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**Working Paper**

## A Pacific perspective on the Living Standards Framework and wellbeing

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# A Pacific Perspective on the Living Standards Framework and Wellbeing

Su'a Thomsen, Jez Tavita and Zsontell Levi-Teu

New Zealand Treasury Discussion Paper 18/09

August 2018

## DISCLAIMER

This paper is part of a series of discussion papers on wellbeing in the Treasury's Living Standards Framework. The discussion papers are not the Treasury's position on measuring intergenerational wellbeing and its sustainability in New Zealand.

Our intention is to encourage discussion on these topics. There are marked differences in perspective between the papers that reflect differences in the subject matter as well as differences in the state of knowledge. The Treasury very much welcomes comments on these papers to help inform our ongoing development of the Living Standards Framework.

**NZ TREASURY  
DISCUSSION PAPER 18/09**

A Pacific Perspective on the Living Standards Framework and Wellbeing

**MONTH/YEAR**

August 2018

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# Executive summary

The Treasury has been working towards higher living standards for all New Zealanders. Over recent years, the Treasury has developed a Living Standards Framework (LSF) to assess the impact of government policies on current and long-term wellbeing. This framework takes into account the reporting requirements that the Treasury is obligated to deliver to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

This paper has been prepared by the Treasury recognising the growing influence and impact of the Pacific diaspora and intergenerational population on the New Zealand economy and on New Zealand's place in the wider Pacific region.

The Treasury appreciates that there is not a “generic ‘Pacific community’ but rather Pacific peoples who align themselves variously, and at different times along ethnic, geographic, church, family, school, age/gender, island-born, New Zealand born, occupational lines or a mix of these” (Anae, Coxon, & Mara, 2001)<sup>1</sup>. Despite some cultural differences, Pacific cultures share many commonalities. This paper focuses on the commonalities Pacific New Zealanders share rather than the differences.

The metaphoric model that we refer to in this paper, “Fonofale”, has been deliberately chosen to express the Pacific concepts of wellbeing and “wellness”. This model highlights “family” as the foundation for all Pacific peoples, and “culture” the overarching element under which all important aspects to Pacific peoples are created and maintained, including values and belief systems. This paper suggests that any framework for describing and understanding Pacific peoples must highlight family as the dominant relationship that Pacific peoples acquire from birth, and highlight the key influence that culture plays in the social, human and physical capital stocks of Pacific New Zealanders.

The paper draws on the research and work undertaken by Manuela, S and Sibley 2015<sup>2</sup> on the *Pacific Identity and Wellbeing Scale – Revised* (PIWBS-R), which identifies six indicators for assessing Pacific identity and wellbeing:

- Perceived Familial Wellbeing
- Perceived Societal Wellbeing
- Group Membership Evaluation
- Pacific Connectedness and Belonging
- Religious Centrality and Embeddedness
- Cultural Efficacy.

This discussion paper points to a gradual shift in culture from first generation to second and third generation Pacific New Zealanders, away from the church as their main collective institution, to other support systems. This action upholds that, while Pacific peoples are

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<sup>1</sup> Pasifika Education Research Guidelines (Anae et al, 2001:7)

<sup>2</sup> [https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/psych/about/our-research/documents/The%20Pacific%20Identity%20and%20Wellbeing%20Scale%20\(PIWBS\).pdf](https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/psych/about/our-research/documents/The%20Pacific%20Identity%20and%20Wellbeing%20Scale%20(PIWBS).pdf)

continuing to maintain their own cultural norms, they are also adapting, evolving and responding to the environment (context) in which they live.

Data gaps continue to pose a challenge to the Treasury's ability to undertake comprehensive and coherent quantitative and qualitative analysis relevant to Pacific New Zealanders. This paper acknowledges the gaps in the data available on Pacific capital products, and we have identified the lack of coordination and alignment of data between agencies as a key developmental issue.

We intend that this paper will initiate further discussion within government agencies, and the wider community, on what constitutes Pacific peoples' wellbeing.

The Treasury invites comments on this paper (and all others released) to help weave these strands of work together into a relevant, fit-for-purpose set of indicators that we can use to track and monitor our progress towards achieving wellbeing outcomes for all New Zealanders.

**Note:** Throughout this paper we refer to Pacific peoples homogeneously, but it is important to note that we acknowledge and recognise the diversity within Pacific cultures.

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# A Pacific Perspective on the Living Standards Framework and Wellbeing

## Introduction

New Zealand is a Pacific nation comprised of a wide range of diverse communities which is growing more diverse. Within New Zealand, there is a large Pacific population that makes up almost 8% of the population. “Pacific” refers to people native to several different island nations, who have migrated and now call New Zealand home. It also collectively applies to those who are New Zealand-born and to those who identify themselves as Pacific. The paper recognises that, while New Zealand is home to its Pacific diaspora communities, the home islands hold a special and unique place in the culture and identity of Pacific New Zealanders.

Pacific New Zealanders are, themselves, a diverse population with different ethnicities, languages and communities. The Pacific population is a young and growing demographic with over 7.8% of New Zealand’s population identifying as Pacific in the 2013 Census. Median projections estimate this number will increase to approximately 10.9% by 2038.

The median age of the Pacific population is 21 years compared to 34 years for the general population. This demographic adds momentum to the current efforts by the Treasury to be more inclusive of the voice and perspectives of Pacific New Zealanders in its thinking about the economy now and into the future.

To comprehend a Pacific view, we first have to understand what that means. “Pacific” is not just a word that describes Pacific Island migrants now residing in New Zealand; it is a term that describes a behaviour, a way of viewing the world (around us) and the way in which we operate within it. The Treasury defines Pacific as “the concepts, perspectives, values, belief systems and knowledge that frame, drive and underpin the way that Pacific peoples behave and respond to issues that matter to them, including how these issues are prioritised”.<sup>3</sup>

The New Zealand Pacific community is made up of Polynesians, Melanesians and Micronesians. A significant majority of Pacific New Zealanders are Polynesians. While people-to-people relationships with the Pacific region remain high, there are now two to three generations (in some cases, more) of Pacific peoples in New Zealand. The 2013 Census indicates that 60% of Pacific New Zealanders are born here and call New Zealand home.

The Treasury intends that, as the Living Standards Framework (LSF) develops, the information and analysis of the role and contribution of Pacific culture in our society will

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<sup>3</sup> The Treasury’s Pacific Strategy 2011-2020 “Le Tofa Mamao ma le Fa’autautaga”



become more explicit. The paper is a starting point in evaluating the role of culture (specifically as it applies to Pacific New Zealanders) within New Zealand's living standards and wellbeing. This paper is not intended as a “deep dive” analysis of all issues; rather, an introduction to the discussions around the role and importance of Pacific New Zealanders' contribution to the work we are undertaking that are unique and relevant to Pacific New Zealanders.

We recognise that this paper marks the first time Pacific New Zealanders' views and aspirations have been included in the Treasury's thinking about living standards and what wellbeing means to Pacific people. We expect this paper to set the groundwork for further thinking about wellbeing and the appropriate measures we need to use to ensure accountability and transparency for the development of policies and delivery that will achieve the wellbeing outcomes the Treasury is seeking for all New Zealanders.

Our paper is broken into six sections:

1. **A Pacific perspective on wellbeing:** This section looks at the wellbeing frameworks that already exist for Pacific New Zealanders and how this has changed since the “first wave” of Pacific immigrants. This section will also consider how wellbeing outcomes are interpreted and applied to Pacific New Zealanders.
2. **What does New Zealand's Pacific culture look like?:** This section covers Pacific ethnic identity and diversity, and discusses the common elements that comprise what is generally referred to as Pacific culture.
3. **The Pacific operating model:** This section attempts to understand what a Pacific operating model looks like: what core drivers influence the way Pacific New Zealanders think and respond to the issues affecting them. This section highlights that, while the environment and demographics are changing, key bedrock values and beliefs are seemingly unchanged from the first migration.
4. **The four capitals and Pacific New Zealanders:** This section unpacks all four capitals, and considers what each capital means when viewed from a Pacific perspective.
5. **The LSF and indicators for Pacific New Zealanders:** This section asks what Pacific-centric indicators look like and how we can embed them into our policy thinking.
6. **Subjective and objective measures:** This section discusses the impact of the different methodologies on measures of wellbeing, and how the application of these approaches to Pacific New Zealanders could distort our analysis.

This paper acknowledges the policy implications of Pacific diversity, how harnessing this diversity adds value to our economy and society, recognising that data and knowledge gaps still remain (requiring more investment in meta-analysis and research). The paper therefore aims to generate thought and discussion on these issues, and provides an opportunity to incorporate these into our approach to the development of wellbeing indicators for all New Zealanders.

The paper asks you to respond to the following high-level questions:

- **Outcomes for Pacific New Zealanders:** Pacific families work and aspire to achieve outcomes relevant to them, their families and their communities. What do you think these outcomes are, and what can we do to facilitate their achievement?
- **Indicators:** Achieving wellbeing outcomes is a journey. Which indicators should we consider that can show that we are on the right track and why?
- **Policy-making:** In the absence of coordinated quantitative and qualitative data and corresponding insights on Pacific economic performance, how should we ensure a relative, strengths-based, inclusive approach in our policy advice?

# 1. What is the Pacific perspective on wellbeing?

## Historical context

Prior to the colonisation of Aotearoa, Pacific peoples have travelled back and forth to this land for at least 1,000 years. The *tangata whenua* of Aotearoa sailed from the warm Pacific Islands and headed far south to settle on this land. The indigenous people of Aotearoa have an ancient kinship with the people from the warm islands to the north (Laban, 2012).

Renowned Tongan academic and author Epeli Hau'ofa (1995) in his essay *Our Sea of Islands* portrayed Oceania as not comprised of tiny individual islands isolated by the vastness of the sea around them, but an Oceania that is vast, encompassing numerous communities that are joined together by the sea and to it. He described the Pacific as communities of people who lived and regularly travelled across the Pacific for over 2,000 years. They were able to do this in part because they viewed their world as a “sea of islands”, rather than “islands in a far sea”. It was this understanding that allowed them to traverse and colonise the Pacific (Hau'ofa, 1995).

The New Zealand Government's colonial engagement with the Pacific region dates back to the administration of Niue and the Cook Islands in 1901 to the present, Tokelau from 1925 to the present and with Samoa from 1914 to 1926.

The history of New Zealand's colonial engagement with the Pacific is well known in the region and continues to be the subject of ongoing research and commentary: in particular, how this history has influenced the relationship between the Pacific region and New Zealand, and the New Zealand Government's own historical relationship with Pacific New Zealanders.

In the late 1940s, New Zealand was a growing society, becoming more urbanised and industrialised. Labour was necessary to grow all industries. Sectors such as forestry and factory processing were demanding more manual labour to meet the growing demand for goods and services. This created an opportunity for Māori and Pacific peoples migrating from rural or island homelands to seek opportunities of employment in urban centres.

To meet New Zealand's labour shortages in a number of sectors, immigration was encouraged from the Pacific Islands, who in turn saw this opportunity as a means for mainly young males to provide for their families left behind in the islands. Immigration policies were relaxed and many Pacific Islanders travelled to New Zealand to contribute to the country's economic growth. According to the Statistics New Zealand (StatsNZ) Census 1976, the Pacific population at the time comprised approximately 65,700, making up 2.1% of New Zealand's total population (StatsNZ, 2018).

During periods of economic recession, however, immigration laws were tightened and actively enforced. Quotas for Pacific migrants were introduced to limit migration from the Pacific. The most notable of the initiatives by government to limit and control immigration led to the infamous “Dawn Raids” period in New Zealand history, where Pacific families awoke to find Police and Immigration officials demanding entry into homes to identify, escort and

remove “overstayers” to be immediately sent back to their homelands<sup>4</sup>. Dawn Raids were named such because of the time of day Police and Immigration officials carried out these activities. Dawn Raids would affect entire families, not just individuals, and remain an enduring recollection in the collective memory of Pacific peoples in New Zealand.

Under the 1972–75 Labour government, police and immigration officials sought to identify and deport those who had overstayed their work permits. Raids on the homes of alleged overstayers – usually at dawn, to catch people before they woke – began in 1974.<sup>5</sup> (Spoonley, 2017)

This action caused outrage, brought accusations of racism and created a rift of social mistrust between Pacific New Zealanders and the New Zealand Government, which is still talked about today.

In the 1975 general election campaign, a National Party cartoon depicted Pacific migrants as a threat to New Zealand. The authorities continued to carry out random street checks and dawn raids to identify overstayers. Pacific migrants, whether or not they were New Zealand citizens, were described by politicians and the media as unwelcome<sup>6</sup>. (Spoonley, 2017)

The Dawn Raids gave rise to activist movements such as the Polynesian Panthers who continually sought justice by organising activities to oppose the injustices against Pacific Islanders. Their principles also closely aligned with the rising voice of Māori reclaiming their sovereignty and their traditional land. These events, and government efforts to control and limit migration from the Pacific, have provided a platform for negative, collective memories that resonate through generations of Pacific New Zealanders.

A study on Pacific youth by the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (formerly Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs) completed in 2003 summarised that the youth alluded to the history of overstaying and the difficulty of dealing with others’ perceptions and stereotypes, and this had affected the way they saw themselves, and their communities, in a more positive light (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2003).

Fast forward to 2018. Pacific New Zealanders have made, and continue to make, a significant contribution to political, economic, social, cultural, spiritual and sporting development which continues to change what it means to be a New Zealander. The Pacific New Zealand community continues to grow and the demographics are pointing to an increasingly diverse workforce with projections that, by 2038, the population of Pacific New Zealanders will top approximately 10%.

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<sup>4</sup> “The statistics of prejudice”: A study undertaken in 1985–86 revealed Pacific Island people comprised only a third of overstayers, but made up 86% of all prosecutions for overstaying. Citizens of the United States and United Kingdom also made up a third of overstayer numbers, but represented only 5% of prosecutions (Beaglehole, 2015).

<sup>5</sup> Paul Spoonley, 'Ethnic and religious intolerance - Intolerance towards Pacific migrants', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/ethnic-and-religious-intolerance/page-4> (accessed 9 August 2018)

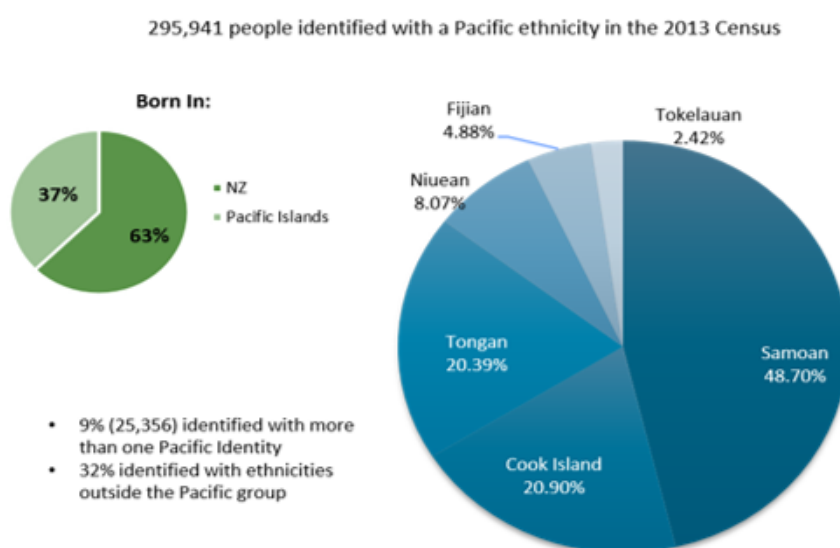
<sup>6</sup> Paul Spoonley, 'Ethnic and religious intolerance - Intolerance towards Pacific migrants', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/ethnic-and-religious-intolerance/page-4> (accessed 9 August 2018)

## Ethnic identity

The Pacific community in New Zealand comprises a number of Pacific nations each with their own cultural priorities and social construction. A considerable amount of research has been undertaken by the public service on this diversity, acknowledging that a significant number of communities share a common Polynesian heritage. While acknowledging this diversity, this paper focuses on what Pacific peoples have in common, and not on their differences. It is worth noting that over 90% of the New Zealand Pacific community share a common Polynesian ancestry with obvious implications in terms of shared values, beliefs and social structures.

Recognition of this shared heritage has seen the development of Pacific-centric research models and approaches across the State sector. Ethnic-specific models capturing the unique differences between communities have emerged as a result of the search for better and more relevant approaches in education and social science, including Kakala, Vaka, Teu Le Va, Nga Vaka o Kaiga Tapu and Tivaevae to name a few. Alongside these approaches, pan-Pacific models, such as the Fa'afaletui, Fonofale and Talanoa methodologies, have emerged which reflect both the differences and similarities in Pacific communities that we could use to enhance our qualitative understanding and insight into Pacific-centric data. These models are particularly useful for gaining insight into community priority issues such as poverty, housing and inclusiveness, including notions of citizenship, and participatory democracy.

**Figure 1 – Who are Pacific people?**<sup>7</sup>



Information from StatsNZ also points to a growing demographic of mixed marriages and cross-cultural relationships within the Pacific, Māori and other migrant groups which are expected to play a significant role in the future face of Aotearoa. There is a growing awareness amongst the new generations of Pacific New Zealanders who are focused on increasing the availability of activities and programmes aimed at maintaining cultural identity through core elements of Pacific culture, such as through language, arts and cultural practices.

<sup>7</sup> StatsNZ Census 2013

## 2. Defining New Zealand's Pacific culture

Defining New Zealand's Pacific culture is no easy task. Culture, in general, affects how we view, comprehend and respond to "physical and social phenomena. It extends beyond language and ethnicity: factors, such as age and generational issues, gender, sexual orientation, geographic location, religion and socioeconomic status may have as much – or more – cultural significance for an individual or community" (Bennett, et al., 2005).<sup>8</sup> Culture is dynamic, and fluid in nature. It is a process formed by individuals and "expresses the interaction between individual subjectivities and collective subjectivities"<sup>9</sup> (Airini, 1997).

Culture can be split into two types:

- material elements that people create and assign meaning to
- non-material elements that include language, beliefs, ideas, rules, customs, myths and skills (Macpherson & Macpherson, 1990).

Pacific peoples have been in New Zealand for more than a century and have contributed significantly to the political, social and cultural fabric of New Zealand society. The expanding demographic pattern, socio-cultural features and overall health and wellbeing of New Zealand are closely interwoven and influenced by the contribution of Pacific New Zealanders.

For Pacific New Zealanders, cultural activities, identity, values and beliefs are key elements that comprise and define its Pacific institutions. These shared cultural concepts are "to serve, a duty to care, a requirement in order to sustain the community, cultural obligation or expectation and a form of love and reciprocity relating to kinship and protocols" (Tamasese, et al., 2010).

In Pacific culture, an individual does not exist alone, but exists in relationship with other people both living and deceased (Waldegrave, et al., 2003). Relationships with, and between, people, villages (or community), the land and spirit world are paramount for Pacific peoples, and the guardianship of these aspects is vital to the Pacific ethos.

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<sup>8</sup> Bennet et al 2005 "Culture, Class, Distinction" p.29-30

<sup>9</sup> Airini, 1997. "Dreams of woken souls: the relationship between culture and curriculum". PhD thesis University of British Columbia

Values are at the very core of each culture’s being, meaning and expression. Values inform all human behaviour and all human relationships. Waldegrave et al. (2003) describe what they call “some significant differences between Pākehā (European) fundamental values and Māori and Pacific peoples’ values” in the following way <sup>10</sup>

**Figure 2 – Fundamental values – Pākehā vs. Pacific peoples/Māori** (Waldegrave et al., 2003)

Pākehā	Pacific Peoples/ Māori
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Individual</li><li>•Secular</li><li>•Consumer</li><li>•Conflictual</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Communal</li><li>•Spiritual</li><li>•Ecological</li><li>•Consensual</li></ul>

The authors of this paper would consider adding two more elements to the above description by Waldegrave et al. – “Pākehā: Competitive vs. Pacific peoples/Māori: Collaborative”.

An understanding of values first, and of cultural differences second needs arguably to be at the heart of any research in this area. Emele Duituturaga writes: “If individualism is the essence of the mainstream culture then ‘being part of a family: aiga, anau, magafoa, kaiga, kainga and kawa’ is the essence of Pacific Islands cultures. Recognition of the fundamental differences would be a step in the right direction<sup>11</sup>

The largest Pacific ethnic group in New Zealand are Samoans followed by Cook Islanders and Tongans in equal measure, Niueans, Fijians, Tokelauans and Tuvaluans. Although most groups have significant similarities, each possesses their own cultural history, beliefs, values, traditions, language, social structure and regional stories. Within each group, there are also sub-groups; for example, differentiating between those born or raised in New Zealand, those born or raised overseas and those who identify with multiple ethnicities (Tukuitonga & Finau, 1997). There are also varying emphases on the role of young people, women, the elderly and extended families.

Migration has provided the opportunity for a wide range of ethnicities from the Pacific to mix and share their commonalities and celebrate their differences within communities. It has also provided following generations with the ability and the opportunity to engage and reflect about what it means to be a Pacific person. Given that Pacific people occupy different social positions and encompass a range of backgrounds and experiences, unavoidably, there is a range of views on what it is to be a Pacific persona (Macpherson, 2001).

Anae et al. express that “there is no generic ‘Pacific community’<sup>12</sup> but rather Pacific peoples who align themselves variously, and at different times along ethnic, geographic, church,

<sup>10</sup> Waldegrave et al. 2003., “A qualitative study into Pacific Perspectives on Cultural Obligations and Volunteering” p. 32-33, Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit

<sup>11</sup> Emele Duituturaga (“For the Family First: “A study if income allocation within Pacific Island Families in New Zealand. Chapter Five Family Violence: A Pacific Perspective” 1995 pp.73-74.

<sup>12</sup> Anae, et al 2010 “Teu Le Va: Relationships across research and policy in Pasifika education” Appendix 2



family, school, age/gender, island-born, New Zealand born, occupational lines or a mix of these” (Anae et al. 2001).

The term “New Zealand born” recognises both Pacific descent and local upbringing and is an identity shared with many other Pacific young people. The social and material experiences of Pacific New Zealand-born or raised people are diverging in terms of the significant differences in the ways they perceive themselves and the importance placed on their Pacific identity (Macpherson, 2001). This is important to consider, given that 60% of Pacific people were born in New Zealand.

It is also important to recognise that some Pacific people may identify with more than one ethnic group. For example, findings from the Youth2000 National Secondary School Youth Health Survey (2003) indicated that 11.7% of Pacific secondary school students identified with Pacific and one or more other ethnic groups (Adolescent Health Research Group, 2003). In addition, it is projected that intermarriages among Pacific populations will also increase (Callister, et al., 2004). Accordingly, a large majority of Pacific people are born in New Zealand and it is very likely that they are negotiating conflicts between their cultural and family traditions and those of Pākehā New Zealand. Such diversities are a vital consideration in our thinking about what New Zealand’s Pacific culture looks like.

The following depiction highlights what Pacific New Zealanders consider to be important in the LSF. Unsurprisingly, it points to the encompassing role of culture in the LSF, as an enabler, a connector and as a safety net, in which innovation and risk taking across all dimensions of the framework, can be encouraged.



**Figure 3** – A Pacific perspective on the four capitals – Culture is overarching

13



*How important is New Zealand's natural resource base to Pacific New Zealanders?*

The Natural environment is an increasing concern amongst Pacific New Zealanders. Especially those who were born here.

*How do we ensure that we protect and preserve the natural environment for our current and future New Zealanders?*

While we live in NZ, many of our Pacific people still have an active interest in the wellbeing of our native (or parents) homelands.

*How do we continue to stay attuned to the issues and threats to the Pacific region and our homelands?*



*What impacts do you see social capital having on families and communities?*

*How important is social capital for building trust between government and communities?*

Community collectives are usually ethnic-specific, though the Pacific New Zealand community has the ability to work collaboratively across Pan-pacific lines. For instance, the Auckland Pasefika Festival is regarded as NZ's largest festival with over 250,000 people attending over two days.

*There is strength in working together, how do we ensure that we continue to work together through our specialist interest groups, arts, sports and Pacific associations?*



*(overarching element of all capital products)*

- Does this impact on the cultural capital of the future?
- Will this affect the preservation of languages, cultural values and identity in the future?



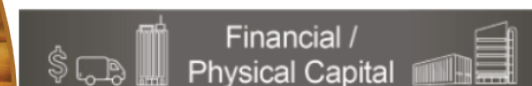
*How should we utilise the unique stock of both formal and non-formal skills and qualifications in the Pacific Community to meet our wellbeing outcomes?*

Pacific New Zealanders possess a range of traditional, specialist skills and qualifications.

*How do we ensure that we protect and preserve these traditional skills for future generations??*

Research shows that Pacific children with educationally qualified parents are more likely to become qualified themselves.

*How do we ensure that our children receive quality education, with or without educationally qualified parents?*



*How do our cultural-based stocks reduce our vulnerability to external shocks?*

Income generation is viewed as a collective financial asset which can be used to meet family commitments. Pacific youth are entering the workforce at a slightly lower rate than others.

*How do we ensure that our young Pacific NZers are being supported into entering the workforce?*

The Treasury has collaborated with the Pacific Business Trust to obtain data on Pacific NZers financial/non-financial contribution to the economy. This will identify key elements and indicators for measurement by the government.

- 13 The Proposal for a Living Standards Dashboard: Monitoring Intergenerational Wellbeing, Figure 4, p. 9, A conceptual framework for the Living Standards Dashboard, references that the role of **Culture** is an underpinning function of the LSF (Smith, 2018).

### 3. The Pacific operating model

Pacific or Māori peoples, are not individuals; we are integral parts of the cosmos. We share a divinity with our ancestors – the land, the seas and the skies. We are not individuals because we share a tofi (inheritance) with our families, our villages, and our nations. We belong to our families and our families belong to us. We belong to our villages and our villages belong to us. We belong to our nation and our nation belongs to us. This is the essence of our sense of Pacific belonging. (Tui Atua Tupu Tamasese,

Samoa Head of State Address, University of Auckland, Fale Pasefika 2008)

#### Literature reviews

The Pacific operating model draws on the work of many notable and esteemed Pacific educators, commentators and scholars<sup>14</sup>.

These Pacific researchers, authors, commentators and academics are some of the many notable Pacific scholars who have conducted research and lead thinking on Pacific methods of learning. They provide distinctive understanding on the nature of knowledge, wisdom and intelligence specific to Pacific cultures. Similar work is being undertaken and published at the National University of Samoa, the University of Papua New Guinea and the East West Centre in Hawaii.

The concern of these scholars is to affirm that indigenous epistemologies are alive and well, and that they are relevant and useful to the societies and people to whom they belong (in this case, New Zealand). This is important for us in the Treasury as lack of understanding could potentially put us on the wrong track in thinking about the LSF and its impact on the Pacific New Zealand community.

In particular, it provides us with an alternative way of thinking about physical and financial, social, cultural, human and environmental assets. It gives us a better platform to understand what these products mean for Pacific peoples, and adds value to our advice and our response to diversity and inclusion.

#### Movements of the Pacific diaspora

The Pacific diaspora is a way of understanding the movements of people through the Pacific region, which has been happening for thousands of years. Today, we see the effect of this movement with vast numbers of Pacific people now living in a place that is very different from where their ancestors would have lived. New Zealand has the largest number of people from the Pacific, living among other New Zealanders.

Officially, Pacific New Zealanders have migrated to New Zealand to find employment in “lower-skilled” roles since the 1940s. Today, 60% of Pacific New Zealanders were born here, and they are a young and growing demographic with over 35% of them being under 21; compared to a national average of 35 years. It is projected that, by 2038, Pacific New Zealanders will make up over 10% of the national population. With a younger age structure comes implications for age-related socio-economic indicators such as employment,

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<sup>14</sup> List of Pacific scholars’ work – see Appendix.

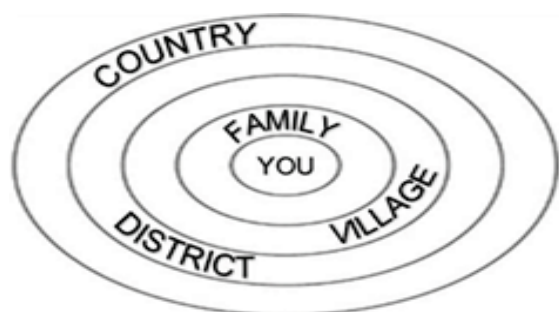
income, home ownership and crime: "...young Pacific workers is projected to grow from 7% of the youth labour force in 2006, rising to 10% in the 2020's" (Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Contemporary Pacific Status Report 2016, pp 6, 19- 32).

To inform more effective and relevant policies for our Pacific New Zealanders, we must incorporate diverse perspectives and build inclusiveness into our policies. The preferred outcome is better formed policies that attempt to close the gap between Māori, Pacific New Zealanders and other New Zealanders, acknowledging that a "one size fits all" approach does not fit New Zealand's unique, cultural setting.

## The Pacific operating model – first wave

But I, being poor, have only my dreams; I have spread my dreams under your feet; Tread softly because you tread on my dreams. (W.B. Yeats)<sup>15</sup>

**Figure 4** – Traditional Pacific operating model



The Bronfenbrenner Bioecological Model of Development (1994) below provides us with a useful framework for describing the nature of relationships that are critical to understanding the Pacific operating model. This model encompasses the concepts, perspectives, values, beliefs and knowledge that frame, drive and underpin the way Pacific people and Pacific New Zealanders behave and respond to issues that matter to them. This model highlights the family as the first and most important relationship that Pacific peoples have from birth. It highlights the priority that the collective wellbeing has over notions of individual interest.

The Pacific operating model applies to a large majority of the first "wave" or first generation of Pacific immigrants to New Zealand. The model expresses the way in which culture, values, beliefs and behaviours influence everyday life. It depicts a Pacific worldview of the relationships and groupings that are important to them. The first obligation is to the family before anything else.

The broad governance and community structures that were paramount in the Islands accompanied them to New Zealand and, for many Pacific New Zealanders, are still a relevant and applicable depiction of their relationships, priorities and their aspirations. New Zealand-born generations have continued a more contemporary representation of this approach reflecting the new physical, social and economic environment that is typical of their experiences in New Zealand.

For the first wave of immigrants and for many New Zealand-born Pacific people, the church has replaced the predominance of village leadership and community life, and has become

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<sup>15</sup> "The Cloths of Heaven" Y.B Yeats 1899

the centre of the community. This is reinforced by the church's ability to transcend and bring together people from diverse island communities and villages. The Pacific operating model reflects the important role that religion plays in the New Zealand context.

Churches are a place where social connections and networks are fostered and maintained; cultural practices and language are encouraged and reinforced, and community cohesion and identity created, reinforced and sustained. Using the living standards approach, the role of churches in the development, utilisation and the building of social and cultural capital is a significant element in the ongoing contribution of Pacific New Zealanders to the country.

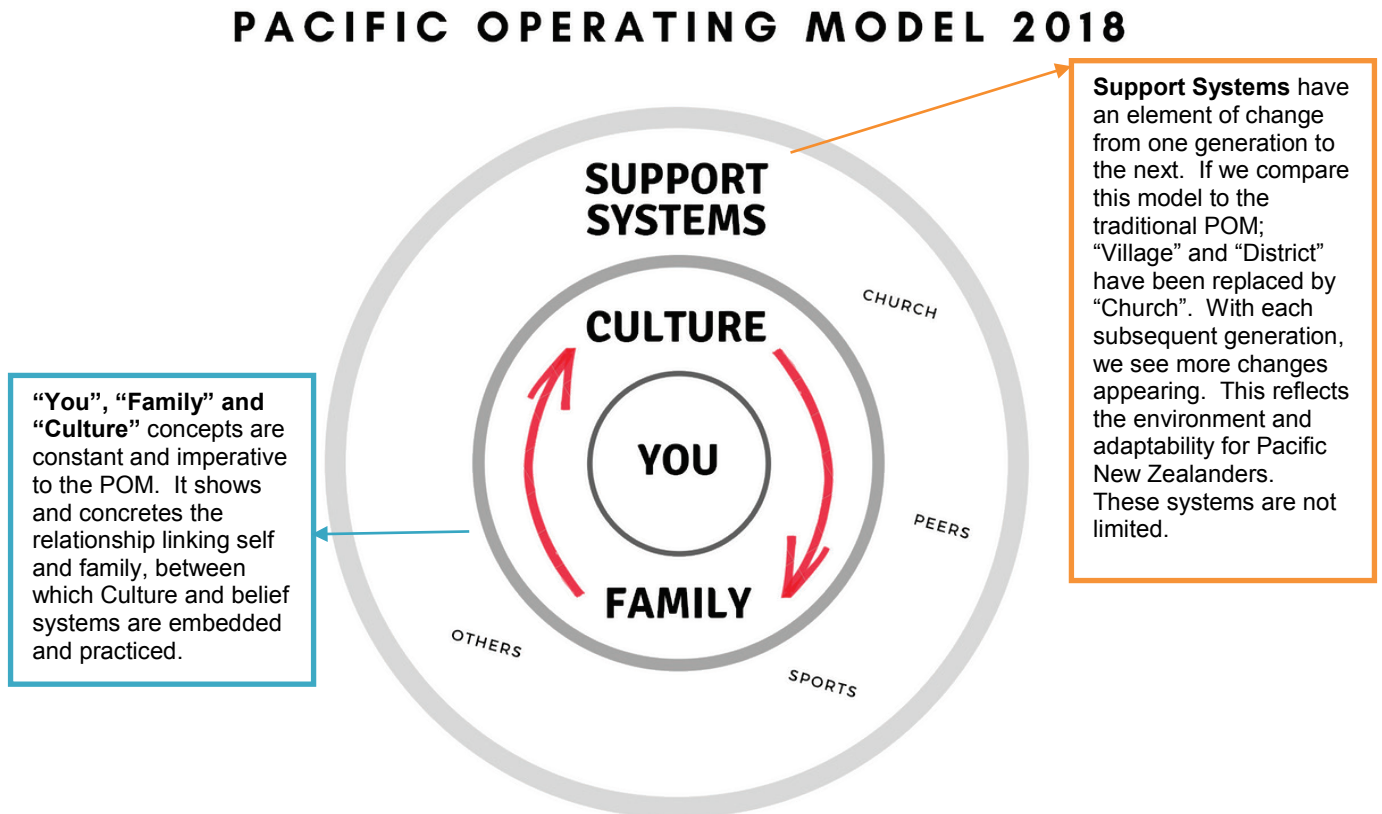
## **Pacific operating model 2018 – into the future**

The Pacific operating model has adapted with each new generation of Pacific New Zealanders, and there is no reason to suggest this will not continue through generations. The principles, values and beliefs underpinning the Pacific operating model have remained largely unchanged through the generations. The role and influence of mainstream churches, however, are showing signs of shifts as younger Pacific New Zealanders find more responsive applications and relevancy in the rise of smaller and regional, non-traditional churches. The shift denotes that the church in its various forms (mainstream, local or other) continues to be a significant institution in the lives of Pacific New Zealanders. Other support systems have risen to supplement the role of the church. These are generally expressed through peers (or friends), special interest groups, sports or sports groups, social advocacy activist groups, student bodies and local youth groups. Structures such as technology (Facebook, Instagram, other social apps), areas of work and even neighbourhood affiliations (which can be observed in the rise of neighbourhood gangs) (Bellamy, 2009), can all have a direct influence on Pacific New Zealanders, and the choices they make.

In this model, the family dynamic is intricately woven in with cultural norms and behaviours. In New Zealand, Pacific New Zealanders continue to participate and affiliate with the dominant culture, operating within the environment (context) in which they are born. While they maintain their own cultural norms, cultural diversity is also a growing feature of the operating model. Exposure and socialisation with other cultures in churches, schools, language nests and community activities is a key feature in the contemporary environment for Pacific New Zealanders. For first-wave migrants, ethnic-specific churches were the key community focus, allowing Pacific peoples to speak their native languages and practise cultural traditions freely. This has enabled the church to be a safe place for Pacific peoples to continue to grow and nourish their culture for subsequent generations. Current generations of Pacific peoples are more comfortable and enjoy the freedom to practise cultural customs and speak their native (or parents') language in different domains.

Hon Luamanuvao Winnie Laban expressed that: "When we are secure in our multiple cultural identities, and recognise our places of belonging, we are better equipped to relate to others with different cultural identities and places of belonging" (Public Address "Pacific Women in Leadership" February 2012).

**Figure 5** – Pacific operating model 2018



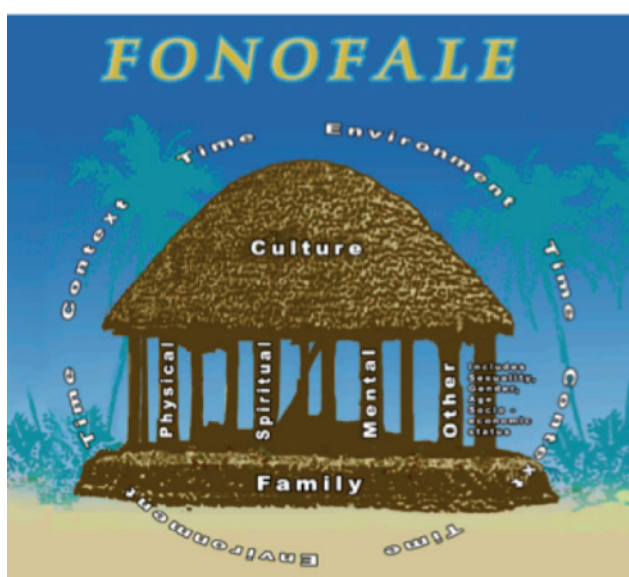
For the LSF to be relevant for Pacific New Zealanders, it is critical that any framework applied reflects what matters to them, and in a visible way. For the Treasury, understanding what is important to Pacific New Zealanders (and what is less important) are key levers in our thinking about what wellbeing means to Pacific New Zealanders and the indicators that allow us to ensure we are addressing these.



## What does a Pacific Living Standards Framework look like?

Pacific concepts of wellbeing can be informed via Pacific models of health. The Fonofale Model by Fuimaono Karl Pulotu-Endemann, 2001 (Health Promotion Forum Massey University, Wellington 2009) prescribes a model in the metaphoric shape of a fale/buru/whare/house to show wellbeing (and the concept of “wellness”) from a Pacific world view. It is dynamic in that all the aspects within the model are in constant engagement with each other. Fonofale is also particularly relevant to the Treasury as it captures both the overarching concept of culture, and the foundational concept of family, and the pillars or capital products that connect and support the two conceptual elements.

**Figure 6** – Fonofale model



The configuration of the fale represents various concepts that are key to Pacific wellbeing overall. The model highlights family as the foundation for all Pacific cultures. The roof represents the overarching element, under which all other elements important to Pacific peoples are maintained and where the values and belief systems are created. The four posts, or supporting elements (Physical, Spiritual, Mental and Other), sustain the link between family and culture. An important consideration is the connectedness between all concepts, which is influenced by environment, time and context – factors that can have direct or indirect influence on families and on individuals. Interestingly, this configuration reflects the relationship between Papa (Paptuanuku) the earth and Lagi (Ranginui) the sky, which is also a key component in the Māori view of creation.

Further considerations will need to be given in the Fonofale model to the role of language in the intergenerational wellbeing of Pacific New Zealanders and in its potential to strengthen and sustain human and social capital elements. In its strategic priorities, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples has reinforced the importance of Pacific language skills and capabilities in building academically strong, resilient children, grounded and comfortable in their identities as a precursor for later success.

The importance of language to identity is reflected in the following statement by Nelson Mandela when he famously said: “If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.”

## A Pacific lens

We have created an alternative pictorial description, which is an adaption of our current thinking about the LSF. Like the fale imagery used in the Fonofale model, we have offered the traditional Pacific art of weaving to provide an alternative depiction of our thinking around the LSF and wellbeing.

Weaving is a cultural practice that is found throughout Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia. It has pre-historic foundations and is a practice that is still prevalent in many communities, not only in New Zealand and the Pacific but also in Asia, Europe and South America.

Weaving reinforces and highlights the technical skills and competencies of the weaver, giving confidence to the wider consumer community that the practitioner is highly skilled and understands the complexities of their product. The reputation and the skills of the weaver have a direct relationship with the demand for the final product.

This practice is particularly relevant to Pacific perspectives on wellbeing because it captures the conceptual considerations that Pacific New Zealanders value. Weaving is consistent with the gathering of information from a variety of sources, analysing and interpreting it (strength, colour, texture etc.), identifying best linkages and alignments with each other and integrating it together so that it tells a comprehensive story (the product) that is accurate, fit for purpose, sustainable, flexible and future-proofed.

### Question

- How useful is the Fonofale model for capturing Pacific living standards?

**Figure 7** – Weaving – an alternative pictorial description



## 4. The four capitals and what they mean to Pacific New Zealanders

The following section unpacks what each capital product means when viewed against the Pacific operating model.

For ease of reference the definition of the capital stocks has been summarised to identify the key elements comprising each capital.

Information on these interpretations has been obtained from meta-analysis using a variety of research findings and publications, and from information held by other agencies on Pacific responsiveness.

### Human capital

...the stock of skills and qualifications that people have. The systems that people have to create value...

For Pacific peoples, the skills, qualifications and systems that build human capital stocks are based on the whole person. This includes the expectations of the role and contribution they make to the social and economic status of the family. As such, they refer to the three essences that Pacific peoples believe make us human: physical, spiritual and emotional (psychological). The Fonofale model discussed earlier captures these perspectives.

Human capital is not limited to purely formal skills or educational achievement. Knowledge of language, genealogy, myths and legends, the cosmos and the intimate relationship between people and the natural world are all valued skills and qualifications that are particularly important. Young Pacific New Zealanders are increasingly recognising the value of these skills and knowledge, and adding them to their intergenerational identity and cultural legitimacy.

In business, the most important lesson I have learned is that there is one currency that always plays the key role in forming value, and that is human capital—the knowledge, skills and experiences of people. (Milken, 2017), TAP Conference Keynote Address)

The range of specialist skills and qualifications that Pacific communities value as part of its stock of skills and qualifications include experts in indigenous music, drama, tattooing, weaving and spiritual experts. These specialisations add to the stock of skills and qualifications that Pacific New Zealanders have and challenge a more formal view of human capital in the LSF. Pacific experts tend to demand and enjoy the same status akin to (and in some cases in excess of) those holding Doctorates or other similar qualifications. Some of those recognised with these unique skills started their academic pursuit of these skills from birth. We expect similar expert categories to be found in Te Ao Māori.

Human capital can also be perceived as the investment that families and communities make in the education of their children. Pacific youth are encouraged and supported to gain formal qualifications. One reason is so that in the future they may assist in subsidising or increasing household income to help meet family obligations, and/or to lift the status of their family within the wider community. It also aligns to the Pacific expectation that children look after and support their parents at old age.



Research undertaken by the Ministry of Education in its Pasifika Education Plan notes that education is the single most influential predictor of social and economic success (Ministry of Education, 2013). Studies show that Pacific families with parents who have education qualifications are more likely to have children who are educationally qualified. This message has been grasped by Pacific parents, and research by the Treasury in 2016<sup>16</sup> concludes that a significant number of Pacific young people at university level report that their academic and professional pursuits are still very much determined by their parents.

### Question

- How can we utilise the unique stock of both formal and non-formal skills and qualifications in the Pacific community to meet our wellbeing outcomes?

## Financial and physical capital

...assets both financial and physical...

When the green hills are covered with talking wires and the wolves no longer sing, what good will the money you paid for our land be then. (Chief Seattle of the Squamish Tribe)

Among Pacific families, income generation is viewed as a collective financial asset that can be utilised to meet family commitments. While young Pacific New Zealanders are increasingly entering the workforce (albeit at a lower rate than others), their financial and physical capital contributions are still determined by family priorities and commitments.

Family priorities and obligations can appear in the form of religious contributions, remittances overseas, family events (weddings, funerals, etc.), children's school fees, rental payments, trips to the Islands for family reasons, paying for parents to travel to visit and payments for short-term loans to mention a few. Prioritising the use of finances to maintain and sustain family obligations and status is a major contributing factor to the minimal savings that Pacific New Zealanders have. Financial capital is generally used in a distributional fashion across families and is often used to trade off against other priorities. Physical capital assets are in community property such as church lands and buildings. Research on the value of these assets is currently being undertaken.

Pākehā New Zealanders may view (from their particular set of cultural glasses) with bewilderment and sometimes horror, the Pacific Island value of meeting obligations to community and extended family before their immediate personal needs. But as experiences of the Pacific Islands families in this study show, meeting these cultural imperatives is necessary to fulfilling the Pacific Islands person's sense of place within their cultural group, to both confirm identity and demonstrate affiliation. (Pasikale & George, 1995 p.68)

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<sup>16</sup> Eva Laurenson, University Study of Pacific Students report, 2016, The Treasury

The inadequacy of income<sup>17</sup> to meet basic living standards has resulted in the rise of short-term loan facilities, especially in Auckland. The ease with which short-term loans are granted has created a dependence on these types of lending facilities to supplement living costs.

High levels of household debt which, in many cases, have become intergenerational, continue to be a significant element precluding full participation of many Pacific communities in building physical and financial capital and the uptake of business development opportunities available to other New Zealanders.

The reliance on short-term, excessive-interest-rate loans is a key contributor to the maintenance of the remittance flow to the region. For many Pacific families, disproportionate debt levels, interest rates for short-term loans in excess of 100% and erratic repayments generally prevent families from accessing physical and financial opportunities that are available to other communities. As a result, poor credit ratings, overcrowding and low home ownership rates are features that influence access by Pacific New Zealanders to physical and financial capital. This has also influenced geographical distribution of the Auckland population. This has led Associate Professor Damon Salesa from Auckland University to comment during a national radio interview that: “Unlike other ethnic communities, Auckland’s Pacific population live in ‘locked-out segregation’”<sup>18</sup> (Salesa, 2017).

In an effort to obtain quantitative and qualitative data the Government could use to benchmark Pacific economic contribution, and the sectors in which these occur, the Treasury has collaborated with the Pacific Business Trust to commence a national economic research project. This project aims to provide quantitative and qualitative data on Pacific New Zealanders financial and physical contribution to the economy. It will identify key elements and indicators the Government can use to target and track real and actual progress in raising living standards for Pacific New Zealanders.

#### *Question*

- How do our culturally based stocks reduce our vulnerabilities to external shocks?

## **Social capital**

...the cultural, philosophical and ethical norms of society and the social and political institutions and the way people interact...

The main responsibilities of an individual were not for himself or herself but for various groups to which he or she belonged. Individualism as we know it was considered selfish and anti-social behaviour. (Hau'ofa, 1985)

Social capital for Pacific revolves around the role, influence and impact of cultural norms, values and beliefs on behaviours and ways of thinking. For Pacific New Zealanders, the sense of connectedness and family relationships are important factors. The default position for Pacific is to view themselves and the world from a collective perspective. Thus, group values and beliefs are integrated into discussions on wellbeing. The cultural drive towards group considerations is Pacific New Zealanders' most significant social capital: “Pacific

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<sup>17</sup> Pacific New Zealanders' median personal income was \$19,700 vs. the national median income of \$28,500 (Stats NZ, 2013).

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/sunday/audio/2018624858/damon-salesa-our-pacific-future>

cultures are family-oriented and, in general, value collective wellbeing more than individual gain” (Ministry of Pacific Peoples, 2011).

Community collectives are usually on ethnic-specific lines but they also have the ability to work collaboratively across pan-Pacific groups to meet shared interests and common objectives. Institutions that build social capital include sports and cultural clubs, kava clubs set up to coordinate and manage family remittances to the Pacific, and women’s committees.

The role of the church as one of the major institutions for Pacific New Zealanders is particularly important in this area, as are other support systems (as seen in the Pacific operating model 2018).

Evidence of the strength of social capital stocks that Pacific New Zealanders enjoy can be found in many sectors. For example, in the sports arena, the Tongan community with the support of other Pacific communities organised a celebration nearly as big as the Auckland Christmas parade in just a few hours on social media (the Ōtāhuhu Rugby League World Cup parade). This capability highlighted what commentators have described as a “powerful magnet” sport can be for cultural pride.

Associate Professor Salesa noted that with “That kind of ability and power, those kinds of relationships, should really make us wake up and think – look at the potential that lies in these communities”<sup>19</sup> (Salesa, 2017).

An established cultural institution can be evidenced in the success and growth of the annual Auckland Pasifika Festival. This festival is now regarded as the largest festival in New Zealand with attendance over the two days of 250,000 people from across New Zealand.

Special interest groups (music, arts, sports, dance) aligned to churches, and Pacific associations (tiavaevae, fitness clubs, etc.) all provide the social capital necessary to build and sustain social and community cohesion, stability, cultural identity and a sense of belonging. These experiences are shown to be critical to success within the formal education system (Ministry of Education, 2013).

### *Questions*

- What other impact do you see social capital having on families and communities?
- How important is social capital for building trust between government and communities?
- Does social capital as it is defined sufficiently capture the role and influence of Pacific institutions?

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/sunday/audio/2018624858/damon-salesa-our-pacific-future>

## Natural capital

...environmental sources, extracted resources and renewable resources...

Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.  
(Chief Seattle of the Squamish Tribe)

Natural capital is an increasing concern amongst Pacific New Zealanders, especially amongst young Pacific New Zealanders. As subsequent generations of Pacific New Zealanders are expanding and growing, we are finding that their appreciation of the value of the natural environment is also increasing significantly. Evidence from virtual and social networks shows an increasing awareness of the threats to natural capital in Aotearoa and the climate threats to their ancestral homelands.

Pacific New Zealanders hold great value and respect for the natural environment as part of their cultural connection to the natural environment. While the Pacific diaspora population has strong and traditional interest in regional issues such as the threats posed by climate change and fisheries to their homelands, the lack of substantial natural assets in New Zealand limits the conversation to threats posed by climate change, over-fishing and rising sea levels; and the implications for Pacific Island countries. As a general observation, Pacific New Zealanders are highly attuned to the issues and threats to the Pacific region and to their homelands. The advances in virtual and social networks have meant that the connections between communities in New Zealand and in the Pacific are close and almost instantaneous and the exchange of information is highly active and robust, especially in the areas of natural resource management, regional governance and global threats.

At a micro level, Pacific New Zealanders often take the opportunity to trade their home-grown natural goods at local markets (Otara, Mangere, Waitangirua etc.). These markets, however, are more than transactional events. They serve a significant community purpose which is found in its ability to create new networks, exchange and share information, as a mentoring forum for new business opportunities, and an important mechanism for connecting and reinforcing relationships between various communities (including Pacific Island, Asian and others).

### *Question*

- How important is New Zealand's natural resource base to Pacific New Zealanders?

## 5. What is the LSF and why is it important?

If standard of living is your major objective, quality of life almost never improves, but if quality of life is your number one objective your standard of living almost always improves. (Zig Ziglar, “The Life of Your Choice” 2013 p.173)

In May 2011, the Treasury published a Living Standards Framework which was developed to guide the objectives and formulation of public policy in the organisation. This paper outlines the key developments in thinking about living standards which underpins and presents the conceptual framework, and includes a discussion of factors that are important for living standards.

In performing its role as the Government’s lead economic and financial adviser the Treasury’s policy advice focuses on how improved economic performance can enhance people’s lives. The Treasury is a central government agency and has oversight over all significant policy issues across the State sector. As such, it acknowledges that living standards are broader than income alone, and are determined by a wide range of material and non-material factors. In addition, the Treasury’s roles require consideration of how policy decisions affect the distribution of living standards across the population.

To support these roles, the Treasury uses a Living Standards Framework to guide its strategic objectives and policy advice.

The framework was developed for two primary reasons:

- 1) to provide a clear view of, and theoretical underpinning for, the organisation’s objectives (both for internal and external audiences)
- 2) to assist the organisation in providing robust advice on complex policy issues, ensuring that the range of relevant factors are considered.

While relatively new, the framework is already making a meaningful contribution to the Treasury’s advice, particularly at the level of organisational priorities and large policy projects. There has been demand for a policy tool that can be more easily used by analysts to apply the framework to policy issues.

This section outlines the Pacific view of the LSF. It unpacks the four capital products and what they look like when viewed from a Pacific perspective. A number of specific papers have been developed which examine each capital product and what they mean for the Treasury and New Zealand as a whole noting further refinements as we move towards the Wellbeing Budget 2019, and beyond.

The OECD views the four capitals in terms of their value in understanding indicators of sustainable intergenerational (meaning current, long-term and risks and opportunities) wellbeing.

The work we undertake in the Treasury across the different domains of the LSF, in particular the inclusion of other cultural perspectives, including Māori and Pacific, may well broaden our understanding of the LSF and the key capital products that are unique to New Zealand. We expect that these working definitions and their emphasis in the paper/s are likely to shift as

more quantitative and qualitative data become available, and as we acquire more depth to our understanding of the issues that matter to Pacific New Zealanders.

Some key areas for consideration in our thinking of the capital products include:

- whether the four capitals are growing and whether they are likely to be sustained
- social and demographic inequities and their impact on wellbeing
- how the flow of current benefits impacts on long-term outcomes
- the impact of resource allocation decisions on current or long-term wellbeing.

The LSF allows the Treasury to ask how policy advice can improve if the imperfect measure of wellbeing – income – is brought together with other data into a single framework.

This paper hopes to generate discussion on the unique perspectives there are about Pacific wellbeing, which are particular to this population (and relevant to our thinking on the LSF, economic policies and systems).

Understanding the elements to wellbeing that are unique to Pacific New Zealanders is an important first step in identifying how these might be measured, tracked and monitored.

We anticipate debate and discussion on the various papers developed by the Treasury on the LSF, some of which will have relevance to Pacific populations (similar to that identified for the OECD for its member countries). We also anticipate that this paper will identify priorities that are unique and important to Pacific New Zealanders which the Treasury will need to incorporate in its thinking.

## Dashboard indicators

This paper is one of a suite of papers that the Treasury intends to consider when assessing what the wellbeing indicators might look like from a range of perspectives. It is expected that this paper will help to inform the development of indicators considered suitable for understanding intergenerational wellbeing in New Zealand, with particular reference to Pacific New Zealanders. Indicators that best meet wellbeing outcomes (including measures) will, together, form a dashboard of indicators, which Ministers will consider for Budget 2019 decision-making.

There are three types of indicators being considered at present:

- best evidence indicators for comparison between New Zealand and other countries, to understand current and future trends in wellbeing
- New Zealand-specific indicators of current and long-term wellbeing, particularly with respect to the Treaty of Waitangi obligations and values, and other aspects of New Zealand's unique diversity
- indicators for current policy priorities that supplement the medium to long-term focus of other indicators to support short-term-focused action by government and government agencies.

For Pacific New Zealanders, identifying the unique indicators that we can demonstrate make a difference to family and community wellbeing outcomes will be part of the discussions for the *Dashboard*.

This paper recognises the holistic nature of the Pacific operating model and the challenges this model may pose to the OECD measurement process. However, we anticipate that this approach will resonate closely with a Te Ao Māori worldview, and we expect that similar challenges to the OCED measurement indicators will likely occur within the Māori domain.

## 6. Indicators

### Data on Pacific New Zealanders

Across the board, and mentioned previously, we know that there is a lack of comprehensive data and evidence on the growing Pacific economy. The paper also recognises that a number of agencies collect data on Pacific New Zealanders relevant to their own purposes. The Pacific Economic Research project currently underway within the Treasury and the Pacific Business Trust will provide us with quantitative and qualitative economic information and data on the scope, coverage and value of the Pacific's economic contribution to the New Zealand economy. The project will help identify the potential opportunities for targeting government investment for raising, and prioritising, living standards relevant to all New Zealanders.

#### The Treasury's Pacific Economic Research project 2017–18

The Treasury's Pacific Strategy recognises the importance of obtaining accurate and ongoing research data that establish the current value, composition and contribution of the Pacific economy to New Zealand. This project will provide us with reliable and comprehensive data on the range and description of Pacific capital products and activities that comprise the Pacific collective wealth and its real and potential contribution to the New Zealand economy. This information will enable us to consider appropriate policy and operational benchmarks (including the consideration of downstream targets) for improving and sustaining Pacific economic performance in the longer term.

The project is a collaborative effort between the Treasury and Crown entity, the Pacific Business Trust. The analysis of the data obtained will be guided by the Treasury Living Standards Framework. The framework will also act as a roadmap for coordinating the project's planning, research and data gathering and analysis activities. Unlike other economic research projects, attention will be given to the less visible aspects of the economy such as the total contribution families make to churches; the value of Pacific-owned church assets, and their role within the Pacific economy. Included in this analysis, the project will examine the size of remittances to the Pacific Islands. It will also offer an estimate of the benefit cost of non-financial contributions that proffer to a stable and cohesive community and society; and sum up financial contributions that Pacific New Zealanders make to industries such as the arts and cultural sectors within the New Zealand economy.

...Pacific Islands families, family income cannot be used as an accurate measure of individual family members' access to the economic resources available in the household. Family and collective need has priority over individual need. (Pasikale & George, p.50-51 1995)

The project was launched in December 2016. The first preliminary milestone report from the project team is currently being considered by the governance group in the Treasury.



## Objective indicators

In our search of objective measures of wellbeing for Pacific New Zealanders, we have looked closely at the *Pacific Identity and Wellbeing Scale – Revised* (PIWBS-R) (Manuela & Sibley, 2015) as a measure of ethnic group identification and wellbeing. The PIWBS-R is the first psychometric measure developed specifically for Pacific New Zealanders and provides researchers with alternative avenues to explore Pacific identities and wellbeing. This psychometric tool, incorporates a holistic view of the self from a Pacific perspective. The overall model provides the best psychometric and quantitative equivalent to the holistic conceptualisation of the Pacific self to date. We reference the work in the PIWBS-R at this point to provide the Treasury with a suitable benchmark from which we can objectively view what matters to Pacific New Zealanders and what key indicators can be deployed to measure forward progress in these areas.

The PIWBS-R is described as a culturally appropriate measure that assesses six factors of Pacific identity and wellbeing. It was developed through an integration and synthesis of both Pacific and psychological research concerning ethnic identity and subjective wellbeing (see Manuela & Sibley, 2013, 2014a, 2014b). It is a unique tool as it provides a quantitative approach to understanding the holistic conceptualisation of the Pacific self (see, for example, the Fonofale model discussed in this paper: Crawley, Pulotu-Endemann, & Stanley-Findlay, 1995).

The PIWBS-R has six factors for assessing Pacific identity and wellbeing:

- Perceived Familial Wellbeing
- Perceived Societal Wellbeing
- Group Membership Evaluation
- Pacific Connectedness and Belonging
- Religious Centrality and Embeddedness
- Cultural Efficacy.

A copy of the original PIWBS is presented in Manuela and Sibley (2013). Here the analyses indicate that participants who identify with the four largest Pacific nations groups in New Zealand (Samoa, Cook Islands, Tonga and Niue) are responding to, and interpreting, items of the PIWBS-R in a similar way to each other. Furthermore, the research found a small but significant difference in the Religious Centrality and Embeddedness factor where Tongan participants scored higher relative to their Cook Island and Niuean counterparts, even after controlling for gender, age, place of birth and religious status. This finding was consistent with patterns of religious affiliation within Pacific groups in New Zealand and is also a feature in the Pacific operating model. There were no other significant differences between groups in other constructs of the PIWBS-R.

These findings show that the PIWBS-R provides an important and psychometrically sound tool to advance psychological knowledge concerning the ethnic identity and wellbeing of Pacific peoples in New Zealand. The results presented here provide evidence that the PIWBS-R is performing equally well across groups. This is important for two reasons:

1. The PIWBS-R was explicitly designed as a pan-Pacific research tool. As the scale was developed based on common elements of identity and wellbeing across the Pacific nations, the report argues that it can be used to pursue identity and wellbeing research for the Pacific group at a general level.
2. The evidence obtained from the PIWBS-R demonstrates that the tool performs well for the groups assessed and that this may lead to even more specific measures of identity and wellbeing for the Pacific groups.

The PIWBS-R provides an objective avenue for the development of intra-ethnic and wellbeing indicators for Pacific New Zealanders.

In assessing Pacific wellbeing, a more simplified version of the PIWBS-R will need to be devised without losing the essential measurement elements of the tool.

### Questions

- Are these objective indicators suitable for tracking wellbeing outcomes for Pacific New Zealanders?
- Which of these objective indicators would you consider is a priority at this stage?

## Subjective indicators

Subjective wellbeing is determined by an individual's evaluation of their life and measures "life satisfaction and happiness" (King, Anita; Huseynli, Gulnara; MacGibbon, Nairnt, Treasury Discussion paper 18/01 2018). Wellbeing is thus related to quality of life, happiness and satisfaction.

Our aim is to improve living standards, and we need to be honest about addressing problems at the root, rather than providing short-term fixes for symptoms. To do this effectively we need solid dependable and reliable data and information that provide us with insight into the real issues facing Pacific New Zealanders.

### Factors impacting on Pacific measures of wellbeing and life satisfaction

The assumptions made in this paper are that there are specific and unique indicators that are particular to Pacific New Zealanders.

Consultations with Ministry of Health and Pacific Health providers on their perspectives on Pacific wellbeing and what it means from a population health perspective have indicated that, for many Pacific New Zealanders, answering survey and research questions that do not reflect the cultural contexts of Pacific families and communities inevitably results in a distortion of the data. Tuhiwai Smith's May 2012 work on "Decolonising Methodologies", Waikato University, underscores the risk that mainstream analysts run in not critiquing their own "gaze" when assessing quantitative data and research on indigenous peoples and those from minority groups. This impacts on understanding the real issues and factors relevant to

them; in particular, the focus of surveys on individuals, as opposed to families and groups, which reflect the lived experiences of Pacific New Zealanders across the board.

An example can be demonstrated in the life satisfaction self-reporting survey results and in the Ministry of Health's own self-reporting surveys on the state of Pacific New Zealanders' health. The annual survey<sup>20</sup> subjectively asks participants what they think about their health status. Pacific New Zealanders consistently report good health. The survey integrates these responses within the broader responses for health in general. A number of issues immediately surface surrounding critical mass considerations and the visibility of ethnic-specific responses within broader data sets. The other issue can be demonstrated in the clear difference between the survey data versus the actual costs of primary and secondary care engagement and hospital admissions for Pacific New Zealanders. Understanding that Pacific New Zealanders will almost always report good health, discounting chronic health issues such as diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity and so forth, can undermine the integrity of the data.

The cultural interpretations of the questions asked and the corresponding answers will inevitably affect the reliability of the data for the family and social services sector, and the justice and security sectors (these sectors are reflected in the OECD indicators).

Recognising this, subjective indicator questions need to be carefully crafted (including awareness of English as a second language) to ensure participants fully understand what is being asked.

#### *Question*

- What sorts of questions should we be asking in the surveys to get the most accurate data on Pacific New Zealanders?

We invite your feedback on the above, and any others you see as relevant.

#### **Questions**

- Is our understanding of Pacific perspectives in this discussion paper accurate and sufficient for capturing Pacific perspectives on the Living Standards Framework?
- What elements do you believe comprise Pacific wellbeing that is unique to, and for, Pacific New Zealanders?
- How will we know that we are tracking in the right direction to meet wellbeing outcomes?
- How can we integrate Pacific perspectives into the Living Standards Framework?
  - More communication?
  - Specific reference to relevant indicators?
  - Regional or ethnic differences?
  - More emphasis on cultural diversity adding value?
  - More qualitative analysis and research?
  - Focus on two to three sectors?

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<sup>20</sup> Annual Update of Key Results 2016/17: New Zealand Health Survey

## Pacific wellbeing indicators (suggested)

Based on the section above, we have suggested some indicators we believe we should focus on initially. This is not an exhaustive list, but should be viewed as more of a steer to help our thinking in this area. The following outlines the key areas our research and consultations have identified (supported by the work of Dr Manuela and Dr Sibley) are possible indicators for Pacific wellbeing:

- Family Resilience
- Pacific Connectedness and Belonging
- Religious Centrality and Embeddedness
- Cultural Recognition.

We invite your feedback on the questions posed in this paper.

## Next steps

The Treasury intends to develop a dashboard of indicators suitable for understanding intergenerational wellbeing in New Zealand. The dashboard of indicators will need to be robust relevant to New Zealand and intergenerational.

Feedback on the *Proposal for a Living Standards Dashboard* and consultation on this paper, and others relating to the LSF, will be incorporated to form the suite of indicators that will eventually become the standard in measuring New Zealand's intergenerational wellbeing and living standards.

We encourage you to submit your feedback on this paper, and any others. The online version of the paper identifies the process for providing feedback on this paper.

# Consultations

## Initial consultation into the draft discussion paper

The following groups and agencies were asked to provide input into the draft papers.

- Interagency officials – Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry of Health, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand Police Pacific Strategy, New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Te Puni Kōiri
- Porirua community and business leaders
- Pacific Education Centre Chief Executive and team
- Manukau Institute of Technology Pasefika team Auckland
- Alliance Community Initiative Trust Auckland
- South Seas Healthcare Otara
- Pacific Business Trust

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# Appendix – List of Pacific scholars

## Further suggested reading

### **Professor Konai Helu Thaman, University of the South Pacific, Fiji**

- Ako and Faiako: Cultural values, educational ideas and teachers role perceptions in Tonga (1988)
- Kakala (1993)
- Reclaiming a place: Towards a Pacific concept of education for cultural development, *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 106(2), 119–130. (1997)

### **Dr Unaisi Nabobo, Fiji National University**

- Knowing and learning: An indigenous Fijian approach (2006)
- Education for sustainable development: An annotated bibliography

### **Dr Teweiariki Teaero, Centre of Pacific Island Studies, Hawaii**

- First wave: Pond storms, *Buakan te nei* (2004)
- Mwamira Teuana: Songs from Kiribati (2004)

### **Dr ‘Ana Maui, Taufe‘ulungaki University of the South Pacific in Tonga**

- Language and culture in the Pacific regions: Issues, practices and alternatives (2005)
- Language community attitudes and their implications for the maintenance and promotion of the Tongan language

### **Professor Tagaloa Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, Auckland University of Technology**

- Gender, culture and sustainable development – The Pacific way

### **Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese, Head of State of Samoa**

- Clutter in indigenous knowledge, research and history: A Samoan perspective (2005)
- Bioethics and the Samoan indigenous reference (2010)
- Talanoaga na loma ma ga’opo’a (2000)
- Whispers and vanities in Samoan indigenous religious culture

### **Dr Epeli Hau‘ofa, University of the South Pacific, Tonga**

- Our sea of islands (1993)
- Tales of the Tikongs (1983)
- Kisses in the Nederends (1987)
- We are the ocean (2008)



### **Associate Professor Damon Salesa, University of Auckland**

- Island time: New Zealand's Pacific futures
- Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the peoples of the Pacific (2012)
- Our Pacific future is already here: <https://e-tangata.co.nz/comment-and-analysis/damon-salesa-our-pacific-future-is-already-here/>

### **Teremoana Ma-Ua Hodges**

- Tivaevae – A Cook Island model of wellbeing  
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### **Clunney Macpherson, Paul Spoonley, and Melanie Anae**

- Tangata o te Moana nui: The evolving identities of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa/New Zealand (2001)

### **Michael Field**

- The Mau: Samoa's struggle for freedom (1984)

### **Oscar Kightley**

- Dawn raids (2017)

### **NZ History online**

- Dawn raids: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/the-1970s/1976>

### **Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand**

- NZ in the Pacific