

**TOWARDS AN EVALUATION
FRAMEWORK FOR URBAN
REGENERATION IN SOUTH
AUSTRALIA:**

DISCUSSION PAPER

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Nancy Rogers, Krystyna Slowinski

**Strategic Planning & Research
Department for Families & Communities**

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1 Why a framework?

South Australia has nine urban regeneration projects, in both metropolitan and regional areas, managed by the South Australian Housing Trust. These projects include Westwood (the largest urban renewal project in Australia, and a joint development between SAHT and a private developer, Urban Pacific), Whyalla (a small demonstration project preceding further development); Kilburn South (a five year project in conjunction with the City of Port Adelaide Enfield); Port Lincoln (completed in 2003); and Salisbury North (a \$100 million, 10 year project).

This project was initiated because of a perceived need for an overarching framework to guide and structure the evaluation of urban regeneration initiatives in South Australia. It was originally envisaged that such a framework would:

- ❑ Outline an agreed purpose, scope and desired outcomes for evaluations of urban regeneration in this state
- ❑ Outline principles and values to guide the evaluations
- ❑ Identify key stakeholders and stakeholder groups whose views and experiences should be integrated into the evaluation
- ❑ Identify an indicative theoretical framework(s) for the evaluation
- ❑ Identify key evaluation components and research questions
- ❑ Outline suitable evaluation methodologies.

Whether such a framework is possible, or even desirable, is itself an issue debated in this paper.

Evaluations of urban regeneration are conceptually and methodologically complex tasks. Nationally and internationally, urban regeneration evaluation methodology is still in a developmental stage and most evaluations could be critiqued on the basis of their scope, adequacy, focus, relevance or rigor. This is probably a reflection of the inherent challenges in developing and delivering robust evaluation outcomes which answer the complex questions around regeneration, within the time frame and budget that is generally available and utilising the current scope of evaluation methodologies. It also arguably reflects the difficulties in developing holistic and balanced evaluations that bring together the requisite expertise and perspectives across disciplines.

The challenges which arise in planning regeneration evaluations also emerge when constructing a framework. Difficult, but fundamental, questions must be resolved, for instance:

- ❑ What constitutes success in regeneration? What is regeneration trying to achieve? Is there an overarching meta-objective and purpose which projects should be evaluated against?
- ❑ What are the key outstanding research questions for evaluation? What do we already know, and what do we need to know? Which questions, issues and populations should receive priority?
- ❑ How much should the evaluation focus be on more subjective social and individual impacts of regeneration – harder, and more expensive, to detect, measure and assess?
- ❑ How are such complex, large scale and multi-level initiatives best evaluated? What are the methodologies and approaches that have been used? How adequate, robust and applicable are they to South Australian needs and interests?
- ❑ Given that regeneration is an intervention with a long-term perspective: when should an evaluation be conducted and what should be assessed at different stages?
- ❑ What principles should guide the evaluation?

- What should be the commitment to the evaluation of regeneration in South Australia?
- Is it possible, realistic or even desirable to have an overarching evaluation framework?
What are the advantages and limitations of such an approach?

This paper is structured around such dilemmas. Thus, the following eight sections each summarise a key issue and argue a position using examples from current practice, research and literature. The aim of this approach is to stimulate an informed discussion, debate and learning and produce a product that is robust, applicable and widely supported. Sections close with questions to assist discussion and feedback.

The final section draws this information together into a draft Framework for comment.

This paper will inform a consultation process on the issues raised. Subsequently it is envisaged that the proposed Framework will be modified, and a 'trial evaluation', based on the Framework, commissioned and conducted.

2 What is the overarching objective in regeneration?

2.1 The issue:

Current South Australian regeneration projects have different objectives, priorities and strategies. Thus, outcome hierarchies and key performance indicators developed for each project are quite different. Projects are monitored and evaluated against their individual objectives. This results in information that is non-comparable; arguably, it may also mean that key information and research questions are missed, and findings may be misleading (projects can be shown to successfully achieve against limited delineated outcomes, but broader issues and impacts are overlooked).

Should evaluations only be conducted against the objectives for each project? Or is there a broader and unifying set of objectives which need to be considered? Are there overarching goals for urban regeneration that should inform the construction of the major research questions in evaluation?

2.2 The position

This paper proposes that there is an underlying unity of purpose and approach in regeneration activities which imply consistent objectives. It is argued that these form the meta-questions for evaluation, to overarch individual project aims, goals and objectives.

2.3 Current practice

Individual sets of objectives have been developed for each regeneration project in South Australia, reflecting the specific circumstances and priorities for each area. These objectives are generally translated into key performance indicators for project monitoring purposes and evaluation.

For example, nine overall objectives were identified for the Mitchell Park project:

1. Improve the social and physical environment
2. Provide greater opportunities for home ownership
3. Improve the integration of new residential development with existing communities
4. Enhance the social environment of Mitchell Park
5. Assist in the broad distribution of public housing throughout the metropolitan area
6. Achieve a balance of housing and allotment types to meet housing preferences and demographic trends
7. Improve the physical amenity and value of SAHT assets
8. Raise funds from under-utilised SAHT assets to fund construction of new public housing
9. Apply environmentally sensitive approaches to urban design.

The evaluation brief for Mitchell Park focuses on these objectives, with potential indicators including useable open space, the condition of roads, footpaths, verges and storm-water systems, the improvement to total Council rates collected, and increases in the value of properties in the project area.

By contrast, Victoria has established an overarching aim for all its urban regeneration projects, namely to *'narrow the gap between the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the rest of the State'*. Under this, six key objectives are common across all projects:

1. Increase people's pride and participation in the community
2. Enhance housing and the physical environment
3. Lift employment, training and education opportunities and expand local economic activities
4. Improve personal safety and wellbeing
5. Promote health and wellbeing
6. Increase access to transport and other key services and improve government responsiveness.¹

An overarching evaluation framework has been developed which will assess achievements against the above objectives. Core performance indicators are common to all projects, and are collated through annual administrative data collections and bi-annual community services.

2.4 Discussion

Evaluation is a systematic process of research and analysis, which uses a range of information collection strategies. Evaluation should consider not only whether a project has achieved its objectives, but its impact, intended and unintended consequences, and the elements, processes and actions which contributed to the impact. **Intrinsic to the concept of evaluation is knowledge building and development.**

Urban regeneration is a concept and practice that has evolved internationally over time. Although there is no single binding definition of what regeneration is, or what it seeks to achieve, an underpinning uniformity is evident.

At the core of urban regeneration are attempts to tackle two major and related issues:

1. problems of physical decay, ageing and inappropriate stock in public housing estates and
2. social dysfunction in these areas.²

At a meta-level, urban regeneration is 'place policy',³ an intervention aimed at a designated neighbourhood or area which seeks to respond to area disadvantage and degeneration. Spiller Gibbins and Swan⁴ identify the major characteristics of the areas which cause concern as including:

- ❑ a high concentration of public housing
- ❑ stigma and poor image for residents
- ❑ low client satisfaction levels and high vacancy rates

¹ Department of Human Services, Victoria (2002), **Neighbourhood Renewal: Evaluation Framework 2002 – 2003**, www.neighbourhoodrenewal.vic.gov.au

² Spiller Gibbins Swan Pty Ltd (2000) **Public Housing Estate Renewal in Australia**, Australian Housing Research Fund, Project No. 212 Final Report

³ Carley M (2002) **Community Regeneration and neighbourhood renewal: a review of the evidence**, Communities Scotland

⁴ Spiller Gibbins Swan Pty Ltd (2000) **op cit** p 2

- ❑ high concentrations of the socially disadvantaged with high levels of unemployment, crime and other indicators of social dysfunction and
- ❑ tenancy management problems such as high arrears and neighbourhood disputes.

Estates often exhibit design problems, poor building conditions and in some instances poor location with respect to jobs and urban services.

Walker et al argue that regeneration is a mainly housing-led response to social problems in degraded communities. They have identified major goals in regeneration as: lowering local crime, reducing the stigma associated with an area, increasing employment, and achieving social justice (or social inclusion), all supporting a meta-goal of sustainable communities.⁵

Regeneration projects implicitly share meta-objectives around improving the quality of housing and environment in a disadvantaged and degraded area, along with social and community wellbeing. While these objectives are expressed in different ways, recurrent themes include better quality housing, tenure mix and sustainable communities.⁶ Thus:

(Urban regeneration programs are) comprehensive and integrated visions and actions which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change.⁷

A definition developed by the South Australian Department for Families and Communities (formally Department of Human Services) implies this holistic approach to 'problems of place' and broad aims of addressing area disadvantage and improving quality of life through regeneration:

Urban regeneration is a collaborative process to enhance and sustain quality of life in areas of relative disadvantage, through working with the community to develop its resources, services and networks.⁸

Similarly, the South Australian 1999 Green Paper on Urban Regeneration describes urban regeneration as a process which 'involves all aspects of the urban environment' and can reap 'social, economic and environmental benefits'.⁹ Improvement in social and living conditions; a better matching of services and housing to community requirements; enhancing property values; enhancing community pride; and economic development linked to training and employment are all in scope. The implicit holistic approach draws infrastructure issues of outdated stock and degraded areas together with those of social exclusion, disadvantage and sustainable urban environments.

2.5 Proposal

Regeneration projects seek to bring about lasting improvements across economic, environmental, social and physical conditions in disadvantaged communities. These ambitious and large-scale meta-objectives generate over-arching research questions for evaluation. It is proposed that at the broadest level these questions include:

- ❑ **How successful is regeneration as a strategy to address problems in disadvantaged and degraded areas? What are the impacts, for whom and what, and why?**

⁵ Walker R, Ballard J, Taylor C & Hillier J (2003) **The effects of New Living on Indigenous Wellbeing: A case study on urban renewal**, AHURI, Western Australia Research Centre, Positioning Paper.

⁶ Spiller Gibbins Swan Pty Ltd (2000) **op cit**

⁷ Batey P (undated) **Urban regeneration in Britain: progress, principles and prospects**; International Symposium on Regeneration of City Downtown, www.prSCO.agbi.tsukuba.ac.jp

⁸ Fulcher H (1999) **Determining priorities for urban/community renewal**, Paper presented to National Housing Conference, Sydney, New South Wales, www.housing.nsw.gov.au/Conference99

⁹ Planning SA (1999) **A better place to live: revitalising urban Adelaide, A Green Paper on Urban Regeneration** Department for Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts

- **How can regeneration activities be improved to maximise positive impacts and minimise the negatives?**

2.6 Questions

Do you agree that evaluation should be concerned with the meta-objectives of urban regeneration, rather than simply project-level objectives?

Do you agree that what is proposed adequately captures the meta-objective of urban regeneration?

Are there additional meta-questions you believe should be considered?

3 How are large-scale complex initiatives best evaluated?

3.1 The Issue:

A range of specific issues in the evaluation of urban regeneration are debated throughout this paper. However, before moving to these, we first consider the broader methodological questions. Urban regeneration is an example of a large-scale, complex, multi-level community based initiative: these are notoriously difficult to evaluate. How are the broad-level methodological issues best resolved, what are the trends in the evaluation literature, and what implications do they have for this evaluation?

3.2 The position

The evaluation of urban regeneration should draw on contemporary evaluation theory and practice to ensure the best possible results. Current evaluation theory would support evaluation which utilises a range of strategies to counteract the inherent methodological difficulties. Such strategies are identified.

3.3 Current practice

Evaluation of large scale and complex community-level initiatives vary substantially in their quality, approach and methods. The limitations and issues in evaluation approaches are widely acknowledged and debated in the literature. Generally, more 'rigorous', 'scientific' and measurement-oriented approaches are being supplemented or replaced with alternatives including theory based approaches, mixed methodologies and evaluation as a learning tool. The focus of evaluation is shifting from a narrow focus on impact, outcomes and efficiency to an exploration of conditions under which change takes place, as well as influences and reasons for this change. Increasingly, analytical approaches are supporting a deeper exploration of the complex factors impacting on outcomes.

One theory-based approach rapidly growing in popularity is that of scientific realism, developed by Pawson and Tilley into the concept of 'realistic evaluation'.¹⁰ In this model, evaluation aims at determining why a program works (through what mechanisms, acknowledging there will be more than one), for whom, and under what circumstances. This investigation of what it is about a program that makes it work, or how policies and programs generate effects and outcomes, allows for exploration of process, context and the multiple mechanisms for implementing change. Thus **reasons** for an impact or effect, as well as simply the effect itself, become a primary topic of interest.

3.4 Discussion

Regeneration is an example of a complex, multi-levelled, multi-strategy area-specific intervention. Evaluating such initiatives pose particular challenges, including in conceptualisation, definition of objectives, application, interpretation, timing, resourcing and data collection. These are briefly outlined below.

¹⁰ Pawson R & Tilley N (1997) **Realistic Evaluation**, Sage, London.

1. **Conceptually**, large scale, complex area-specific initiatives are challenging to define, order and understand for evaluation purposes. Multiple dimensions, objectives, domains and strategies; a complex and often multiple theoretical basis which is seldom well-articulated; the general absence of a clear and overarching conceptual framework and hypotheses of cause and effect; poorly defined or complex and contradictory outcomes; and the action based, practical and evolving nature of such interventions all contribute to this difficulty.

Kubisch et al.¹¹ have identified evaluation challenges as arising from both **horizontal** and **vertical complexity**. Area based initiatives are *horizontally* complex, working across systems and sectors in a range of activities and using a number of different strategies (e.g. community work, programs, environmental and 'bricks and mortar' solutions). Evaluators must identify the 'right' activities to measure and track, checking on the progress and outcomes of individual activities as well as the interactions between them. As well, initiatives are *vertically* complex, usually seeking change at a number of levels (e.g. for residents, communities, the service system, across and between the levels of government). The interaction between the different domains and levels (where change at one level impacts on another) is usually not well understood and is difficult to articulate and assess.

Evaluators must also confront and plan for issues of **context**. A community is not a laboratory, and multiple influences will be at work concurrently with the particular program or strategy. Political, microeconomic, social, cultural and demographic factors will all influence outcomes, as will other initiatives and programs affecting the area.

Evaluations must therefore, by implication, be methodologically complex and conceptually strong, resisting the tendency to simplification.

2. **Defining objectives and success**, thus determining what to measure and when, is difficult. Most complex community interventions occur in areas where there is long-standing and entrenched disadvantage, reflected in poor outcomes across a range of indicators. Achieving real change in these indicators requires interventions with considerable power and intensity, sustained over time. The evaluator must assess and pose answers to an inherently difficult question: '*What can reasonably be expected from the level and kind of resources committed in this program?*' Most programs tend to be either over-optimistic (with ambitious objectives beyond their capacity to achieve) or else overly-cautious (with objectives so low that success is virtually guaranteed).
3. The **application and conduct** of an evaluation plan is inevitably made more difficult by evolution and change in strategies over time. The best-laid plans of evaluators are often laid waste by the dynamic nature of actual programs: simply keeping track of what is happening can be enough of a challenge.
4. In complex initiatives there will usually be multiple **interpretations and explanations** that can be made for any observed impact. The evaluator must assess highly complex and interactive strategies, investigate their often less-than-clear impacts, and explore and assess competing and conflictual interpretations and views.
5. **Timing**: Because goals are broad and initiatives long term, it is difficult to determine what to evaluate when. Ten or more years may be required before some impacts can be truly assessed; this time-frame is usually impossible and unrealistic. Consequently, evaluators must maintain a long-term perspective whilst considering more immediate impacts and making predictions for the longer term. There are usually no absence

¹¹ Kubisch A. et al. (1995) *Introduction* in Connell, J. et al. (eds) J. & Kubisch, A. (1999) **Applying a Theory of Change Approach to the Evaluation of Comprehensive Community Initiatives: Progress, Prospects, and Problems: Volume 2 (Theory, measurement, and Analysis)** www.aspenroundtable.org/

adequate measure of progress (i.e., if we want to be at point X in ten years time, what is good progress at year two, and is it good or bad to now be at point M?). What results can reasonably be expected, and when, from a given intervention.

6. **Resourcing:** Due to their complexity, and the desirability of measuring changes over time, a proper evaluation will be costly and longitudinal. The necessary resources (time and money) are often not available.
7. **Data collection:** Objectives may be defined and strategies developed, but there still may be little adequate, robust and comparable data. Data will generally need to be collected from a range of sources; access and extraction must be negotiated and quality and definitions will be variable. Data sources may differ in their area boundaries, and are unlikely to match exactly with the area chosen for the intervention.

Although methodologies for such evaluations are in the early stages of conceptual and technical development, there are now frameworks being put forward which attempt to deal with the identified problems. The common themes in these frameworks are:

- Systematic and comprehensive data collection (both qualitative and quantitative)
- Multiple dimensions as the focus of the evaluation
- Identifying both assumptions on which programs are based and critical pathways in the system and
- Acceptance that evaluation may not be able to answer all questions about program effectiveness.

Notable trends in evaluation **methodology and literature** include:

1. The utilisation of **theory based approaches** as an alternative to empirical design in evaluation. Thus, a theory-of-change is constructed, explored or developed in the context of evaluation. (Pawson and Tilley, with their 'Realistic Evaluation' model discussed in Section 3.2, are probably the most well-known proponents of this approach).
2. An emphasis on **evaluation as a learning tool rather than to assess compliance**. The role of evaluation (and evaluator) is expanding, with evaluation becoming more exploratory and explanatory, seeking to understand and describe change and document learning. This refocusing removes the excessive and often impossible burden of 'proof' and 'scientism' from evaluation and evaluators.¹²
3. **Reliance on mixed methodologies**. Methodological pluralism is widely adopted, incorporating qualitative and quantitative methods.¹³ Statistical and experimental approaches are increasingly combined with a deeper level of analysis of organizational contexts, structures, decision making, behaviour and action (qualitative methods).
4. **A greater role for stakeholders**, through new forms of participative evaluation such as democratic¹⁴ or empowerment evaluation.¹⁵ These are particularly relevant to the evaluation of programs or strategies that promote community development and capacity building.

¹² Judge K & Bauld L (2001) *Strong theory, flexible methods: evaluating complex community-based initiatives*, **Critical Public Health** Vol 11 No 1.

¹³ Sanderson I (2000) *Evaluation in Complex Policy Systems* **Evaluation** Vol. 6(4), 433-454.

¹⁴ Flochlay B & Plottu E (1998) in Sanderson I (2000) **op. cit.**

¹⁵ Fetterman D et al (1996) in Sanderson I (2000) **op. cit.**

3.5 Proposal

A review of evaluation literature suggests that in order to deal with the inherent methodological complexities, the evaluation of urban regeneration should:

1. Have multiple dimensions as the focus for the evaluation
2. Set realistic evaluation goals with regards to the capacity of the evaluation to answer questions of outcome, impact, cause and effect
3. Identify underpinning assumptions
4. Undertake systematic and comprehensive data collection using both qualitative and quantitative approaches
5. Have a central concern with learning, development, and understanding change, rather than compliance and accountability
6. Adopt a conceptual approach which supports investigation of mechanisms, process and context as well as impact, outcome and cost
7. Give a central role to the community.

3.6 Questions

Do you agree with the broad level methodological approach outlined in this chapter?

Are there other issues and concepts which should be considered?

Do you support the seven core proposals about methodology?

Is there anything else you believe should be considered at this stage?

4 What are the dimensions that should be considered in evaluation?

4.1 The issue

It was proposed in the previous chapter that urban regeneration evaluation should consider and assess within a number of dimensions. What should these dimensions be?

4.2 The position

If evaluation is to answer the central questions around regeneration, it must consider, investigate and assess against a number of dimensions. These dimensions and their relationship are inherently complex; a schema is therefore proposed where these are organized into *dimensions of impact*, *dimensions of attribution* and *dimensions of analysis*, with component sub-elements. A 'map' which outlines the broad dimensions is presented.

4.3 Current practice

It is widely agreed that evaluations of urban regeneration should consider different dimensions. Evaluation briefs and frameworks usually identify these areas. For example, the brief for the evaluation of Mitchell Park states that the evaluation must consider social development, urban improvement and financial performance. It has also become common practice for public sector evaluations to consider dimensions such as inputs, outputs, efficiency, outcome and appropriateness.

It is the task of an evaluation framework to bring these topic areas and foci together into an ordered and logical schema. Thus for example the Evaluation Framework for the Single Regeneration Budget projects in the United Kingdom proposes evaluation should assess dimensions of **economic, housing, social, environmental and community**. The approach is predominantly concerned with a 'cost-benefit' analysis, i.e. measuring the cost of the project in terms of the benefits resulting. Three levels of outcome or benefit are assessed: 1) **delivery** (the direct outputs from the activities, or what the project actually does: questions of process and partnership are also considered in this dimension); 2) **impact** and 3) **sustainability**.¹⁶

4.4 Discussion

It has been argued (Section 2) that the two central questions in urban regeneration evaluation are:

- How successful is regeneration as a strategy to address problems in disadvantaged and degraded areas? What are the impacts, for whom and what, and why?
- How can regeneration activities be improved to maximise positive impacts and minimise the negatives?

In order to answer these questions, the evaluation must be structured around multiple dimensions. The selection of these dimensions is key: it will determine areas of interest and imply a conceptual framework for analysis, as well as the relationship between and across elements and dimensions.

¹⁶ Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge (1997) **Discussion Paper 83: Evaluation of Regeneration Activities funded under the Single Regeneration Budget Bidding Round: the evaluation framework** www.landecon.cam.ac.uk/urban

This paper argues for the delineation of three dimensions, each of which will contain sub-dimensions or elements. These three dimensions are:

1. The **dimension of impact**: identifies the major areas and spheres within which impact should be explored.
2. The **dimension of attribution**: information is collected in various spheres to provide an answer questions to questions of 'why and how'. This can be roughly summarised as '*what influences and causes the impacts of regeneration?*'"
3. The **dimension of analysis**: information gathered in all processes is drawn together and assessed. Answers to the second over-arching question in evaluation (*How can regeneration activities be improved to maximise positive impacts and minimise the negatives?*) should be explored.

Each of these dimensions is further articulated below, with reference to the sub-dimensions.

It must be understood, however, that these dimensions and sub-elements are not discrete and there is considerable overlap between them. What is proposed is a conceptual schema to promote the necessary breadth and depth of coverage; it does not imply a methodology where all elements are treated or explored separately.

4.4.1 The dimension of impact

The impacts of urban regeneration should be broadly explored across a number of areas. It is thus proposed that the *dimension of impact* include three sub-dimensions, with a schema as follows:

DIMENSION 1: IMPACT
What are the impacts of urban regeneration in the spheres of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Housing and built environment<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental<input type="checkbox"/> Social<input type="checkbox"/> Economic<input type="checkbox"/> Community<input type="checkbox"/> Financial
In the areas : <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Targeted area<input type="checkbox"/> Surrounding area<input type="checkbox"/> Broader region
And over time : <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Short term<input type="checkbox"/> Long term

These spheres, and their composite parts, are discussed below.

4.4.1.1 Spheres of impact

Spheres of impact are the key 'topic areas' under which the impact of regeneration will be investigated and assessed. Six different spheres are proposed: *housing and built environment; environment; social; community, economic and financial.*

There are three main reasons why information must be collected across-spheres. Firstly, regeneration activities usually seek to impact on a number of spheres, and these impacts should be captured and articulated. Secondly, there is emerging evidence that the most successful projects target multiple spheres (therefore the *number* of spheres of influence is itself relevant to evaluation).¹⁷ Thirdly, activities in one sphere can have unintended effects, both positive and negative, on another. These six spheres are discussed below.

1. **Housing and built environment** is generally a primary focus in regeneration. Regeneration usually occurs in areas where there is a high concentration of public housing, and existing stock is in poor condition and/or a mismatch with current needs.¹⁸ Projects commonly aim to provide better quality housing, change tenure mix and upgrade obsolete stock. Evaluation may consider such questions as the impact of regeneration on housing affordability and accessibility; the extent to which changes in tenure mix and dwelling type have been achieved and their impact; asset issues; and the change in quality and appropriateness of other built forms within an area.
2. It is now widely agreed that regeneration should have positive and sustainable **environmental** impacts. This has been specified as a broad objective in South Australia.¹⁹ Regeneration usually occurs in environmentally degraded areas, and there may in fact be specific issues (such as pollution and emission levels) which affect the health of residents and the area's image and desirability. Evaluation may consider questions such as the extent to which environmental issues have been considered and addressed in individual housing and the area as a whole; the improvement to an area both visually and as a place to live; image enhancement and the addressing of area-specific environmental issues.²⁰
3. **Social** impacts, both intentional and unintentional, are intrinsic to regeneration. This is perhaps the most controversial and difficult sphere and is consequently often less than adequately treated in evaluations. Evaluation should always consider the general (but complex) question of the impact of regeneration on individuals and families. This includes assessing issues such as the effect of changed social mix; the impacts for particular sub-groups (such as Aboriginal people); and outcomes for dislocated tenants.
4. **Economic impacts:** Generally, areas targeted for regeneration are economically disadvantaged, and it is widely argued that sustainable change is conditional upon change in economic conditions.²¹ Economic development has become central to the British practice of urban regeneration and has been advocated as a key strategy that should be adopted in Australia.²² The literature highlights the importance of strategies which seek to reduce unemployment, including 'recovery programs' (helping people become 'job-ready'), attracting business and industry into the area; education and skill-development to create a better 'fit' with the needs of industry; supporting the growth of a local 'subsistence economy' and improving transport.²³ Indicators of economic activity and work participation are thus important measures in evaluation.

¹⁷ See for example Joseph Rowntree Foundation (1998) **Regenerating neighbourhoods: creating integrated and sustainable improvements**, www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/foundations, Ref 588

¹⁸ Spiller Gibbins Swan Pty Ltd (2000) **op cit**, Appendix 4: Manual for Public Housing Estate Renewal Evaluation: Sectorised Cost Benefit Analysis

¹⁹ Planning SA (1999) **op cit**

²⁰ Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge (1997) **op cit**

²¹ Social Exclusion Unit (2002), **National Strategy for Urban Renewal: A Framework for Discussion**, Cabinet Office, United Kingdom, www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk/publications

²² Beer A & Maude A (2002) **Community development and the delivery of housing assistance in non-metropolitan Australia: a literature review and pilot study**, Positioning Paper, AHURI; Spiller Gibbins Swan Pty Ltd (2000) **op cit**

²³ Beer A & Maude A (2002) **op cit**; Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, (2001) **National Evaluation Report: Worklessness**; New Deal for Communities: National Evaluation Scoping Phase; www.neighbourhood.gov.uk

5. **Community impact:** Regeneration actively seeks to benefit communities, notably through improving community assets, reducing exclusion, and improving environment, facilities, safety, resources and opportunities. However, there is also potential for harm (through disrupting existing community strengths and networks, changing social mix, or reinforcing exclusion when regeneration is 'done to' rather than 'done with' a community). Taylor²⁴ argues that authorities undertaking regeneration have a responsibility far greater than simply ensuring community participation and a proactive community action model is necessary.

There are particular challenges for the evaluator in this sphere. Communities are diverse, fluid and amorphous bodies, in which there is often little unity and unanimity of experience, perception and interest. Evaluation and research sometimes falls into the trap of an overly simplistic, idealistic and ideological view of community, failing to attend to the often competing interests and perceptions, and to sub-communities within an area.

6. **Financial:** The financial impact of regeneration is generally of considerable interest to government. This includes the financial outcomes for the public housing provider, local government, and private investors in public/private partnerships.

4.4.1.2 Areas of impact

Regeneration targets a defined area, which is the primary focus for evaluation. However, surrounding areas, as well as the broader region, will also be affected. Impact on surrounding localities has received scant coverage in research and evaluation and there is little information as to what actually occurs.²⁵ It might be assumed that regeneration will have positive spin-offs (if the desirability of an area and its facilities and resources improve and economic growth is bolstered). However, the reverse may also be true, with potential negative impacts from the displacement of 'difficult' residents to other areas, the loss of public housing stock, changes in housing affordability, or business attracted away from one area and to another.²⁶

4.4.1.3 Impact over time

Time is a significant variable in regeneration:

- Regeneration aims to achieve sustainable change, rather than short term impact.
- Some effects will take years to become visible and measurable (e.g. changes to health and well-being in an area).
- Regeneration is inherently disruptive: what is being measured and assessed in the immediate to shorter term may in fact be the impact of disruption, which will disappear over the longer term.
- Views, perspectives and experiences of stakeholders are likely to change over time.

Evaluations are often conducted simultaneously with, or immediately after, regeneration. This substantially limits the quality of findings. Robust, longitudinal evaluations are needed; however cost is usually prohibitive.²⁷ As an alternative, progress indicators can be developed, where early and intermediate outcomes and objectives are identified. This is usually done through logic models, which focus on charting critical program activities and the expected results. However, this is less than robust, with intermediary outcomes usually established through a combination of experience, hunches and common sense.²⁸

²⁴ ²⁴ Taylor (1998) quoted in Spiller Gibbins Swan Pty Ltd (2000) **op cit** p 11

²⁵ Cole I, Reeve K (2001) **Housing and physical environment domain: a review of the evidence base**, New Deal for Communities: National Evaluation Scoping Phase, www.neighbourhood.gov.uk

²⁶ **ibid**

²⁷ **ibid**

²⁸ Chen H et al (1997) in Lipsey M & Cordray D (2000) *Evaluation methods for social intervention*, **Annual Review of Psychology** vol 51: 345 – 375.

It is proposed, however, that under this framework evaluation should assess the short-term impacts (i.e. over the life of the project and in the year following completion) then return to reassess longer term impact post-completion. It is also proposed that indicators of sustainability be developed and assessed in the short-term evaluation. This involves identifying and specifying assumptions on what will need to be in place if change is to be sustained.

4.4.2 The dimension of attribution

'There are many examples of what works in regeneration, but specifying 'where, when and in what circumstances' is far more problematic.'²⁹

Simply identifying that an outcome did or did not occur is of little value in evaluation. It leaves too many crucial questions unanswered: *why* and *how* did the outcome occur? what were the causes and influences? what needs to happen for the result to be replicated, improved or avoided? Similarly, for identified goals that were not achieved: why not? Was it due to a weakness in strategy, process, goal setting, changes around the project or a failure of the project as a whole?

Attribution, and understanding why impacts did or did not occur, is particularly difficult in large-scale complex initiatives. Attempting to track, record and identify 'what is caused by what, when and why' will test the capacity of any evaluator.

It is proposed that information which can inform an analysis of attribution be collected in at least four delineated areas: **context**, **strategy**, **process** and **cost** creating a schema (with proposed sub-domains) as follows:

Dimension 2: Attribution	
To what can the impacts be attributed, considering:	
1.	Context
	<input type="checkbox"/> Macro-level
	<input type="checkbox"/> Micro-level
2.	Strategies
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequacy
	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriateness
	<input type="checkbox"/> Evolution
3.	Process
	<input type="checkbox"/> Community participation and capacity building
	<input type="checkbox"/> Partnership and integration
	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation
4.	Costs

4.4.2.1 Context

A particular intervention is never the only factor impacting on an area. Political, economic, social, cultural and demographic factors, both internal to and encompassing a region, will be influential during and after the project. Thus, contextual impacts should ideally be monitored at both a macro and micro level.

- At the **macro-level**, influences outside of or encompassing the region should be noted. These might include complementary or competing initiatives and policy changes at a national, state or regional level which affect the region; or macro level trends (such as an economic downturn).

²⁹ Cole I, Reeve K (2001) **op cit** (pages unnumbered)

- At a **micro-level**, other influences within the area should be identified. Again, these might be economic (e.g. the shut-down of a major employer in the area); social (e.g. the area attracting a large number of newly-arrived refugees); service and institutional (major changes to the level or nature of service provision); or community-based (e.g. some areas may have drivers such as partnerships, relationships and leaders which make them a more fertile field for change).

Both quantitative and qualitative information will be needed in this assessment. Quantitative measures should include the gathering of base-line data on a regional and local level which will allow distinctive area-based patterns to be identified. Qualitative data, predominantly information on potential influences, can also be considered at a 'base line' position and tracked over time.

4.4.2.2 Strategies

Australian and international experience has shown that the simple manipulation of the housing stock is insufficient to deal with the fundamental problems evident in public housing areas. This is because the approach does not get to the causes of multiple disadvantage or social exclusion in these areas.³⁰

Neighbourhood renewal initiatives....must be sufficient to (the) magnitude of the task of social inclusion or.... Another thirty years of neighbourhood initiatives could go by without resolution of the fundamental nature of the problem.³¹

Regeneration initiatives generally utilise a number of strategies. Historically, regeneration has focused on interventions related to built environment and housing stock; however since the 1990s the trend has been to more holistic strategies which include economic and social aspects as well as 'bricks and mortar'.³²

An assessment of these strategies, specifically for their **appropriateness**, **adequacy** and **evolution**, should be included in evaluation.

1. **Appropriateness:** In order to be successful, a regeneration project must adopt strategies capable of achieving the desired effects. An initiative may be unsuccessful because the strategies it used were 'the wrong ones'. There is also now strong evidence that regeneration projects cannot address area disadvantage and degradation unless they utilise a range of strategies.³³
2. **Adequacy:** Regeneration is an optimistic intervention, aiming to achieve positive results in areas which have suffered long-term and complex disadvantage. Too often, interventions fail because the extent of the original investment is inadequate to achieve the desired result, or the investment is not sustained for long enough. Were the interventions and strategies used enough to have a real and lasting impact on an area? Were they equal to the task they faced? Were they sustained for long enough?
3. **Evolution:** Strategies are unlikely to remain static over the course of a project: they change and develop through reasons of policy, intent or accident. Thus, a particular strategy may, by the end of a project, have evolved into something quite different from the original plan. Understanding the dynamics around and influences on outcomes in a project requires at least some understanding of these changes.

³⁰ Beer A & Maude A (2002) **op cit** p iv

³¹ Carley M (2002) **op cit** p. 5

³² Spiller Gibbins Swan Pty Ltd (2000) **op cit**

³³ Beer A & Maude A (2002) **op cit**

4.4.2.3 Process

To provide positive results, genuine involvement must be present.³⁴

The situation where residents feel disenfranchised particularly arises when institutional stakeholders set both the agenda of regeneration and the rules of participation, hold the purse strings, and take real decisions before they interact with residents.....Professional interests can dominate because of the ease of communication between regeneration professionals and civil servants, and because professionals have the resources and skills to respond

There is increasingly strong evidence that the **process** by which regeneration is done has a major impact on outcomes. Further, there is growing unanimity that *partnerships, community participation and community capacity building* are integral to success. An evaluator should, therefore, consider the processes by which a project has been carried out, and particularly with regard to these dimensions, as well as the general history of implementation. Thus, evaluation should consider the following:

1. **Community participation and capacity building:**

It is widely agreed in the literature that community participation and capacity building are essential elements in successful regeneration:³⁶ Initiatives owned, supported and co-led by the community are likely to reap maximum benefit and minimise harm. The participation, empowerment and skill development of community members are important underpinnings for the success of a venture; they are also values and worthy outcomes in their own right.

Community participation and capacity building are not easy. Communities are not unitary in their interests or composition; disadvantaged communities have more than their share of conflict between members, and also contain many who have enough to do in managing their day-to-day affairs and have little interest or capacity to engage in community.³⁷

Most regeneration projects now include a focus on community participation. However, given the difficulties, there is an ever-present danger that such processes are tokenistic or even exploitative and burdensome.

2. **Partnership.** Every regeneration project inevitably features a wide range of stakeholders: State and Local government; residents; business and industry; service providers. The forging of effective partnerships is essential if the full potential of an initiative is to be harnessed and conflict, exclusion and disempowerment avoided.

Carley³⁸ argues that partnerships should foster integrated responses across levels:

- ❑ Physical development integrated with social and economic development
- ❑ Community organisations working on a level playing field with institutional players
- ❑ Time-limited regeneration initiatives co-ordinated with mainstream service delivery and

³⁴ Taylor (1998) quoted in Spiller Gibbins Swan Pty Ltd (2000) **op cit** p 11

³⁵ Carley (2002) **op cit** p 33

³⁶ see for example Spiller Gibbins Swan Pty Ltd (2000) **op cit**; Hugman R & Sotiri M (2001) **op cit**; Beer A & Made A (2002) **op cit**

³⁷ Beer A & Maude A (2002) **op cit**

³⁸ Carley (1992) **op cit** p 20

- ❑ Lower level initiatives organised in the context of a higher level strategy.

For South Australia, there is probably a fifth dimension:

- ❑ Coordinated responses between the levels of government.

These five elements are one example of a potential check-list which could be used in evaluation to assess partnership. Assessment could also consider the possible negatives of partnership, which include delays and added expense; unequal participation and power distribution; partnership fatigue; and burden on partners.

3. **Implementation:** The implementation of any major project is never straightforward, and always evolutionary. It is important to understand the general 'story' of implementation, for example, major problems experienced during the project and significant events and decisions. This qualitative aspect is fundamental to answering critical questions of attribution for the project as a whole.

4.4.2.4 Cost

Finally, an evaluation should document the broad financial costs and expenditure of the project.

4.4.3 The dimension of analysis

The **dimension of analysis** refers to the process by which all the information and findings generated in the various dimensions and activities are brought together, assessed and explored. It is here that the real craft of the evaluator comes to play: a high-quality analysis has the capacity to add great value and generate new ideas. Components in this process are represented below:

This component is represented below:

Dimension 3: Analysis
What are the findings, based on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cross-dimensional analysis (considering relationships & interplays) 2. Exploration of key research and meta-questions What are the implications for SA and broader regeneration policy and practice?

4.5 Proposal

The discussion in this chapter has generated an overarching schema or map for the evaluation (overleaf).

Under these dimensions, evaluations can consider any of a number of research questions, which would generally be selected on the basis of their priority and relevance to the individual project and South Australia, and the extent to which the question is already answered in existing research/literature. The proposed Framework would include a (not exhaustive or exclusive) list of potential questions. Examples of such questions are contained in the final Section of the Discussion Paper (9.8). **Highlighted in this list are those questions which it is proposed are mandatory for every evaluation.**

DIMENSIONS OF THE EVALUATION: FRAMEWORK MAP

OVERARCHING REGENERATION OBJECTIVE:

To bring about lasting improvements across economic, environmental, social and physical conditions in disadvantaged communities.

KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- How successful is regeneration as a strategy to address problems in disadvantaged and degraded areas? What are the impacts, for whom and what, and why?
- How can regeneration activities be improved to maximize positive impacts and minimize the negatives?

DIMENSION 1: IMPACT

What are the impacts of urban regeneration in the areas of:

1. Housing and built environment
 2. Environment
 3. Social
 4. Economic
 5. Community
 6. Financial
- In the
7. Targeted area
 8. Surrounding areas
 9. Broader region
- In the
10. Short term
 11. Longer term

DIMENSION 2: ATTRIBUTION

To what can the impacts be attributed, considering:

1. Context
 - Macro
 - Micro
2. Strategies
 - Appropriateness
 - Adequacy
 - Evolution
3. Process
 - community participation & capacity building
 - partnerships
 - implementation
4. Cost

DIMENSION 3: ANALYSIS

What are the findings, based on:

1. Cross-dimensional analysis
2. Exploration of key research and meta questions

What are the implications for SA and broader regeneration policy and practice?

ASSESSMENT & APPLICATION

Across government
Across the department
By SAHT
For urban regeneration literature/knowledge

META-EVALUATION

- Consolidation of findings and learning into meta-evaluation

4.6 Questions

Do you support the proposed dimensions and model? Is there anything you think should be changed, added or removed?

Are all the dimensions and their elements applicable to the South Australian context?

Are there additional evaluation questions that should be added?

Which of the potential evaluation questions should be mandatory (considered in all evaluations?)

5 What are the common methodologies in regeneration evaluation and how adequate are they?

5.1 The issue

The discussion to date and the resulting proposals are beginning to shape out the evaluation task, particularly with regard to the dimensions to be covered and the questions to be explored. What are the methodologies commonly used in regeneration evaluation? How adequate are they to the task which is developing here? What are their strengths and limitations?

5.2 The position

It is argued that the methodologies commonly used in urban regeneration evaluation are generally too narrowly focused. Choice of methodologies should be influenced by the new thinking and practice in evaluation and must take into account the broader impacts of regeneration as well as the interests of various stakeholders. A mixed methodology approach, which draws from the three main streams of evaluation practice, is recommended.

5.3 Current practice

Most regeneration evaluation methodologies currently fall within three major streams:

1. **economic** (most commonly cost benefit analysis)
2. **managerial** (using performance indicators to measure progress against objectives)
3. **qualitative** (aiming to understand the dynamics of community and the perception of stakeholders and mostly relying on client satisfaction surveys/tenant feedback)³⁹:

Economic and managerial evaluations are the most common. To date, there has been limited mixing across methodologies/streams, with evaluations generally using a single approach, probably due to costs, complexity, and the methodological preference and theoretical background of the individual evaluators. However, the information and learnings from such restricted evaluations leave many questions unanswered.

5.4 Discussion

5.4.1 Economic approaches

Economic evaluation is the most common approach to urban regeneration evaluation in Australia.⁴⁰ The reasons for this include:

- The emphasis on 'bricks and mortar' in projects
- The strong focus on financial objectives

³⁹ Randolph B & Judd B (2001) **A framework for evaluating neighbourhood renewal: Lessons learnt from New South Wales and South Australia**, Workshop session, National Housing Conference, Brisbane, www.housing.qld.gov.au

⁴⁰ Spiller, Gibbins & Swan (2000) **op cit**

- ❑ The difficulties in measuring social and community impacts
- ❑ The limited time and resources available for evaluation.

Economic approaches range from narrowly focused cost effectiveness measures, based on direct costs to an organization, to more sophisticated cost benefit analyses that attempt to incorporate indirect costs and attribute a dollar value to 'intangibles' (for example, costs associated with the loss of social networks).⁴¹ The following are examples.

Cost benefit analysis of New Living Initiatives (Walker, 2000)

The cost benefit approach was used in the evaluation of the New Living Initiative in the Western Australian town of Kwinana.⁴² Although the focus of this project was to improve the 'social situation' of the area⁴³ the objectives were directed towards physical change (e.g. reducing the public housing presence, improving the appearance of streetscapes and parks, upgrading housing stock). The cost-benefit analysis predominantly focused on direct costs to the State Housing Commission, such as management, selling and consultancy fees, infrastructure and costs of refurbishment. The only indirect cost identified related to the relocation of existing tenants (calculated as removal costs of \$200-\$400) and reconnection of services. The evaluator listed a range of benefits from the initiative, including the increased value of refurbished property and 'benefits to the wider community living in privately owned houses in Kwinana', benefits to 'other government departments who are saving money through reduced calls upon a variety of services, including police, truant officers and health workers'. However, no attempt was made to place value on the less 'tangible' benefits or to assess if such benefits have in fact been achieved and if they were a result of urban regeneration. The evaluator concluded that 'there is a demonstrable financial benefit to the State Housing Commission, fully justifying the process (of urban regeneration) in its own right'.⁴⁴

Social Cost benefit analysis (Stubbs & Storer, 1996)

Stubbs & Storer⁴⁵ attempted to deal with the problems of social costs and benefits by examining the potential return on the money spent on an initiative. Their analysis focused on three areas:

- ❑ Determining the cost of identified problems (such as crime, vandalism, unemployment, family and community stress) to the community as a whole.
- ❑ Determining the extent of reduction in the identified problems required to justify the cost of the program.
- ❑ Determining the likelihood of the program achieving this.

⁴¹ Economic approaches to evaluation are covered extensively by Spiller, Gibbins & Swan (2000), **ibid.**

⁴² Walker, E. (2000) **New Living in the town of Kwinana – Suburban Renewal in Public Housing** Pacific Rim Real Estate Society (PRRES) Conference 2000, Sydney.

⁴³ **ibid**

⁴⁴ **ibid**, p. 13

⁴⁵ Stubbs J & Storer L (1996) **Social Cost Benefit Analysis of Department of Housing's Neighbourhood Improvement Program**, Case Study

It is assumed that when the percentage of those likely to be affected by the program is small, the probability of a positive cost-benefit ratio is unlikely. As Stubbs points out, the three underpinning calculations are complex and problematic, and underlying assumptions and values in the analysis could be challenged and critiqued.⁴⁶ In practice, the application of the method in the feasibility analysis of the Neighbourhood Renewal Program in the Western Sydney Airds estate failed to answer some key questions (such as the likelihood of the project meeting the required objectives and the results being attributed to the project).⁴⁷

Secored cost benefit analysis (Spiller, Gibbins & Swan, 2000)

This approach expands on the 'pure' cost benefit analysis by including asset management aspects that are not normally considered (as they have no net cost or benefit to the economy as a whole) but are clearly of interest to the public rental sector.⁴⁸ Thus, Secored Cost Benefit Analysis is a combination of financial and cost benefit analysis.

The analysis identifies direct (relating to specific objectives and interventions of the program) and indirect (relating to by-products of the intervention) costs and benefits (below).

Direct costs and benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity cost of employing the land and improvements in question (i.e. capital not realised by selling the assets) • The benefits from the sale of land and improvements not used in the project • The future benefit derived from sale of assets • The capital costs of housing and infrastructure • The recurrent costs associated with housing and infrastructure • Tenant relocation costs (including compensation) • Benefits to tenants of high standard dwellings, good neighbourhood amenities and reduced stigma.
Indirect costs and benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in access to social support networks for relocated tenants; • Changes in housing opportunities for prospective public rental tenants; • Benefits for other residents in the neighbourhood of higher standard public rental dwellings; • Benefits of society wide reduced social dysfunction.

The authors point to the difficulties involved in valuing some direct costs (such as benefits to tenants) as well as many indirect costs (for example tenant dislocation and disruption to social networks). 'Social exclusion indicators' were proposed as a

⁴⁶ Spiller, Gibbins & Swan (2000) **op.cit.**

⁴⁷ Randolph B & Judd B (2000) **Salisbury North Urban Improvement Project: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework: Final Report** Urban Frontiers Program/University of New South Wales

⁴⁸ **ibid**

way of ranking the before and after situation and allowing some shadow pricing. A deterioration in these indicators (including unemployment rate, child protection notifications, house theft, assaults, community mental health clients) would form the basis for valuation of costs. The authors acknowledge extreme difficulties in costing these factors at a project level and call for research and the development of guidelines in this area. However, the appropriateness of these indicators is also questionable. Arguably, the relationship between disruption to individual social networks and 'social exclusion' measures at an area level is tenuous, and it would take some time for measurable changes to appear. Further, the approach does not deal with the issues of causality: an observed change could be due to a wide range of factors including 'moving the problem'.

Financial cost-benefit evaluations of regeneration projects are clearly very limited, initially developed to assess the 'brick and mortar' aspects characteristic of the early approaches to urban regeneration and recently expanded to try and accommodate the shift to broader social objectives. Although some evaluations recognize the methodological problems, the presentation and interpretation of costs and benefits in strictly economic terms continues. Consequently, total estimates of costs and benefits of social initiatives are usually incomplete, with some costs and many benefits omitted due to estimation difficulties.

However, the most significant problem is that ascription of cost and benefit is highly subjective. Reporting often implies an unjustified degree of 'scientism', authority and robustness. Thus:

'Economic evaluations, in common with other types of evaluations which express results in quantitative terms, may give an impression of objectivity which is not justified, and which can mislead even experts. There are many assumptions about how to quantify costs, including which costs to exclude from the calculations.'⁴⁹

Identification of costs and benefits is a value judgment from a particular perspective, usually that of the State or department (i.e. is the state 'getting value for money' and which approach is likely to deliver best 'value for money?'). A different perspective (for example, that of a community or individuals), may produce different results.

The complexity of the analysis can result in a lack of transparency: it is difficult for others to understand and critique what has been done, with method and findings often reported in a highly technical way (which may imply an unjustified degree of rigor). Thus, results are likely to be accepted at face value and not properly assessed or understood, or the qualifications, underlying assumptions and limitations taken into account.

Despite this Spiller, Gibbins and Swan argue that financial criteria provide a useful unit of measurement across a range of variables. They argue that 'intangibles' defy comparison in any evaluation technique and cost-benefit analysis should not be dismissed because of its inability to deal with this issue. However, they concede that the reliance on economic concepts which are not widely understood is a significant shortcoming.

⁴⁹ Ovetveit, J. (1998) **Evaluating Health Interventions: An introduction to evaluation of health treatments, services, policies and organizational interventions** Open University Press Philadelphia, p. 118

5.4.2 Managerial approaches

Managerial approaches to evaluation rely on developing performance indicators to measure impact, often depicted as a value-free and tangible assessment of change. Indicators are usually established on the basis of specific program objectives: as such, they are useful in monitoring actual operations of the project but usually do not consider broader impact. An indicator approach can result in a narrow process of assessment, without reference to broader goals, issues or unintended consequences. Similarly, causality and sensitivity to change is an issue, with often only a tenuous link between broad measures and program outcomes.⁵⁰ Performance indicator frameworks are usually based on a logic model of cause and effect: the robustness of the framework is dependent on the validity and strength of the underlying assumptions.

Managerial approaches are quite cost effective, usually drawing on readily available data. However, there is a tendency to collect what is available, rather than what is desirable, resulting in an over-reporting of economic and housing activity indicators, and an under-reporting of more subjective, less available 'social' and 'community' measures.⁵¹ (Issues related to performance indicators are discussed in more detail in Section Six, following). An example of a managerial approach is summarized below.

Salisbury North Urban Improvement Project: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (Randolph & Judd, 2000)

The framework proposed by Randolph & Judd was developed to 'identify project performance in achieving objectives and desired outcomes'⁵² of the Salisbury North Urban Improvement Project. However, lack of clarity about the key objectives shared between partners was a significant problem in developing the framework. The existing objectives were criticized for lack of specificity, comprehensiveness, measurability and prioritization. An extensive process was carried out to establish a set of common objectives across stakeholders. The result was a tiered structure including an overarching Primary Objective, three Secondary Objectives (Physical, Social and Economic Viability) and fourteen newly developed Tertiary Objectives (below).

Primary Objective	Secondary Objectives	Tertiary Objectives
To improve environmental and housing quality, social wellbeing and economic viability of Salisbury North as an attractive and desirable living environment well integrated with surrounding communities	<p>1. <u>Physical Viability</u></p> <p>To develop an attractive, safe and desirable living environment where people will want to live by improving the quality of housing, community facilities, public open spaces, and infrastructure in the area.</p>	<p>1.1 To improve the provision of community facilities and quality, amenity and safety of public open space in the area</p> <p>1.2 To improve the quality and integration of public infrastructure</p> <p>1.3 To improve road and pedestrian safety through an effective traffic management plan</p> <p>1.4 To improve the quality and amenity of public and</p>

⁵⁰ Randolph B & Judd B (2000) **op cit**

⁵¹ Problems associated with development of social indicators are discussed by Armstrong, A., et al. (2002) **Difficulties of Developing and Using Social Indicators to Evaluate Government Programs: A critical review** Australasian Evaluation Society International Conference, Wollongong 2002, www.aes.asn.au

⁵² Randolph B. & Judd B (2000) **op cit** p.13

	<p>2. <u>Social Viability</u></p> <p>To increase community stability, cohesion, pride and self-reliance by changing the social and tenure mix, reducing crime and stigmatization, improving access and coordination of community facilities and services and involving residents and relevant stakeholders in the improvement process.</p> <p>3. <u>Economic Viability</u></p> <p>To increase the value of public and private housing, reduce operating costs and provide adequate financial returns for stakeholders to ensure that area and housing improvements are revenue neutral.</p>	<p>private housing to better match consumer needs and community standards and increase demand for housing in the area</p> <p>2.1 To reduce stigmatization of the area, increase community spirit and pride and improve integration with the surrounding community</p> <p>2.2 To increase community stability and cohesion by reducing turnover rates</p> <p>2.3 To ensure participation of the community and relevant stakeholders in the improvement process</p> <p>2.4 To improve access to and coordination of community services</p> <p>2.5 To broaden the social mix by reducing concentrations of public housing</p> <p>2.6 To reduce crime and increase real and perceived levels of safety and security</p> <p>3.1 To increase public and private housing values</p> <p>3.2 To reduce operating costs for public housing</p> <p>3.3 To provide appropriate financial returns for stakeholders relative to their respective risks to ensure that improvements are revenue neutral</p> <p>3.4 To develop initiatives to stimulate local employment and training opportunities</p>
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The framework identified performance indicators at three levels:

- ❑ **core** indicators related to tertiary objectives which would provide summary measures for reporting
- ❑ **supplementary** indicators to provide additional information

- **context** indicators measuring broader aspects of community wellbeing and 'quality of life' directly attributable to specific objectives.

The evaluation process would include a monthly monitoring/reporting against specific performance indicators, an annual evaluation (based on monthly reports, other administrative data and survey material), five yearly review and an end of project evaluation. The evaluation was to review each implementation stage and overall performance of the project against its objectives. The resulting framework is complex, difficult to understand and apply, and expensive. Many of the proposed measures are unavailable or of questionable relevance.

The framework highlights the difficulties involved in establishing clear and tangible objectives for large-scale social interventions and specific, comprehensive and measurable goals. The authors also highlight problems associated with changes to project focus and goals at different stages of implementation, changing priorities over time, and problems in reaching consensus on goals amongst numerous stakeholders. While projects often espouse a range of economic, social and environmental objectives, the emphasis given to different areas is extremely variable.

5.4.3 Qualitative approaches

Interpretive, qualitative approaches are characterized by a greater emphasis on learning and reflection, with the views of residents and other stakeholders given priority. Methods include ethnographic studies to capture 'community stories' and understand the process and experience of change. Whilst qualitative approaches have many strengths, there are also limitations. They can be expensive and time consuming, interviews with key stakeholders may be unrepresentative, and may result in the omission of many issues. Case study action research has been critiqued for its narrow focus, and potential to ignore the impact of wider political and economic influences. Examples of qualitative approaches are given below.

Community Perceptions of social outcomes of urban renewal in Mitchell Park (Social Policy Research Group, 1998)

Community Perceptions of Social Outcomes of Urban Redevelopment in Rosewood (Social Policy Research Group, 1998)

Both these small scale studies deal with a specific aspect of urban regeneration by exploring issues of social wellbeing and community perception. The model of quality of life developed by the study was based on:

- living standards (based on information about income, housing, employment, education),
- environmental and infrastructure factors (such as mobility, environment, public safety derived from a survey about local amenities, transport and safety issues)
- 'sense of community' (based on interaction patterns, family/friends, social supports, civic participation and 'symbols of community')

The studies relied on information from focus groups, an analysis of ABS Census data and a survey of randomly sampled local households. ABS data was used to analyse changes in demographic characteristics of the community between 1991 and 1996 (and partly 1986). Focus groups with residents, service providers and business people were used to gather background information and identify issues of importance to the participants. A survey of 108 randomly selected households was

conducted. This asked questions about satisfaction with services, facilities, housing, and community identity; residents' perception of the area; levels of community participation;; and lifestyle changes resulting from urban regeneration activities.⁵³

Case Studies of Cruddas Park Development Trust, Newcastle upon Tyne (reported by McCulloch, 2000)

McCulloch⁵⁴ reviews a series of evaluations of the Cruddas Park Development conducted over a five year period. The evaluations relied on interviews with 'key stakeholders', 'listening and observing', ethnographic methods and 'in-depth consultations'. The risks and limitations of this approach included:

- ❑ Poor definition of 'stakeholders' with issues about who was included in the research, their representativeness and therefore the validity of the information gathered
- ❑ The danger of major influential informants shaping the views of other participants and evaluator or stakeholders 'colluding' in supporting an image of success to outsiders
- ❑ The fact that there is always more than one narrative of what is happening in an area or organization.

In addition, the micro analysis often associated with a qualitative approach may result in the omission of factors outside the locality.

5.4.4 Evaluations using a range of approaches

More recent regeneration evaluations have tended to draw on a range of methods, as demonstrated below.

The Dundee Social Inclusion Partnership 2 (SIP2) Program

The evaluation of SIP 2 Program focused on the following areas:

- ❑ Change with respect to the specific targets and objectives of the program
- ❑ The effectiveness of partnership
- ❑ Project activity and impact
- ❑ An assessment of value for money

Progress towards the program's aims and objectives was measured against specific targets and indicators. The analysis covered demographic and population data, crime statistics, employment and training and the involvement of voluntary and private sectors in the region. This information was benchmarked against a broader city-wide and national perspective, allowing more meaningful interpretation of changes.

The *effectiveness of partnership* was assessed using predominantly qualitative approaches, including an analysis of the historical context, structured interviews with

⁵³ Social Policy Research Group (1998) **Community Perceptions of social outcomes of urban renewal in Mitchell Park**, University of South Australia, p. 29

⁵⁴ McCulloch, A. (2000) *Evaluations of a Community Regeneration Project: Case Studies of Cruddas Park Development Trust, Newcastle upon Tyne* **Journal of Social Policy** vol. 29, Part 3

key partnership stakeholders and a focus group with representatives of the voluntary sector.

Using project appraisal information about the scope and *impact of project activities* the evaluation sought to provide an assessment of the contribution of the project to meeting the needs of the local residents in relation to key themes (employment and training; housing, health, resident satisfaction, physical transformation of the area).

Selected case-studies examined the nature of project activities, partnerships and achievements within the broader objectives of empowerment, prosperity, sustainability and stability.

An assessment of *value for money* calculated benefit/expenditure ratios. However, the task of collecting relevant data was 'problematic and complex' with information relating to many benefits difficult to collect, express and interpret.⁵⁵

5.5 Proposal

It has already been argued in this paper that the complexities of the evaluation task requires a mixed methodology approach. The review of options in this chapter suggests that these methodologies should include:

- ❑ Economic analysis with assessment of available costs and benefits, but in a transparent and realistic way. In particular, there should not be an over-reliance on cost-benefit analysis;
- ❑ Managerial approaches, including the collection and analysis of performance indicators (discussed in more detail in the following chapter);
- ❑ Qualitative methods (for example, case studies of regeneration activities, focus groups, community surveys).

It is further proposed that none of these activities should occur in isolation from the other, and all evaluations should include components of all three approaches.

5.6 Questions

Is there anything you want to add to or disagree with in this analysis of method?

Do you agree that evaluation should include a combination of the three identified approaches?

⁵⁵ Geedes Centre for Planning and Research, **The End Term Evaluation of the Dundee Social Inclusion Partnership 2 (SIP 2) Programme**. P.58

6 What about indicators?

6.1 The Issue:

Most evaluations of regeneration projects adopt a managerial approach and have a heavy reliance on performance indicators, and it is widely accepted that indicators should be one of the methodological components of evaluation. What role should indicators play in the evaluation in South Australia and how should they be treated? What indicators should be used?

6.2 The position

It is proposed that indicators be used in future regeneration evaluations as one of a number of research methodologies/ information collection strategies. A relatively small number of core indicators should be collected across all projects, supplemented by project-specific indicators. A set of principles to guide the use of indicators are proposed, including the principle that indicators be treated as an indication of change, rather than an outcome measure.

6.3 Current practice

Regeneration evaluations generally have a strong reliance on performance indicators, reflecting the dominance of managerial and economic approaches. Evaluation frameworks (such as the Single Regeneration projects in the UK)⁵⁶ usually contain a set of core indicators, to be collected in all projects, with supplementary indicators determined on a project-specific basis. A review of regeneration performance indicators in the UK noted that projects generally tended to develop an overly-large set of indicators, without adequate conceptual frameworks, standardised definitions or measurement processes.⁵⁷ Further, collected indicators tend to be dominated by financial and housing measures, with less attention to social and community issues.

In South Australia, performance indicators are determined on a project-to-project basis. A major study was undertaken to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Salisbury North Urban Improvement Project.⁵⁸ This reviewed current and potential indicators and proposed a large set of potential indicators, as well as collection strategies.

6.4 Discussion

Performance indicators are a common mechanism for gathering and interpreting information in evaluations. Advantages include the ability to:

- collect and interpret standardised information in statistical form
- link data with objectives
- monitor progress and changes over time, including from a base-line position, and make comparisons.

Indicators are also relatively cheap (unless special collections are needed to gather the desired information).

⁵⁶ Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge (1997) **op cit**

⁵⁷ Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge (1999) *Evaluation of the Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund: An examination of baseline issues*, Discussion Paper 109
www.landecon.cam.ac.uk/urban

⁵⁸ Randolph B & Judd B (2000) **op cit**

There are also, however, limitations and issues in their use:

- ❑ they convey and contain only very limited information
- ❑ data will be of variable quality and reliability
- ❑ they are difficult to interpret (an indicator will demonstrate that a change has occurred; it does not show why or how that change has occurred, or whether the change is good or bad)
- ❑ selecting the 'right' indicator to most accurately measure the desired item is difficult and often contentious
- ❑ selection can be biased to achieve a positive outcome
- ❑ indicators are frequently compromised in terms of quality and relevance and often are selected on the basis of what is possible and practical rather than optimal
- ❑ indicators can create perverse incentives and effects (i.e. undertaking an action to achieve a good result against the indicator, to the detriment of other areas or activities) and results open to manipulation.

There are particular dangers with an over-reliance on indicators in urban regeneration:

- ❑ Very little is yet known about when a result can be interpreted as positive, and the assumptions behind many indicators of 'success' are questionable. For example, the jury is still out as to the benefits of a change in tenure mix in an area, and the conditions and arrangements under which such a change impacts positively on disadvantaged communities.⁵⁹ Similarly contestable is a rise in housing prices in an area and a decline in housing affordability.
- ❑ Indicators focused on a targeted area exclude consideration of impacts on the wider geographical area; on relocated tenants and the areas they have moved to; and on meta-issues such as public housing availability and housing affordability.
- ❑ Measuring overall changes can eliminate consideration of impacts for sub-groups of an affected population, and mask diversity of impact and perception.
- ❑ Crucial changes and impacts may take years to be reflected in indicators: for example, improved health and wellbeing status across a population, or better educational outcomes.
- ❑ Changes in social indicators may superficially be taken to indicate 'success' when in fact they may be due to the re-location of tenants to other areas or 'moving the problem'.

Performance indicators alone present a simplified and superficial picture of impact. The complexity of issues to be assessed in urban regeneration evaluation necessitates a mixed-methodology approach and an over-reliance on indicators should be avoided.

6.4.1 Outcomes or indications?

Headline indicators indicate that a change has taken place in an area. They do not pre-judge or imply that the change is 'good' or 'bad'.

Indicators are widely used to 'measure' program performance. Thus, indicators are developed to measure achievement of objectives and desired outcomes. This is a valid approach in many areas, however, in the complex and contentious field of urban regeneration it becomes more problematic.

⁵⁹ Arthurson K (Forthcoming: December 2003) 'Social mix and disadvantaged communities: policy, practice and the evidence base, *Urban Policy and Research*

The concept of 'headline indicators' deals with this problem. In this model, so-called 'headline indicators' draw together a range of information about an area, and are interpreted as 'neutral' (i.e. neither 'good' or 'bad') monitors of change.⁶⁰ Interpretation and assessment must follow an observed result, considering such issues as the reasons for the detected change, its impacts on various groups and implications.

It is proposed that this approach be adopted in South Australia. Thus, indicators should be treated as an **indication of change**, rather than an outcome measure.

6.4.2 Principles in using indicators

Given both the advantages and limitations of performance indicators, the following principles are proposed to guide their use in urban regeneration evaluations.

1. Each project should collect a common set of data on core designated performance indicators. This data should be collected at a base-line position (i.e. before the project commences) and then regularly throughout the life of the project.
2. Core performance indicators can be supplemented by project-specific indicators.
3. Indicators should be treated as an indication of change, rather than an outcome measure.
4. Performance indicators should comprise only one component of the evaluation information, and should be supplemented by other data collection methodologies.
5. Where indicators are used to measure progress against designated objectives, underlying assumptions should be made explicit and assessed in the evaluation process.
6. Performance indicators should always be interpreted and discussed, rather than simply reported on.

6.4.3 Potential core indicators

There is no shortage of examples of potential regeneration performance indicators: literally hundreds are listed in the local and international literature. The challenge, then, is to identify those which should constitute core indicators for South Australia. A collection of potential indicators have thus been developed; these are contained in Section 9.9.

6.5 Questions

Do you support the proposed approach to indicators and the principles to guide their use?

What indicators do you believe should be core, and collected in all projects? Are there any which you believe should be added to the proposed list?

⁶⁰See for example in Stewart M (et al) *Collaboration and co-ordination in area-based initiatives*, **Final report to the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions**, www.neighbourhood.gov.uk

7 What principles should guide the evaluation?

7.1 The issue

Evaluation frameworks commonly identify principles to inform the development and conduct of an evaluation. What principles should be adopted for South Australia?

7.2 The position

A coherent set of principles should guide evaluation practice. A set of draft principles are identified for discussion.

7.3 Current practice

Many evaluations are not based on an articulated set of principles. However, some are, and principles are usually stated in evaluation frameworks. Thus for example in Scotland the Programme for Partnership Evaluation Framework has underpinning principles of:

- Transparency
- Negotiation
- Partnership
- Non-threatening
- Educative
- Empowering
- Capacity building
- Sustainable
- Realistic
- Flexible.⁶¹

The principles are intended as a 'Code of Conduct' for the evaluation process, to support a model of evaluation based on partnership and inclusivity.

7.4 Discussion and proposal

Evaluation is never a value-free activity and the articulation of guiding principles is an important element in an evaluation framework. Principles determine the kind of evaluation which will occur, and the values which will be promoted in the design, conduct and process of the evaluation. Clear principles are an important component of ethical and focused evaluation practice, especially in complex and sensitive arenas. Principles must reflect the core policy objectives and values of the government, ethical evaluation practice, the interests of stakeholders, and methodologies known to be central to successful regeneration practice.

On this basis, the following set of principles are proposed for South Australia.

⁶¹ Urban Programme/Decentralisation Unit, Neighbourhood Resources and Development (1998), **Project level monitoring and evaluation**, www.trp.dundee.ac.uk/research

1. Participation, partnership and inclusiveness

Evaluation will promote and support participation and partnership with a diverse range of stakeholders, including the community of interest. It will be inclusive of different groups, their concerns and interests.

2. Focus on disadvantaged groups

Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups within the community of interest will receive a priority focus in the evaluation, in particular indigenous people.

3. Independence and objectivity

The evaluation will be independent, and independence will be promoted and ensured through planning, conduct, management and response to the evaluation.

4. Openness, transparency and accountability

Evaluation will support and facilitate the openness, transparency and accountability of government and its agencies. Evaluation processes will be open and accessible and results widely disseminated.

5. Learning and development

The primary purpose of the evaluation is to promote learning, development and improvement in the practice of urban regeneration and other strategies to address area-based disadvantage. The evaluation will support the goals of a learning organization.

6. Quality and rigor

The evaluation should be of high quality and rigorous.

7. Relevance, applicability and timeliness

The evaluation should be relevant to the key concerns of various stakeholders, and findings applicable and timely for policy and program development.

8. Flexibility

The processes and methodologies of the evaluation should be flexible and responsive to changing circumstances, concerns and opportunities.

7.5 Questions

Do you support the proposed set of principles?

Are there any you believe should be added, removed or changed?

What are the implications of the principles for the evaluation process?

8 What are the implications of a framework for urban regeneration evaluation in South Australia?

8.1 The Issue:

The preceding chapters have explored a range of issues. However, there is still a fundamental question: is it desirable and practical to have an evaluation framework for urban regeneration in South Australia? What are the advantages and disadvantages? And what are the implications for the planning, management and practice of regeneration evaluation? How should the framework be applied?

8.2 The position

It is recommended that the evaluation framework be adopted in South Australia, with some elements of the framework mandated for all evaluations, and others discretionary. This approach will require changes in the way in which evaluations are planned, funded, managed and conducted.

8.3 Discussion

This section is structured around a series of questions. Firstly, the desirability, relevance and potential applications of an evaluation framework are considered. The discussion then moves on to consider implications for the planning, management and practice of evaluation.

8.3.1 Should there be a framework for urban regeneration evaluation in South Australia?

The discussion throughout this paper has essentially constructed an evaluation framework. Now that the potential nature and structure of the framework is emerging, it is timely to consider the more fundamental issue: is such a framework practical, and what are the advantages and disadvantages of this approach?

Potential issues with the emerging framework include:

- ❑ **Applicability and cost.** The framework is more holistic, detailed and at a higher level than most current evaluations, and calls for the collection of extensive information, both quantitative and qualitative, from a range of stakeholders, and over time. Is the framework beyond the scope of what can be funded in South Australia?
- ❑ **Best investment?** The framework aims to create capacity to address some of the major outstanding research questions with regards to urban regeneration. Should these questions be addressed through an evaluation, or are they best dealt with in research studies? Given that funding for research and evaluation is limited, should government invest in more expensive evaluations, or in one-off research studies which explore specific questions?
- ❑ **Changing practice:** Adopting the framework requires considerable change to the way in which evaluations are planned, funded, managed, conducted and linked into policy formation and the knowledge base in South Australia. Is this viable?

Against these are the **advantages of a framework**, which would improve the quality, scope, relevance and comparability of evaluations including through:

- ❑ promoting evaluations that are consistent with contemporary evaluation theory and practice
- ❑ establishing a holistic and inclusive approach across issues, dimensions and stakeholders

- ❑ establishing clear expectations and parameters around evaluation focus, scope, content and methodology, coupled with informed flexibility
- ❑ generating comparable and consistent information, whilst maintaining sensitivity to the needs of individual projects
- ❑ increasing the focus on the perspectives and experiences of communities, including sub-groups of particular concern
- ❑ capacity-building across government and the evaluation community with regards to planning, defining, conducting and managing regeneration and other complex evaluations
- ❑ a shift towards evaluation in which the primary function is learning and knowledge-building
- ❑ findings that have greater capacity to inform major issues and questions around urban regeneration, and thus have relevance locally, nationally and internationally and contribute to the knowledge base on regeneration
- ❑ better dissemination and application of findings.

It is argued that these advantages outweigh the disadvantages, and that a framework should be adopted.

8.3.2 What are the implications for.....

The adoption of the framework has implications for many aspects of evaluation planning, management and conduct. These are discussed below.

- ❑ **A built-in evaluation process.** The framework assumes that evaluation will be an expected and integral part of regeneration practice in South Australia. That is, every project should be evaluated, and funding for evaluation should be an intrinsic part of resource allocation in urban regeneration.
- ❑ **Planning and timing.** Evaluation is often conducted as a discrete activity at the end of a project. Evaluation planning, however, should commence with the first stages of the project. Base-line data should be collected at the start, and monitoring, data collection and evaluation activities run concurrently alongside and evolve with the project. This is now widely accepted as good evaluation practice
- ❑ **Funding levels:** Funding for evaluation should be sufficient to support a comprehensive and high-quality evaluation. Given the extent of investment in regeneration, an adequate allocation to evaluation seems both wise and reasonable.
- ❑ **Evaluation scope and methodologies:** The framework establishes parameters and non-negotiables with regards to scope and methods. These include a broad and holistic focus, across a number of different dimensions, and the utilization of economic, managerial and qualitative approaches. These requirements must be reflected in the brief.
- ❑ **The preparation and management of evaluations:** Consideration should be given to processes and structures to link the preparation and management of evaluations with a policy and research framework under the new departmental structure. This would bring increased capacity to the development of briefs and the planning and management of evaluations. It would also support independence and objectivity in the evaluation and better links into the broader strategic policy and planning processes of government.
- ❑ **Evaluator capacity.** Evaluators will need to be selected according to their skill base and expertise across a range of methodologies and their capacity to meet the expectations of the framework.
- ❑ **Dissemination of findings:** Findings should be widely disseminated. Given that evaluation reports are likely to have implications for the 'big' questions in regeneration practice, it is expected that there will be publication and analysis of results in a number of mediums and forums.

8.3.3 A meta-evaluation approach

Meta-evaluation is a technique used to assess a number of projects simultaneously. It draws together information derived from individual project evaluations, data collections and other sources in an assessment of broader issues and overall impact. Meta-evaluations are increasingly used in major policy and funding initiatives such as the Illicit Drug Diversion Program (Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing), and the Strengthening Families Coping with Illicit Drug Use program (Commonwealth Department of Family & Community Services). In these two examples, the meta-evaluation draws together information from numerous projects across Australia, and provides overall advice on progress, processes and impact. Meta-evaluations have also been used successfully in urban regeneration, notably in the United Kingdom in the Single Regeneration Fund projects and the URBAN Community Initiatives in Northern Ireland.

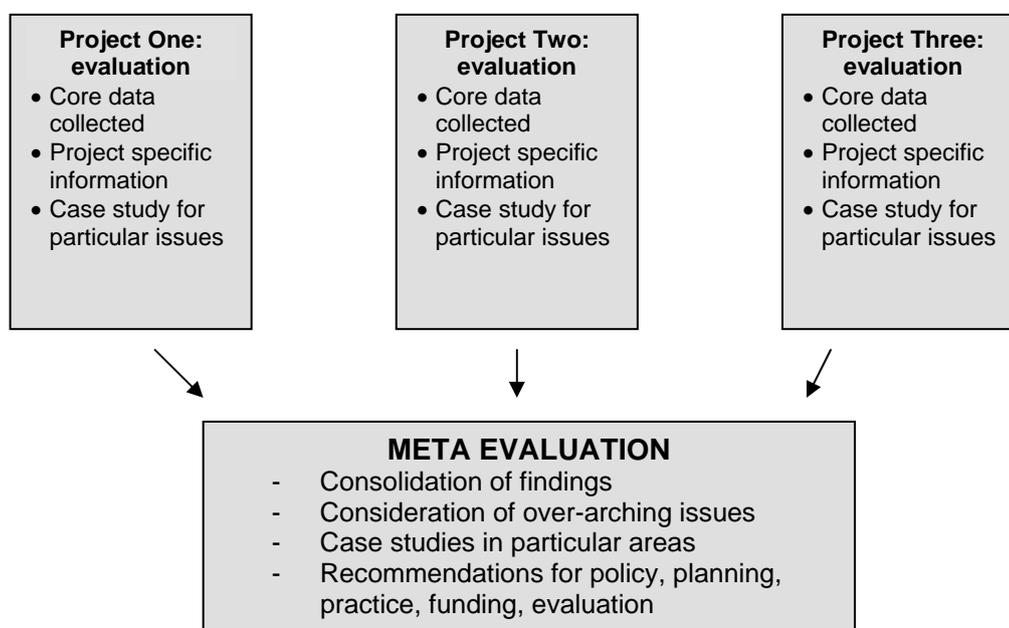
Integral to meta-evaluation is the concept that a **program**, and not simply component **projects**, should be evaluated.

The advantages of a meta-evaluation approach include:

- ❑ The consolidation of findings and learnings from a number of related projects
- ❑ The capacity for comparisons **between** and **across** projects, rather than simply **within** a project
- ❑ Consideration of the 'bigger issues' such as the impact of regeneration as a strategy, and implications for policy, planning and funding
- ❑ Potential to use individual projects as case-studies for particular issues

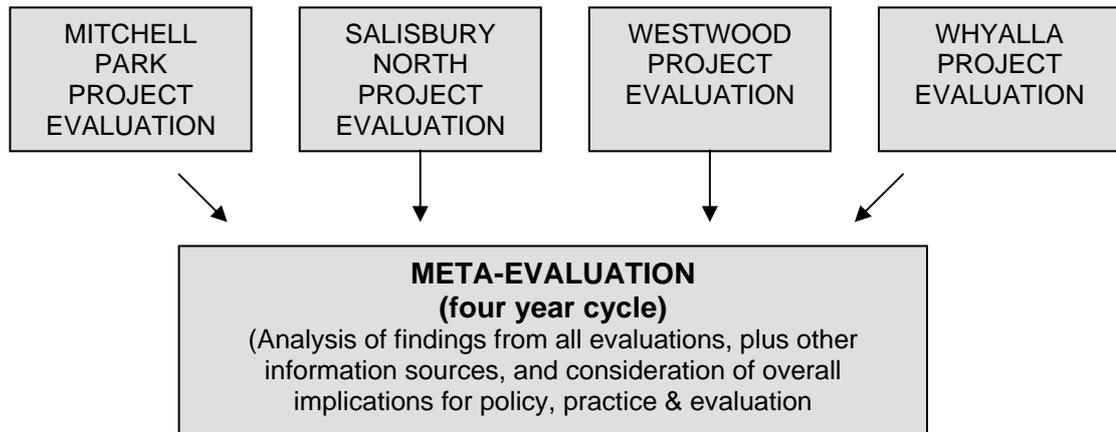
Meta-evaluation works best when there is both commonality and diversity in information gathered in projects. Thus, core indicators/information collection processes should be supplemented by project-specific information.

A simple structure for a meta-evaluation is as follows:



A meta-evaluation approach is recommended for South Australia. The frequency of such an analysis would be dependent on when sufficient evaluation reports and data become available: perhaps every four years. A diagrammatic representation of the possible meta-evaluation process is below.

META-EVALUATION PROCESS EXAMPLE:



8.3.4 Implementing the framework

Resources and a planned approach would need to support the adoption of the framework and associated meta-evaluation. Proposed steps would include:

1. Application of the framework in a trial evaluation, and subsequent modification
2. Policy-level acceptance of the framework by the department
3. Consideration of changes to evaluation planning, funding and management to meet the requirements of the framework (as discussed above)
4. Promotion of the framework across-government
5. Information dissemination and capacity building across the department and other stakeholders in order to meet requirements
6. Regular (bi-annual?) review and updating of the framework in order to ensure continued relevance and resonance with key concerns.

8.4 Proposal

It is therefore proposed that:

1. A framework is adopted to guide the evaluation of urban regeneration projects in South Australia
2. Evaluation is an intrinsic component of planning and resource allocation in urban regeneration
3. A linked, meta-evaluation approach is adopted
4. Evaluation occur concurrently with projects
5. Funding allocations are sufficient to support a comprehensive and high-quality evaluation
6. The evaluation framework forms the basis for future evaluation briefs, and briefs reflect and are consistent with the framework, its expectations and directions

7. Scope and methodology of future evaluations are consistent with the framework, with a broad and holistic focus across the specified dimensions, and drawing on both qualitative and quantitative methods and mixed approaches.
8. Selected evaluators, internal or external, have the capacity to meet the requirements of the framework
9. Evaluations are jointly prepared and managed by the SAHT and policy/research capacity within the department
10. Findings and evaluation reports are widely disseminated
11. An implementation process is adopted to support the introduction of the framework.

8.5 Questions

Do you agree with the proposal for an evaluation framework to guide urban regeneration? What problems do you envisage?

Do you support the meta-evaluation approach? How often should such an analysis occur?

Do you agree with the propositions for the planning, management and conduct of evaluations? What problems and challenges do you envisage?

How should the framework shape and influence future evaluations?

What do you think would be the issues in implementation? How should this be done?

9 The draft framework

This final section presents the draft framework that has been constructed throughout this paper.

9.1 Key Concepts

Urban Regeneration

Urban Regeneration is projects and programs which seek to bring about lasting improvements across economic, environmental, social and physical conditions in disadvantaged communities. Key concerns are the problems of physical decay, ageing and inappropriate stock in public housing estates and the social disadvantage and dysfunction in these areas.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a systematic process of research and analysis, which utilizes a range of information collection strategies, to explore issues related to the impact, consequences, and costs of programs, and the processes and actions which contribute to the impact.

Stakeholders

Evaluation of urban regeneration must incorporate and facilitate stakeholder participation

Stakeholders include residents (the primary stakeholders, both current and those dislocated through the regeneration process); businesses; local government; services and institutions.

9.2 Purpose of the evaluation

1. To add to existing knowledge, and inform the continued development and improvement of strategies which challenge area-based disadvantage and urban decay
2. To measure the impact, outcomes and effectiveness of the urban regeneration intervention
3. To provide an assessment of the factors influencing impact and outcome
4. To fulfil accountability requirements, and support the cost-effective use of government resources.

9.3 Underpinning principles

1. Participation, partnership and inclusiveness

Evaluation will promote and support participation and partnership with a diverse range of stakeholders, including the community of interest. It will be inclusive of different groups, their concerns and interests.

2. Focus on disadvantaged groups

Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups within the community of interest will receive a priority focus in the evaluation, in particular indigenous people.

3. Independence and objectivity

The evaluation will be independent, and independence will be promoted and ensured through the planning, conduct, management and response to the evaluation.

4. Openness, transparency and accountability

The evaluation will support and facilitate the openness, transparency and accountability of government and its agencies. Evaluation processes will be open and accessible and findings widely disseminated.

5. Learning and development

The primary purpose of the evaluation is to promote learning, development and improvement in the practice of urban regeneration and other strategies to address area-based disadvantage. The evaluation will support the goals of a learning organization.

6. Quality and rigor

The evaluation should be of high quality and rigorous.

7. Relevance, applicability and timeliness

The evaluation should be relevant to the key concerns of various stakeholders, and findings applicable and timely for policy and program development.

8. Flexibility

The processes and methodologies of the evaluation should be flexible and responsive to changing circumstances, concerns and opportunities.

9.4 Evaluation planning and management

1. The framework will guide the evaluation of urban regeneration projects in South Australia.
2. Evaluation will be an intrinsic component of planning and resource allocation in urban regeneration
3. Evaluation will occur concurrently with projects
4. Funding allocation will be sufficient to support comprehensive and high-quality evaluations
5. This framework will form the basis for evaluation briefs
6. Evaluations will be jointly prepared and managed by the SAHT and the policy/research capacity in the department
7. An implementation process will support the introduction of the framework
8. The framework will be updated bi-annually to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.

9.5 Meta evaluation

A meta-evaluation will be conducted every four years. This will draw together and assess information gathered through evaluation and accountability processes across projects to provide overall findings and advice with regards to practice, policy and evaluation.

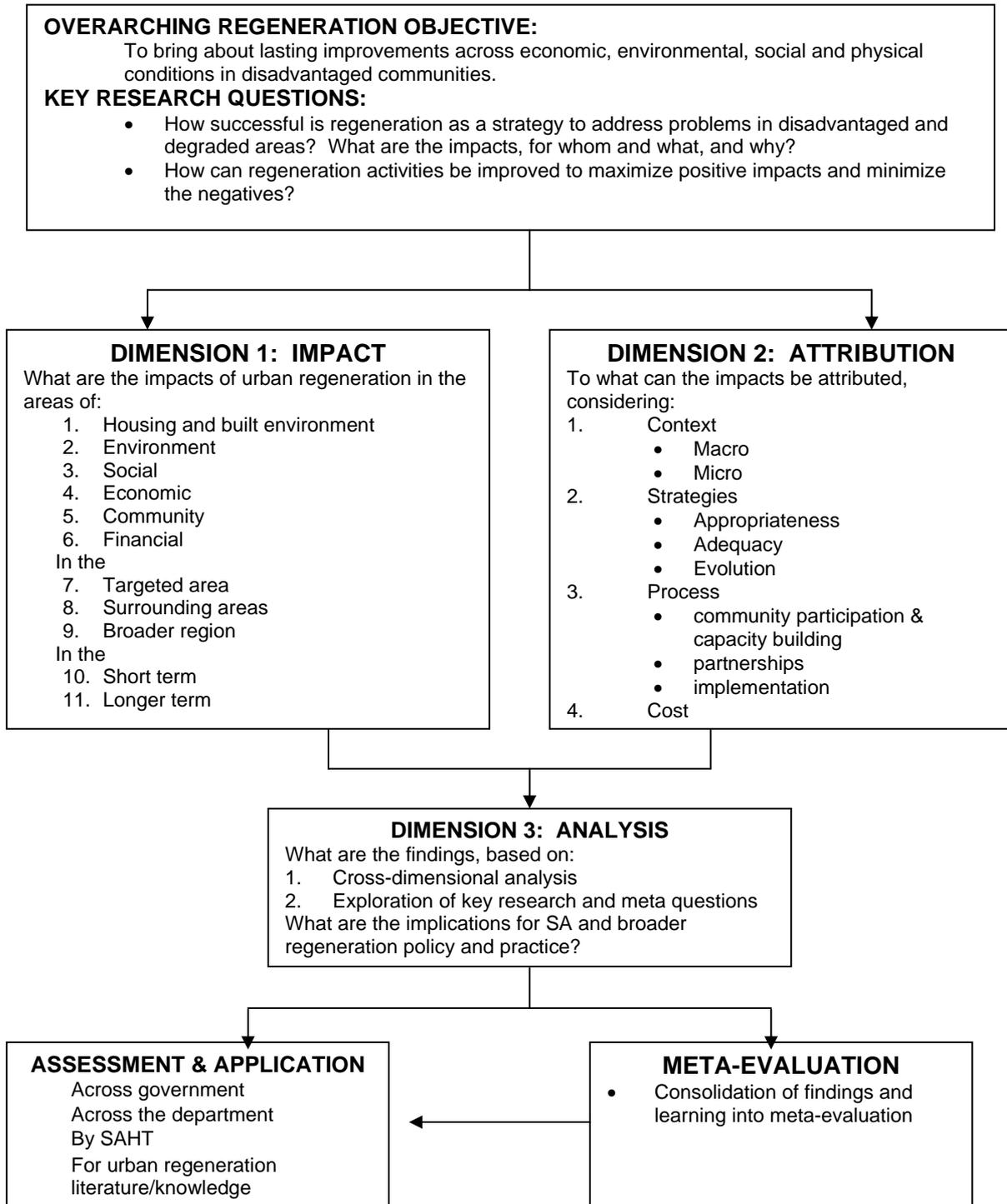
9.6 Methods

1. The evaluation musts assess across the dimensions outlined in the framework.
2. The evaluation should be based on systematic and comprehensive data collection, throughout the life of the project, using a range of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, and mixed methodologies. Economic, managerial and qualitative approaches should be incorporated.
3. The chosen methodologies must have the capacity to assess, collate and document the impacts, outcomes and cost of the regeneration project, as well as investigate mechanisms, process and context.
4. Residents are the primary concern. A particular focus is required on the impact on vulnerable groups, especially indigenous people.
5. Evaluation research questions should be developed with reference to the research questions outlined in this framework. It is expected that the mandatory questions will be considered; additional questions will be influenced by local circumstances and current concerns.
6. Core performance indicators should be included, to enable comparisons between projects.

9.7 Evaluation report

1. A final report will be produced. This should move beyond reporting on observed changes to an analysis of cause and effect.
2. Findings will be incorporated into a meta-evaluation of regeneration projects.

DIMENSIONS OF THE EVALUATION: FRAMEWORK MAP



9.8 Evaluation questions

(Highlighted questions are proposed as mandatory)

1. Dimension of Impact	
<input type="checkbox"/> What are the impacts of urban regeneration?	
1.1	Spheres of impact
1.1.1	Housing
	<input type="checkbox"/> How has regeneration affected housing affordability and accessibility?
	<input type="checkbox"/> What changes in tenure mix have been achieved, and what is the impact?
	<input type="checkbox"/> What changes in dwelling type have been achieved, and what is the result?
	<input type="checkbox"/> What has been the impact of regeneration on asset issues?
	<input type="checkbox"/> How has the quality and appropriateness of housing and other built forms in the area changed?
1.1.2	Environment
	<input type="checkbox"/> To what extent have environmental issues been considered and addressed?
	<input type="checkbox"/> How has the project contributed to a better and more sustainable environment within the local area?
1.1.3	Social
	<input type="checkbox"/> What has been the impact of regeneration on individuals and families within the area?
	<input type="checkbox"/> Has regeneration improved life experiences, opportunities and choices for residents?
	<input type="checkbox"/> What are the impacts on dislocated tenants, as well as those moving into the area?
	<input type="checkbox"/> How has regeneration affected Aboriginal people?
	<input type="checkbox"/> Does changing the social mix in an area improve outcomes for the area and for current and former residents?
	<input type="checkbox"/> Is regeneration a successful strategy in challenging area-based disadvantage and social exclusion?
1.1.4	Economic
	<input type="checkbox"/> Has regeneration improved economic conditions within an area?
	<input type="checkbox"/> How have key indicators of economic activity and work participation changed?
1.1.5	Community
	<input type="checkbox"/> What have been the impacts on the targeted community?
	<input type="checkbox"/> Has community confidence, capacity and social capital improved?
1.1.6	Financial
	<input type="checkbox"/> What are the financial impacts for the major stakeholders?

1.2 Areas of impact

1.2.1 Targeted area

- What are the impacts on the targeted area?**

1.2.2 Surrounding areas

- What are the impacts on surrounding areas?**
- Has regeneration brought benefits to surrounding areas?
- Have there been negative impacts from factors such as the displacement of 'difficult residents', decline in housing affordability and/or accessibility, or business attracted away from the area?**

1.2.3 Broader region

- Has the urban regeneration had impacts for the broader region (e.g. the metropolitan area as a whole?) If so, what?
- What has been the impact on the overall stock and supply of public housing?
- Have social problems shifted from the targeted area to others?

1.3 Impact over time

1.3.1 Short term

- What are the short-term impacts of regeneration (i.e. through the life of the project and in the 12 months following completion?)**
- What are the indications that benefit will be sustainable over time?**

1.3.2 Long term

- What are the long-term impacts (for example over 5 – 10 years?)
- Are impacts sustained over time?
- What is the longer-term impact of the immediate disruption that accompanied the regeneration?
- How have stake-holders views and perspectives on the regeneration changed over time?

2. Dimension of attribution

- To what can the impacts of regeneration be attributed?**

2.1 Context

2.1.1 Macro-level

- Have other initiatives, policies or trends outside of or encompassing the region had an influence in the targeted area during the period of regeneration and monitoring?**

2.1.2 Micro-level

- What other influences, aside from regeneration, have been at work in the area?**
- What were the particular features of the context of the area that may have influenced regeneration outcomes?

2.2 Strategies

- What strategies were used and why?**
- What strategies were particularly successful?

2.2.1 Appropriateness

- Does current research and local issues support the strategies chosen for the project?**
- Were the 'right' mix and breadth of strategies chosen?**

2.2.2 Adequacy

- Was the scope, reach, intensity and duration of the strategies sufficient to achieve the desired change?**

2.2.3 Evolution

- How did strategies change over time, and why?** What are the learnings from this?

2.3 Process

2.3.1 Community participation and capacity building

- Has new capacity been developed in the community?**
- What is the 'story' of the relationship between the regeneration project and the community?
- How has the regeneration included and built community? Was this adequate and successful?
- Which parts of the community have been engaged, and in what ways?
- How has community participation changed the directions and outcomes of the project?
- How is community participation and capacity building best integrated into a regeneration project?**

2.3.2 Partnership

- What partnerships have been formed in the regeneration process?**
- What have the partnerships achieved?**
- What are the lessons for the future?

2.3.3 Implementation

- What is the general 'story' of implementation?
- What problems were experienced?
- What were the significant events and decisions which influenced the shape and outcome of the project?**

2.4 Cost

- What was invested, by whom, in what areas and activities? What was the cost of the program?**

3. Dimension of analysis

3.1 Cross dimensional analysis

- How do findings across all areas inform and relate to each other?**
- What relationships and inter-plays are occurring between factors and dimensions? How does what occurs in one area affect another?**
- To what can the impacts be attributed? What has influenced outcomes?**

3.2	Exploration of key research and meta questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ How are the findings from this project informed by the literature and previous research? ❑ Are the observed changes likely to be sustained over time? ❑ How successful is regeneration as a strategy to address problems in disadvantaged and degraded areas? What are the impacts, for who and what, and why? ❑ How can regeneration activities be improved?
3.3	Implications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ What are the implications of the findings of the evaluation, for South Australia and broader regeneration policy and practice?

9.9 Performance indicators

Principles for use

1. Each project should collect a common set of data on core designated performance indicators. This should be collected at a base-line position (i.e. before the project commences) and then regularly throughout the life of the project.
2. Core performance indicators can be supplemented by project-specific indicators.
3. Indicators should be treated as an indication of change, rather than an outcome measure.
4. Performance indicators should be only one component of the evaluation information, and should be supplemented by other data collection methodologies. These should include strategies to assess causality.
5. Where indicators are used to measure progress against designated objectives, underlying assumptions should be made explicit and assessed in the evaluation process.
6. Performance indicators should always be interpreted and discussed, rather than simply reported on.

Core indicators

CORE INDICATOR	SOURCE
Population in the area (usual residence) by: Age Ethnicity Family structure	ABS Census
Proportion of low income houses in area (as defined by the Social Health Atlas for each Census)	ABS Census
Proportion lacking fluency in English	ABS Census
Population density	ABS Census
Proportion of residents receiving Centrelink payments (by payment type)	Centrelink database
Proportion of Indigenous households in area who are: In private rental Purchasing or owning own home	ABS Census

Unemployment rate (by sex and age)	ABS Census
Proportion of 16 year olds still at school/education/training	ABS Census
Highest educational level attained in population	ABS Census
Public housing turnover rate	SAHT & AHA
Dwelling commencement (public & private)	Local govt
Total public housing stock	SAHT & AHA
Proportion of housing in area which is: public housing private rental owner-occupied or owner-purchasing	ABS Census
Proportion of public housing tenancies under 1 year	SAHT & AHA
Property values in area	Sales data base
No. of people relocated in regeneration project, and where to	SAHT
Proportion of relocated tenants who return	SAHT
Median rental: Public Private	Housing
Child protection substantiation per 1000 population	FAYS
FAYS Domestic violence assessments	FAYS
Crimes against the person	OCS
No of crime victims per 1000 population	OCS
Offences against property Property damage Serious criminal trespass Break & Enter	OCS
Hospital separation rate	DHS
Resident perception of area	Special survey
Resident satisfaction with area	Special survey
Resident perception of area safety	Special survey
Resident & relocated resident satisfaction with regeneration process & outcome	Special survey

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