

## Well-Being Indicators in Aotearoa/New Zealand: the 2021 'state of the play'

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### **Abstract:**

Since the turn of the Millenium there have been active developments of social indicator frameworks in New Zealand, alongside related efforts of economic, environmental, and health indicators. The first phase included the Ministry of Social Development's *Social Report* and the – still on-going - *Quality of Life Project* alongside living standards studies and the academic FWWP<sup>2</sup> study drawing on census data. In the second decade a new approach gradually emerged. The Statistics New Zealand (SNZ) General Social Survey provided a firm foundation for developing indicators, international conceptualisation from the OECD and other sources was explicitly drawn on, the Household Economic Survey underwent ongoing enhancement and Treasury embarked on the long-term development of its Living Standards framework. A recent fillip driven by the emerging rhetoric of 'Social Well Being' has been the institutionalising of social indicators in the forthcoming Treasury Wellbeing report, an interest in social cohesion, mobilisation of academic knowledge, consideration of a wider range of inputs (especially on behalf of ethnic communities) and establishment of more active SNZ and other websites and dashboards, which supply useful single-variable vignettes and considerable downloadable source data but little analysis. The New Zealand social indicator system, within the increasingly comprehensive overall indicator system, is beginning to consolidate but needs more considered development.

**Keywords:** New Zealand, Wellbeing Indicators, Social Well-being, Indicator-sets, Economic Indicators, Cultural Indicators, Environmental Indicators Quality of Life, Surveys, Official statistics,

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<sup>2</sup> The Family and Whanau Wellbeing Project was carried out at the University Auckland: see Cotterell & Crothers, 2011.

## 1 Introduction

The recent release (early September) of *Kei te pēhea tātou? A snapshot of New Zealand's wellbeing* <https://www.stats.govt.nz/infographics/kei-te-pehea-tatou-a-snapshot-of-new-zealands-wellbeing> is a 'storefront' pointing to the recently refreshed SNZ indicators framework Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa – Indicators Aotearoa New Zealand (see <https://statisticsnz.shinyapps.io/wellbeingindicators/>.) The snapshot is a somewhat widely scattered infographic (also available in Te Reo) of interesting social facts on NZ, presumably designed as exciting teasers which might pull readers into delving further into the store of indicators. The snapshot and the proclamation of the Treasury LS2021 both are milestones warranting the timing of this stocktake.

In turn, it seems timely to review other indicator frameworks (some mere collections) available or being developed in New Zealand for measuring well-being. The emphasis in this paper is on social well-being, and indeed general well-being, compared to other indicators and only lightly refers to the arrays of economic, environmental and health indicators (although these may well include some socially-relevant indicators). Economic and environmental indicators in large part require different conceptualisations and methodologies. Nevertheless, the various indicator broad domains are increasingly interfacing.

Indicator is a term broadly used, however as used here An indicator is defined as more than just a variable because it is institutionalised (i.e. some organisational and public 'buy in') with a commitment to ongoing measurement which involves some moral loading – and monitoring trends in relation to some normative standard, if only trending in a 'better' direction. Indicators are combined into sets conceptualised in terms of an encompassing conceptual framework (sometimes minimal, seldom more than lightly developed) which posits relationships amongst the various indicators and any mechanisms animating the whole. Underpinnings include the stock of substantive and methodological knowledge, techniques and technology deployed and real-life programme interventions and operations, together with the feedback mechanisms of research using the assembled data which will improve understandings of how the whole system works. A further layer involved the 'eco-system; of sponsors, users etc within which the indicator-sets are set (for a case study of users of societal indicators in the UK see Walker et al (2020). So, in sum, the indicator measures are but the visible layer of the whole indicator-set system.

The ultimate dependent or outcome variables for many indicator-sets is variously 'Quality of life', 'social well-being', 'living standards', 'happiness', 'life purpose' etc. For current purposes these can be treated as (near) synonymous, although there are differences in stress on objective (e.g. living standards) or subjective (e.g. Happiness) aspects. (In the 1980s an often-used term was 'living conditions'.)

Indicators relate to other forms of applied social research, such as programme evaluation in that they allow some evaluation of *outcomes* as opposed merely to *outputs* and can provide, if conditions worsen, a trigger for development of interventions.

The terminological differences do need consideration – see Duncan (2011) - and they may have different rhetoric effects (e.g. Treasury have committed to ‘living standards’ and the ‘well-being’ nomenclature with the change of government was sufficient for the Social Investment Agency to rechristen itself as the Social well-being Agency. Other rhetoric in social indicator discussion has been ‘progress’, ‘higher’ standard of living etc., with assumptions of ‘improvement’. However, these topics are not further pursued here.

There are several uses to which indicator-sets can be put, which in turn may generate a classification of types of indicator-set:

- The major use is in monitoring, in terms of direction and sometimes level – both at more focused and more general levels (which e.g. might cover unintended consequence so achieving certain goals and spill-over effects);
- More operational and providing a platform for their use in insights analysis for policy formation and evaluation and management (e.g. social investment)
- The use of assembled data for developing and assessing descriptive and explanatory models.

Each in this range of uses is not mutually exclusive and in fact they inter-relate. Only ‘public-facing’ as opposed to various internal-to-government operational frameworks are included. The latter are less visible and also more extensive. But the lines between are blurred.

The fit between indicator-sets and programme delivery vehicles is unclear, and often fraught. Presaging a strong link PM Jacinda Ardern foretold the 2019 Wellbeing Budget.

“For Budget 2019 we will be using the Living Standards Framework developed by the Treasury to create New Zealand’s first Well-Being Budget. We will look beyond the normal GDP measures to measures which show how what we do improves the health and well-being of our people, our environment, and our communities. Improving intergenerational well-being will drive our priorities and how we measure our success”.

But in practise several key programmes that clearly were relevant to the LSD framework were selected on political grounds, rather than being ‘deduced’ from the framework.

Grimes (2021) argues that political priorities still hold although the better availability of data in indicator-sets (after all the data itself was already available) allows better policy rationales to be formulated, and maybe there’s a potential yet to be realised.

“One positive aspect of the LSF approach was the release of detailed distributional information relating to the wellbeing domains according to population groups based on ethnicity, gender, age, region, area deprivation, family type, and employment status (McLeod, 2018). This information – while not explicitly used in the budget process – has the potential to assist prioritisation of government funding. For instance, the evidence showed that older people were doing better on most domains than were younger people, especially those with dependent children. This information could be used to redirect government funding from programmes designed to boost the wellbeing of older people to programmes designed to assist (especially low income)

parents with children.

The fact that budgeted government funding continues to increase for the over 65-year-old age group (for example, a universal 'Winter Energy Payment' was introduced starting in 2018 to pay an extra cash grant in winter to all people over 65 (plus other beneficiaries) without regard to the person's income) despite this information highlights another challenge of wellbeing dashboard frameworks: the information that is released may not dovetail with political priorities in terms of voter support. Governments can pick and choose amongst a myriad of indicators to support pet projects and ignore others that do not support their priorities for vote retention."

The ultimate goal may be for governments to be able to make decisions driven in large part by modelling of indicator-set information, especially where monetised long-term information about costs and benefits (including their social distributions) is available.

This stocktake may be useful in the nudging the thinking of the various arms of the Public Service involved in producing social indicators into more 'whole of government' thinking. Attendant academic and other researchers may be drawn into the conceptual and methodological issues involved and also utilise the assemblage of data for their research purposes. In particular this broad account is to draw the attention of academics and their students and the more intellectual portions of the general public. The government has a broad duty to provide information on its activities and their effects on the broader society, environment and indeed the wider world. In turn, those with relevant expertise and both the general public and specific interest groups should be involved in the development of indicator sets and to attest to their validity.

The international literature on social indicators and relevant methodological issues is considerable and is only drawn lightly on here. International standards (especially OECD) are more closely drawn on to share conceptual thinking and allow comparisons although this is also counteracted by indigenous developments.

But first, an historical update since the 2011 report. Subsequent sections cover:

- Stats NZ Well-being framework: Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa
- Living Conditions and poverty monitoring
- Treasury Living Standards framework
- A widespread array of other indicator-sets, with finally
- Conclusions and indications of a development agenda.

## 2 On From 2011

In 2011, in the last issue of the MSD *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand* Crothers and Cotterell reviewed the state of social indicators in NZ at that time, with particular attention to the contribution which might be made by an academic programme the FWWP<sup>3</sup>. That programme was extended with a cohort study updated with 2013 census (not a longitudinal) trend study covering 1981-2006 period and also updated through 2013 with census data for that year (Crothers & von Randow, 2014). But despite the value of this mobilisation of census data for indicator work there are no plans for further updating since the funding (required to extract special tables from the census database) for the FWWP project has been exhausted.

In other respects, the Aotearoa/New Zealand social indicator space has extensively changed. The Quality of Life (QOL) project has continued with 2-yearly surveys which have carefully added new component but enhanced continuity by repeating most questions and keeping high data quality standards. Unfortunately apart from a couple of rounds (2008) when MSD paid for New Zealand wide coverage it is confined to 7 or 8 major cities, and has negligible small town or rural coverage. But it has shed its compilation of official statistics component, to retain only the survey data.

Adjacent to the MSD interest in social wellbeing was a stream of several surveys concerned to measure the economic well-being of older New Zealanders, Maori and New Zealanders more generally (2000, 2004, 2008). The living standards data then became based on the Household Economic Survey (HES). This in turn was followed by the 2 yearly Stats NZ General Social Survey (GSS) beginning 2008 which provided a broader foundation of social measurement. Indeed, GSS data was taken by Crothers and Yeung (2017) to develop a description of the 'state of society' in New Zealand prior to the election in that year.

The other central component of the 2000s NZ indicator framework was MSD's *Social Report*. At a political level (Minister Bennett) the report was discontinued although there was an important one-shot update in 2016. Although this series was not continued it was carefully developed conceptually and methodologically and forms a sound foundation for later work and also supplementary exercises. Some of the validation was carried out by Alison Gray (2002) who explored issues underlying measurement models with a range of interested groups.) Several subsequent data-analyses of relevant NZ data have also confirmed the

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<sup>3</sup> Although there has been a small programme on social indicators housed in Statistics NZ in the early 1980s which carried out a dedicated survey, the current programmes of indicators began at the turn of the Millennium, particularly as the result of trip to the UK by Minister of social Welfare (and sociologist) Steve Maharey. In the mid-1990s, there was a burst on social capital and then time budget diaries.

Time use surveys were another earlier arm to this. Some authors argue that time use data is useful for revealing well-being, although links have not been explicitly developed (Callister, 2004). After an early 1974 survey, Stats NZ has conducted time use surveys in 1998/9 and 2009/10 although a planned 2019/20 follow up was not funded.

general thrust of indicator development and its components. Moreover, it generated several other social indicator frameworks, some since abandoned.

There was also some interest from some regional councils, notably: Auckland, Waikato, Wellington and Canterbury (and previously CERA).

Currently, the main attention to social indicators is retained by Waikato Regional and Christchurch City Councils. The larger cities retain the QOL survey study begun in 2000. The Local Government Act requires all local government organisations to set community outcomes

The National-led government (2009-2017) with its interest in ‘social investment’ (driven in part by the interests of Deputy PM, later PM, Bill English) focused on the risks associated with particular individuals and the actuarial outcomes of interventions and their effects in life-time outcomes and government costs. The advent of the Labour-led government in 2017 with its focus on ‘wellbeing’ (and ‘investing in social well-being’) and in particular a ‘wellbeing budget’ was an explicit turn away to a more collective level analysis and a more participatory basis for developing well-being frameworks. Ranges of possible indicators were explored in various participatory exercises, across many localities. Perhaps the apex of these convolutions was a widely-attended day-long programme held by SNZ in early December 2018 which brain-stormed a wide range of possible indicators. The array of indicators suggested at this gathering was then made available on the SNZ website although many of the boxes were devoid of extant measures – see also Stats NZ, 2019.

The social indicator enthusiasm was carried on through a 2018 conference (organised by Treasury and VUW) held in Wellington: see Weijers & Morrison (2018). International developments in indicators have increasingly become relevant. This was particularly facilitated by economist Conal Smith’s posting in OECD. International agencies actively developing indicator frameworks include UN, OECD and New Zealand’s indicator development is strongly shaped by these. Arthur Grimes was appointed to a Professorship in Well-Being at VUW. A major impetus for further indicator work came from Treasury which had long (since 2011 at least) been developing a Living Standards framework to provide a wider framework for guiding its advice than the more usual cost benefit analysis.

### **3 Statistics NZ Wellbeing framework:**

In providing the most general framework of the various alternatives SNZ might be adjudged to be the centre of the system. It also the major provider of the statistics and has the virtue of particular independence accorded the Government Statistician<sup>4</sup>. For documentation of the development process see <https://www.stats.govt.nz/indicators-and-snapshots/indicators-aotearoa-new-zealand-nga-tutohu-aotearoa/>.

The current framework is presented with almost no introduction, let alone commentary on results<sup>5</sup>. Data is organised through ‘Dashboards’ within which each indicator is presented in

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<sup>4</sup> Indeed, my personal view is that the CEO of SNZ might be termed the People’s Statistician to reinforce the point of this independence. Oddly in some comments there has been reference to the ‘chief statistician’.

<sup>5</sup> Earlier Stats NZ indicator-sets on ‘progress indicators’ and ‘NZ Indicators’ are no longer being updated.

charts and tables but usually also available to download CSV files provide all the data for each topic-area, so that further analyses can be facilitated<sup>6</sup>. One major source of data is the GSS and where possible indicators are provided not only for short-term trends but also as broken down by age, sex, ethnicity and region. (Although a measure of social class such as income or deprivation area of residence would have been a good addition.) Brief technical descriptions of the construction of indicators and their source are usually provided.

The indicators are encompassed within a framework that cross-cuts three dimensions with 5 topics (further divided into some areas plus context variables) requiring more than 100 indicators to measure.

These measures cover three dimensions:

- current wellbeing
- future wellbeing (what we are leaving behind for future generations)
- the impact New Zealand is having on the rest of the world (international impacts).

The well-beings whose progress is monitored involve social, cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing topics. (There is some debate about whether ‘cultural indicator’ might be added to this.) “The indicators support the government’s wellbeing vision to provide a more holistic view of wellbeing and sustainable development than a purely economic measure does”. The *Conference of European Statisticians (CES)* measuring system is an international guideline for measuring wellbeing and sustainability and was the basis for the development of Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa – Indicators Aotearoa New Zealand.

In addition to providing its own indicators a very useful feature of the StatsNZ indicators site is that it provides tables show how their framework aligns with –

- The Treasury Living Standards Framework (see below)
- He Arotahi Tatauranga
- the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

He Arotahi Tatauranga evolved from work begun in 1995 (developed in 2002 and extensively revised in 2014) by the Māori Statistics Forum to develop a Māori statistical framework focused on the collective aspirations of Māori wellbeing and development. He Arotahi Tatauranga means a focus on pathways to the future through statistics, with many entry points and pathways within the tool. Thus, indicators with a common theme can be considered while acknowledging the holistic and interconnected nature of wellbeing that aligns with a Māori way of looking at the world. The dimensions or themes are

- te ao Māori
- human resource potential
- empowerment and enablement
- economic self-determination
- social capability

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<sup>6</sup> Stats NZ has provided a wellbeing time series explorer which allows people the comparison selected wellbeing data from the 2014, 2016, and 2018 general social surveys (GSS) and can be used to produce data tables and graphs to show GSS results for different demographic groups in New Zealand, as well as changes in wellbeing over time. <https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/new-tool-for-exploring-wellbeing-data>

- environmental sustainability.

As indicated above the framework is organised in terms of three dimensions. *Current outcomes* seems straightforward, whereas *Future wellbeing (wellbeing 'later')* involves on the resources the current generations will be leaving for future generations, including How current choices affect the future population of New Zealand: wellbeing 'later' concerns the resources that future generations need in order to achieve at least the same level of wellbeing as that of the current generation. *International impacts (wellbeing 'elsewhere')* considers how New Zealanders can impact on the wellbeing of other countries.

The super-topics of environment, economic social and cultural can be taken as fairly straightforward although there are always boundary issues. Similarly the 'domains' (each covering a set of indicators) are fairly straightforward although again there are several boundary issues - whether some areas deserve their own domains and then which domain is the best home for particular indicators. (Housing is one interstitial area which impinges on economic, environmental and social issues and might be considered to deserve its own domain status.

In addition, contextual indicators coving demographic and economic circumstances are included to assist with interpreting the indicators since these affect the wellbeing outcomes being measured.

The table below summarises the range of Statistics NZ indicators. (A listing of intended indicators is provided at <https://www.stats.govt.nz/reports/indicators-aotearoa-new-zealand-nga-tutohu-aotearoa-key-findings-from-consultation-and-engagement>).

<https://www.stats.govt.nz/indicators-and-snapshots/indicators-aotearoa-new-zealand-nga-tutohu-aotearoa/>

Overview of NZ Indicators (Source, <https://statisticsnz.shinyapps.io/wellbeingindicators/>)

<i>Current</i>	<i>No. of indicators</i>	<i>Indicators with 'no data'</i>	<i>Future</i>	<i>No. of indicators</i>	<i>Indicators with 'no data'</i>	<i>International</i>	<i>No. of indicators</i>	<i>Indicators with 'no data'</i>
<b>Environment</b>								
Air quality	1							
Cities and settlements	7	4				Climate	1	1
Ecosystems	1	1						
Land	1	1						
			Natural capital	23	14		1	
Waste	2	2					1	
Water and sanitation	2							
<b>Economic</b>								



Economic standard of living	10	1					2	1
			Financial and physical	7	2		2	
<b>Social</b>								
Governance	5	1						
Health	8	2						
			Human Capital	3			1	1
Knowledge and skills	5	2						
Leisure	2	2						
Safety	6	1						
			Social capital	4				
Social connections	3	1						
Subjective wellbeing	7	3						
Work	9							
<b>Culture</b>								
Culture	3	1						
Identity	2	1						

#### 4 Standard of Living Trends Monitoring

Some analyses are concerned with monitoring ongoing trends – without particular reference to an overarching indicator-set. In addition to its SI framework, Stats NZ produces statistics which feed-into ongoing monitoring work on the economic well-being of New Zealanders, including children, from the Household Economic Survey (HES). Importantly, The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) also reports on this in their annual Household Incomes Report and the associated report using non-income measures (Perry, various years). The income, wealth, consumption, and material wellbeing framework discussed in the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) report (2018a) recognises that factors other than income can also affect material well-being. Using non-income measures provides a direct measure of the actual day-to-day living conditions of households – the basics of food, clothing, accommodation, heating, and transport, and their ability to afford other items that most people would regard as essential.

Stats NZ has collected non-income measures through the material well-being questionnaire (MWQ) in the household economic survey (HES) since the 2006/07 survey. MWQ asks about ownership of items, or doing certain activities, and the extent that people economise. It also asks respondents how they rate their life satisfaction and whether income meets everyday needs. In the 2015/16 HES collection year, and every three years following this, the questionnaire also includes specific child-focused material hardship questions, such as the ability to pay for school trips.

Alongside this some work (from Council of Trade Unions and poverty researchers) on minimum income needed (St John and So, 2017) and similar topics.

As a key plank of the Labour-led government child poverty reduction is guided by its own legislation (2018) which requires the government to set three-year and ten-year targets on

four primary measures, and the Government Statistician to report annually on 10 measures of child poverty, in particular

- Material hardship
- Severe material hardship
- Low income and hardship: less than 60% median equivalised disposable household income after housing costs (AHC) for the financial year and material hardship”

The HES provides the relevant data, having been enhanced to correct for a relatively small sample size and a bias for against low-income or high-deprivation households - through an increase in sample size and better targeting of low-income or high-deprivation households.

In methodological work multiple material hardship indexes, such as MWI, EU-13, and DEP-17 were explored and it was decided to use DEP-17 as measure for material hardship. (DEP-17 is a well-established deprivation index developed by the Ministry for Social Development<sup>7</sup>. Work by Arthur Grimes with Tom Carver (2019) on the relationship of SWB with each of ELSI (from 2012 GSS) and income shows that (2019) ELSI has a closer relationship with SWB than does income.

In 2018 Parliament passed the Child Poverty Reduction Act, which requires governments to report on and set targets to reduce rates of income poverty, and material hardship. The Act deploys several different measures of income poverty and hardship with material hardship broadly meaning that children are going without at least six essential things like warm clothes or nutritious food. No specific child index has been created, although it is arguable that it is important to measure hardship through items the child themselves lack or miss out on. For example, certain families may ‘protect’ children from hardship by ensuring they have essentials while doing without items themselves. The sample size of the HES was enhanced to enable better robustness for smaller population. The first major report has been issued - Perry (2021).

Again, the government-provided frameworks are supplemented and critiqued by other researchers, especially the CPAG (e.g. McAllister et al., 2021) and the Otago University Child Poverty Monitor (Duncanson et al, 2020). From 2013 the Monitor has tracked changes in how many children in Aotearoa live in poverty, using a range of measures, and how poverty impacts different aspects of their lives through health, education, housing and family circumstances.

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<sup>7</sup> The material wellbeing index (MWI) is a revised version of the prototype economic living standards index (ELSI) developed by MSD. From 2012/13 onwards the HES has included questions on material well-being, which made it possible to calculate the 24-item MWI. The MWI covers the whole spectrum of material well-being, ensuring some discrimination at the high end of material well-being as well as at the low end. However, as a NZ index MWI does not enable international comparison. MWI includes questions around ‘ownership or participation’, ‘economising’, ‘housing problems’, ‘freedoms/restrictions’, and ‘financial strain’. The DEP-17 index focuses on the low living standards end of the spectrum and includes questions about ‘enforced lack of essentials’, ‘economised, cut back, or delayed purchases a lot’, ‘in arrears more than once in last 12 months’, and ‘financial stress and vulnerability’. The respondent is a caregiving adult from the household.

There are other research programmes which are in train which are concerned with assessment and monitoring together with developing research which can draw on a world-class suite of data-sets including not just the census and longitudinal census but also the IDI. The Whanau and Family wellbeing research programme was developed by SUPERU and then transferred to MSD. It is based on sophisticated analyses particularly of GSS data and has developed useful frameworks for understanding the data (see reports in the SWBA hub).

## **6 Treasury Living Standards framework**

In considerable contrast to the SNZ treasury indicator work is attended by a massive textual support, although the relevant material is somewhat unclear (since there is no landing-page) distributed between a series of discussion papers and a dashboard of data.

The work on living standards (from 2011) was a drive to provide frameworks which might complement and offset the economic focus of Treasury and add extra dimensions to its policy advice. But it also was relevant to the 2019 'Welfare Budget' of Deputy PM Robertson. Analysis of the indicators from the Dashboard was also used, alongside other wellbeing evidence, to inform development of the five priorities of the Government's *2019 Wellbeing Budget*. And it is central to the new four-yearly Wellbeing Report that the Treasury will be required to produce under amendments to the Public Finance Act 1989. The amendments to this Act require:

- every Government to, in each annual Budget Policy Statement:

- a. State its wellbeing objectives; and,
- b. Explain how its wellbeing objectives relate to the range of factors that it considers matters to the long-term wellbeing of New Zealand, including (but not necessarily limited to) consideration of social, economic, environmental, and cultural factors; and,
- c. Explain how those objectives will guide its Budget.

and In each Fiscal Strategy Report:

- d. Explain how its wellbeing objectives have guided its Budget; and,
- e. Where those wellbeing objectives have changed, since the most recent Budget Policy Statement, indicate any differences.

The Treasury is required to report periodically on wellbeing, at least every four years, in addition to the existing two strategic products LTFS (Long-term Fiscal Position Statement , the Investment Statement and covering the following matters:

- a. The state of wellbeing in New Zealand, using an appropriate set of wellbeing indicators which are selected by the Treasury; and,
- b. Discuss how those wellbeing indicators have changed over time; and,
- c. Comment on the sustainability of, and risks to, the state of wellbeing in New Zealand based on the wellbeing indicators selected by the Treasury.

The two are loosely related in that the former (Well-being report) might draw on the latter (Well-being indicators), but annual reporting was deemed unnecessary while the 4 yearly cycle would better fit longer term trends. The content and approach are left flexible with the intention that the Treasury will select an appropriate set of wellbeing indicators using its best professional judgment to provide a comprehensive, balanced and accessible view of

wellbeing, which is consistent with the available theory, evidence or data (in New Zealand and overseas).

The slew of Treasury discussion papers is particularly concentrated on a publication surge in early 2018: these include -

- McLeod, Keith (2018) Our people - Multidimensional wellbeing in New Zealand (AP 18/04) <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/ap/ap-18-04>. The Treasury
- Margreet Frieling (2018) The Start of a Conversation on the Value of New Zealand's Social Capital. Living Standards Series: Discussion Paper 18/04
- Au, Joey; van Zyl, Sonette (2018) The Start of a Conversation on the Value of New Zealand's Natural Capital (DP 18/03).
- Emily O'Connell; Tia Greenaway; Trevor Moeke; Sacha McMeeking (2018) He Ara Waiora/A Pathway Towards Wellbeing (DP 18/11). The Treasury
- Sue Yong (2018) An Asian Perspective and the New Zealand Treasury Living Standards Framework (DP 18/10). Auckland University of Technology
- Thomsen, Su'a; Jez Tavita & Zsontell Levi-Teu (2018) A Pacific Perspective on the Living Standards Framework and Wellbeing (DP 18/09).
- The Treasury (2018) Note on Future Work on the Role of Culture in the Treasury's Living Standards Framework (DP 18/08). The Treasury
- Margreet Frieling; Ken Warren (2018) Resilience and Future Wellbeing (DP 18/05). The Treasury
- Judd Ormsby (2018) The Relationship between the Sustainable Development Goals and the Living Standards Framework (DP 18/06). The Treasury
- John Janssen (2018) The Start of a Conversation on the Value of New Zealand's Financial/Physical Capital (DP 18/07). The Treasury
- Anita King (2018) Wellbeing Frameworks for the Treasury (DP 18/01).
- Gulnara Huseynli & Nairn MacGibbon (2018) The Start of a Conversation on the Value of New Zealand's Human Capital (DP 18/02).
- Suzy Morrissey (2018) The Start of a Conversation on the Value of New Zealand's Human Capital (DP 18/02)
- Smith, Conal (2018) Treasury Living Standards Dashboard: Monitoring Intergenerational Wellbeing Treasury Living Standards Dashboard: Monitoring Intergenerational Wellbeing.
- Paul Dalziel; Caroline Saunders & Catherine Savage (2019) Culture, Wellbeing and the Living Standards Framework: A Perspective (DP 19/02). Ministry for Culture and Heritage & The Treasury
- Te Puni Kōkiri (2019) An Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework (DP 19/01). Ministry of Māori Development—Te Puni Kōkiri and Treasury
- Cook, Diana; Phil Evans; Hana Ihaka-McLeod; Kara Nepe-Apatu; Jez Tavita & Tim Hughes (2020) He Kāhui Waiora: Living Standards Framework and He Ara Waiora COVID-19: Impacts on Wellbeing (DP 20/02). The Treasury
- Tim Hughes (2020) Justice, Wellbeing and Social Capital (DP 20/01). Ministry of Justice & The Treasury

The central methodological paper (Smith 2018) provides a design for the system. The Living Standards Framework (LSF) includes:

- the 12 Domains of current wellbeing outcomes (see listing on dashboard diagram below);
- the four Capital stocks that support wellbeing now and into the future; and
- risk and resilience.

In addition, there are various ways in which the relationship amongst domains might be constructed. The Treasury design is ‘flat’ with each being of similar importance but arguably quality of life and related measures might be seen as residing at an overarching level. There is also interest in distributions – across people, places and generations – of matters across all three of these dimensions.

Future wellbeing (wellbeing ‘later’) is concerned to monitor future potential progress: the resources being left for future generations and how current choices might affect the future population., and in particular the resources future generations would need in order to achieve at least the same level of wellbeing as that of the current generation.

The international impacts (wellbeing ‘elsewhere’) dimension considers how describes the way in which New Zealand generates its wellbeing ‘here and now’ New Zealanders’ actions can impact on the wellbeing of other countries.

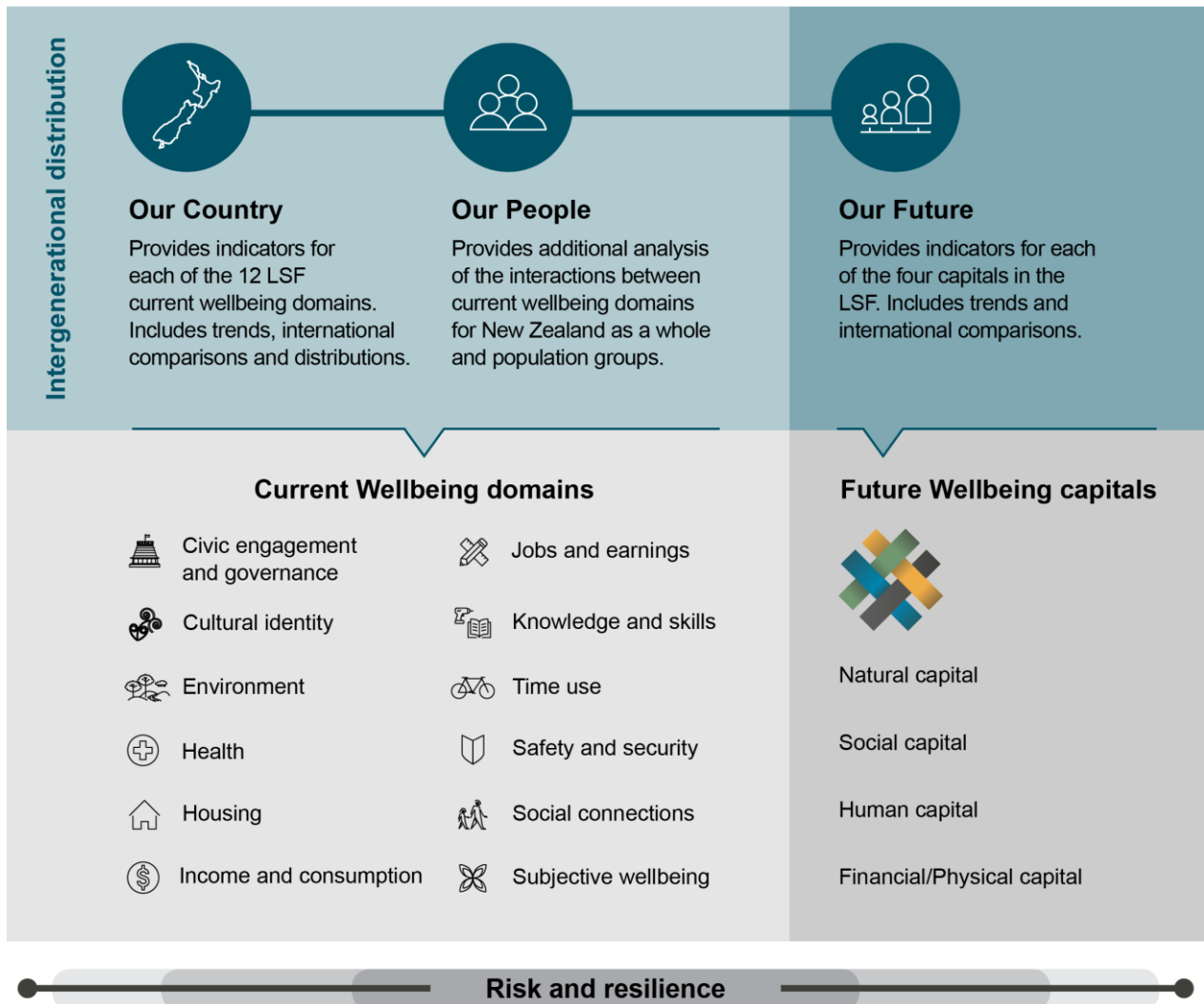
Economic wellbeing refers to the economic resources (material wealth and income) that individuals, households, families, and whānau have available to meet their own needs and contribute to wider economic growth, together with the control over these resources and conditions individuals and groups have and the distribution of economic wellbeing. This includes the financial resources people have access to, including individual and household income and debt, consumption, and savings. Economic wellbeing acknowledges the contribution of both paid and unpaid activities.



The Dashboard holds the data relevant to this includes a range of outcome indicators:

- ‘Our country’ provides data for each of the LSF Wellbeing Domains. This includes distributional data and international comparisons, where available.
- ‘Our future’ provides data about stocks of each of the four Capitals in the LSF. This includes international comparisons, where available.
- ‘Our people’ provides supplementary analysis of how wellbeing varies across population groups and the relationships between the LSF Wellbeing Domains.

### How the Dashboard links to the Living Standards Framework



LSF2011 and LSF2018, following the OECD, combined some of these capitals and omitted others, resulting in a four-capitals model: see diagram. Since LSF2011, the capitals have been described as the ‘stocks’ and the wellbeing domains as the ‘flows’ that those capitals facilitate. In LSF2018 a further distinction was introduced between the wellbeing domains as representing current wellbeing and the capitals representing future wellbeing. LSF2021 is under active development (see Treasury, 2021- forthcoming) involving several extra steps, some to accommodate emerging policy attention to ethnic/cultural issues and

especially Maori and Pacifica and to children's wellbeing which re seen as the policy areas most in need of attention. The new LSF has three levels and a series of analytical prompts that apply to all three levels.

Level one captures those resources and aspects identified as important for wellbeing as individuals, families, whānau and communities. In LSF2018 wellbeing was implicitly conceived of as about individual people whereas In LSF2021 the concept of collective wellbeing has been introduced to reflect the importance of families, whānau and community. The definitions of the 12 wellbeing domains have been revised to better reflect child wellbeing and the wider role culture plays beyond identity: For example, the 'social connections' domain has been redefined as 'family and friends' to capture the central importance of attachment to the wellbeing of children.

Level 2: Our Institutions and Governance is a new level in the LSF capturing the role of political, economic, social and cultural institutions in facilitating the wellbeing of individuals and collectives, as well as safeguarding and building of national wealth. This layer captures the role that, for example, schools have in the wellbeing of children, and marae have in the wellbeing of tangata whenua.

Level 3: The Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand captures wealth as a country, including aspects of wealth not fully captured in the system of national accounts, such as human capability and the natural environment. Culture is added as underpinning all aspects of our wealth.

In LSF2021 'capital' is now only used for financial and physical capital, which together with human capability, social cohesion and the natural environment are collectively referred to as the 'Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand'. This change in language reflects that things like the natural environment, our health and skills are valued for more than their role as factors of production, particularly in certain cultural traditions. Some aspects of the wealth and wellbeing domains have also been refined to clarify their overlapping relationship with one another. For example, the wellbeing domains of health, knowledge and skills, and cultural capability and belonging each capture a part of human capability, and as wellbeing domains capture the private benefit these personal characteristics generate for the individuals and communities that are healthy, skilful, and culturally capable. At the third level of the framework, the human capability aspect of NZ's wealth captures the public benefit that is created for all of us here in Aotearoa New Zealand by having a healthy, skilful and culturally capable population in aggregate.

The 'Analytical prompts' of productivity and sustainability, alongside distribution and resilience, have been added as lenses with which to analyse wealth and wellbeing. These are designed to provide criteria to indicate whether observed patterns at different levels of the framework are concerning or not.

In sum, adapting LSF to more recently stressed concerns and extending its components has pushed the LSF well beyond the platform set by the Social Report, and doubtless the changes made will need to reverberate around the whole indicator system.



## 7 Other Frameworks

Beyond the heavy-lifting indicator providers of Stats NZ and Treasury there is a sprawl of other indicator-systems, each grouping of which will be briefly covered:

- Economic, Environmental & Cultural indicators (coeval with SWB indicators at a general level),
- Regional and local
- Population-group orientated Ministries
- Welfare service agencies
- Vulnerability, resilience and risk indicators
- Inter-generational indicators
- Unorthodox, Academic, NGO and commercial indicator providers.

### 7.1 Economic Indicators



New Zealand's economy is measured through an elaborated suite of economic indicators drawing on a wide array of data collections, many of which are tied to the synthetic National Accounts system which provides an overarching conceptual apparatus. There are cross-overs but social indicators are mainly concerned with social realities beyond the economic. This is a very large topic but a short introduction to NZ's main economic indicators is provided by

The goals of economic indicators are to:

- monitor progress towards economic goals and to benchmark a nation's performance against that of other nations.
- allow the tracking and comparison of performance both in terms of high-level outcomes (such as income and wealth levels) and the underlying factors that may influence these outcomes over time (such as levels of innovation and skills);
- help to evaluate the effectiveness of economic policy by tracking the direction or pace of change over time.

The paper covers:

- \* Economic growth – National Accounts and Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
- \* Employment and unemployment – Quarterly Employment Survey (QES),
- \* Labour Cost - Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS)
- \* Inflation – Consumer Price Index (CPI)
- \* External – Balance of Payments (BOP)
- \* Finance and International – Stock market and exchange rate.

### *7.2 Environment Indicators (see MFE, 2021)*

While there are some linkage environmental indicators are a separate indicator-set. New and updated indicators for *New Zealand's Environmental Reporting Series: Our land 2021*, jointly developed by Stats NZ and the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) were published during April 2021 framed within a "pressures, states, and impacts" conceptualisation. . These included 13 indicators: one new, and 12 updated and expanded<sup>8</sup>. The Environmental Reporting Act 2015 (the Act) requires Stats NZ and MfE to publish regular reports about the state of the environment and their target has been to publish every six months a report on one of the five domains– air, marine, fresh water, atmosphere and climate, and land – together with a synthesis report on the state of New Zealand's environment as a whole every three years. Besides maps and data-sets the *Our land 2021* report also draws on scientific literature – published, peer-reviewed articles, and technical reports.

The ERS is supplemented by Environmental health indicators provided by The Environmental Health Intelligence New Zealand (EHINZ) at Massey University, Wellington indicators <https://www.ehinz.ac.nz/indicators/> which describe links (where possible causal)

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<sup>8</sup> all potential statistics were peer-reviewed and assessed against the six criteria from the data quality framework (as outlined in [Principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 statistics](#)): relevance, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, coherence and consistency, and interpretability

between the environment and health. The environmental health indicators cover a wide range of topics arranged in 12 domains<sup>9</sup>:

### 7.3 Cultural Indicators

Ministry of Culture and Heritage has a 'legacy' indicator system – see key indicators <https://mch.govt.nz/statement-intent-2011-2014/key-indicators>. There are three sector outcome areas:

- Outcome 1: Cultural activity flourishes in New Zealand (Create)
- Outcome 2: Our culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations (Preserve)
- Outcome 3: Engagement in cultural activities is increasing (Engage).

This area is ripe for further development (a Treasury paper in particular focuses on this) and is treated in part in a later section on Maori-relevant indicators.

### 7.4 Social Cohesion indicators

A recent addition to indicator frameworks concerns social cohesion (together with associated concepts such as social capital, inclusion/exclusion etc). <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/information-releases/cabinet-papers/2021/approach-to-improving-social-cohesion-and-public-engagement.html>. This concern has developed in considerable part because of apparent threats to social cohesion through the increasing social complexity produced by immigrant flows from people of different ethnicities than those currently in New Zealand. Some indicators for measuring social cohesion was laid out by Spoonley et al. (2005) and revisited more recently (Peace & Spoonley, 2019). Spoonley et al (2005) developed a framework particularly focused on immigrants and their social inclusion. More recently with the concerns raised over terrorism and its effects, there has been a renewed concern with social cohesion on a broader scale: see MSD (2021) in which it is indicated that beyond incorporating treaty issues the “..work on social cohesion goes beyond ethnicity and faith, and includes a broad definition of diversity including ages, cultures, beliefs, disabilities, family composition, where people live, gender identities, and sexual orientation” and the approach seeks practical means of intervention to build social cohesion. MSD (2021) has also reviewed this areas of literature and is actively engaged in developing measures.

### 7.5 Local Government: Community Well-beings

Concerns for enhancing well-being has also been scaled downwards. Some examples of local authority-level indicator-sets were mentioned earlier. The Local Government (Community Well-being) Amendment Act (2019) extended the purposes of local government to promote

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Air quality, Animals & human health, Alcohol-related harm, Border health, Children, Climate change, Hazardous substances, Indoor environment, Population vulnerability, Transport, UV exposure, Water.

community well-being: improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of our communities. Local Authority Professionals Aotearoa <https://taituara.org.nz/community-well-beings> has developed The Taituarā Community Well-being Service to support local councils with this task.

### 7.6 Ageing Indicators

The Office for Senior Citizens developed a regular (over 5 years) programme of monitoring the wellbeing and quality of life of older New Zealanders: <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/monitoring/positive-ageing-indicators/index.htm>. Guided by the Positive Ageing Strategy, the report for the first iteration was organised around 10 outcomes domains capturing aspects of wellbeing and quality of life for older people<sup>10</sup>. In the current 'Covid' period several updates (latest July 2021) were issued of the key indicators being used to track the impact of COVID-19 on older people. The Office for Seniors has now moved its focus to reporting on the initial Better Later Life indicators as outlined in the *Better Later Life – He Oranga Kaumātua 2019 to 2034 strategy*<sup>11</sup>:

### 7.7 Children and Young People:

There has long been separate attention to well-being indicators for children and young people, and several agencies involved – Office of Children's Commissioner, MSD, Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Youth Development and Prime Ministers and Cabinet department's children's units. In 2008 the second Children and Young People: Indicators of Wellbeing was issued. The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy <https://childyouthwellbeing.govt.nz/measuring-success/indicators> has an array of progress indicators. The indicators were developed from expert review together with feedback from the public consultation. The research literature shows that people's impressions of their circumstances are usually most predictive of their future wellbeing, and that thus children and young people are often the best experts about their own wellbeing and that what is measured needs to reflect children and young people's experience of the things they said were important to their wellbeing such as asking them directly about things like feeling safe and the wellbeing of their family and whānau. A set of 36 indicators was developed<sup>12</sup> around 6 outcomes:

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<sup>10</sup> Sections include - Population overview; Health; Care and support; Education; Economic security; Safety; Civil and political rights; Justice; Cultural identity; Social connectedness; Environment.

<sup>11</sup> Achieving financial security and economic participation; Promoting healthy ageing and improving access to services; Creating diverse housing choices and options; Enhancing opportunities for social connection; Making environments accessible.

<sup>12</sup> "The criteria included a preference for indicators that are strengths-based, relevant and easily understood, applicable to all children and young people, and aligned with the other government indicators and measurement frameworks to enable consistency and coherency across Government". See <https://childyouthwellbeing.govt.nz/measuring-success/indicators>. The outcomes are: Loved, safe and nurtured; Have what they need; Happy and healthy; Learning and developing; Accepted, respected and connected; Involved and empowered.

A wide array of data sources have been tapped to provide the measure - comprising government databases long term and newly established surveys – in particular The Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey – WhatAboutMe?<sup>13</sup>

Child Poverty monitoring is an overlapping programme referred to above. There are also Youth Justice Indicators which measure volumes and patterns across key stages in the youth justice system - entry into the system, how young people progress through it, and reoffending. The resulting infographics summarise data by ethnic group, offence type, gender and Police District.

### 7.8 Gender

Gender (now including categories beyond the binary) is common breakdown, but in addition the Ministry for Women issued a report on *Women's Indicators for Change* [https://women.govt.nz/sites/public\\_files/indicators-for-change.pdf](https://women.govt.nz/sites/public_files/indicators-for-change.pdf). Many of the indicators are common but one area provided in more detail is work/life balance.

### 7.9 Health system indicators

There is a wide range of data on health conditions which from time to time have been ordered into indicator-sets. The 2021 changes to Health organisation have been complemented by a new proposed indicator-set. The indicators framework builds on six Government priorities and 12 high-level indicators. The new framework replaces health targets, the previous national performance measures for our health services.

The Health System Indicators framework has been developed by the Ministry of Health and the Health Quality & Safety Commission. It builds on the System Level measures programme that was co-designed with health and disability sector. The Commission has developed an online dashboard for reporting improvements on the Health System Indicators. This new framework identifies 12 national high level performance indicators while taking into account that every community has different health challenges. The emphasis is on continuous improvement at a local level to lift overall health system performance, rather than on achieving nationally-set performance targets<sup>14</sup>.

### 7.10 Social Services Sector Indicators

Each of the various State welfare services has indicators available on their data web-pages, sometimes in support of particular strategies, but not organised into a more formal system.

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<sup>13</sup> "This is expected to be the largest survey of young people in a generation and will ask around 14,000 young people about their experience, health and wellbeing. The WhatAboutMe? survey is intended to be the main data source for approximately half of the Strategy's indicators, including most of the subjective wellbeing measures. However, because of COVID-19, data collection has been delayed until 2021".

<sup>14</sup> Government priorities are: Improving child wellbeing, Improving mental health, Improving wellbeing through prevention, Strong and equitable public health system, Better primary health care. See <https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/health-system-indicators-framework>.

### *7.11 Vulnerability, Risk and Resilience Indicators*

Major indicator projects have been sponsored by National Science Challenge research programmes, both ostensibly on much the same issue – interactions between natural hazards and disasters and communities.

Social vulnerability indicators (Mason et al., 2021) help identify areas with people who are more vulnerable to the negative impacts of natural hazards and emergencies. Such communities may be less able to prepare for, cope with or adapt to a hazard and therefore are more likely to be affected by a hazard. A set of small-area mainly 2018 census data are built on an earlier set of [social vulnerability indicators for flooding](#), developed using 2013 Census data. The indicators are intended to inform planning, response, and recovery for natural hazards and pandemics and cover the three main components of exposure, susceptibility, and resilience.

Given our disaster-prone natural environment, understanding and enhancing the disaster resilience of our communities is important and tracking the development of interventions that enhance communities' resilience can be measured through a national resilience assessment tool: the New Zealand Resilience Index (NZRI). Resilience is defined in the National Disaster Resilience Strategy as: The ability to anticipate and resist the effects of a disruptive event, minimise adverse impacts, respond effectively post-event, maintain or recover functionality, and adapt in a way that allows for learning and thriving informed by New Zealand's national and international resilience strategies a review was prepared which then allowed the establishment of a theoretical framework which shows the various dimensions of resilience and how they relate to each other. Resilience is broken down into seven community "capital" domains. In the CCF model there are seven different components of community capital: natural, cultural, human, social, political, financial, and built. An extensive list of metrics for measuring these is provided.

### *7.12 Intergenerational mobility/inheritance indicators*

An emerging area of indicator work is to convert the array of studies of intergenerational mobilities into institutionalized indicators. The OECD and more particularly WEF are already pushing in this area with the former developing some intergenerational measures such as the number of generations required in each country to reach the median from starting as low income parental background while the latter has recently a global social I mobility index. For NZ 4 generations are required (placing NZ amongst a second tier and NZ is 33<sup>rd</sup> on the GSM index. It is not yet clear how some of the dimensions of intergenerational persistence – income, education, occupation, wealth etc – are best combined an.

### *7.13 Nonorthodox indicators*

In addition to the usual indicators built on official book-keeping or survey data non-orthodox indicators gleaned from big data may be a useful complement. Work on twitter data has yielded a daily 'gross national happiness index' <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/CU2004/S00012/gross-national-happiness-index-shows-true-mood-of-country.htm>

Which provides empirical evidence about the state of a country's overall 'mood' (also known as "*affect happiness*"). The data is based on real-time tweets, which are analysed to determine the sentiment of each tweet, deriving sentiment scores and then applying an algorithm to construct the Happiness Index. The index is measured on a scale from 0 (unhappy) to 10 (very happy), with 5 being neutral, neither happy nor unhappy. More recently the research has been expanded differentiating between eight emotions: joy, anger, trust, anticipation, anger, fear, sadness and surprise. In addition to a drop in happiness, they found the overarching emotion to be that of trust.

#### 7.14 Academic Work

As well as the government-sponsored indicator work there is a steady stream of NZ academic work, with both tributaries threading together at points – e.g. the edited collection Crothers & Fletcher (2015), Dalziel & Saunders (2014); Dalziel, Saunders & Saunders (2018); Grimes et al. (2020); Karacaoglu, Krawczyk & King. (2019); Waring (2019). Most of these academic developments are from economists and there remains much need for deeper sociological exploration. Some of the NZ contributions are empirical such as Grimes work with global survey data, but more is theoretical in part stemming from Marilyn Waring's work on the limitations of GDP and in part following up on the conceptual underpinnings of living standards research – for a review see Dalziel, 2021.

#### 7.15 NGO and Business indicator work

Several NGOs are active in monitoring social research, and a few have been referred to above. Other indicator-sets have been deployed from time to time by the Salvation Army and the Child Poverty Action Group. There also has been a series of pamphlets on wellbeing *A State of the State New Zealand* resulting from a collaboration between Deloitte and the School of Government, VUW explores how we can nurture greater wellbeing in New Zealand. Few have the resources to provide ongoing institutionalized indicators but they have the advantage of being able to field rather more radical (non-establishment) measures. .

### 8 Targeted Indicators

Indicators can be built into the development of new initiatives as feedback mechanisms for assessing progress and fine-tuning further development, and these approaches can involve methodological developments.

A major study by Motu (Mitchell et al., 2021) on behalf of the Human Rights Commission monitors the enjoyment in Aotearoa New Zealand of the rights to two case-study domains - adequate housing and health care and protection. The New Zealand Government is required to comply with its obligations under the International Covenant for Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) regarding the right to adequate housing and the right to health care and protection. The project develops indicators to measure each of these rights and then 'populates' these indicators with appropriate data. Structural, process and outcome indicators (deploying distinctions between conduct (actions taken) and result (outcomes achieved) are developed with criteria of meeting right defined as including progressive realisation, ensuring non-retrogression and the use of the maximum of available resources to realise rights with some concentration on minimum core obligations.

The report finally points out that major data gaps had constrained their evaluation, especially regarding disaggregation of indicators by population subgroup (e.g., disability status) and benchmarking use of maximum of available resources, and that these data gaps themselves constitute a breach of the ICESCR.

Another development project concerns NZ's movement towards sustainability, which will be accompanied by unequal social distributions of benefits, costs and risks (White & Leining, 2021). As Aotearoa New Zealand responds to climate change and other changes, policymakers need to try to ensure a 'just transition' for workers, households and communities. However, no domestic consensus exists about how to define, measure, monitor or manage a 'just transition'. A special issue of *Policy Quarterly* examines this and explores tools for improving policy, including progress indicators.

Over the past near decade MSD has developed and implemented an investment approach to improve employment and social outcomes for people on working-age benefits, now pivoting to a broader approach (extending across the social service sector) of investing for social wellbeing. The Investment Strategy outlines the areas that need to be focused on as priorities to achieve improved employment and social outcomes for people who are receiving, or are likely to receive, a working age benefit. In developing this framework Results from impact evaluation and performance monitoring are critical inputs, along with other evidence such as modelling forecasts, Government priorities, MSD's new strategic direction *Te Pae Tawhiti – Our Future*, and engagement and feedback from clients, staff and stakeholders.

## **9 Maori**

Although covered at each point it is important to bring together Maori –specific interest in wellbeing indicators. This topic deserves extensive separate treatment, well beyond the current perfunctory comments. Where possible ethnic distribution breakdowns of indicator results are included, but further, these issues need to be built into the design of each indicator-set. Ethnic groups other than Maori have also received some separation attention, particularly in Treasury papers (see listing above). So, a major theme is the emergence of Iwi-Māori driven social monitoring. There is much conceptual work running through many indicator developments, Stats NZ, Treasury but most others.

As well as the development of further Maori indicator frameworks there has been some appropriate adjustments over time to the content of mainstream indicator-sets, especially in their treatments of cultural capital.

This is not the place to argue the philosophical and political benefits of separate Maori frameworks, and what the relationships between these and mainstream indicator-sets should be – separate, overlapping or perhaps blended. If nothing else they are a useful resource for better overall development of NZ-specific indicators. It is somewhat unfortunate that there are quite a few Maori frameworks including Stats NZ's He Arotahi Tatauranga, the SWBA The Whānau Rangatiratanga Conceptual Framework used in the Family and Whanau studies, Treasury's He Ara Waiora and MSD's Tikanga Māori Strengths-based Index and others. This diversity may be more apparent than real, as they share important components such as Treaty-based, holism (interlinkage especially with the environment and sustainability), stress on collectivity (especially whanau), incorporation of



spirituality, strength-based, self-determination, blending past present and future, with presentation often visual and using Māori terms. In addition, there is some 'data warehousing' such as the Data Iwi Leaders Group's [Te Whata](#) product and the Figure NZ/Callahan Institute's [Pātaka Raraunga](#).

## 10 Conclusions:

Indicator development in Aotearoa/New Zealand is an invention of this Millennium, and the early years saw the development of several vehicles, some of which lapsed during the first decade. After an interstitial period marked by a variety of approaches to social indicators, a new generation of indicators – and the conceptual frameworks they have been set within – have been developed and can be located in a partially interconnected overall framework. This is partially institutionalised, with some legislative backbone. This newer generation of indicators is based on further academic work and intergovernmental statistical development programmes as well as more firmly based in participatory approaches. The conceptual frameworks are more sophisticated with multiple layers, although there has been some lapses in theoretical attention. The indicator frameworks are not strongly conceptualised wellbeing frameworks; so they provide limited methods to interpret whether wellbeing is increasing or not based on movements across disparate domains (see Grimes, 2021). Display of individual indicators through (downloadable) charts is possible through useful and visually explicit dashboards, and broader datasets are downloadable. But again, while trends are displayed there is little analysis or commentary. The frameworks are sitting there largely populated with data, but knowledge production built from them is limited. Nevertheless, some important research has emerged and the readily accessible datasets facilitate more.

The extension of indicators to consider long, inter-generational time-depths is important. In the treasury LS framework these are conceptualised as 'stocks'. However, these are more longer-term resources and proper inter-generational 'inheritance' patterns and inter-generational justice/equity is not properly conceptualised.

### Tendencies over two decades

Period	Earlier (2000s)	Later (2010s)
<i>Indicator-sets</i>	Separate	joined-up, comprehensive
<i>Conceptual development</i>	Pragmatic	conceptualised
<i>Warrant</i>	Institutional	legal
<i>Source</i>	Indigenous	international
<i>Engagement</i>	Top-down	Partially participatory
<i>Data Support</i>	Illustrative	dashboards, 'long form' csv downloads
<i>Purpose</i>	Descriptive	explanatory
<i>Orientation</i>	Monitoring	Target-orientated interventionist
<i>Textual</i>	Short Commentary	'bare-faced'
<i>Time orientation</i>	Cross-sectional	over-time
<i>Spatial orientation</i>	Some regional data	Some LA level data



The institutional landscape is littered with abandoned indicator-sets, and consideration about sustainability is needed before starting off new ones. Perhaps there could be some underlying centralisation in a platform from which more particular indicator-sets can be readily built. There is already good evidence of inter-programme cooperation and collective responsibility for more research and higher standards going forward.

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