

A knowledge base to model the  
relationship between individual's  
lives and their communities

Ken Reed & Betsy Blunsdon

# Project collaborators

- Our Community
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Deakin University
- Funded by the Australian Research Council 2005-2007

# Aims

- Aim 1: to model the impact of community on residents' lives
- 3 types of 'community'
  - Community of place – geographical communities
  - Community of interest – voluntary associations
  - Personal community – networks of significant others

# Aims

- Aim 2: How do levels of social connectedness affect community functioning.

# Objectives:

- Test and refine an integrated measurement framework for Victoria that can be extended to analyse communities throughout Australia.

# Objectives:

- Build a data archive and online analysis system that is:
  - Hierarchical
    - distinguishes between community and individual
  - Longitudinal
    - able to support trend analyses
  - Recognises that processes might work differently in different types of communities

# Objectives:

- Construct indicators for a range of community, network, neighbourhood and individual characteristics;

# Objectives:

- Compile case studies of purposively selected communities.



# Specific outcomes 1:

- A model of how community environment, community processes and individual characteristics and processes affect levels of social capital;

# Specific outcomes 2:

- A knowledge base (a database of community, neighbourhood and individual level indicators) to provide evidence relevant to policy relevant to community development and capacity building.

# Conceptual framework

- Community level.
  - community structure
  - community capital
- Individual level
  - life situation
  - life-world

# Community level

- Community structure
  - The ‘organisational community’
    - the mix of organisations located in or significantly affecting the community;
  - Demographic structure
    - eg age, gender and occupational distribution and household composition.

# Community level

- Community capital
  - social capital
    - prevalence and density of networks and norms that contribute to collective efficacy and levels of confidence in local authority structures and institutions;
  - physical assets
    - industrial and commercial infrastructure -- the economic capital invested within the community;
  - cultural heritage and social history;
  - the natural environment and geographical features.

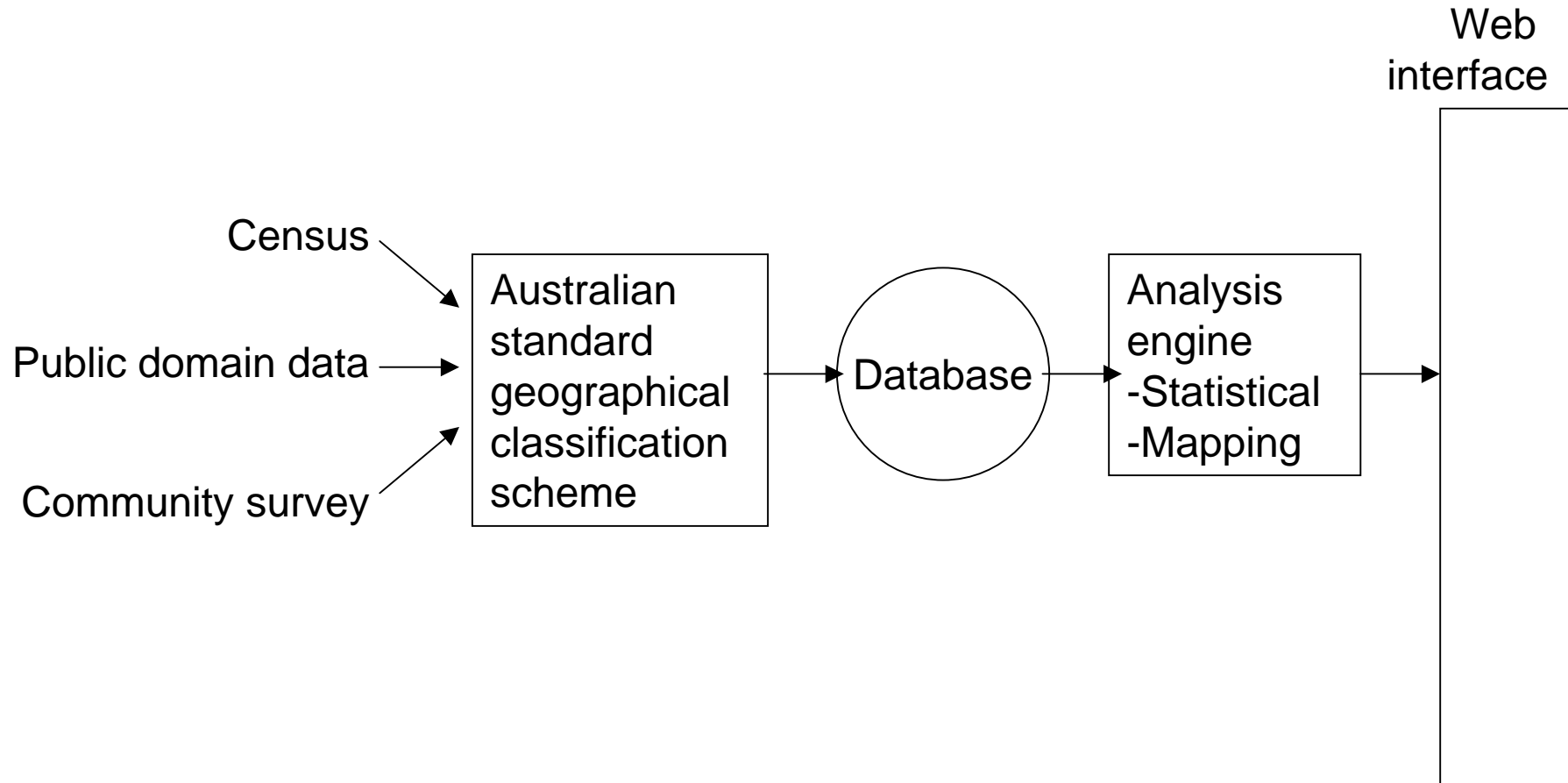
# Conceptual framework

- Community level.
  - Community structure
  - Community capital
- Individual level
  - life situation
  - life-world

# Individual level

- Life situation:
  - stage in the life-cycle;
  - social status;
  - social roles;
  - access to friends, neighbours and family members.
- Life-world
  - the motivations, values preferences and beliefs that shape the way we interpret the world.

# Knowledge base





# Case studies

- Samples of residents in selected areas
- In-depth interviews + descriptions of neighbourhoods
- Focus on:
  - Qualitative aspects of quantitative measures
  - Key features of neighbourhoods, communities of interests and personal communities
  - Perceptions of community involvement