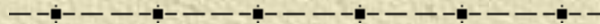


*Selecting Your Level of
Geography in the CIMS*

Resource Note #3

Community Information Mapping System

October 2009



Preface

- ✦ The Resource Note is intended to increase our understanding of and broaden our knowledge base on key subject areas that are fundamental in building our capacity in numeric and geographic analysis.
- ✦ It is not an in-depth or comprehensive discussion of the subject matter.
- ✦ It highlights certain relevant and important areas that deserve our attention and consideration.
- ✦ It is intended to be informal and informative.

Introduction

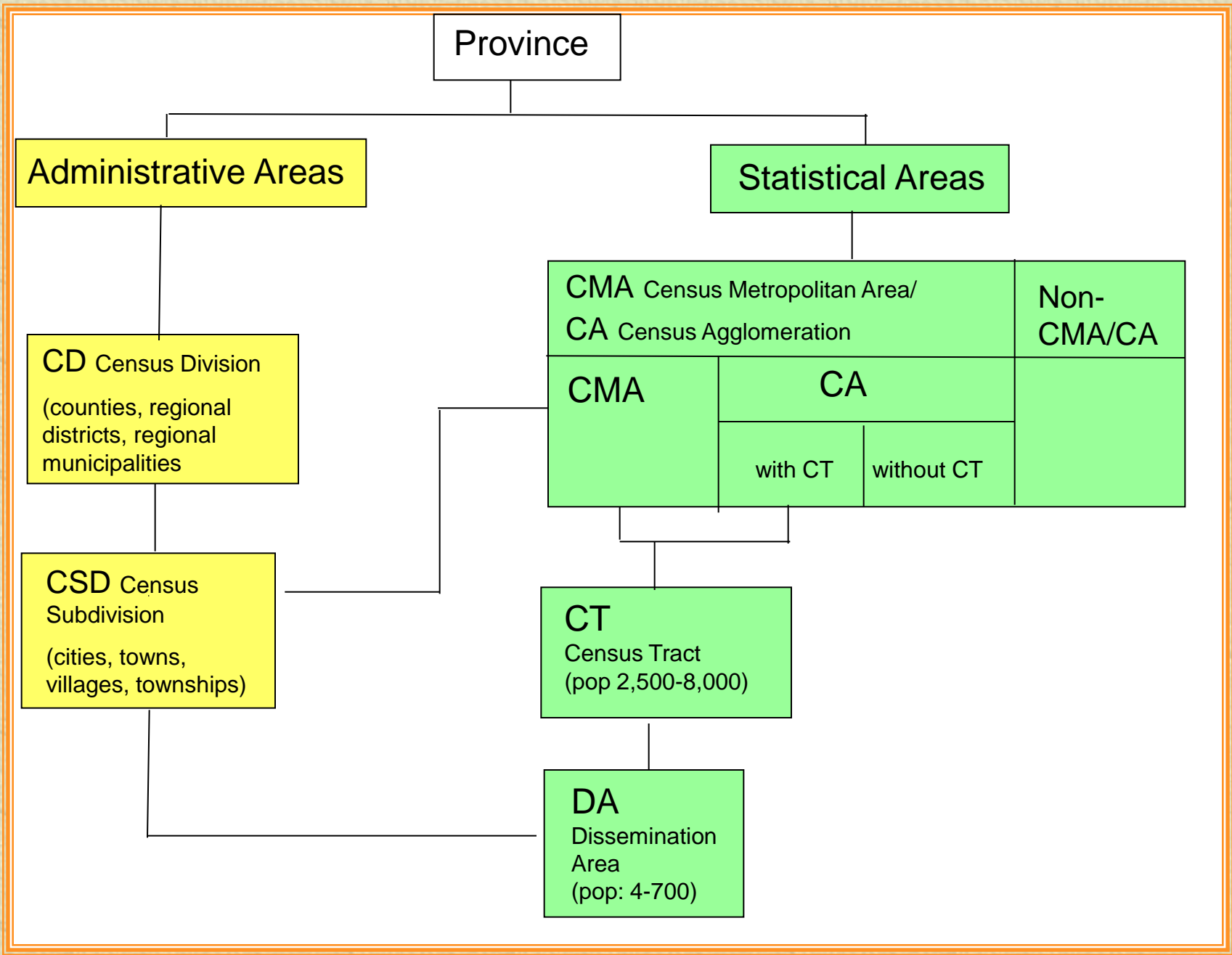
- ✦ The focus of this resource note is on the geographic units used by Statistics Canada to disseminate 2006 Census data and how to define your study area
- ✦ The easiest way to use Census data in the CIMS, is to conform to standard census geographic units such as Census Division (CD), Census Subdivision (CSD), Census Tract (CT) or Dissemination Area (DA)
- ✦ If you want to define a different geography, such as the catchment area for your service, please contact the CIMS Manager (see slide later in this resource note).

Introduction (2)

- ✦ Census Division (CD) and Census Subdivision (CSD) correspond to administrative areas such as counties, regional municipalities, towns and villages.
- ✦ Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)/Census Agglomeration (CA) are large urban areas together with adjacent urban and rural areas that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the large urban area.
- ✦ All Census Metropolitan Areas are divided into Census Tracts. All Census Agglomerations with urban core population of greater than 50,000 are also divided into Census Tracts.

Introduction (3)

- ✦ Census Tract (CT) is relatively permanent area resembling a small urban neighbourhood or rural community. CT boundaries generally follow permanent and easily recognizable physical features. The population of a CT should range between 2,500 to 8,000, with a preferred average of 4000 and greatest possible social and economic homogeneity.
- ✦ Dissemination Area (DA) is the smallest standard geographic unit for which all Census data are disseminated. DAs are uniform in terms of population size, which is targeted from 400 to 700 persons to avoid data suppression
- ✦ All Canada is divided into DAs



Example – Blue Sky Region

- ✦ The service area of the North Bay and Area Social Planning Council covers:
 - The Blue Sky Region – a new “Economic” area including Nipissing District and parts of Parry Sound District
 - Nipissing District has 15 Census Subdivisions (CSDs) including City of North Bay
 - part of Parry Sound District (along Hwy 11 – south to Novar, west to Magnetewan) has 16 Census Subdivisions (CSDs)

How to select your area of interest?

- ✦ In the CIMS portal you can select your indicator (such as percentage of seniors) at different levels of geography
- ✦ If you are interested in information about a rural area or areas, you will most likely want to select the data at the level of “census sub-division (CSD)” (roughly township level).
- ✦ If you are interested in information about an urban area, you will most likely want to select the data at the level of “census tract (CT)”.
- ✦ In a few cases we have data available at the level of “dissemination area”. This is a smaller level of geography than either the CSD or CT.

Selecting your geography in the portal

★ Access the thematic map tool

The screenshot displays the SCIC CIMS Community Information & Mapping System interface. The main map area shows a geographical view of the Ottawa region with a color-coded thematic layer. The interface includes a legend on the left, a top navigation bar with 'Maps', 'Save', and 'Help' options, and a 'Tasks' tab highlighted in the top right. A 'Task List' drop-down menu is also visible. The 'Thematic Maps' tool panel on the right contains the following elements:

- Filter indicators:** A section with a 'Select a theme' dropdown menu, and sub-sections for 'Sub-category', 'Date', and 'Geography' dropdowns.
- Select an indicator:** A section with an 'Indicator' dropdown menu and a 'Description' text area.
- Map Style:** A section with radio buttons for 'Choropleth' (selected) and 'Graduated symbol'.
- Create Thematic Map:** A button to generate the map.
- Instructions:** A text block stating: "Clicking the button above will add the selected indicator as a layer in your map. The theme tool can be used to change the classification of the indicator layer. The selection tools can be used to select a subset of the features before theming."

Annotations with arrows point to the 'Tasks' tab, the 'Task List' drop-down list button, and the 'Thematic map tool' panel.

Selecting the level of geography (cont'd)

-The indicators are organized in a framework structured in categories and sub-categories (see the description of the data framework in the [data section of the website](#))

- To start browsing the data, select a category by clicking on the category drop-down list (see figure 1). Once a category is selected, the first related sub-category is automatically selected and the associated indicators are displayed in the indicator list (see figure 2).

- Once the indicator is selected the “Geography” drop-down list will show you what choices of geography level are available to you. Click on the level of geography most appropriate to you. (see figure 2).

-If you are looking for data at a particular level of geography but it is not offered to you in the menus, please contact the CIMS manager to discuss whether there is any other way you could access the information you are wanting.

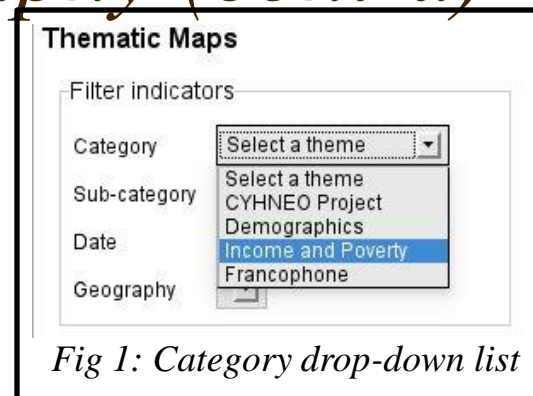


Fig 1: Category drop-down list

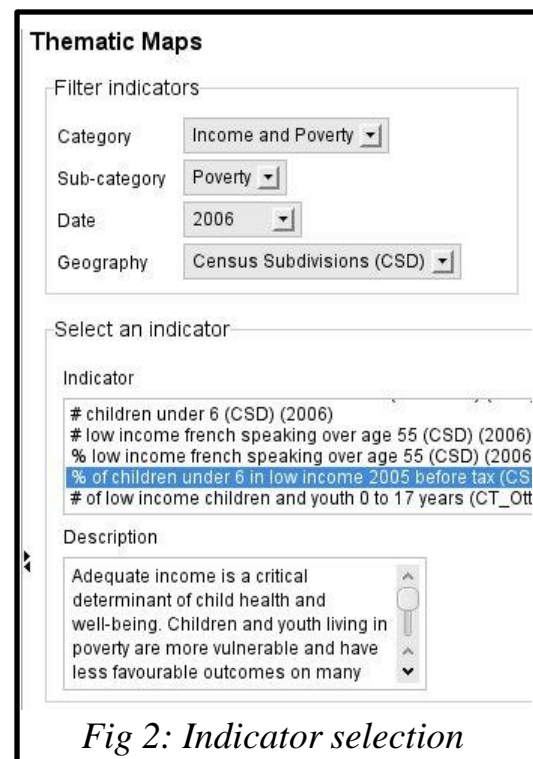


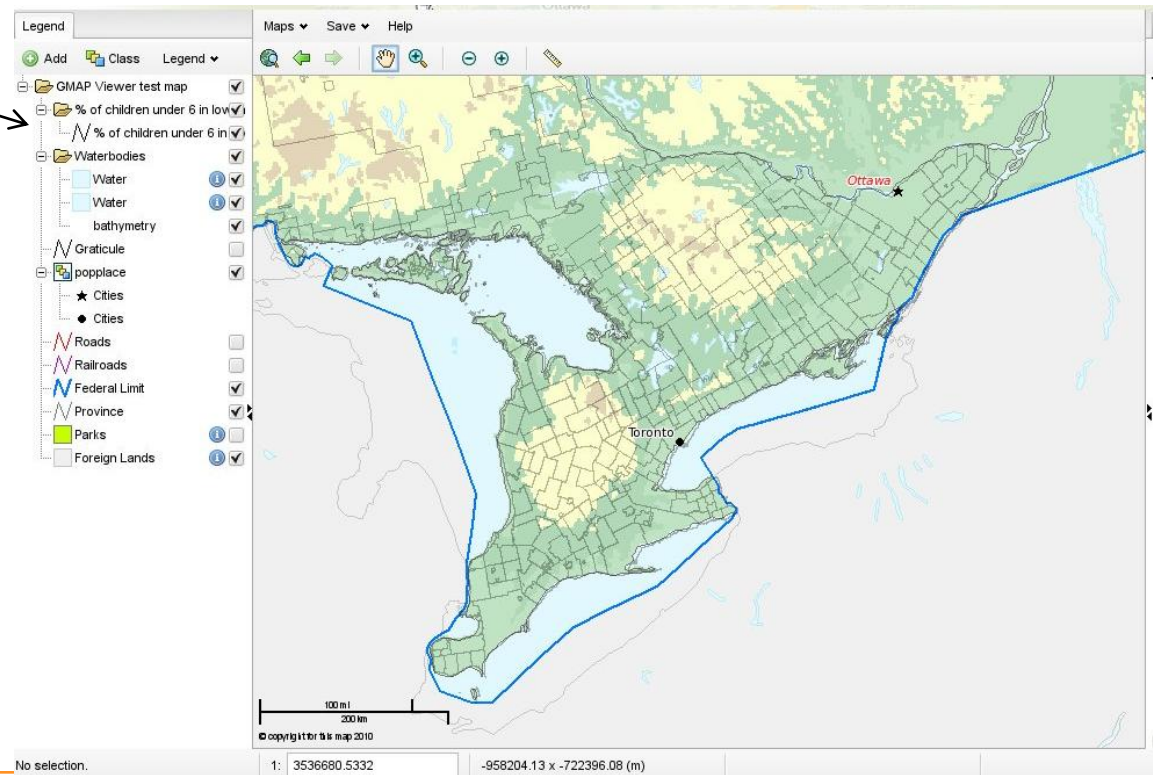
Fig 2: Indicator selection

Selecting the level of geography (cont'd)

-Once the “Create thematic map” button is clicked, the selected geography unit is drawn on a map with grey boundaries. No colour scheme has been applied yet. If this is the level of geography you need, you can proceed to the next stage of the map creation.

-Please see resource note #7 on “Creating a Thematic Map” for details of how to finish your map

New boundary layer



What Have We Learned?

- ✦ The various census geographic units where census data are disseminated
- ✦ The relationship between administrative areas and statistical areas
- ✦ Statistics Canada's Standard Geographic Classification (SGC) system
- ✦ How to select your data by census tract or census sub-division

Any questions or comments?

Please contact me at:

Vivien Deparday

GIS Project Manager

Community Mapping Information System

Email: vdeparday@spcottawa.on.ca

Phone: 613-236-9300 ext: 304

Fax:

Thank You

Sources

Most of the information used in this document was prepared by Richard Lau, GANIS Project Coordinator for the Social Planning Network of Ontario (www.spno.ca).

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