Quality of Life survey data use and dissemination workshop

Carla-Leanne Washbourne, University College London / GCRO

Summary report

This report summarises a one-day meeting convened on 6th November 2019 by the Gauteng City-Region Observatory, to reflect on data use and dissemination of the results of previous and forthcoming Quality of Life Surveys.

Compiled by: Carla-Leanne Washbourne

With input from Julia de Kadt, Sandiswa Mapukata, Sthembiso Mkhize, Bonolo Mohulatsi, Yashena Naidoo, Alexandra Parker

Table of Contents

Scope of the workshop

The primary aim of this workshop is to better understand how the Gauteng City-Region Observatory's (GCRO's) Quality of Life (QoL) survey data and results are currently used, how usage can be developed and enhanced, and how we, as the GCRO, can strengthen our work in dissemination of data and results for optimum benefit for our different users and audiences.

The objective of this workshop is to draw on input from stakeholders and experts to help us think through the following:

- how we approach sharing and disseminating our survey data and results;
- what we can learn from current usage of survey data and results;
- how to understand the needs of users and potential users; and
- potential strategies to problem-solve challenges, and areas for development.

This workshop follows a series of workshops convened as part of the GCRO's ten-year review of the QoL survey. The GCRO initially implemented a series of three technical review workshops, focused on key aspects of the survey: (1) sampling; (2) survey management; and (3) questionnaire content.

The objective of the series of workshops was to support the GCRO in revisiting sample size and distribution, field processes, questionnaire composition, duration of data collection, indexing, and requisite resources in such a way as to facilitate survey sustainability over the next ten years, while also protecting as far as possible the continuity and value of the survey. Each workshop was externally facilitated by Dr Tara Polzer-Ngwato, and was attended by a small group of 3-4 external experts, as well as core GCRO team members. Participants in each workshop generated a series of considerations for the GCRO. Prof Mark Orkin served as the external technical chair of the technical review process, providing guidance to the process, and subsequently developing a series of recommendations informed by the three workshops.

These technical review workshops highlighted for us the importance of better understanding the ways in which QoL data and results are used, how they might be used, and what our users and stakeholders need. In particular, given the cost of collecting this data, ensuring that stakeholders are able to derive maximum benefit from the data and analysis is essential to the long-term sustainability of the project. Consequently, we decided to hold this additional workshop, outside of, but informed by, the technical review process. Considerations raised by this workshop will inform our work on enhancing the use of survey data and results into the future.

Schedule of the workshop

Wednesday, 6 November 2019

GCRO Boardroom, 6th Floor University Corner, 11 Jorrissen Street, Braamfontein

8:30-9:00	Arrival and refreshments
9:00-10:45	Dr Rob Moore: Welcome & objectives (10 minutes)
	Dr Alex Parker: QoL data use and dissemination overview (30 minutes)
	Approaches to sharing research and data:
	- Richard Gevers (20 minutes)
	- Lynn Woolfrey (15 minutes)
	- Laura Grant (15 minutes)
	- Shirona Patel (15 minutes)
10:45-11:00	Tea break
11:00-13:00	All: Facilitated discussion of issues for GCRO to consider with regards to sharing QoL data and findings
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-16:00	The research-policy interface:
	- Prof Ruth Stewart (15 minutes)
	- Dr Carla Washbourne (15 minutes)
	- Dr Kim Ingle (15 minutes)
	All: Facilitated discussion around strengthening the policy impact of QoL (60 minutes)
	Dr Rob Moore: Closure

Summary of sessions

Welcome and objectives

- The Quality of Life survey (QoL) is GCRO's flagship project. An extensive technical review has recently been conducted on the key aspects of the survey's methodology and implementation, i.e. the survey instrument, methodology and fieldwork methods.
- This is the fourth workshop in the review process, to determine ways to further the dissemination of QoL data and to understand how the work is being used.

QoL data use and dissemination overview

- The workshop opened with a discussion of the QoL V survey
- GCRO recognise that there is a large scope for analysis and visualisation of data produced in QoL V, but that there are issues regarding the best ways in which to maximise both the use of the data and the impact that this use can have.

Challenges:

- The primary output of QoL V is the dataset, and this is not always immediately usable by all stakeholders
- The data is not currently certified by StatsSA as official statistics
- GCRO does not currently produce a comprehensive summary report to support the release of the QoL dataset
- A key output of the QoL launch is the main presentation which has been supplemented with various other documentation, including data briefs and insights at different times
- GCRO prepares and presents a significant number of presentations, based on QoL data, as a form of dissemination. The process can be quite strenuous, particularly for requests that require rapid response
- The stipulation that data is only available for non-commercial use may limit use, and the data use agreement process currently in place for potential users can be slow and cumbersome.
- The data is not always correctly cited and users are not lodging publications with the GCRO, meaning that there is an undercount of usage

Opportunities:

- There are currently 14 different types of official GCRO output. Outputs that make significant use of QoL data include: Presentations, Data brief, Maps of the Month, Visualisations, Vignettes, Exhibitions, Website (main point of dissemination), GIS Viewers, Survey viewers.
- Existing proposals for increasing dissemination and data use includes using a Wazimaps based tool for QoL data, drafting a single comprehensive survey report and producing an annotated version of the launch presentation
- The team are open to new ideas and innovations that the GCRO could incorporate

Presentations: Approaches to sharing research and data

Richard Gevers - Open Data Durban (now 'Open Cities Lab' - http://opencitieslab.org/)

Link to presentation - bit.ly/oddgcro

Richard Gevers is the CEO of Open Cities Lab. Open Cities Lab works to promote participatory democracy in cities and urban spaces through enhancing access to information.

- Lots of data supplied from QoL, but not clearly mapped out for use or application
- Need to consider the impact of data and be mindful of the fact that data is not neutral
- Recognise the importance of human capital in data creation and sharing and make sure that training costs are considered upfront
- It is important to pay attention to different data platforms
- Data sharing platforms benefit from modular, open source design
- Data outputs should be demand driven. Given the richness of the data at hand in QoL, there is so much that could be done. GCRO needs to focus on what people can use and what they will be excited by. Technological capabilities need to be supply driven, but design of outputs must be demand driven. Once we understand the needs of various stakeholders, we can tailor supply directly to these needs.
- Bite-sized, immediately usable outputs are particularly important for the GCRO audience (i.e. government). Data stories could be a powerful means of communicating with this audience.
- Connecting new insights to critical decisions and decision-makers requires building a narrative, maybe based on wanting to engage, disagree, agree etc.
- Common data framings / narratives are based on creating a better and more informed future: hindsight > insight > foresight

Questions / provocations for GCRO:
- What is the reason we want to share QoL data?
- Who is using the GCRO output and what are they using it for?
- What are the user's priorities and needs?
- How should the data be used?
- How do we optimise & make sure the organisation owns the process (to the extent that it wishes to)?
- What is the 3-minute pitch?
- How do we make data accessible and inclusive to the audience?
- How do we ensure that changes to data use and dissemination practice happens at the pace of humans, and in ways that work for the people involved?

Lynn Woolfrey – DataFirst

Lynn Woolfrey is the Manager of the DataFirst research data service. They promote open access to academic and public sector data from South Africa and other African countries through providing essential infrastructure for hosting and sharing datasets.

- DataFirst does not share aggregated data: nuance and utility can be lost in the aggregation
- An appropriate registration process allows data collection on the data users
- Platforms like DataFirst are critical in assuring data quality standards

- The use of open source formats and approaches can assist with resource constraints in other organisations, which may prevent them from accessing and using the data
- There is currently a fair amount of human intervention when trying to access QoL data, due to a long user registration process, which then needs to be read, verified and actioned. This probably reduces the use of QoL data.
- Some reflection on the benefits of Public vs Licensed access and how this can improve ease of access and increase data uptake:
    o Data collected through public money should be ethically shared
    o There is a sea change with regards to commercial use of data, enabling businesses to be informed. Commercial use of data can often be a public good.
    o Public access data improves overall usage of data
- DataFirst is changing to creative commons licences in 2020

Laura Grant & Alastair Otter - MediaHack

Laura Grant & Alastair Otter are data journalists, and part of the MediaHack team. MediaHack is dedicated to generating and promoting high quality data journalism in South Africa.

- 2 key themes for data use and dissemination: Awareness and accessibility
- There is a growing interest in data, with particular reflections on journalists writing using raw data
- Many people don't know what data the GCRO has available and this is not always easy to find out
- Perception that GCRO data is high quality, but is poorly accessible with the access process being too intimidating and long
- More openness = more exposure = more insights
- Specific actions here could be very helpful, such as more interactivity with regards to 'Map of the Month' (MoM), e.g. csv dataset to allow users to play with the data. MoM is the most accessible format of GCRO data
- Advice that GCRO outputs should be less 'academic' and include more storytelling, with an obvious point or angle that clearly illustrates why readers should care about the data and a clear summary (e.g. 3 takeaway points)
- Enabling the reuse and sharing of outputs, possibly by third parties, could increase reach and visibility
- Making data more accessible can allow people to make different visualisations and draw their own conclusions, which can be good exposure

Shirona Patel - Head of Communications, University of the Witwatersrand

Shirona Patel supports researchers at the University of the Witwatersrand in communicating data and research findings with external audiences.

- Framings of 'science' and 'democracy' are important with respect to data generation and use
- A key role of universities is in assisting with the dissemination of different types of data and research
- Researchers must adapt to a changing media environment. Currently working in the context of limited resources and skills in journalism, including an overall decline of specialist journalists (2 fulltime science journalists in South Africa)
- There is a growing need to supplement traditional media with digital platforms

- Radio is a good option for dissemination, community radio stations are becoming more popular
- Internet news is increasingly incorporated by broadcast newsrooms
- Social media has no cost but requires human capital
- LinkedIn increasingly being used by researchers
- Youtube very useful for disseminating research findings in short videos
- Eurekalert! Platform for sharing research
- Open Science, Live Science – see live happenings, seeing the human element
- **Journalists do not have capacity and resources to read and process complicated research and often find it difficult to access experts**
- **Generation of multimedia formats means that they can be used across a range of platforms. Theme-based reports are preferred**
- People are genuinely interested in discovery research and how it impacts people's lives
- **Important to embed open access principles to ensure effective communication**

Questions / provocations for GCRO:

- What is your impact? How do you measure your impact?
- How do we change people's lives?
- How do you create a conversation on (non)traditional media?

Presentations: The research-policy interface

Prof Ruth Stewart – Africa Centre for Evidence, University of Johannesburg

Prof Ruth Stewart is the Director of the Africa Centre for Evidence (ACE). ACE works to support and enhance the use of evidence in policy design and decision-making.

- Laying out a spectrum from 'research' to 'policy', noting that there are very different actors and approaches at either end of this spectrum
    - The space between academia and policy is a process of creating change, and data use is useful in creating said change
    - Just as there are people who are good in either the academic or policy space, there are also people who are good in the brokering space that sits between those two spaces
- Decision-making is both technical and political, as we co-produce evidence
- Policy impact - good policies are made by good research:
    - Does someone know about it?
    - **How do move from research / information to implementation? Evidence use is not the same as dissemination**
- **Need for collaborative and integrative discussions to recommend how we can shape and share (?) our research and work to implement meaningful policies.**
- Need for multiple approaches (from different stakeholders and partners)
- Things the ACE have learnt:
    - Need to understand the landscape by trying to understand what others are already doing. There is no need to always try new things if old things are working.
    - **Have multiple approaches, there is not a 'one-size fits all'**
    - **Think about decision-makers ability to engage with the research**
    - **Data needs to align with the needs expressed**
    - Networking is essential - developing and maintaining relationships and acknowledge the relationships and diversity of audiences and partners. **Relationships make the biggest difference – tools can help relationships do what they need to do, but the relationships are the fundamental instrument**
- Raising profile and value of using evidence

Carla Washbourne – University College London / GCRO

Carla Washbourne is a Lecturer in Environmental Science and Policy and the University College of London. She has been working closely with the GCRO to assess the impact of the GCRO's work.

- High-level findings from broader research on GCRO impact relevant to QoL and dissemination:
- QoL is seen externally as a very significant component of GCRO's work
- One critical reflection coming from this research was "Who are the clients of the QoL survey and is GCRO targeting them generally or specifically?" It is critical to have a good sense of this in order to be able to frame any outputs at all
- By looking at how GCRO works and its external interactions it was possible to collate a number of questions around how GCRO approaches its work and how data / information (research evidence) is demanded and used by different people:
    - Philosophy - who are the clients and how do we communicate with them? Are our services user-friendly and accessible?
    - Audience - who is the intended audience?

- o Visibility - how visible is GCRO to who and why?
- o Framing - theming and grouping
- In general: is the data credible, relevant, timely, easy to use or easy to source?
- Challenges: work that is seen as academic is sometimes interpreted as being difficult to understand or to gain access to
- There are calls from stakeholders for GCRO to be more directive in its outputs, making specific recommendations framed in language of being 'user friendly and accessible'
- Thematic focus areas where GCRO was seen to have particular strengths were identified as urban planning, housing and transport and were seen as parallel to social programmes

Questions / provocations for GCRO:

- What do stakeholders see QoL as?
- How are specific outputs received by different audiences?
- Is the methodology or complexity visible or necessary to be visible?
- Could outputs be themed / groups in to key areas?

Kim Ingle – South African Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU)

Kim Ingle is a Research Analyst at SALDRU. She was previously the Policy Researcher and Communications Manager for the National Income Dynamics panel survey.

Worked examples of national panel data reaching the policy conversation through different channels:
1. Direct implementer consultancy

- o Workshops with government departments
- o Creating data and ensuring people know how to use data

2. Indirect third-party consultancy based on panel data

- o DPRU (development policy research unit) reports
- o Think tank - toolkit on multidimensional poverty

3. Skills and knowledge development

- o National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) panel data courses
- o Production of guides on "how to use data"

4. Direct use in department

- o Life transitions and their drivers

5. Untargeted insertion into general knowledge milieu

- o Programme to Support Pro-poor Policy Development (PSPPD) policy briefs informed by NIDS
- o NIDS Study video
- o Public policy think tank

Discussion notes

Discussion: Approaches to sharing research and data

Key points:

- Data must have an obvious value to the audience
    - Provide 'key messages' of what the data is truly about
    - Ensure that available data is always well-categorised and well-sorted, so that the content of the dataset is clear
    - Ensure that data is clearly filling key data gaps e.g. granular spatio-temporal data
- Increase visibility and navigability of data e.g. organising the website, QoL Launch can be used more effectively
- Interoperability is key
- Data needs to be more accessible and a review of the use agreement is needed
    - Need to consider open data and widening usage, even commercial
- Remember that data is not neutral
- Need to consider how GCRO functions as a research agency in its current relationships and practices
    - Develop a clear community participative component including co-developing questions
    - Consider partnership working, drawing on skills of other parties
    - Conditioning of receptive environment e.g. focus on capacity building for data use in government

Discussion

Dr John Mgwenya (JM): Key focus of this workshop is on data dissemination. It is also to find the best ways of disseminating data and whether current methods are effective. Richard Gevers (RG) presentation really spoke to him in terms of moving from descriptive to prescriptive. Results must add value to the audience.

Mickey Padiachee (MP): What does society do with the data? How do people use this data to re-shape and improve their wellbeing? **Importance of a community participative component.** Presentations struck a nice balance. However, we need to consider participative component both for government and society at large. This is critical when considering inequality in South Africa and how data may be used by communities to reshape their own lives.

Mawande Ngindi (MN): At the Office of the Premier, there is a need for readily available data that is well-categorised and well-sorted. Knowing where things are and how you can use them (where to find information efficiently) is important when making decisions. What are the one or two components that are critical to understanding data? i.e. Having one or two key messages and offering bite-sized chunks of what the data is truly about. This is what is good about 'Map of the Month'. In South Africa, there is a deficiency of granular spatio-temporal information. Also, a need to link information with other sources of information, e.g. the StatsSA national census. StatsSA could assist GCRO with collecting more data. How do we inform decision making? Potential in quick data release and producing publications / content that would be easy to read.

Ebrahim Farista (EF): Gauteng Department of Education collects a lot of administrative data. GCRO QoL survey has limited usefulness for the department, as questions around schooling are quite limited and a lot of the content is data that the department has anyway. Survey doesn't have a lot on education, so hard to determine whether there is a need for engagement between the two. For the survey to be of use, it needs to add to census data & StatsSA household surveys. There is very limited use-value at present but there may be opportunities i.e. in using QoL to investigate what is needed at school level. Questions of validity also arise and whether QoL is consistent with administrative data. Finding ways to draw connections between QoL and administrative data might be valuable. Much of the dissemination content not really relevant. Very good data specialists are needed in government instead of outside government. GCRO may need to focus on building capacity within government. Capacity building with departments to do the data analysis; government needs its own data specialists. This will enable government to use existing data to deal with stakeholders and difficult decisions.

Dylan Weakley (DW): Open data is often not available for commercial use but that may be something useful to consider as **commercial use can be beneficial**. For example, a developer may use QoL data to inform business decision-making. If Lightstone (business group providing data and analytics on property, vehicles and business assets in South Africa) takes GCRO data and uses it to improve their own, is this a problem?

Hendrik Labuschagne (HL): From the perspective of the City of Tshwane; always interested in understanding what is happening within a space and within a region. Have been using data for regional indices to profile dynamics within the region. Use census data to get a better sense of the effects of interventions such as e-Tolls. Used QoL & Census to model possible financial impact of e-Tolls on people in the area. May be important to **mine the data beforehand to provide breadcrumbs that will be useful for the end-user.** Sense that very **few people in municipalities understand the value of QoL data** and don't have requisite skills to get the full value. Also, difficulties with StatsSA: 'build it and they will come' view is not true. Data needs to have value for the end users.

Thabo Sephiri (TS): Share a lot of sentiments that have been previously raised, particularly around validity, participation, and ethics and the politics of data. **Data is not neutral**. Inevitable resistance among poorly performing departments to accept the findings of the QoL survey. These departments then rely on internally-produced data. Data Discomfort.

Kim Ingle (KI): Ideas on improving accessibility: Loads on the website, but hard to find an overview of what is in the data i.e. produce infographics highlighting main themes that the data are covering. Make the data more accessible to users of the survey. Advertise that the QoL data is available by making it more prominent on the website and through DataFirst. Create systems of support to make it easier for users to access and use the data. In response to EF, licensing restrictions make it difficult for research institutes to assist government departments with capacity-building. Use own licence to facilitate capacity-building with government departments. Licensing of software for government is a problem. Survey viewer tool would overcome this – then would need to spend time with government showing them how to work e.g. away days.

Lynn Woolfrey (LW): Use of creative common licences. The more visible you make the data, the more likely it is to be used by researchers. **If researchers / people don't know they are allowed to use data, they won't use it.** Make this explicit – licensing badges, 'get our data' button etc.. In the current context, what do we really mean by 'research use only'?

Richard Gevers (RG): People may lie about use to access data if the platforms appear inaccessible. Sometimes, it is easier to share data between political departments rather than access data through open data platforms. Politics around data sharing – opening things to citizens. Don't contravene boundaries / ethics, but within these, what can you do to get data used? Candidates are making bad decisions, that this data could help with. Data pipeline is critical. Build in values and what we are trying to do; mapping to community and government priorities; community-based monitoring project etc..

Prof. Ruth Stewart (RS): **There is a danger in oversimplifying how researchers may contribute to increased dissemination of data. Cannot assume a linear relationship. What happens after publications?** What is the data used for e.g. solutions, debate, policy, just publication? Does the international community have access to our data? Do they use it? how accessible it is to me? **Simply someone publishing a paper using GCRO data shouldn't be the goal.**

Laura Grant (LG): Who uses WaziMaps? who's the target audience for the Wazimaps? Who uses this data? How do they use this data? For what reasons?

RG: A move towards open source statistics platforms. WaziMaps was initially developed for journalists. However, it doesn't have to be WaziMaps that GCRO decides to use—**use whatever platforms to make data more readily available. It is more effective to not reinvent the wheel**. E.g. Most students use R because it is open source and works better than SPSS and STATA.

LW: Interoperability is good as DataFirst data can be used in R, STATA and CSV. Difficulties do arise when trying to track citations of QoL data due to the multiple points of access to the data. **Need to find ways of consolidating the tracking of citations.**

HL: Right of access to the QoL data needs to be clearly stipulated e.g. SASQAF certification. There is a culture of distrust that predominates around data-sharing within government circles and problems with siloes.

Dr Alexandra Parker (AP): One key issue is the human element. We often think of data as standalone information but there is the human element of interacting with the data, the issues around capacity building to effectively engage with the data. There is also the aspect of the human in drawing out the meaning of the data. GCRO is trying to get the QoL data to speak for itself but that presents significant challenges that make it difficult to make the data more readily accessible.

Dr Rob Moore (RM): Reflect on the current format of the 'Map of the Month', which currently requires the audience to draw their own conclusions about what the map (re-)present.

Jan Erasmus (JE): **Cannot rely on the data to speak for itself.** Should data / publication just speak for itself? Or should we be more explicit when representing the findings. **Users need the value add made clear in order to draw out additional insights**.

JN: Extrapolation is key.

Kate Joseph (KJ): GCRO are the experts of the QoL survey and government can use that expertise. And GCRO should express that.

RS: Need to be careful not to pretend / reinforce that academics are neutral experts and that decision-makers are biased and ineffective in their use of data.

RM: Issue around making data more accessible and more open. There are ways in which we can make the visibility and navigability of the data clearer to users. There is a larger issue of packaging of data insights. There is a clearer range of what the GCRO can do on that front, i.e. partnering with other organisations. Conditioning of the receptive environment—making government more receptive and capable in handling of the data which they receive. Need to think about what kinds of approaches are available to an organization like the GCRO? How is the GCRO thinking about how it functions as a research agency? There are many areas where the GCRO have unreliable and patchy data around critical issues, e.g. crime and safety particularly in relation to gender-based violence. Data on gender-based violence is inefficient for supporting effective decision-making around critical issues. Perhaps data repositories may already be driving these innovations. Key takeaways:

- Data need to be more accessible; review use agreement
- Increase visibility and navigability of data;
- Identifying data gaps;
- Larger issue of packaging and transmission of data insights; possibility of partnership working, drawing on skills of other parties;
- Conditioning of receptive environment; build the disposition of government to work with data; and the capability of dealing with data;
- How does the GCRO function as a research agency; government bring large and complex issues; patchy and unreliable data around very pressing issues; developing a consortium around data issues

JE: Focus on Shirona Patel's (SP) presentation around technological innovations for data dissemination. How do we increase our 'reach'? **How do we embrace creative ways of disseminating the data insights?**

EF: **Focus on (co)development of questions? With line departments.** Use-value may also be connected to how the QoL questionnaire is currently being compiled. Focus on longitudinal tracking may be coming at the cost of relevance.

RM: QoL survey is currently being developed according to both a longitudinal and modularized approach.

AP: What would you want for us in terms of how we next launch the availability of our dataset?

Japie Greeff (JG): Link to the UN's sustainable development goals (SDGs). We should be able to monitor how we have addressed them in our publications. **Maybe link towards the SDG**

indicators. Can't be 'all things to all people', but it is critical in terms of making the QoL dataset more relevant to the end-users.

JE: De-politicise the launch of the QoL dataset. Ensure equal voices of government and academia; consider a partnership launch.

Nalini Naicker (NN): Significant portion of the launch is spent on presenting the steps taken to ensure integrity (validity and reliability) of the data. Get to the headline points of the QoL survey a lot sooner as the current format does exhaust the audience.

JE: The launch is focused on what the launch is there for. It should focus on all key stakeholders which include academics and politicians.

Gillian Maree (GM): There are many different ways of serving up the data. On the one hand, there is the approach of just launching the data and on the other hand, there is the approach of providing a nuanced overview of headline findings.

AP: 'Maps of the Month' are our most popular outputs and our second most popular outputs are research reports. These outputs are polar opposites. There is the need for punchy, bread crumbed findings but there is also the need for in-depth academic analysis.

NN: GCRO outputs are not only read by researchers, they are also used by people outside of academic and government circles. **Ordinary people also need exposure to the work done by the GCRO.**

JP: How reusable are your maps of the month? Perhaps there is some longitudinal value that is not being captured in current dissemination of the maps of the month.

Samantha Ngindi (SN): Finding this conversation very interesting and very eager to digest the launch of the QoL survey. It would be great to gain better insights on the effect of the SETAs and links to skills development.

DW: The GCRO is doing amazing work and Gauteng's position is envied by colleagues in Cape Town, eThekwini and Nelson Mandela Bay. Need to really focus on the value of having the data.

Discussion: The Research Policy Interface

Key points:

-   Brokerage roles between academia and policy
-   Focus on supporting government research units
-   Research, policy and implementation
-   Opportunities to engage with experts and expertise
-   Must consider the knowledge systems and needs of different governance levels
-   Should be mindful of the current and potential data needs and user of different decision-makers (e.g. different parts of government)

Discussion

Sandiswa Mapukata (SM): What is the role that journalists can play in the space between academia and policy? Often appear to be speaking different languages between academics and journalists.

Prof. Ruth Stewart (RS): With the availability of open-source data, there is a danger that people can cherry-pick what they want. They [journalists] can help us with communication.

Dr Bridget Ikalafeng (BI): How do we strengthen our relationships?

RS: Thinking about knowledge management structures and system; collating evidence; better equipping people in government; supporting research units in governments e.g. What Works centres in the UK. There is a gap within government that is being worked on, that is dealing with research units.

Dr John Ngwenya (JN): We have research units, but they don't do the kind of work that is being done by the GCRO. **There is a need for people capable of interpreting the work being done by the GCRO. Need to build a capacity in terms of knowledge brokering**. Government departments are isolated.

Mawande Ngidi (MN): Argument of linking research, policy and implementation. Linking policy and outcome. The fundamental question is: "Is there a forum to discuss the different problems that are present in government" and to brainstorm with experts instead of just having the data. This would assist in problem solving.

Dr Rob Moore (RM): There are rhythms of government = short periods of time to address issues and need to move faster. GCRO would value a more structured discussion with the different levels of government.

Dr Alexandra Parker (AP): There are a couple of points that can be pulled out from the day.

1) Growing recognition to identify data that is missing

2) Though we are aware that certain information is out there, there is a gap in how to find and access this data.

RM: There have been discussions around health (in response to a health observatory in Gauteng). Either the data is not used or it is not found to be helpful. What kind of data is being collected and what are the gaps?

Mickey Padiachee (MP): We need for all the cities to come together for the different consortia we want to create. At local government, there are questions we need to ask: What is it we want to explain? How do we look at single components and breakdown of the service delivery chain? How do the cities interact/interface in a consortium?

RM: In this case, **data comes second and we need governance to come right first**.

Japie Greeff (JG): So, what happens after today? There is a lot to consider.

AP: A lot of concrete insights have come from today. Need to work on building this into QoL VI and how we could communicate this to you [the workshop attendees, and stakeholders more broadly]

Jan Erasmus (JE): Needs to be discussion of the demand side; how do we mutually support research and data collection, convening research data units in the policy space?

Figure 1 – Results of Mentimeter survey conducted with participants during the workshop, illustrating some of the key points and takeaways from the session

Recommendations for GCRO

The report author, together with the GCRO workshop team, have developed the following recommendations based on the workshop. The recommendations drawn from the key points summarised in 4a and 4b, and thoughts from workshop participants illustrated in Figure 1.

Recommendations are clustered around three key areas of focus:

(1) Enhancing visibility of our data and related products
(2) Strengthening our practices around the open sharing of data
(3) Increasing ability to understand and meet stakeholder needs

Within each focus area, recommendations are presented for the short, medium, and long term.

Enhance visibility of our data and related products:

Short term:

- Dedicate a part of the website to accessing QoL data and products, to increase visibility of data
- Prepare an infographic illustrating types of data available and how to access them, and place this prominently on our website
- Include a direct link from our website to the DataFirst portal to facilitate use of this service
- Launch a WaziMaps instance, linked from our website
- Use the next QoL launch to emphasise the availability of our data

Medium term:

- Enhancing data management and dissemination practices, drawing on local expertise and international best practice, so that users can more easily understand what is available
- Develop strategy to ensure that our data and related products are visible and easy to access

Long term:

- Implement and sustain strategy towards ensuring our data and related products are visible and easy to access

Strengthen open sharing of data and related products:

Short term:

- Shift management of data requests exclusively to DataFirst, to free up GCRO time for other priorities
- Begin GCRO-wide discussions towards an integrated approach to sharing data and research products

Medium term:

- Develop a web-based portal for GCRO data and research products, which includes functionality allowing for the analysis of QoL data
- Explore and adopt the most appropriate creative commons license for our data, ideally dropping the non-commercial use stipulation
- Partner with other data organisations to further develop skills and techniques to make GCRO data more accessible and easier to manipulate

Longer term:

- Maintain a cutting-edge web-based portal to facilitate open sharing of data and related products
- Grow internal capacity to support open sharing of data

Increasing our ability to meet stakeholder needs:

Short term:

- User mapping exercise and further stakeholder engagements to better understand current and potential audiences, use cases and needs
- Develop clear, punchy messages for upcoming data products, drawing on the expertise of individuals with communications experience

Medium term:

- Develop strategy for monitoring data use and impact
- Establish sustainable, long-term approach to stakeholder engagements regarding data use and needs
- Develop a strategy towards enhancing the messaging accompanying our data and research products

Long term:

- Develop more detailed understanding of knowledge support needs at different levels of governance, reflecting on where, and in what roles, the GCRO can contribute most substantively
- Maintain ongoing stakeholder engagements regarding data use and needs
- Enhance community-level engagements, to meet the data needs of local communities and local-level decision makers
- Sustain monitoring of data use and impact
- Sustain enhanced messaging related to data and research products

Appendix

Attendees

Name		Organisation
Jan Erasmus	JE	City of Joburg
Ebrahim Farista	EF	Gauteng Department of Education
Richard Gevers	RG	Open Data Durban
Laura Grant	LG	Media Hack
Japie Greeff	JG	Treasury / North-West University
Bridget Ikalafeng	BI	Gauteng Department of Health
Kim Ingle	KI	The Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit, University of Cape Town
Kate Joseph	KJ	City of Joburg
Hendrick Labuschagne	HL	City of Tshwane
Khetho Lomahoza	KL	City of Joburg
Professor Mkhululi Lukhele	ML	Gauteng Department of Health
Ayanda Mabuyakhulu	AM	Gauteng Department of Health
Mpho Matsolo	MM	City of Ekurhuleni
John Mgwenya	JM	Gauteng Provincial Government
Nalini Naicker	NN	Gauteng Office of the Premier
Mawande Ngidi	MN	Gauteng Office of the Premier
Samantha Ngindi	SN	Gauteng Department of e-Gov
Alastair Otter	AO	Media Hack
Mickey Padiachee	MP	City of Joburg
Shirona Patel	SP	University of the Witwatersrand
Thabo Sephiri	TS	City of Ekurhuleni
Ruth Stewart	RS	University of Johannesburg / Africa Centre for Evidence
Carin Venter	CV	North-West University
Carla Washbourne	CW	University College London
Dylan Weakley	DW	City of Joburg Planning
Lynn Woolfrey	LW	University of Cape Town / DataFirst