encompassing population-level outcomes in domains, with example sub-outcomes and indicators)
- An extensive (though not exhaustive) outcomes and indicators bank.

The outcomes and indicators bank has drawn extensively on several other WA and other jurisdictional frameworks. Lotterywest and the Department of Communities have in particular been very generous and collegiate in providing their own working frameworks through the development of the project. These have been especially useful for the development of this Framework.

## Vision for Implementation

The Outcomes Framework Working Group outlines an ambitious and compelling vision for implementation of this Framework.

### What does implementation look like?

When implemented, the WA Outcomes Measurement Framework will result in common outcomes and consistent language across government and the human services sector. Its implementation should be state-wide and holistic.

There should be alignment (and re-alignment) of other OMFWs and Strategic Plans across the WA government and sector over time. This includes policy initiatives such as Our Priorities, and the Outcomes Based Management system. Further, there should be alignment with national agendas, or the capacity exists to take them into account.

The OMFW is the DNA of all human services strategic planning – it represents an agreed standard that all human services planning and policy builds upon and contributes to. The focus on human services and the community services sector in this OMFW is a step towards a whole-of-government OMFW.

*Over 5 years we should see:*

Together, state government and the community services sector have a common understanding and language with respect to community outcomes and impact.

The OMFW, together with the Our Communities dialogue, is contributing to a rich and informed understanding of outcomes, both those desired and achieved, for the people of Western Australia.

True outcomes-based procurement and commissioning with appropriate accountability in place, including policies, instruments, targets and audit processes.

The OMFW is being developed beyond the first focus on human services only to a whole-of-government framework.

*Over 2-3 years we should see:*

State government strategies use the OMFW as a 'north star' that they build upon.

We have a clearly articulated communication strategy about how to embed the OMFW, including an overarching statement of intent, assuring an evidence base and evolving practice (i.e. through action research).

Awareness and education of OMFW across Departmental staff, Parliament (i.e. the political arena), media and non-government sector (and maturity of the sector to delivery on this – see section 4.3).

Further and ongoing alignment with organisational strategic goals, projects and policies.

Testing/pilot with procurement processes of agencies, and internal government services. This includes testing joint commissioning between agencies (e.g. between Mental Health Commission and Dept of Communities).

The OMFW has been incorporated within and 'tested' through the Our Communities dialogue (for which the process provides a baseline for many of the population level outcomes) (see section 4.2).

### **What does implementation look like from particular perspectives?**

The language of program logic models and theories of change are properly understood and incorporated into our work, and research is being conducted to identify the connections and the gaps.

- Central government uses the OMFW to provide coherent linkages across areas of work of line agencies (e.g. as a framework within which to better understand and measure progress of Our Priorities and other relevant government reforms as below).
- Line agencies are aligning their internal Frameworks, and using the OMFW as a starting point for planning and for considering resource allocation.
- Organisations are aligning their internal Frameworks, and together with line agencies, are using common and consistent measures to understand the impact of their work in communities.

## **Test cases: link with other SCF Priorities and Government Policy**

There are several win-win-win opportunities to implement the OMFV right now, which align with both a) other Supporting Communities Forum priorities and b) current state government policy.

### ***OMFV and Our Communities***

The OMFV offers a framework within which the Our Communities dialogue process can be implemented. Given the person-centred nature of the Framework, it provides a set of outcomes for peoples' lives, which can be used and leveraged for the Our Communities engagement process.

This engagement process would in turn contribute to the ongoing development of the OMFV, in testing its domains, outcomes and assumptions with WA communities. Through this process, it would be possible to create a dashboard of reporting based on what people in communities want to know about where they live, which further embeds and operationalises the OMFV.

### ***OMFV, the Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy (DCPP) and commissioning***

One of the key focusses of the DCSP has been outcomes-based commissioning. By most reports, the implementation of this element of the DCSP has been somewhat inconsistent across agencies.

The OMFV provides a 'north star', and the consistent language to guide the conversation about what outcomes-based procurement and commissioning looks like. Further, over time, as various services are negotiated between government and the sector, service level outcomes will continue to be added to the Framework bank.

### ***OMFV and Our Priorities***

Our Priorities provides whole-of-government targets, which sit neatly within the OMFV. Through Our Priorities 'leaning back' on the OMFV, the two can be seen as a whole, where the OMFV provides a full, coherent set of outcomes, and Our Priorities identifies where current focus and resourcing is targeted towards. The measurement of Our Priorities will provide critical information as to how we measure outcomes. This, in turn, will inform the continuing development of the Framework.

Further, beyond the achievement of Our Priorities, new targets will need to be developed. With the further development of the Framework, these targets can be chosen based on evidence and data that has been collected and analysed through the Our Communities engagement process.

### *OMFW and the Homelessness Strategy*

In a similar vein as 4.2.3, the Homelessness Strategy 'leans back' or relies on the OMFW to provide the outcomes-based, person-centred full picture of a person's life. The Strategy then, can focus on system-level prioritisation and specific strategies. The Homelessness Strategy provides an excellent opportunity to use and test the language of the Framework, and in continue to inform its development.





# Organising Principles underpinning the Framework

In the consultation and engagement sessions for this project, it was noted that a series of stated and agreed organising principles and values that underpin the Framework would be useful.

1. The Framework is indefinitely iterative. It will continue to be developed through implementation in a variety of different contexts and as policy initiatives build upon the outcomes and indicators contained within.
2. The Framework is loosely based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Safe, Stable, Healthy, Equipped, Connected, Empowered). Sub-outcomes and indicators are inserted into the 'earliest' domain they can appropriately fit in. For example, having access to certain kinds of services could be considered under 'Empowered'. However, generally access to services has been addressed in the first instance under 'Equipped'.
3. Wellbeing and the idea of a 'good life' is not linear, and every single one of these elements is highly intertwined. The domains are organising principles only. A person's life consists of elements across every domain, highly dependent upon one another. This interdependency is not able to be properly depicted across the Framework, given the domains as an organising principle. The domain where any population-level outcome is located should be considered a 'primary' domain only, acknowledging that they could also appropriately sit underneath any number of 'secondary' domains.
4. The outcomes in this Framework are person-centred and population-level.
5. Theories of program logic and theory of change underpin this Framework.
6. Within each domain, if a sub-outcome can properly and appropriately fit under one of the other population-level outcomes RATHER than the domain-level outcome, that is where it will sit. The domain level outcome captures sub-outcomes, indicators and measures that do not easily or comfortably sit under one of the other population level outcomes.
7. In the Framework, sometimes a particular identity, experience or stage of life will be referenced. It is important to note that 'we' encompasses EVERY identity, experience and stage of life that people are at. At places throughout the Framework where this needs to be emphasised, this statement may appear in the 'Assumptions/Comments' column: *These outcomes should be taken to encompass every life stage, identity and experience people have (e.g. Aboriginal people, people from a CALD background, people identifying as LGBTQI, women, older people, etc)*
8. We acknowledge that important enablers for a person-centred approach to outcomes include systems and organisations. It is impossible to completely separate outcomes about organisations and systems from indicators of a good life, and some outcomes and indicators addressing the performance or quality of organisations or the system exist in the Framework. However, these are not exhaustive. The Framework requires further development for it to be able to do this comprehensively, and in a way that would enable evaluation of services, organisations and/or systems.

# Values underpinning the Framework

We respect the human rights and dignity of all.

We are courageous and innovative. We consider successes, research, social movements and failures in other places and areas, and we are accountable and transparent. We learn lessons, and we share them with one another.

We have a shared responsibility for achieving these outcomes for ourselves and our communities. We are collaborative in achieving outcomes for our communities.

We strive for equality and equity in our communities.

We recognise and value individual strengths and differences, and take them into account in planning. People have the right to choose what a good life looks like for them, which may not include many outcomes within this Framework.

We value activities of prevention (or earliest possible intervention) over later prevention. We endeavour to address the roots of the systemic and complex issues we are addressing.

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes as the first sovereign nations of the Australian continent. We understand that the legacy and impact of colonisation has led to proportionally poor outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and we are committed to addressing the structural nature of this problem.

*KH note: this last value is working and needs to be confirmed. It draws on elements of the Uluru Statement, as well as bits and pieces that people in the consultation and engagement sessions have put together over time, but I have framed it here. In the same way that there are areas in the Framework itself that need ultimately to be driven by Aboriginal people, so does this.*

*Further, the Working Group affirmed that they want to see strengths-based language here, and I have grappled with how to frame this acknowledgement as strengths based. This absolutely has to be something that continues to be developed in partnership with Aboriginal peoples, alongside those identified elements in the Framework, and perhaps this can be linked with the work of the DPC Aboriginal Policy Unit in reviewing the Aboriginal Advisory Council.*

# Definitions

*Note: all definitions will be revised in light of ensuring consistency across Dept of Communities and Lotterywest Frameworks*

These definitions apply to this document, and to the Outcomes and Indicator Bank.

Population-level outcomes are person centred, and focussed on outcomes for an individual's life.

Sub-outcomes are person centred, and focussed on 'steps along the way' to the population level outcome.

Indicators *[definition to align with confirmed definitions as above]*

Measures *[definition to align with confirmed definitions as above]*

If a WA data source for each measure could be identified, it is listed. A data source provided in black text means we know that we can get the information from that source. *A data source provided in blue italic text means we think we can get the information from that source, but this is an assumption that requires confirmation.*

If an agency or network has created a target for this measure, it has been listed. The clearest examples here are Our Priorities. If this column is blank, no target was identified; but it does not mean that it does not exist. Further development of the Framework will likely lead to further identification of targets which exist across agencies or network groups across the sector.

Assumptions/comments provides questions, reflections, or clarifications with respect to something in that row to guide and inform further development of the Framework.

# Domain explanations

## Safe: We are, and we feel, safe and free from harm

Feeling secure and protected has long been recognised as one of the most basic human needs.

Everybody should be able to live their life safe and free from harm. Harm can take many forms. It can include discrimination, financial exploitation, physical, sexual or verbal abuse, personal and family violence, or physical and emotional neglect. It can comprise self-inflicted injuries, where people may feel isolated, are living with stress or a mental illness, or have an experience of trauma.

Ensuring people feel secure and are able to live their lives free from harm is essential to their wellbeing and creating the kind of society in which we all wish to live.

## Stable: We are financially secure and have suitable and culturally appropriate housing

Households struggling to get by on inadequate and insecure incomes often face difficult choices: Do you pay your rent to keep a roof over your head, pay your energy bill to keep the lights on and fridge running, or buy food for your family this week? What may seem like an impossible dilemma to us is the reality for 360,000 Western Australians living in poverty.<sup>1</sup> 150,000 more are at risk of joining them in financial hardship in the event of a crisis, such as a loss of work income, interest rate rise or serious accident.

A sufficient income, coupled with safe and secure shelter, is essential for people to be able to fully engage in our community. Conversely, instability in housing and uncertainty in income are tantamount to the foundation of entrenched disadvantage. We all need a stable base to work from. An absence of this compounds the other challenges people face, directly affecting their capacity to look for and secure paid work, and entrenching disadvantage.

## Healthy: We are healthy and well


Everybody should be able to live their lives enjoying good physical and mental health.

There is a growing recognition as to how health is intertwined with and shaped by a range of social, economic, cultural, and environmental factors. Circumstantial factors such as education, employment, and social support operate to strengthen or undermine the health of communities. People who live in higher socio-economic communities experience better morbidity and mortality rates than people from more disadvantaged communities.

A deeper understanding of the social determinants of health requires a more nuanced approach to ensuring improved health outcomes, beyond biology, physiology and traditional medical models.

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<sup>1</sup> Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre (2017) *The Price is Right: An Examination of the Cost of Living in Western Australia*, Focus on Western Australia Report Series No. 10



Ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing for people all ages is crucial to creating inclusive communities in which everyone has the capacity to engage. Elevated community health and resilience has far-reaching benefits for wider populations.

## Equipped: We have the skills, experiences and resources to contribute to our community and economy

Education and training are essential to equip us with the knowledge and skills we all need to contribute to and benefit from our community and economy.

A lack of education and training are a significant driver of social and economic disadvantage. This is especially apparent in early years, where a good start in life lays the foundations for later learning.

Equal access to quality education can break the cycle of poverty by providing people with the tools to access employment opportunities and ensure they can access the support they need. Coupled with having the requisite skills, it is also crucial that people are equipped with the resources and technology needed to participate fully and gain the benefits of new developments and innovations.

Learning and skill development facilitates access to the labour market, provides people with more opportunities to build their independence and engage in the activities that they want. Equal and widespread access to education, training and technology play an important role in reducing social and economic inequalities. It is a pathway out of poverty.

## Connected: We are connected to culture, our communities, our environment and to each other


Like other outcome domains, individual and community connections are critical for strong and effective social support systems. Positive relationships, be they with friends, families, peers or colleagues, are essential for people's well-being and sense of belonging. Connections are also critical to our ability to discover and achieve our vocation in life and have a positive impact on our community.

In addition to relationships with family and friends, people's links to their community also contributes to a cohesive society. Being able to connect with your culture, language and community is crucial for those whose culture heritage is different from the mainstream. Similarly, respecting and understanding the cultures of others is important to creating a harmonious society, where people feel welcome and included.

Social connectedness helps build self-esteem and enhances mental and emotional health. Ensuring people are able to engage with each other builds resilient communities. Community in turn plays a crucial role in assisting individuals and families to respond to and overcome life challenges.

## Empowered: We choose how to live our lives

People have a fundamental right to make decisions about their own lives. With authority and insight about what is in their best interests, people and communities should be enabled to contribute as



independent, experienced and respected voices. This includes their rights and choices being acknowledged and respected, as they direct and design the services and supports that they access.

Where people and communities require assistance in managing and addressing their needs, it is the responsibility of the state and our sector to provide the means by which they are empowered to exercise their agency. Because improving life outcomes is ultimately dependent of the involvement of people and the community in shaping and controlling factors affecting their wellbeing, creating and supporting empowering mechanisms has to be a priority.

Engaged and empowered people and communities are at the heart of a healthy and resilient Western Australian society.

## Sustainable: Our built and natural environments are clean, liveable and sustainable

The health and vitality of our natural environment is intertwined with our own. We are healthier when our surrounding environment flourishes. Australia's First Nations peoples often lived by a fundamental maxim, "heal the country, heal the people". Whether you are based in the city, towns, or regions, this is true now as it has been in the past.

Biodiversity loss, soil condition, water health, and air quality are just a few of the overlapping variables that are under pressure, and are continuing to degrade through a changing climate, unsustainable consumption and waste, poor land management, and population pressures.

Targeted local interventions supported by state-wide coordination and policy frameworks can help reverse trends in environmental health and ensure the long-term sustainability of Western Australia's greatest and most unique resource.



# Data Dictionary

To be completed and inserted with further development of the Framework.

Note adoption of Lotterywest Index of Wellbeing Data Dictionary is appropriate and useful in some circumstances, as many indicators and measures are the same.