

# FEATURE STORY:

## Saskatchewan Index of Wellbeing



## Saskatchewan Index of Wellbeing, Community Initiatives Fund & Heritage Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Index of Wellbeing (SIW) is a resource that expands our understanding of how well our communities and citizens are faring beyond the economic measures of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The report was released in October 2019 and measures 8 inter-connected domains based on the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) framework, that allow us to monitor changes in quality of life and wellbeing for Saskatchewan citizens. This data when combined with the GDP provides a more comprehensive picture of wellbeing in Saskatchewan.

Heritage Saskatchewan and the Community Initiatives Fund partnered to develop the SIW with the goal to promote evidence based decision-making that reflects the values and responds to the needs of Saskatchewan's citizens. The Index is strongly aligned with the mandates of both provincial organizations with a shared vision that all Saskatchewan residents enjoy a high quality of life and wellbeing. We believe that wellbeing is achieved when people are physically, emotionally and spiritually healthy; economically secure; have a strong sense of identity, belonging and place; and have the confidence and capacity to engage as citizens. As a funder, CIF believes the data identifying community needs and gaps is important to evaluate how CIF's funding is supporting community needs, as it works towards increasing the wellbeing of Saskatchewan communities.

**“This Saskatchewan report is intended to be shared with others, including those involved in programming, policy, and decision making at all levels,” shared Tracey Mann, Executive Director of the Community Initiatives Fund. “This is a starting point for conversations and action, as we collectively work towards improving the quality of life for all Saskatchewan residents.”**

We encourage everyone to use the SIW, including all levels of government, businesses, nonprofit organizations, funding bodies, community groups, etc. – anyone involved in influencing policy, programming, or decision-making that impacts Saskatchewan people. The goal for the Index is to provide evidence to inform policymaking, encourage community engagement, and lead to the implementation of multi-sectoral approaches to addressing community priorities and issues. Our hope is that the SIW will encourage solution-oriented conversations and actions to address the gaps and lagging trend lines at an organizational, local, regional, and provincial level.

Examples of how the Index has been used in other jurisdictions include:

- The Association of Ontario Health Centres has used the CIW framework to develop and implement a Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy that focuses on physical, social, and mental wellbeing.
- Engage Nova Scotia partnered with the CIW to create an Index Report in 2018. They have now conducted a complementary Quality of Life Survey, the results of which will be used for regional planning and priority setting.
- In the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, several organizations came together to conduct a CIW Community Wellbeing Survey. As a result of the survey several issues were identified that the community is working together to address. Several other communities have engaged in a similar process.

Since the report was released, SIW has continued to participate in meetings with a variety of stakeholders to promote wellbeing. Along with this, SIW is spending the next year delving into each of the 8 domains that make up wellbeing, focusing on how Saskatchewanians are faring and reflecting on the interconnectivity of each domain and the actions needed to ensure a healthy future for all. You can follow along by [signing up here](#).

The [SIW website](#) provides access to an array of helpful documents, powerpoints, and other tools to share with your community, workplace, government, or as a jumping off point to start important conversations – wherever you may be.

