

## **Connecting Communities with Community Indicators\***

By

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## Introduction

The question I would like to begin answering in this essay is this. How can one connect communities of diverse sizes by means of a system of statistical indicators in the interests of building solidarity and embracing diversity? I say "begin answering" because I have only been able to see some salient aspects of a beginning. A complete and logically tidy vision is not yet clear.

The general structure and approach to answering the question before us is that used by the team of researchers building the Canadian Index of Wellbeing System (CIWS). The main sponsor of the CIWS work is the Atkinson Charitable Foundation. Since the team is fairly large (a few dozen people), we do not have complete agreement about everything, but we generally aim for consensus as our work progresses.

Besides following the structure and approach of the CIWS, my remarks are significantly informed by discussions with the governing Board and participants at meetings of the Community Indicators Consortium and the newly formed National Neighbourhood Network in Canada. There are levels of theoretical and practical expertise, and of enthusiasm and energy in the CIWS, CIC and NNN groups that are quite remarkable. Indeed, adding the new initiatives of the OECD to these grass roots organizations and those of the International Society for Quality of Life Studies promises a very bright future for work in the general field of quality of life, wellbeing and progress measurement.

Because our time is limited, I will make several assumptions immediately.

First, as explained in detail elsewhere (e.g., Michalos, 2003, 2005), it is assumed that a good life or a life that is qualitatively good may be measured in quantitative terms with statistical time series data, broadly referred to as social, economic and environmental indicators.

Second, it is assumed that the progress referred to in the title of this conference is progress toward precisely such a life.

Third, the communities referred to in our research question are primarily place-based, i.e., communities of place, and secondarily communities of interest. Although there are frequently interactions among these two kinds of communities, it seems more likely that people sharing the same space would have common interests than that people having common interests would share the same space. The people assembled at this conference to discuss issues of common interests illustrate my point precisely, since we come from all parts of the globe. What is perhaps extraordinary about our meeting here is the fact that our particular common interest concerns issues related to connecting the earth's great variety of place-based communities by identifying additional common interests.

Fourth, it may be useful to distinguish what we might call *fundamental definitions* of 'community' from *derived definitions*. Fundamental definitions would have individuals (people) as their constituents, while derived definitions would have groups (collectivities) as their constituents. A fundamental definition of a 'place-based community' would be a network of people sharing some common place or space (e.g., the city of Prince George, the Carney Hill Neighbourhood in Prince George, the province of British Columbia, or Canada), while a fundamental definition of an 'interest-based community' would be a network of people sharing some common interests (e.g., dentists, city mayors, sociologists, book publishers). A derived definition of a 'place-based

community' would be a network of place-based communities (e.g., the network of municipalities of British Columbia, the network of Canadian provinces, the network of countries in the European Union or the United Nations), while a derived definition of an 'interest-based community' would be a network of interest-based communities (e.g., the Canadian Labour Congress or the Social Sciences and Humanities Federation of Canada).

Fifth, following Aristotle (1999) in the fourth century BCE, I think that a good life for an individual or community is a function of the actual conditions of that life and what an individual or community makes of those conditions. What a person or community makes of those conditions is in turn a function of how the conditions are perceived, what is thought and felt about those conditions, what is done and, finally, what consequences follow from all these things. People's perceptions, thoughts, feelings and actions, then, have an impact on their own and others' living conditions, as illustrated in Exhibit 1.

Sixth, the basic components of a good life from the time of Aristotle to today, across all cultures, are familiar to most people. In the ancient philosopher's terms, they included goods of the body (e.g., good physical health, strength, vitality, bodily pleasures), goods of the mind (e.g., wisdom, moral virtue and mental pleasures) and external goods (e.g., wealth, security, good friends, loved ones, beautiful built and natural environments, and good communities). People whose lives are characterized by such features have generally been regarded as happy, enjoying *eudaimonia* or "living well and doing well" in Aristotle's phrase, or briefly in contemporary terms, enjoying wellbeing.

Seventh, and finally, at least since the report of the Brundtland Commission (1987), the idea of a good quality of life has been essentially connected to that of sustainable development.

"Sustainable development", we are told in the Report, "is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. . . The satisfaction of human needs and aspirations is the major objective of development. The essential needs of vast numbers of people in developing countries – for food, clothing, shelter, jobs – are not being met, and beyond their basic needs these people have legitimate aspirations for an improved quality of life. . . Sustainable development requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunity to satisfy their aspirations for a better life" (pp.43-44).

### **Acceptability Criteria and Critical Issues**

Over some years of work on indicators of a good life, I have gradually produced lists of Acceptability Criteria and Critical Issues that must be addressed by anyone interested in constructing such indicators. Briefly, acceptable indicators and/or indexes should be:

#### **Acceptability Criteria**

1. Relevant to the concerns of our main target audiences
2. Easy to understand
3. Reliable and valid
4. Politically unbiased
5. Easy to obtain and periodically update
6. Comparable across jurisdictions and groups

7. Objective or subjective, or both
8. Positive or negative, or both
9. A constituent or determinant of wellbeing, or both
10. Attributable to individuals or groups of animate or inanimate objects, or all of these
11. Obtained through an open, transparent and consultative review process
12. Going to contribute to a coherent and comprehensive view of a good life or human wellbeing

Acceptability Criteria are not usually specified with great precision (e.g., see Hagerty, *et al.*, 2001), but they provide useful guidelines for discussions and negotiations over particular indicators and indexes. Some judgment is required in their application in order to prevent the achievement of some goals at the expense of others, e.g., measures that are easy to obtain and update must not be allowed to arrest the development of new measures that might have greater validity and make a greater contribution to a comprehensive view of wellbeing.

Additional complications arise when one considers the array of Critical Issues that have to be settled in order to assemble a set of indicators or indexes satisfying the final criterion in the list, i.e., contributing to a coherent and comprehensive set. Explicitly or implicitly, every indicator or index must be specified by addressing the 21 issues listed below. The issues are not categorized or presented in any particular order of priority or importance because no single principle or set of principles seems sufficient to provide a single rank order of the total set. Some are clearly logically prior to others in the sense that answers to some must be obtained before others, e.g., one cannot assess causal relations (#17) or benefits and costs (#9) without knowing what sorts of things (#5) have been selected for measurement or evaluation. Other ordering principles would lead to different orders, e.g., one might suppose that the most important question in the lot is who gets to assess the adequacy of answers to all other questions (#20), or perhaps, who is entitled to any consideration at all (#4). As well, it is unlikely that the issues in this list are mutually exclusive in pairs and collectively exhaustive. Nevertheless, for all their limitations, in order to identify and measure *a life, way of life or quality of life worthy of pursuit*, an individual or community must make decisions concerning the following issues.

#### Critical Issues

1. *Individual wellbeing, group wellbeing or both*: e.g., per capita incomes are inferred attributes applying to individuals, while unemployment rates are inferred attributes applying to groups.
2. *Spatial coordinates*: e.g., the best size to understand air pollution may be different from the best size to understand crime.
3. *Temporal coordinates*: e.g., the optimal duration to understand resource depletion may be different from the optimal duration to understand the impact of sanitation changes.
4. *Population composition*: e.g., analyses by language, sex, age, education, ethnic background, income, etc. may reveal or conceal different things.
5. *Domains of life composition*: e.g., different domains like health, job, family life, housing, etc. give different views and suggest different agendas for action.

6. *Objective versus subjective indicators*: e.g., relatively subjective appraisals of housing and neighborhoods by actual dwellers may be very different from relatively objective appraisals by "experts".
7. *Positive versus negative indicators*: negative indicators seem to be easier to craft for some domains, which may create a biased assessment, e.g., in the health domain measures of morbidity and mortality may crowd out positive measures of wellbeing.
8. *Input versus output indicators*: e.g., expenditures on teachers and school facilities may give a very different view of the quality of an education system from that based on student performance on standardized tests, and both may be very different from assessing whether the populace at large is becoming more literate, knowledgeable, educated and wise.
9. *Benefits and costs*: different measures of value or worth yield different overall evaluations as well as different evaluations for different people, e.g., the market value of child care is far below the personal, social or human value of having children well cared for.
10. *Recipient populations*: Who should be included as a recipient for particular benefits and costs?
11. *Measurement scales*: e.g., different measures of wellbeing provide different views of people's wellbeing and relate differently to other measures.
12. *Research personnel*: e.g., different stakeholders often have very different views about what is important to monitor and how to evaluate whatever is monitored.
13. *Report readers*: e.g., different target audiences need different reporting media and/or formats.
14. *Aggregation function*: e.g., once indicators are selected, they must be combined or aggregated somehow in order to get a coherent story or view.
15. *Distributions*: e.g., because average figures can conceal extraordinary and perhaps unacceptable variation, choices must be made about appropriate representations of distributions.
16. *Distance impacts*: e.g., people living in one place may access facilities (hospitals, schools, theatres, museums, libraries) in many other places at varying distances from their place of residence.
17. *Causal relations*: Prior to intervention, one must know what causes what (interaction effects), which requires relatively mainstream scientific research, which may not be available yet. At a minimum, correlations among variables should be explored with a view to discovering possible evidence of dependence or independence, redundancy and double-counting.
18. *Discount rates*: How much should one discount costs and benefits delivered some time in the future compared to those delivered today?
19. *Confidence levels*: What levels of confidence should one require to accept any particular claim or measure?
20. *Auditors*: Who should decide if any assessments are adequate or appropriate?
21. *Auditing criteria*: What criteria should be used to assess the adequacy of auditors' assessments, the adequacy of the procedures used for audits and even the adequacy of the answers to questions raised with the previous 20 issues?

The last question reveals the threat of either an infinite regress, a circular argument or an arbitrary end to analysis. Clearly, none of these options is very attractive, but it is in the very nature of foundational work that such a point must be reached. In any event, supposing that one had only two alternatives for each of the 21 Critical Issues (an absurdly conservative supposition), at least 2,097,152 different sets of indicators might be constructed. If nothing else, this suggests the size of the working space for indicator and index development.

### **Multi-level Nesting of Indicators**

Given the particular question of this essay, our attention should be directed to the critical issues of individual versus group wellbeing (#1), spatial coordinates (#2), distance impacts (#16) and causal relations (#17). Assuming that we are seeking indicators in the form of statistical time series to connect diverse kinds of communities, Exhibit 2 illustrates an array of 8 kinds of entities that are usually nested within larger entities. The entities in the exhibit are not exhaustive of all those that might have been included and, since they are nested, they are not mutually exclusive. People often talk about places of work or places of worship, and statistical agencies routinely collect data on "establishments" of various kinds. Such places might be given an appropriate slot in a more robust exhibit. Apart from the smallest nest in the exhibit, that of individuals, all the other nests are place-based communities with diverse geographical, cultural and other component features.

As the exhibit clearly shows, individuals are multi-nested entities. Because each type of nest has some distinctive features and requirements for its own existence, multi-nested individuals typically have multiple roles to play throughout their own existence. Different nests produce different rights, privileges and obligations. For example, we are family members (fathers, mothers, sons, cousins), friends, neighbours, residents of some city, province and country. As fathers, for example, we have special obligations to our wives and children, as neighbours we have somewhat less distinct obligations, as residents of cities and so on, still other kinds of obligations as well as rights and privileges.

It seems to me that the most fundamental problem faced by people with an interest in community indicators is to precisely identify the particular nest or set of nests that they are thinking of when they think of community indicators, and then to clearly identify its or their essential features by working through the list of Critical Issues. Identification of the nest or nests is essential because of the diverse roles, rights, privileges and obligations that are attached to individuals and groups in the nests. It is impossible to begin taking stock of a community's strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, obligations and rights without community identification. Until there is common consent regarding community identification, there is no way to know who is or should be responsible or accountable for what, and no way to begin constructing a strategic plan for change or development. For example, homelessness will be addressed in different ways if it is regarded as a personal problem of some individuals, a problem of some neighborhoods, some cities, provinces or the country as a whole. If people living in certain areas of a city do not perceive those areas to be neighbourhoods and do not think of the problem of homelessness as a neighbourhood problem, it will be impossible to address the problem at a neighbourhood level. Similar remarks apply to

each of the kinds of nests named in Exhibit 2. At the broadest level, the so-called international or world community often fails to act (e.g., to reduce global warming, the spread of AIDS or genocide) because the community and its interests are so vaguely defined. If these colossal problems are neglected for lack of a sufficient definition of a 'global community', it is difficult to be optimistic about the chances of global action for common measures of progress toward an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future. Nevertheless, it is necessary to try to build a consensus for the development of such measures because, after all, we all inhabit a single planet with a limited capacity for growth and waste disposal.

In Exhibit 2, individuals are the smallest units of analysis. They are not places, certainly not in any geographical sense. Social scientists might suppose these "units" are individual human beings, but biologists of various sorts might imagine individuals of other animal or plant species and other kinds of scientists might have still other paradigm cases of individuals. Regarding human beings, individual-level indicators for any place-based community would include things like simple census counts of total numbers of individuals, men, women, people of a certain age, born in a certain place, educated to a certain level, with an income of a certain amount and a Body Mass Index of a certain size. The place-based community might be as small as a single household or a remote village or a neighbourhood within a city, or as large as a province, a whole country or set of countries.

It is important to emphasize that even though social scientists might collect individual-level information about people (e.g., Body Mass) without collecting any information about the place(s) occupied by those people, human beings are not disembodied spirits. So, they are always occupying some place(s) and the missing information would frequently, if not always, be relevant to the measures obtained. This happens all the time, for example, when psychologists gather information from students in diverse places. Depending on the issues being investigated, being in one class rather than another, or in one school or university rather than another, or in a particular family, neighbourhood and so on might be relevant, whether or not any such place-based information is collected. If such variables are just missing from the survey research instruments used, then it is impossible to test for place-based effects or interaction effects, or to undertake any kind of multi-level modeling involving place. Researchers' explanatory equations are then bound to be misspecified, as it so often happens, and their purported causal analyses are bound to be faulty.

Individual-level indicators are routinely aggregated in uncontroversial ways to form group-level indicators. For example, we might calculate the percentages of men and women in a certain place-based community, and find that 52% of the individuals are women and 48% are men. Since only individuals can be characterized as men or women while only groups can be characterized as having a certain percent of men or women, it is clear that the properties of being a man or women are distinctive of individuals while the properties of being a certain percent of men or women are distinctive of groups. There was a time when social scientists hotly debated the question of whether all social scientific data could be reduced to individual-level data or not, with those on the individualist side insisting on the possibility of reduction and those on the holist side insisting on its impossibility. We need not address this question here, but I have always been on the holist side (Michalos, 1978).

Dwellings occupy the second level of Exhibit 2, typically “our places” for most people and most often family places. The tasks of taking account of people without dwellings (homeless people), in the simple sense of counting them as part of the official population and in the more profound sense of accounting for their very livelihood, usually do not fall on statistical agencies. Such tasks are routinely left to public or private welfare service agencies.

One might suppose that the aggregation of individuals into families is a relatively simple matter, but it is not. For example, for some years Statistics Canada had two definitions of a family. A *census family* was either a husband or wife couple, including common-law couples, with or without children, or a lone-parent with a child sharing a dwelling, while an *economic family* was any group of people, including all census families, sharing a dwelling and related by blood, marriage, common-law or adoption. Thus, the idea of an economic family was broader than that of a census family and both kinds of families were essentially place-based communities of people, the places being the particular dwelling units occupied by those people. More recently, ‘census families’ have dropped out of usage, and we now have ‘economic families’ and ‘unattached individuals’. For the purposes of their study of family violence, Poff and Michalos (1991) had to construct an even broader notion of family which they called a *socio-psychological family*. They defined such families as “economic or census families, or groups of individuals with self-avowed, personally and socially constructed, relatively intimate relationships without sexual or temporal boundaries” (p.155). Socio-psychological families must also occupy some place, which may differ from that of particular economic families.

If one went no farther down the pyramid of nested entities in Exhibit 2, one would still have to address the issues concerning the interactions and causal relations among individuals and groups occupying particular dwelling units. After all, individuals with different genetic and learned capabilities and attributes act and react in different ways in groups with different capabilities and attributes. So, what resources and constraints are present or absent, and what it might be necessary to provide or remove in the interests of improving the quality of the lives of individuals and groups can only be determined by individual and group-level research, with some notion of family or at least occupants of a single dwelling providing the group-level unit of analysis. Thus, if one went no farther down the pyramid of nested entities, it is obvious that the chances of appropriately measuring and understanding only the socio-psychological dynamics affecting the individuals and families would be very small unless one engaged the expertise of multi-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary teams of researchers. Nevertheless, because the basic building blocks of human communities are human beings, one can be sure that the Aristotelian core of internal and external goods will merit attention, be capable of measurement, periodic monitoring and some deliberate manipulation in the interests of improving the quality of life.

The term ‘neighbourhood’ in the third nest of Exhibit 2 is intended to do double duty, designating a set of contiguous streets and/or blocks with residents whose children often share a single public school as well as a set of contiguous rural properties. While the former idea and situation is probably familiar to more people because most people live in relatively urban areas, people living in sparsely populated rural and remote areas also think of themselves as having neighbours. That is, residents of urban and rural or



remote areas all have neighbours sharing a common place, only those in urban areas might be just around the corner, across the street or upstairs while those in rural and remote areas might be several acres or even hundreds or thousands of acres away. That is why when we speak of neighbourhoods as place-based centres of community activities, we must be sensitive to the fact that the geography of the places occupied by some communities can be the most important feature of those communities, the greatest asset or liability for mobilizing community action.

It is worth mentioning that there is no more agreement over definitions of 'urban' and 'rural' than there is over 'community' and 'neighbourhood'. Statistics Canada's concept of rurality is a function of population density and distance from an urban centre. So, for example, "one's measure of rurality would change, depending upon whether one was considering access to a monthly ballet performance or access to a curling rink or access to a sizable number of organic restaurants to market your organic farm products" (Bollman, 2007, p.7). Since there is very little information about the size of most people's living space, how far they are willing to and actually do travel to access shops of various kinds (groceries, clothes, household appliances, automobile services), leisure activities (theatres, restaurants, arenas, golf courses, parks, ballparks, museums), health care (clinics, hospitals, medical specialists and general practitioners), education and information (public and private trade and other kinds of schools, universities, libraries), it is very hazardous to assess the quality of people's lives by simply counting kinds of facilities and services available within a relatively well-defined political jurisdiction (e.g., within a particular town or city). For example, when I moved from the city of Guelph, Ontario to Prince George, British Columbia, both cities had populations of 70 to 80 thousand people, a university, hospital and symphony. However, Guelph is about a one hour drive from downtown Toronto and the Hamilton-Niagara region, giving Guelph residents access to practically all the facilities and services of these two larger communities, while the closest relatively large city to Prince George is Edmonton, Alberta, at least a 7 hours drive away. Residents of Toronto can escape the city congestion and enjoy the theatres and more leisurely paced lives of the small towns of Stratford or Niagara on the Lake, Ontario by simply driving a couple hours west. Clearly, the so-called 'spillover problem' that researchers encounter when they try to assess neighbourhood facilities and services is a problem for researchers assessing the facilities and services of communities of all sizes in most places. Even in a relatively small city like Prince George, road maintenance is sometimes primarily the responsibility of the municipal government and sometimes the provincial government, depending on which road. A local survey respondent asked to approve or disapprove of the government's performance on road maintenance would seldom know which government is praise-worthy or blame-worthy.

The fourth nest in Exhibit 2 is set aside for villages, towns and cities, settlement areas which seem to have no universally agreed upon definitions. This is also true of metropolitan areas, our fifth nest. Although the diversity and complexity of facilities, services, institutions and organizations tends to increase with the populations of such settlement areas, there are no new Critical Issues so far as quality of life, wellbeing or progress measurement are concerned. I would not under-estimate the significance of the additional diversity and complexity introduced by great increases in population or population density in particular places. However, the changes that occur with such

increases seem to me to be differences of degree rather than differences of kind. Villages, towns, cities and metropolitan areas are communities of communities insofar as each of the larger settlement areas contains smaller settlement areas. Each of the larger places contains smaller places, with diverse kinds of interactions and causal relations among the individuals and groups in the diverse places.

I mentioned the Community Indicators Consortium earlier and there will be a presentation at this conference focused specifically on the work of this group. However, Exhibit 3 has been included to briefly provide an overview of the sort of information, knowledge and wisdom generated at the most recent meeting of the group in Jacksonville, Florida in March 2007. Participants in the meetings of this group are primarily interested in the development of indicators and indexes, tools of measurement, advocacy and change for communities of the fourth and fifth levels of Exhibit 2. Hopefully, this essay will make it easier to see connections between these two levels and all the others.

It might be thought that differences of kind would appear at the sixth nest, involving relatively large political jurisdictions like provinces or states, or ecological water sheds or air sheds. But such a view does not seem warranted. The province of British Columbia, for example, has two large river basins, for the Columbia and Fraser Rivers. The largest of the two, the Fraser River runs approximately 1,400 kilometres from Mount Robson in the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean at the Strait of Georgia. About 2.8 million people live in the basin, which is two-thirds of the province's population. According to the most recent "state of the basin" report of the Fraser Basin Council (2007, p.2), "The Fraser Basin is a special place". The Basin supports

"...six salmon species, including steelhead, and 65 other species of fish. . .British Columbia's most productive waterfowl breeding area, home to hundreds of species of birds and mammals as well as reptiles, amphibians and insects. From Prince George to Williams Lake to Kamloops, and throughout the most populated stretches of the Fraser Valley and Greater Vancouver, communities depend on the Basin to support a range of economic activity –from natural resource industries, to agriculture to businesses of all types. This is the land where we live, work and play. Our well-being is so closely tied to the Fraser Basin that its future is our own".

Such is the diversity and complexity of the Basin, that to make a reasonable assessment of the "state of the Basin", the total area covered has been divided into 5 regions with a common set of indicators applied to each region. Prince George is the largest city in the most northern region of the Basin, a region that enjoys the best water quality and the worst air quality of all 5 regions. Regardless of the fact that the Basin occupies much more space and has a considerably greater variety of natural species than, say, the metropolitan area of Toronto, measuring the quality of life in the Basin does not seem to introduce new Critical Issues. One would expect greater variability in the air and water quality across the length of the Basin than across the length of the metropolitan Toronto area, but not necessarily different kinds of indicators of air and water quality. Sampling techniques and quality standards that would apply to air and water in the Basin would apply in the metropolitan area. Measures of family violence, mortality and morbidity, educational attainment, employment, income and so on would be as relevant to the people in the smaller communities and neighbourhoods within communities within the "special place" known as the Fraser Basin as in the place known as metropolitan Toronto.

For a huge country like Canada, diversity and complexity significantly increase as one moves to the seventh level or nest, the whole country. Unlike the States of the United States of America, Canadian provinces have constitutionally guaranteed jurisdictional rights to the natural resources found in the provinces, e.g., the oil and gas of Alberta is primarily a provincial resource and source of tax revenue. Apart from constitutional provisions, the geography of the country creates its own divisions. For example, to address the issue of a sustainable fishing industry in Canada, one must consider problems of the Pacific herring and salmon on the coast and inside of British Columbia as well as problems of the cod fish across the continent to the coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador. Forestry is vitally important to the economy of British Columbia but not to Manitoba. Air pollution is a significant problem in Toronto, but not a problem in Nova Scotia.

The community of communities that is Canada is not only vertically laced with many levels of nested communities, but horizontally laced with distinct geographic features that individually and collectively make distinct as well as causally interacting contributions to what we call 'the Canadian Mosaic'. A comprehensive assessment of the progress of the Canadian community over time must somehow take account of this great diversity and complexity, and so far we have not developed a vocabulary, much less a general theory to allow us to make such an assessment (Michalos 1997, Michalos, Sharpe and Muhajarine 2007).

Additional complications arise at the eighth level, the level concerning international relations, whether they are bi-lateral (e.g., Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement), tri-lateral (e.g., North American Free Trade Agreement) or multi-lateral (e.g., World Trade Organization). Such agreements create new opportunities and constraints on a country's capacity to act in the interests of national progress, and additional problems in measuring and accounting for progress (Michalos, in press). Then, of course, such problems are multiplied again when one moves to the global level, the nest of all nests. In a recent issue of *Prospect* magazine, Cooper (2007, p.24) wrote,

"In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the new forms of communication have brought us a new world and we need a new constitutional form too. The big question is how to organise this world in which politics and identity are national, but we can survive and prosper only if we act internationally. It is fine to talk about "the international community," but who is it and how can it function?"

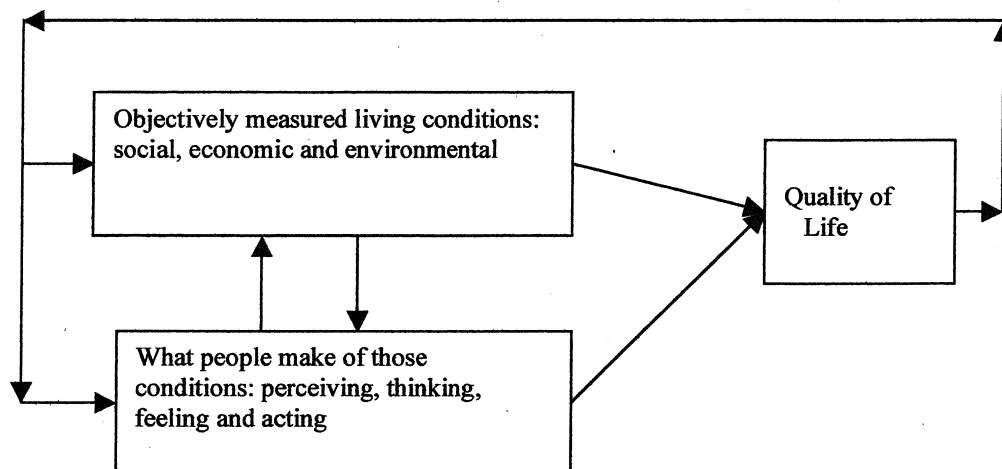
As already suggested, the form and functions of the international community are yet to be defined (constructed), but conferences like this one are helpful. Hopefully, so are observations on the multi-leveled forms and functions of communities of necessarily diverse and smaller sizes.

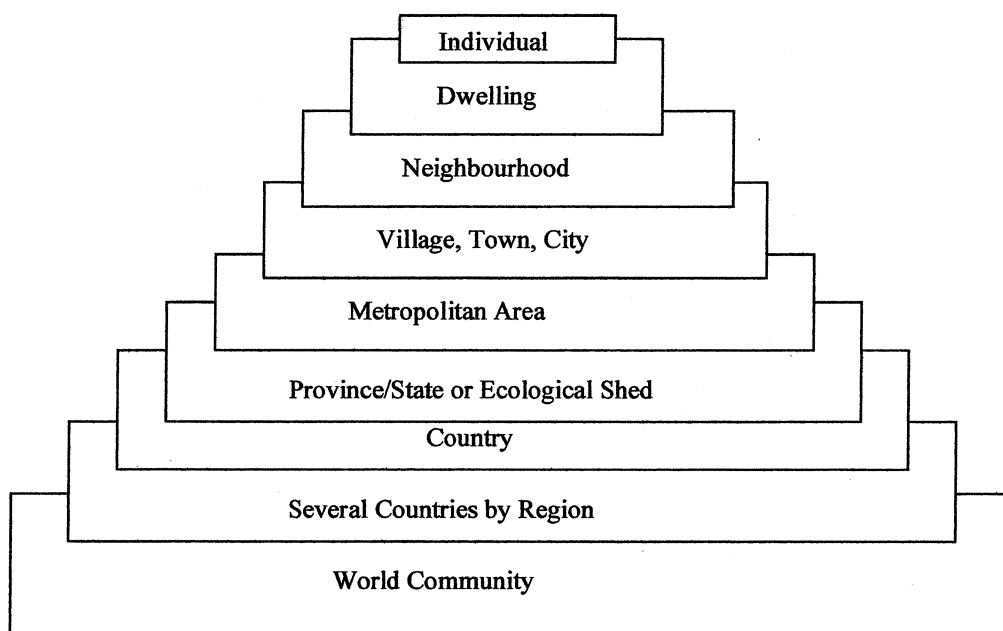
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**Exhibit 1. General Quality of Life Model**



**Exhibit 2. Multi-Level Nesting of Indicators**

**Exhibit 3. Some results from the CIC Jacksonville  
meeting: lessons learned, March 2007**

Aim to build a culture of evidence-based policy making  
Be as inclusive as possible and find the best talent  
Inclusiveness is more important than speed  
Expect mistakes, be patient, be very patient  
The process is at least as important as the product  
Let media and friends know how much they are appreciated  
Agency responsible for reports needs recognized integrity  
City level reports can influence state/provincial, federal gov.  
QOL reports provide vision and allow goal setting  
Benchmarking is important  
Results-based accountability is important  
QOL is connected to place and to heritage  
Facts and perceptions are important  
Different communities have different champions  
Produce shorter and longer versions of reports  
Use diverse media and means to communicate messages  
Pictures are better than numbers  
Provide user training sessions for diverse potential users  
Identify key change agents for diverse kinds of changes  
Allow elected and appointed officials to do their jobs  
Undertake evaluations to find what works or does not work  
Recognize that communities are not homogeneous  
Don't try to do know everything or do everything  
Focus on something, identify critical variables for action  
From Bishop Tutu: Mobilize, mobilize, mobilize  
From trade unions: analyze, organize, educate, agitate