

**SOCIAL STATISTICS
ISSUES AND IMPACT FROM A COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE**

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Introduction

The consideration you are giving to Social Statistics is welcome recognition that policymaking requires more than market mechanisms for implementation. On the other hand, that recognition should also be received with great caution, because the Government's attempt over the last 20 years, to incorporate as many social activities as possible into the market by redefining them as commodities, has made much of what really matters to us invisible.

Therefore I take this as an opportunity both to acknowledge that you have SOCIAL Statistics on your Agenda, and to insist that SOCIAL activities be seen in their full context of relationships. They should never be seen only in the context of market transactions between individual buyers and sellers, as is required by the current market approach to social planning.

Current policy framework

The current requirement is that instead of taking the full social context into consideration, policymaking priority must be given to "efficiency". This in practice transforms the complex web of mutual relationships inherent in social activities into a simple sub-set where items of production and consumption are traded. The policy development associated with this approach has been underpinned by slogans such as Margaret Thatcher's assertion that "there is no such thing as society, there are just individuals" [1], and others such as "get big Government off my back" and concern about the "nanny state" on which some people are "dependent". When one points to the way prices never fully reflect all the relevant social factors, the outcome is described as "market failure", as if this is only a minor aberration on the way to incorporating everything into the market.

Alongside such conclusions is promotion of the idea that if everyone will just express their individual preferences and self-interest, and "demand", then the market will respond. It is time to remind ourselves that there is no such thing as supply and demand -only supply and **funded** demand. The market will not respond unless we have funds to go with our demands.

The existing fiscal responsibility legislation is the backdrop to policy developed within a market framework. We need to be aware that new policy will be developed within that market framework unless we see that the framework itself is broadened.

The current approach is also associated with emphasis on "strategic management", where individual blame is apportioned when difficulties arise and "outcomes" are seen as clearly definable and not a matter of perspective. This emphasis on defining outcomes is what Christopher Pollitt, speaking at the 1997 NZ Public Service Senior Management conference, called:

"unwarranted conceptual imperialism.... There may be fundamental political and social

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dissensus as to what the desired outcomes are supposed to be. Are prisons supposed to rehabilitate or punish?..... Outcomes are not products..... Rather they are interactions.... What I do not mean is that ministers and public servants can wash their hands of outcomes. What I mean is that responsibility for them is often shared..... Government responsibility begins to shade into societal and individual responsibility.... There is an ethical issue here. What does it say about our standards if ministers and public servants avert their gaze from the final impacts of the programmes they have fashioned?" [2]

There is much evidence that the final impacts of current policies are failing to achieve what is expected of them. Alarming social statistics in this (and other) countries abound. A fifth of the world's people now share less than 1.5% of the world's income [3] and pressures on scarce environmental resources are introducing the danger of collapse of agricultural, forest, soil, water and other systems [4]. In this land, at least 30% of our children live in benefit dependent families, we have the highest female youth suicide rate and the third highest male youth suicide rate amongst the 23 OECD countries, and the number of people receiving food bank assistance has risen from 4000 in 1990 to a recent figure exceeding 65000 [5].

The assertion that it is individual behaviour rather than the social order that is to blame for this state of affairs must be exposed as false. The currently-prevalent explanation is that there has been a sudden (over the last 15 years) widespread personal failure of individuals in their families and local neighbourhoods, causing them to move to benefit dependency instead of being socially responsible. Deakin recently [6] described the recent shift in the view of welfare as being:

< to a channel of the pursuit of self-interest - from a mechanism for the re-distribution of wealth

< to the exercise of control by society - from an expression of altruism

< to a mechanism of moral regeneration - from a negation of social divisions.

He also argued that the possibility that there can be an alliance between the haves and the havenots must become part of the policy debate.

Possible policy frameworks

Pollitt quotes Immergut [7] - "It is important to be clear that political and administrative institutions set the boundaries within which strategic actors make their choices". This reality gives the opportunity to address the assertion often stated by those in power (and felt by many lay people) that there is no alternative (TINA). In reality there are many options (TAMO).

The TINA principle is best exposed by analogy with Henry Ford's famous dictum in relation to his motor cars - "You can have any colour you like as long as it is black". What TAMO affirms is not only that different colours are to be encouraged but also that alternatives such as bicycles, buses and horses may be equally solutions to the transportation problem.

There is useful comparative work being done by Pollitt and others [8]:

"... (In) Sweden and Finland business is not regarded as inherently superior (where the) state is fundamentally a burden on society..... (There) is considerable scope for national leaders to adapt reform policies to suit the particular institutions and value preferences of their own countries."

The question we face is how to explore this scope when "TINA" (especially that in the form of market-driven policy) and the paralysis we feel from analysis of all that is bad and sad around us, seem overwhelming.

"As the millennium draws to a close we must not succumb to the notion that we have failed, and therefore must retreat into ever smaller spaces of self-definition. This is precisely the time to dream the best dream of them all..." [9]

It is my hope that the development of Social Statistics can provide a way to dream this dream in

a way that is ethical and inclusive, allowing for TAMO.

But how are we to develop and monitor policy, without imposing one "solution"? In a pluralistic world, strong personal convictions are important, but they cannot be shared by everyone, nor can they be "proved" to be right [10]. We must also keep constantly in our minds that our current legal system is predicated on individual property rights, implying that all such property can be "valued" and traded. Yet most of us know that the things we really value cannot be priced in dollar terms.

It is my contention that individualisation of social statistics is a contradiction in terms! **Social** is the key word!
Social ethics

Thus, we must find ways of ethically controlling "the best dream" of an inclusive framework for the future for social statistics. We must not be limited to doing so within the market framework alone. This paper is a contribution towards this dream
Peter Pruzan of the Copenhagen Business School suggests that such a dream will be

"ethical if all parties involved can accept it.... (This ethics refers to) both to a conversation process and to the action which is the product of the conversation. The same action can be both ethical and unethical - either for two different groups at the same time or for the same group at different times" [11].

This means that we need to map the expressions of consensus, for example The Peoples Charter [12]. Ethical baselines need to be articulated which will form the touchstones for policy development.

Philippe van Parijs' book "Real Freedom For All" [13] promotes touchstones of what he summarises as "undominated diversity". The test of whether or not this has been achieved is that people are satisfied that they do not wish to have the lifestyle of the other person. He also advocates what he calls the "wisdom of the ancient - active and constant participation in the collective power" and expresses concern at the modern approach of "peaceful enjoyment of private independence".

Van Parijs also argues that we need to pay much more attention to the endowment that we have inherited. This, he suggests, is mostly in the "unowned commons" where there is access for all and which is unrestricted by a set of rules. This endowment and the unowned commons must be examined alongside, but independent of, public and private ownership if we are to achieve real freedom for all.

Social Capital/Cohesion and Responsibility

We hear talk of Social Capital and Social Cohesion as means of assessing social factors. In her "Cautionary Notes on Social Capital", Linda Hill points out that the main indicators of Social Capital / Cohesion focus on "interaction as valuable in itself, without regard to the nature of the shared goal.... The emphasis on measuring interactions without regard to goals means that personal and political purposes are entirely blurred" [14]. Also, David Robinson [15] has suggested that the purpose of or use made of Social Capital is largely in terms of how it could contribute to economic growth and social well-being, where social well-being is generally presented as the correction of dysfunctional situations.

Many people, up and down the country, were very wary of the Government's proposed Code of Social Responsibility and focus on social issues, as it is likely to be linked to these concepts. In her "state-of-the-nation" address last year [16], the Prime Minister stated that answers need to be found to social problems and that "we will only get the real results New Zealanders are looking for if we work together on solutions more radical and honest than we have been to date". In the same address she stated that the economic programme "will continue".

It seems that much of the current apparent willingness by our Government and by international agencies like the World Bank to focus on "Social Responsibility", "Social Cohesion" and "Social Capital" is a reflection of their adherence to "economic rationality". The World Bank's shift "to protect poor and marginalised people as part of structural adjustment programmes" [17], is but one example. No World Bank official has been more clear than A Choski, Vice President Responsible for Human Resources, when he told the 1994 UN Social Summit that "investing in people is not only the key to improving people's lives, it is also good economics [18]". Robert Putnam, for another example, sees Social Capital as the key to "democracy and prosperity [19]".

As Public Service International points out, however, the linking of these two concepts of democracy and prosperity raises the spectre that the apparent retreat from monetarism is:

"more apparent in theory than practice on the ground. It represents... a pre-emptive strike, aimed at preventing a more general shift to more progressive international policies and structures, particularly those advocated by the Copenhagen Social Summit and the Commission on Global Governance. It also represents an attempt by the IMF and the World Bank to marginalise the more progressive and politically accountable UN agencies like the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). (Finally) it represents a response to the combined pressure from a growing group of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and movement organisations like Public Service International (PSI)".
[20]

The Third Sector and Democracy

The combined pressure by most NGOs and some members of the labour movement is a major source of hope here in this land, as well as globally. Thank you for including a contribution from The Third Sector in your conference.

The "classic" welfare state in the industrialised world was in need of reform. It is also now obvious that import-substituting growth in many countries of the so-called "developing" world laid the basis for today's situation of crippling debt in those countries. We needed change.

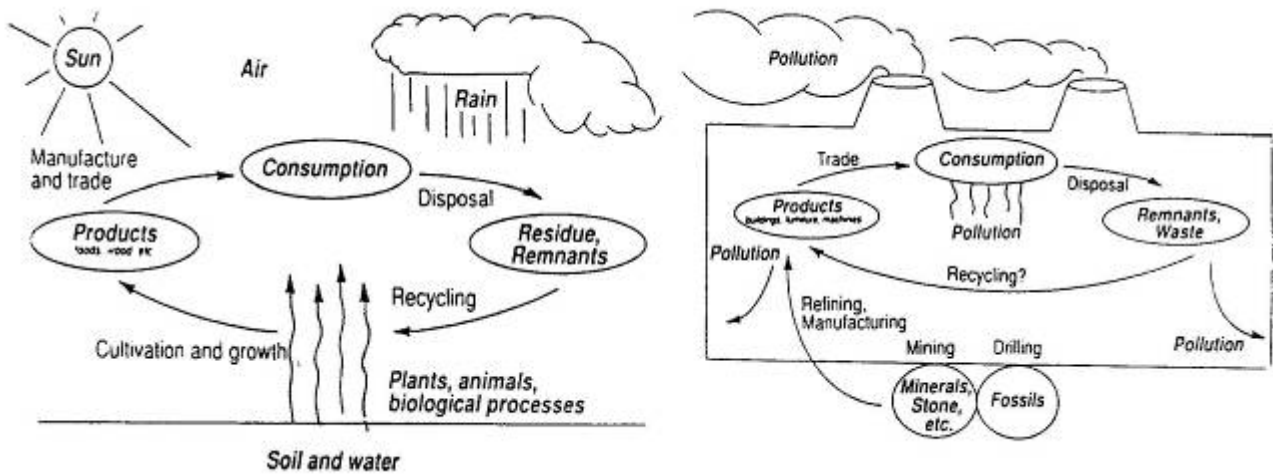
But the "Mantra of the Market" [21] as the answer to these problems needs constantly to be challenged. Privatisation and contracting out of Government responsibilities to Business and to the voluntary (Third) sector organisations need to be transparently examined. In fact, activities in all three Sectors need to be mapped more coherently. As quoted from Pollitt above "It is important to be clear that political and administrative institutions set the boundaries within which strategic actors make their choices". But if these boundaries are to be redrawn - and that is the plea of this paper -we must have a bigger picture to work from than that which is produced by a market approach to social planning.

The Third Sector, alongside the two other Sectors of Commerce and Government, has produced much information. But it is being side-lined and made invisible by the market focus common to both the Commercial (business/corporate) Sector and the Government (State/statutory) Sector. What is needed is new approaches to "democracy". I like the idea that democracy:

".... is not just voting, but setting the agenda. It's not the tyranny of the majority, but it is finding common ground between different people and groups, and it is definitely not the clever manipulation of people to simulate grassroots support" [22]

An example of useful resources being produced in the Third Sector is the comparison made by Hilikka Pietilä, between the Cultivation Economy and Industrial Production [23].

The reader will note that much of what is made invisible by the Industrial Production view of the Economy is included in the Cultivation Economy, yet industrial production is not excluded from the Cultivation Economy.



An illustration and comparison of the differences between the cultivation economy (left) and industrial production (right) (Pietilä)

In addition, we should note that the Third Sector is more properly named the First Sector - it was there before Governments and Commerce appeared in the human world! However, it is indeed the Third Sector of society, in terms of power in the political pecking order. Whether named the Third Sector or not, what is important is that we know what we are talking about. Participation and governance of their affairs by citizens is not merely what the State prescribes and/or the Market allows - it is far more than those.

A new democracy will be required to achieve participation and governance which takes into account much more than commercial and statutory activities. However, in recent years deregulation of trade, especially capital transactions, has meant that the space within which the State, the Public Sector and the Common Wealth interact is no longer controllable by Nation States. They have become "too big for the small things and too small for the big things..... Because a private/public dichotomy is no simplistic solution, (the Third Sector) must explore a new space where creativity, imagination and initiative thrive" [24]

The New Zealand Council of Social Services is established to provide a "NATIONAL VOICE FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES". We are committed to strengthening the SOCIAL contribution of the Third Sector, and would appreciate any assistance you can give. We work with Treaty-based commitment and have a number of international and transnational contacts, which enrich our local community-initiated focus.

Culture in a Treaty-based Future

Fundamental for us in this land, whether Maori or Tauwiwi, is the need to establish local relationships with those Tangata Whenua who are the keepers, caretakers and protectors - the kaitiaki - of the places in which we work. The experience of local communities with the Resource Management Act has already established protocols for contact in many places. As an instrument of the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Waitangi requires us to honour the extraordinary rights and responsibilities retained by Maori who hold kaitiakitanga, as well as to take shared responsibility with Maori to build an honourable Kawanatanga. Kaitiakitanga responsibilities apply under Articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Treaty.

Getting some of the road blocks out of the way so those with Maori ancestry can do their work, both retaining and regaining Tino Rangatiratanga and accessing whatever is set up by a more honourable Kawanatanga, is only part of what needs to be done by Tauwiwi. We must also declare what we hold precious. In addition, we need to ensure that the values of all cultures are protected. For me, an ethnically- and culturally-diverse, Treaty-based framework is an exciting filter through

which to see the field of Social Statistics.

Attention to culture raises fundamental questions for considering what it is that could bring us together, thus allowing that key word "SOCIAL" to have a clearer meaning. As a Kura Kaupapa Maori school teacher in the Coromandel stated in a Heartland programme in 1996 -"culture is what you have left when you don't have any money". Coming together in a new order which is better for everyone, requires that we map connections, strengthen links and advocate a response to the ideology of individualism across all our Sectors. We will need to lose some things, and gain others. This reflects Jane Kelsey's conclusion [25], that the problems for Tangata Whenua and for Taiuiwi are the same but that the solutions may be different. Any national voice will need to emerge from those local, regional, and national relationships.

Subsidiarity - linking the local to the global

A focus on augmenting what local people do well requires us to be clearer about what is appropriately done regionally, nationally and internationally. In addressing this split of responsibilities, I want to refer briefly to the notion of Subsidiarity. The touchstone of Subsidiarity is that wherever a task can be satisfactorily achieved (in the opinion of all those involved) by the initiative of those involved, the fulfilment of the task must be left to those people. In other words, the group affected by the decision is the group that makes the decision. The idea is monitored by criteria such as "no bigger than necessary" and "as big as needed to achieve the common good". Liberalistic individualism, which subordinates society as a whole to the sum of selfish actions by individuals, is replaced by the sense of mutual collaboration, animated by a common will. In addition, a social undertaking of any sort, by its nature, ought to aid the members of the body social but never destroy or absorb them [26].

The limitations of "employment"

One major constraint to creation of an innovative future is the continuing incorrect use of the word "Work". As an example, the former Prime Minister, Rt Hon Jim Bolger, at the launch of From Welfare To Well-Being 1997, quoting British (Labour) Prime Minister Tony Blair, said: "The new welfare state must encourage work not dependency." He then continued to use "employment" and "self-employment" as synonyms for "work". The current Prime Minister, talking on social issues, refers to the economic programme continuing [27] and how "unemployment had to come down". This linguistic artifact reduces the citizen-producer to an increasingly precarious and passive role as a production factor in the marketplace.

If, instead, we acknowledge that everyone's contribution to society includes their "work", we soon note that many "work" functions are not included in conventional economic statistics. Making visible all the productive activities is not merely a matter of including them in market terms. Such "False Economy" [28] is illuminated by the following examples:

- < In the USA, families without a worker with at least a college degree increased their annual employment effort (i.e. hours in employment) by 12% between 1973 and 1988, but they received 8% less annual income in real terms [29].
- < High-low cycles of employment were experienced by 40% of men in the lowest quintile and by 20% in the highest quintile. Swings in employment opportunity are not felt most by high-earners [30].
- < Even those employed full-time may not earn enough to sustain their livelihoods [31].

- < Of the world's working-age population of around 3 billion, only 400 million are "employed" in industrialised countries, yet "job creation" is high on the priority list of governments, worldwide. Even the ILO notes that the linkage between economic growth and employment options is not an automatic one for all groups [32].

The Department of Statistics' current Time Use Study has potential to be a source of very important information for the development of Social Statistics. It will only be so if a Framework of

reporting that is wider than the current market approach to social planning is developed. The UNDP Human Development Report 1995 refers to the failure of statistics in general to do justice in reporting paid and unpaid contributions. As one example they calculate that "If more human activities were seen as market transactions at the prevailing wages, they would.... come to a staggering 16 trillion (US dollars) ...about 70% more than the officially estimated 23 trillion of global output."

The idea that employment is a fair way of distributing income must also be addressed. For both practical and theoretical reasons, we know that we cannot rely on the market, which has neither social ethic nor conscience, to distribute income fairly. Provision of a Universal Basic Income is probably the most creative response to this problem [33]. It could best be associated with a "move away from taxes on labour, incomes, profits and capital towards taxes on pollution and the use of resources.... In other words, it would be funded by taxing people on the value they subtract rather than the value they add" [34]. This non-targeted scenario:

"would emphasise the need to clarify the responsibilities of citizens towards themselves, their children, one another and society as a whole in return for their right to an equal share in the value of common resources For example, the problem for ageing societies, of taxing the earnings of fewer economically active people more highly to support a growing number of pensioners would be largely avoided." [35]

I suggest a new way of addressing our future is to look not just at employment alone, but at livelihood systems as a whole, taking note of all the "work"/ mahi [36] being done. This includes self-provisioning and pluri-activity, as well as acknowledging the multiplexing undertaken by so many of us [37]. "Sustaining" (rather than sustainable) economy and "Resourcefulness" [38] rather than resource use become the guiding criteria. This will require integration of the matrix of interactions between policy, science and technology and investment/finance, with the focus being on augmenting what local people already do well. There are many examples of local economic development in this land [39]. The Grameen Bank in Bangladesh [40] sees:

"... as the essential first step, to help people to be more aware of their skills, not to tell them at first that they are going to receive training. Doing so leaves them seeing themselves simply as tools of production, employed to benefit the one who owns the capital. Many lifestyles do not involve employment, or do so in only a very fragmentary fashion".

Ellie Perkins (of York University, Ontario, Canada) is researching local economies and has summarised the results of her work in a useful article "Building Communities to Limit Trade" [41]. Such resources will assist in building a bigger picture where we do not accept that TINA applies to our economic future.

A possible framework?

Renewed hope lies in tackling and conceptualising fundamental issues of effectiveness. The ethical, inclusive framework of "the best dream" means developing SOCIAL STATISTICS which enable us to move on from only market-economics and social dysfunction to find new innovative responses that may incorporate existing tools but also go beyond them. "Rather than build a wall to keep out the wind, build a windmill!" [42]

I suggest that an ethical, inclusive framework for the "best dream" must be predicated on Subsidiarity and deliberately engage all three Sectors of society. It must be concerned with both process and content/action and involve:

seeing the Treaty-based approach [43] as a whole

planning a process by which society can move from a concentration on individual rights to one based on community ethics which can be accepted by all those involved

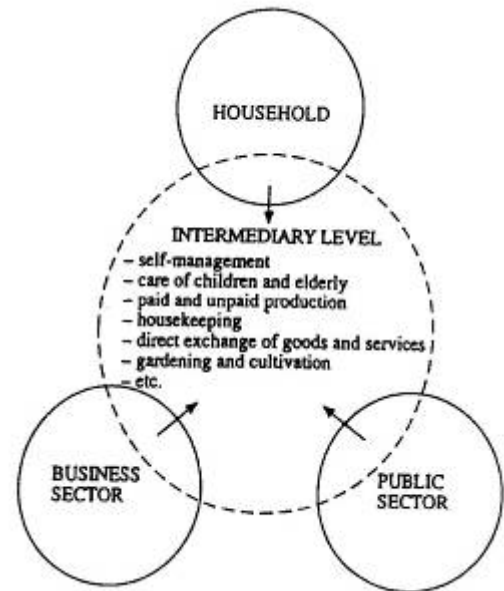
identifying and building on existing strengths and assets, thus seeing training, education and

learning differently

* organising production and distribution of goods and services (i.e. economic activities) in a way that does not conflict with these goals

* mapping the connections between the parts and celebrating!

If we were to acknowledge that present-day households simply too small to be able to solve their problems within particular household then we will need an intermediary level between the "big society" and the "shrinking family" [44] shown in Pietilä's diagram of "A new everyday life" . There need to recreate a functional geographical and organisational level, which in this country would need to honour the Kaitia those places.

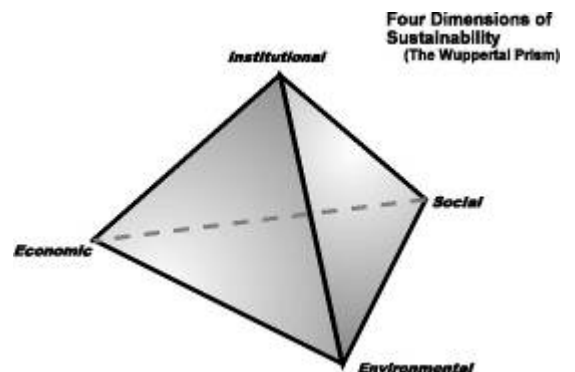


Caring, cosiness and health in the household economy as accommodated into the narrow physical-mathematical framework of sunshine, rain and fresh air fit in - nor the life processes of the cultivation economy. They cannot be translated into material economics operates.

Goals and Directions - the Imperative of Sustainable Living

The crucial issue is to understand that there is the need of a new theory of the totality of human actions for sustainable livelihood [45].

A useful metaphor for appreciating the interrelationships between the principal factors of importance in looking at Sustainability has been produced by Spangenberg and Bonniot [46] at the Wuppertal Institute in Germany. Their approach has been to represent the "Four Dimensions of Sustainability" of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development as a prism.



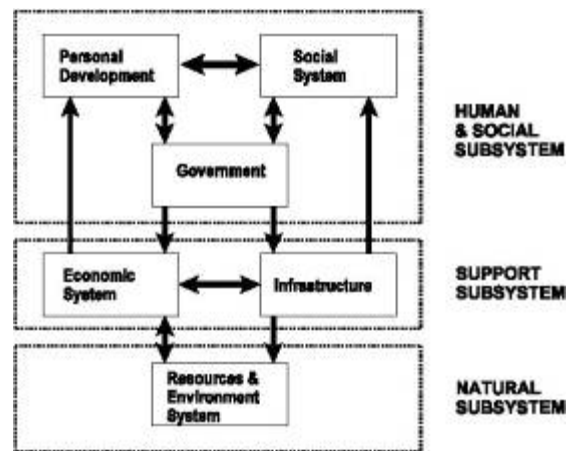
In order to take the discussion further, it is valuable to understand something about the reality of Need in the contexts of people, of communities and of systems in general.

The Reality of Need

In recent years, social development workers in Central and South American countries have produced some important ideas, directly relevant to the issues we are addressing. For example, Manfred A Max-Neef [47] has organised Human Needs into nine fundamental categories: Subsistence, Protection, Affection, Understanding, Participation, Idleness, Creation, Identity and Freedom.

The Needs are all necessary, all equal. Any human need that is not adequately satisfied reveals a human Poverty. There are multiple poverties, not just one kind of poverty. Every poverty, if extended beyond a threshold, leads to a Pathology, a sickness. The key to human development is a Sufficient level of satisfaction of each need.

The related approach of Bossel [48] not only allows for the organisation of Human Needs into a complete Framework, it also can be used to address the question of needs of systems in a generic sense. Coming from general Systems thinking this work is based on identifying factors which interrelate the health of sub-systems and the health of a total system. It places human society in its context (see figure) and goes on to identify the core relationships (which he calls Basic Orientors of Behaviour) of the systems and subsystems that constitute the supersystem of Life on Earth.



This framework provides a way to assess whether or not we are moving towards a more sustainable way of living. If we are to detect whether this is happening, we need to construct Indicators to show the trends which represent the viability/sustainability of the system. When that is done, people and societies will have the opportunity to institute "control" actions to encourage movement in the direction of the desired goal. It is not necessary to get bogged down in a plethora of indicators. The Systems approach maps them into a Framework.

A vital component of the methodology is attention to the fundamental ethical goal of the total system. Once that is enunciated -and people in communities must be involved in order to ensure the validity of the exercise -the viability and sustainability of the total system can be addressed. People who are committed to this approach can then construct a set of indicators which **together** monitor progress towards the fundamental ethical goal that was expressed by the communities involved. Bossel's approach has been applied to the New Zealand Aotearoa system by Peet and Bossel [49]. A working ethical goal where all people have their basic needs satisfied, so they can live in dignity in healthy communities with the minimum adverse impact on natural systems, now and in the future has been formulated by the Federation of WEAs in this country.

This type of work in Systems Thinking is associated with several other developments which recognise the limitations of both Cartesian scientific approaches and the related neo-classical economics. Dealing with the emergent problems of complexity as a result of the need to consider interrelationships is becoming known as Post-Normal Science, whose application is predicated on the use of "decision stakes". This refers to the way the methods used are dependent on those who have a stake in the decision [50].

Such an approach will challenge the professions to learn to work beyond traditional bounds and cooperate rigorously with one another. It also, most importantly, enables people in communities to set the agenda for finding a Framework for Social Statistics - the experts are available!

The requirements, then, for development of SOCIAL statistics cannot be limited to data on aggregations of individuals. What is needed is attention to relationships, and to institutional and other structures within the total socio-economic-institutional-environmental supersystem.
A touchstone for success?

Finally, I offer an image that may help to sustain us. It is that we assess our work/mahi by whether or not what we are involved in increases or decreases the capacity to "unearth seeds of fire" [51] in the people with whom we work, and in ourselves.

The type of fire in this image is alluded to in many cultures -Moses' visionary experience of the burning bush which was not consumed by the fire [52]; keeping the home fires burning; and non

commercial aspects of the symbolism of the Olympic flame are examples from my own culture. My own limited understanding of a related three-faceted image from tangata whenua [53] says it better than I ever could. We will know whether we are connecting better with each other when

we contribute to: Ahimura - the flame of life which give energy and warms and brightens life for others
Ahi ka - the home fires which maintain security and ensure that peoples' identities and

autonomy are not extinguished Ahi tapu - the sacred fire. This -for me -indicates the possibilities for the development on SOCIAL STATISTICS in this great little country - and throughout the world!

"As the millennium draws to a close we must not succumb to the notion that we have failed, and therefore must retreat into ever smaller spaces of self-definition. This is precisely the time to dream the best dream of them all..." [54]
"Social" is indeed the key word!

Acknowledgement

This paper is based on the author's address to the "Social Responsibility: Whose Agenda?" conference, held in Auckland, 1998 (published by AUWRC, Box 3813, Auckland).

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42 Challenge to participants at CONFITEA, reported in K Peet's report of the conference attended as International Federation of WEAs delegate

43 The Treaty of Waitangi (1840), signed by the British Crown and the Chiefs of over 500 Hapu, is the founding document of the State of New Zealand Aotearoa as it currently exists.

44 Hilikka Pietilä op cit IAFFE 1996

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52 The Bible, Exodus Chapter 3

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MIHI

E te whanau, o tenei huihuinga tangata e tau nei -Tena koutou (E ,
rakatira o , tena koe)

He mihi nui tenei ki a koutou katoa, na Te Upoko o Te Runaka ki Otautahi o Kai Tahu, Maurice
Gray no Te Wai Pounamu, no reira

Ka huri noa ahau ki te mihi atu ki a E Te Timuaki, Tena koe.

Me hoki ki a koe, Tena korua.

He mihi nui hoki ki a korua korua ko

Huri noa ki tenei to tatou whare

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena tatou katoa.

I carry greetings of my local Runaka and in particular their Timuaki Rev Maurice Gray.

Giddy to ? (? other overseas speakers)

And to all my Taiwi colleagues