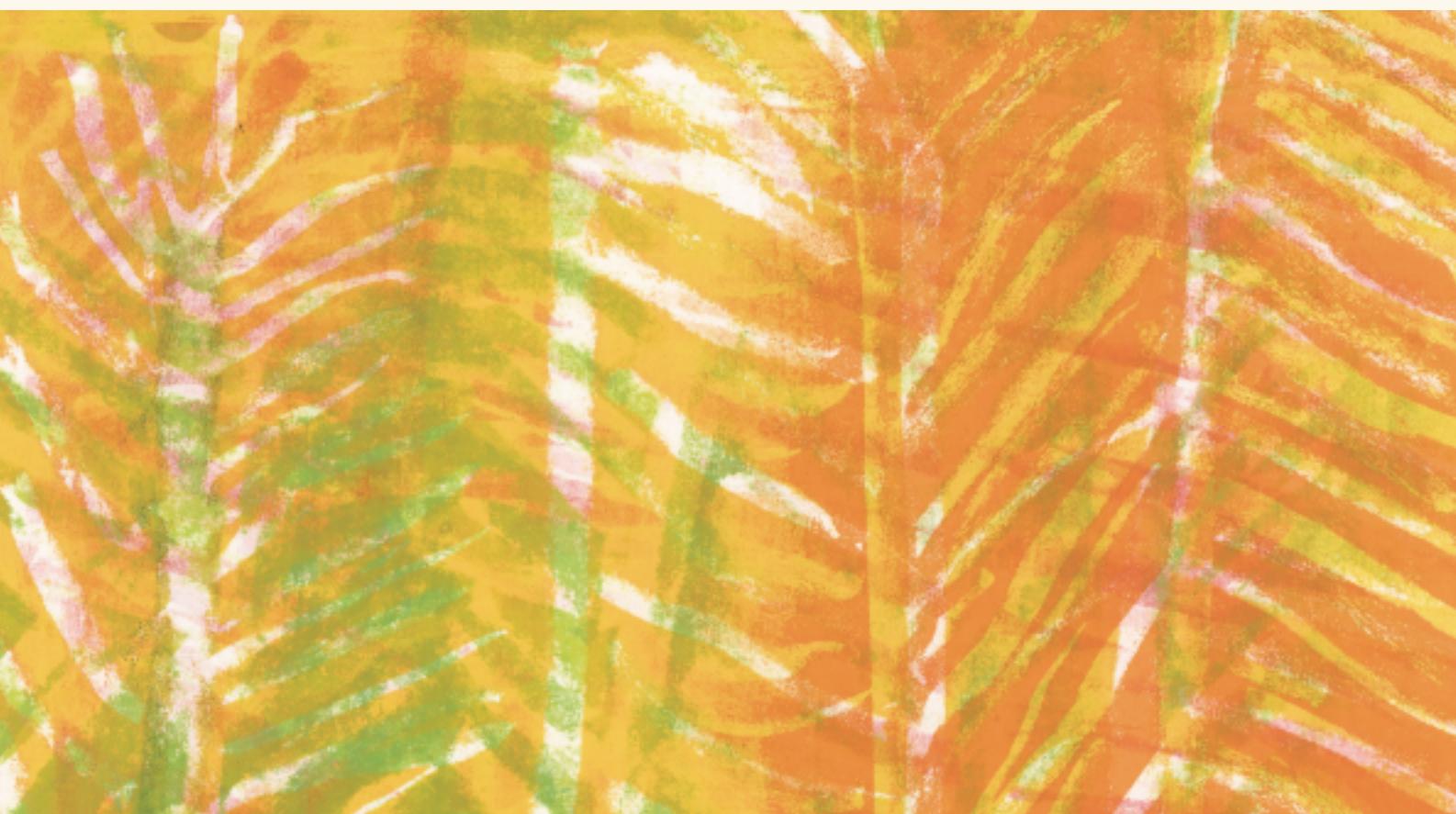


Opportunity for All New Zealanders



*Together we can make a difference.
Together we can make New Zealand a land of opportunity for all.*





All artwork used in this publication has been created by members of Art Compass. Art Compass is a studio-gallery supporting artists with intellectual impairments. Participants are encouraged by professional artists to explore the potential of art-making as a vocational choice; an alternative form of communication; cultural expression; and a tool for (self-) advocacy and integration.

Art Compass demonstrates that being an artist can be the foundation of a skill-based identity and career that holds more promise for development and integration than limiting disability labels.

Artists include: Yelena Barbalich, Idan Gavison, Francis Crosbie, Lisa McConnochie.

*Office of the Minister for Social Development and Employment
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Opportunity for All New Zealanders



Social development means a commitment to equality of opportunity and a fair go for everyone. It means providing social protection for vulnerable New Zealanders: a helping hand during hard times.

And it means investing in our people, our future: spending the money today that will ensure better health, education, and employment outcomes tomorrow.

Ministerial Foreword



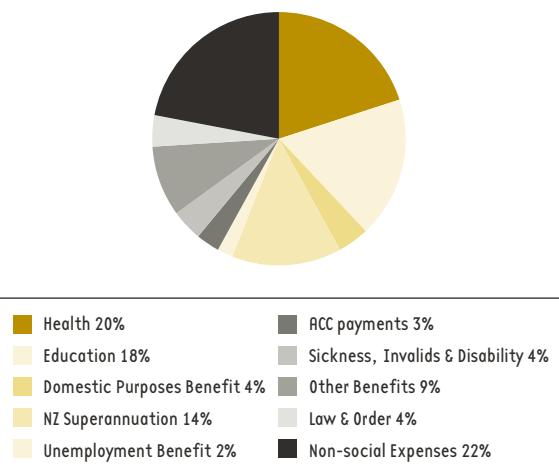
The publication of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* is a significant event. It is the first time any New Zealand Government has sought to develop and publish a summary statement of its strategies to improve social outcomes.

The New Zealand social policy portfolio has been built up over more than 100 years. New social policy initiatives are often introduced as a response to immediate needs at the time. In addition they are often developed in a silo context, without consideration of a broader social policy direction. As a result, we have inherited a portfolio of social policies that is not in all respects coherent or well-geared to the needs of today, let alone the future.

Today, social expenditure totals approximately \$37.4 billion for 2004/2005, or 78% of core Crown expenses. While the bulk is clustered within the “big three” Votes (health, education and social development), social expenditure is spread over 22 different Votes.

Given its size and the impact the state social sector has on the lives of New Zealanders, it is vitally important that governments ensure wise and coherent management of the social portfolio. Social expenditure is the area where New Zealand makes the human and social capital investments

Core Crown Expenses in 2004/2005 (\$44.5 billion)



that will determine the country’s success – not only socially, but also economically.

Social development and economic development go hand in hand. *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* is a strategic co-ordinating framework for sustainable social development. It takes its place alongside the *Growth and Innovation Framework*, the Government’s strategic co-ordinating framework for sustainable economic development. Together, these documents chart a way forward for a prosperous and inclusive New Zealand.

Opportunity for All New Zealanders paints a big picture of the Government’s social strategies,



which aim both to protect New Zealanders who experience poor outcomes, and to invest in the future success of New Zealand and its people. It does not attempt to provide an encyclopaedic account of everything the Government does to improve social wellbeing. *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* focuses on the developmental directions pursued by the Government since 1999, and highlights some current priorities.

This Government is committed to making a difference and improving the quality of life of all New Zealanders. We have taken a deliberate and long-term view.

We want to improve and sustain the quality of life enjoyed by all New Zealanders, now and in the future. We want to reduce the levels of disadvantage experienced by some New Zealanders, and hold fast to the tradition of New Zealand as a land of opportunity where everyone gets a fair go.

Fundamental to this approach is a commitment to social justice - valuing the equal worth of all people, promoting their right to be able to meet their basic needs, spreading opportunities as widely as possible, and eliminating unjustified inequalities.

In the 21st century, it will be the capacity, capability and contributions of our people that will decide how successful New Zealand is as a

nation. We need to extend economic opportunity to all. We need strong social institutions, strong families, and strong communities that enable people to thrive in a demanding global environment. We have to invest in people as a top priority, so they feel secure and are able and willing to participate in our society and to face the challenges arising from constant change. Communities do not become strong because they are rich; they become rich because they are strong.

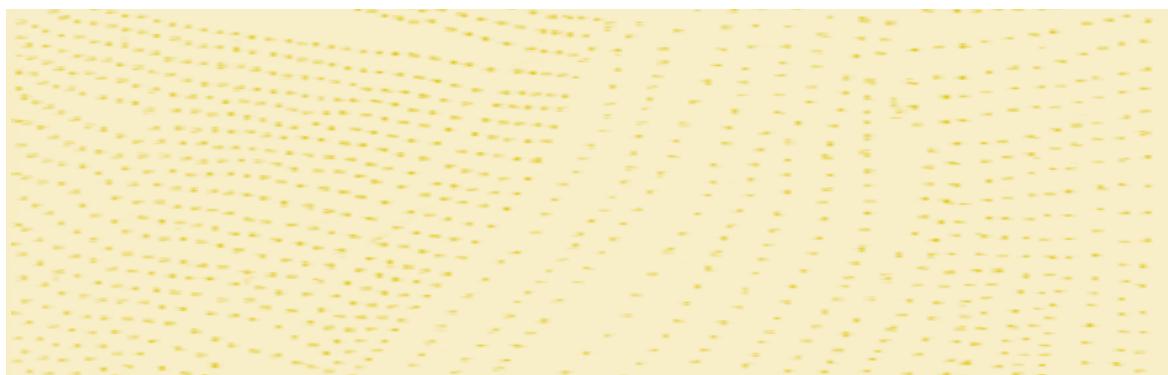
Opportunity for All New Zealanders has been produced in the first instance as a prototype. It is a document that will develop and evolve over time. Before *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* is re-issued, we will be listening carefully to the views of New Zealanders on how the Government's social policy can best meet the needs of present and future New Zealanders. We welcome wide public discussion and debate on the Government's objectives and priorities for sustainable social development.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Maharey".

Hon Steve Maharey
Minister for Social Development and Employment

Table of Contents

Ministerial Foreword	2	Health	34
Executive Summary	5	Social Cohesion	38
Part 1: Improving Wellbeing through Social Development	9	Safety	41
Introduction	10	Civil and Political Rights	44
A Vision for New Zealand and its People	11	National Identity	46
Two Overarching Goals	11	Leisure and Recreation	49
Sustainable Development	12	Physical Environment	51
Social Development and Economic Development	13	Keeping a Big Picture	53
Central Government and Social Wellbeing	14	Part 2: Critical Social Issues	55
Māori and Social Policy	15	Introduction	56
The State of the Nation	16	Improving Educational Achievement Among Low Socio-economic Groups	58
Social Wellbeing Outcomes	16	Increasing Opportunities for People to Participate in Sustainable Employment	63
Social Wellbeing at a Glance	16	Promoting Healthy Eating and Healthy Activity	69
Recent Progress in Improving Social Outcomes	18	Reducing Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse	72
Continuing Challenges	18	Minimising Family Violence, and Abuse and Neglect of Children and Older Persons	76
A Changing Population	19	Conclusion	80
Investing in Social Development	20	Selected References	81
What Government is Doing to Improve Social Wellbeing	21	Endnotes	84
Knowledge and Skills	22		
Employment	26		
Economic Standard of Living	31		



Executive Summary

Opportunity for All New Zealanders summarises the Government's social policy and strategies for sustainable social development. It is presented as the Government's response to the state of the nation, as reflected in *The Social Report 2004*.

Social development and economic development go hand in hand. *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* is a strategic co-ordinating framework for social development. It takes its place alongside the *Growth and Innovation Framework*, the Government's strategic co-ordinating framework for economic development. Both documents are best read alongside *Sustainable Development for New Zealand*, which is the Government's overarching strategy for a sustainable future for New Zealand.

Part 1 of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* explains the Government's overall approach to improving the wellbeing of New Zealanders. Using a broad framework provided by *The Social Report*, *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* describes in summary what the Government is doing and why it is doing it.

Part 2 of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* presents five critical social issues that the Government has identified as priorities for interagency action over the next three to five years.

A Vision for Social Development

The vision that inspires the Government's social policy is:

An inclusive New Zealand where all people enjoy opportunity to fulfil their potential, prosper and participate in the social, economic, political and cultural life of their communities and nation.

The Government's two overarching social policy goals are:

- achieving and sustaining improvements in social wellbeing for all New Zealanders
- reducing disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity for all New Zealanders.

Social development is a process of co-ordinated social change that:

- promotes the wellbeing of the population as a whole and of disadvantaged groups within it
- aims to improve a broad range of social outcomes (eg health, education, housing, employment, living standards and safety), rather than focusing on any one outcome to the exclusion of others
- focuses on improving the social wellbeing of New Zealanders throughout their lives
- maintains effective social protection systems, to respond to the needs of individuals, groups and communities who have encountered difficulties
- invests in people and in the social institutions that enable them to fulfil their potential, prosper and participate in the social, economic, political and cultural life of their communities and nation.

The Government acknowledges and affirms the many agents who contribute to and bear responsibility for social wellbeing: individuals; families/whānau; neighbourhoods, communities and iwi; the community and voluntary sector; the private sector; local government; and central government.

Opportunity for All New Zealanders addresses only the roles and responsibilities of central

government with respect to social wellbeing. Government's aim is to promote freedom with responsibility, and to support people, families and communities to run their own lives wherever possible.

What the Government is Doing to Improve Social Outcomes

The Social Report 2004 paints a picture of broadly improving social outcomes for the population taken as a whole. Social conditions in New Zealand compare favourably with those in other developed countries. However, a number of challenges remain. *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* describes these challenges, and sets out what Government is doing to address them.

Part 1 of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* is broadly structured around the 10 domains of social wellbeing identified in *The Social Report*. It identifies key objectives and maps central government activity for each domain.

Knowledge and Skills

- equip New Zealanders with 21st-century skills
- reduce systematic under-achievement in education, so that all school leavers have the skills and knowledge to gain sustainable employment, to pursue further education and to contribute to society and become leaders and innovators.

Employment

- maximise the number of jobs that provide opportunities to increase potential and enhance productivity
- minimise persistent disadvantage in the labour market and enhance the sustainability of employment
- improve the quality of people's working lives.

Economic Standard of Living

- improve all New Zealanders' incomes through economic growth
- make work pay - support labour market participation and help people, particularly families with dependent children, move into and remain in employment
- improve access to stable, affordable, quality housing.

Health

- improve the health status of all New Zealanders
- reduce health inequalities experienced by disadvantaged groups
- provide a publicly funded health system that performs to high standards and that New Zealanders can trust.

Social Cohesion

- promote social cohesion and build a strong, thriving and inclusive society.

Safety

- reduce crime in our communities
- improve safety and wellbeing through partnerships with the community.

Civil and Political Rights

- improve access to and delivery of court services and related child, youth and family services
- increase public confidence in the police, judiciary and other justice institutions
- improve relationships among the many communities that make up New Zealand
- improve laws governing family relationships and other private dealings
- promote voter registration and active citizenship
- enhance the transparency of government.

National Identity

- strengthen New Zealand's cultural and national identity
- promote and preserve a unique, shared heritage
- build strong creative industries.

Leisure and Recreation

- increase New Zealanders' level of physical activity
- encourage, promote and support the arts and cultural activities.

Physical Environment

- improve New Zealanders' quality of life while protecting the quality of our environment.

For each domain, *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* describes what the Government is doing to achieve these objectives, and acknowledges continuing challenges. Key government strategies are listed for each domain.

Critical Social Issues

Having reviewed continuing challenges for each domain of social wellbeing in Part 1 of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*, Part 2 identifies five issues as critical for sustained interagency attention over the next three to five years. None of these issues can be addressed effectively by a single agency working alone. So the Government has directed clusters of agencies to work together in new ways, to achieve a measurable improvement in social outcomes.

Five issues have been identified as critical:

- improving educational achievement among low socio-economic groups

- increasing opportunities for people to participate in sustainable employment
- promoting healthy eating and healthy activity
- reducing tobacco, alcohol and other drug abuse
- minimising family violence, and abuse and neglect of children and older persons.

For each issue, *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* provides an initial definition and description of the problem, summarises the current status and trends, describes existing government activity, and identifies an agency or agencies to lead a co-ordinated approach to addressing the issue.

Moving Forward

This is the first time that a New Zealand Government has published a summary statement of its strategies to improve social outcomes.

Opportunity for All New Zealanders represents a commitment to transparency and accountability. More than that, it is a significant step towards a more considered and co-ordinated approach to central government investment in social development.

Opportunity for All New Zealanders has been produced in the first instance as a prototype. It is a document that will develop and evolve over time. Before it is re-issued, the Government will be listening carefully to the views of New Zealanders on how social policy can best meet the needs of present and future New Zealanders.

But *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* is more than a document. It represents the commitment by a broad range of government agencies to work together to make a difference, and a call to action by central government to make New Zealand a land of opportunity for all.

Securing a better future for all New Zealanders requires the active engagement of individuals, families and communities, supported by a strong economy, and with leadership and investment by local and central government.

We welcome your response to *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*, and your personal commitment to our common good.

1. Improving Wellbeing through Social Development



Opportunity for All New Zealanders summarises the Government's strategies for social development.

Introduction

Opportunity for All New Zealanders provides a summary statement of the Government's social policy and strategies in response to social conditions reflected in *The Social Report 2004*.

First published in 2001, *The Social Report* reports on the quality of life experienced by New Zealanders. It monitors trends over time, so we can see whether our quality of life is getting better or worse. *The Social Report* also indicates who benefits from improving social conditions and who does not; and how New Zealand compares with other countries.

Opportunity for All New Zealanders summarises the Government's strategies for social development.

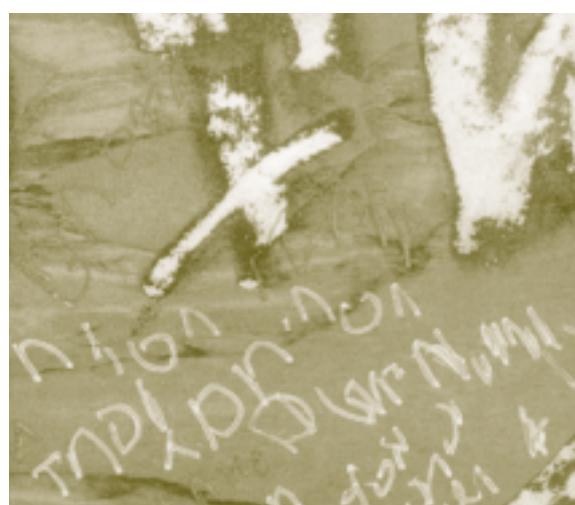
Opportunity for All New Zealanders paints a big picture of what the Government is doing to improve the wellbeing of New Zealanders. It:

- explains the Government's overall approach to improving the wellbeing of New Zealanders
- shows what the Government is doing to make life better for all New Zealanders
- states the Government's current priorities for action and investment
- identifies challenges and social issues that are critical for the future wellbeing of our people, and states how central government will respond to these.

By producing *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*, the Government is:

- promoting a stronger emphasis on desired end outcomes ("What are the overall results we are all trying to achieve, and how are we going to get there? What trade-offs are we prepared to make in the pursuit of these outcomes? How will we know when we get there, and how will we manage the risks along the way?")
- encouraging alignment of strategy and interventions across the many agencies that comprise the state social sector, to achieve a more unified, planned approach to the Government's investment in social wellbeing for all New Zealanders
- inviting alignment between central government, local authorities, the private sector, the community and voluntary sector, and iwi and other Māori authorities
- providing a resource for active citizen engagement in public policy discussion.

A web-based version of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* can be found at www.msd.govt.nz/opportunity-for-all.



A Vision for New Zealand and its People

The vision that inspires the Government's social policy is:

An inclusive New Zealand where all people enjoy opportunity to fulfil their potential, prosper and participate in the social, economic, political and cultural life of their communities and nation.

This vision reflects Government goals that go beyond social policy to the breadth of our national life, highlighting New Zealand as:

- a land where diversity is valued and reflected in our national identity
- a great place to live, learn, work and do business
- a birthplace of world-changing people and ideas
- a place where people invest in the future.¹

A decent society nurtures and protects its children, respects older people, and ensures that working people get a fair return for their labour.

The Government wants a society that gives its children a good start, provides for the physical welfare of its citizens, ensures they have the opportunity to develop their full potential when they are at school and when they are in the workforce, and guarantees them an adequate standard of living in retirement.

Two Overarching Goals

The Government's two overarching social policy goals are:

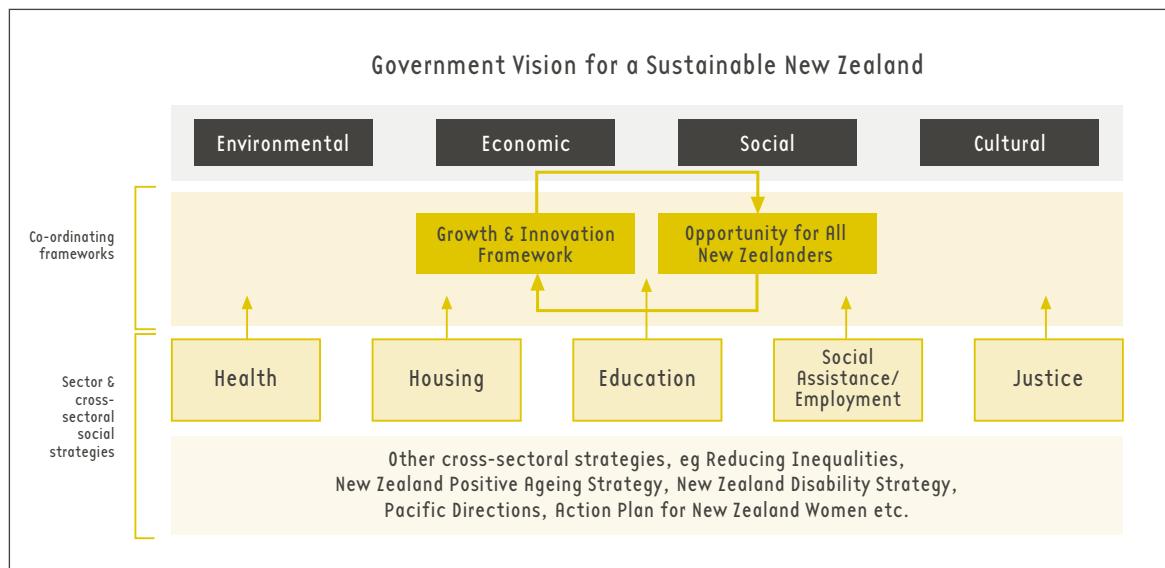
- achieving and sustaining improvements in social wellbeing for all New Zealanders

- reducing disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity for all New Zealanders.

The Government's economic objective is to return New Zealand's GDP per capita to the top half of the OECD rankings. Reducing disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity and higher living standards for all New Zealanders are important for a variety of reasons.

- We do not want New Zealand to become a country where there is extensive poverty and disadvantage. We do want a society where the major determinant of success is hard work, rather than privilege, race or luck.
- Reducing inequalities is critical for economic growth. The prosperity of our country depends on improving the productivity of all our citizens. Educational under-achievement, chronic poor health, unemployment and crime are all barriers to economic participation and prosperity.
- With an ageing population, New Zealand needs to address barriers to economic participation among its working-age population, and do everything possible to reduce disadvantage and promote equality of opportunity among young people.
- We want to build a more unified and socially cohesive society. We want to lift everybody's chances without leaving anyone to fall behind.

Opportunity for All New Zealanders is promoting a fair go for everyone.



Opportunity for All New Zealanders is promoting a fair go for all New Zealanders. This does not mean that everyone will achieve identical outcomes in terms of health, education, or economic standard of living. We don't all want to lead identical lives. Government policy is focused on improving opportunities so all New Zealanders can achieve their potential.

Sustainable Development

In January 2003, the Government released its *Sustainable Development Programme of Action*. The Government aims to increase economic growth, reduce inequality, and improve the standard of living of all New Zealanders in a manner that is environmentally, socially, culturally and economically sustainable.²

In committing to sustainable development for New Zealand, the Government has adopted the following operating principles for policy and decision-making:³

- considering the long-term implications of decisions

- seeking innovative solutions that are mutually reinforcing, rather than accepting that gain in one area will necessarily be achieved at the expense of another
- using the best information available to support decision-making

The Government's social strategy takes a long-term view, and aims to achieve sustainable improvements in the quality of life of all New Zealanders.

- addressing risks and uncertainty when making choices and being cautious when making decisions that may cause serious or irreversible damage
- working in partnership with local government and other sectors, and encouraging transparent and participatory processes
- considering the implications of decisions from a global as well as a New Zealand perspective

- decoupling economic growth from pressures on the environment
- respecting environmental limits, protecting ecosystems and promoting the integrated management of land, water and living resources
- working in partnership with appropriate Māori authorities to empower Māori in development decisions that affect them
- respecting human rights, the rule of law and cultural diversity.

Sustainable development is to be at the core of all government policy.

Social Development and Economic Development

In its first term (1999-2002), the Government identified that its most urgent task was to build the conditions for long-term and sustainable economic growth. For decades, New Zealand's rate of economic growth per capita has been lower than that of many other OECD countries. While our absolute standard of living rose, our relative standard of living declined.

Consequently, *Growing an Innovative New Zealand (GAINZ)* was released in February 2002.

GAINZ, commonly referred to as the *Growth and Innovation Framework (GIF)*, sets out an approach for New Zealand to achieve higher levels of sustainable economic growth.

The focus in *GIF* is on sustainability and positive outcomes over the longer term, not only in economic terms but also to ensure that economic development yields positive and sustainable outcomes in the social, environmental and cultural dimensions. *GIF* initiatives are focused around developing innovation, skills and talent, global connectedness and infrastructure, and

encompass sector engagement and regional development.

Economic and social development go hand in hand.

Opportunity for All New Zealanders recognises that economic and social development must go hand in hand. Just as economic growth is important to achieving and sustaining good social outcomes, human and social capital are vital to sustainable economic development. A better-educated and healthier workforce is essential for economic growth. We are also becoming increasingly aware that stronger social cohesion, less crime, affordable housing and a positive work-life balance contribute to economic performance. Social development in turn relies on economic growth to provide the resources to invest in further improvements in the social wellbeing of New Zealanders.

Government policy seeks to achieve a balance, where economic and social development are mutually supporting and sustainable, and where both support a rich national culture and a healthy environment.





Central Government and Social Wellbeing

Wellbeing starts with citizens, their families/whānau and communities. The quality of life we enjoy largely results from the choices we make as individuals, within the limits and opportunities afforded by our social, economic, political, cultural and environmental contexts.

Central government has certain roles and responsibilities that impact on those wider contexts. However, government policies, activities and services are not the only factors that determine social wellbeing. Our quality of life is the product of the interactions of many different agents - many of them not under Government's direct control or influence.

- **Individuals** carry much of the responsibility for their own wellbeing. Whether we fulfil our potential, prosper and participate in our communities and wider society depends largely on personal choices, including the beliefs, attitudes, and values we express through our behaviour.
- **Families/whānau** are responsible for the wellbeing of their members, particularly that of dependent children. While there are and must be exceptions, it is a reasonable

expectation that families will, for the most part, "look after their own".

- The **neighbourhoods, communities and iwi** within which we live our lives also contribute to, and carry some responsibility for, our individual and collective wellbeing.
- The **community and voluntary sector** makes an essential contribution to quality of life. Voluntary associations provide contexts and build communities within which we shape and are shaped by one another. Some agencies within the community and voluntary sector also deliver significant social services (many of which are part-funded by the state).
- The **private sector** contributes significantly to social wellbeing, as well as to the economic health of our nation. For many people, engaging in paid work provides, to a greater or lesser extent, material wellbeing (with resulting increased choices), social contact, and structure to our life and how we spend our time.
- **Local government** decisions significantly affect our lives. The Local Government Act 2002 set out a clear purpose for local government - to promote the social,



economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing of local communities.

Wellbeing starts with citizens and communities. Government supports people to manage their own lives wherever possible.

- **Central government** impacts on the quality of life of New Zealanders through its legislative, regulatory and re-distributive functions; leadership and strategic direction setting; direct and indirect delivery of services; capability building; and monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

Opportunity for All New Zealanders addresses only the roles and responsibilities of central government; that is, the contribution of the state social sector to New Zealanders' quality of life.

The Government aims to fulfil its roles and responsibilities without undermining the valuable contributions made by local government, the private sector, the community and voluntary sector, neighbourhoods, communities, iwi, families/whānau and individuals themselves.

The Government's aim is to promote freedom with responsibility, and to support people, families and communities to run their own lives wherever possible.

Mōori and Social Policy

The disproportionate levels of unemployment, poor health, low educational attainment and poor housing among Māori must be of concern to any government. Making life better for all New Zealanders can never be achieved if New Zealand's indigenous people are left behind as a marginalised community, permanently worse off than everyone else.

Important outcomes for Māori include what everyone else values as well, like good health and a high standard of living. A further outcome for Māori is to be able to live as Māori.⁴ Beyond physical needs, Māori need their culture to survive and develop. Māori culture and language has no home other than New Zealand. If Māori culture dies here, it dies everywhere. It is in this sense that Māori are tangata whenua. And for these reasons government has policies and programmes that explicitly address the needs of Māori as people who are indigenous to New Zealand.

The State of the Nation

Social Wellbeing Outcomes

Information is essential to building an effective social development strategy. The Government has made considerable progress in building our knowledge of the wellbeing experienced by New Zealanders.

The Social Report 2004 provides a “report card” on how New Zealand is doing in relation to 10 social outcomes that together contribute to the wellbeing of New Zealanders.⁵ A range of indicators is used to measure progress towards these outcomes, and to monitor trends over time. *The Social Report* also provides information on how levels of wellbeing vary between individuals, households and different groups in the population, and between New Zealand and other countries.

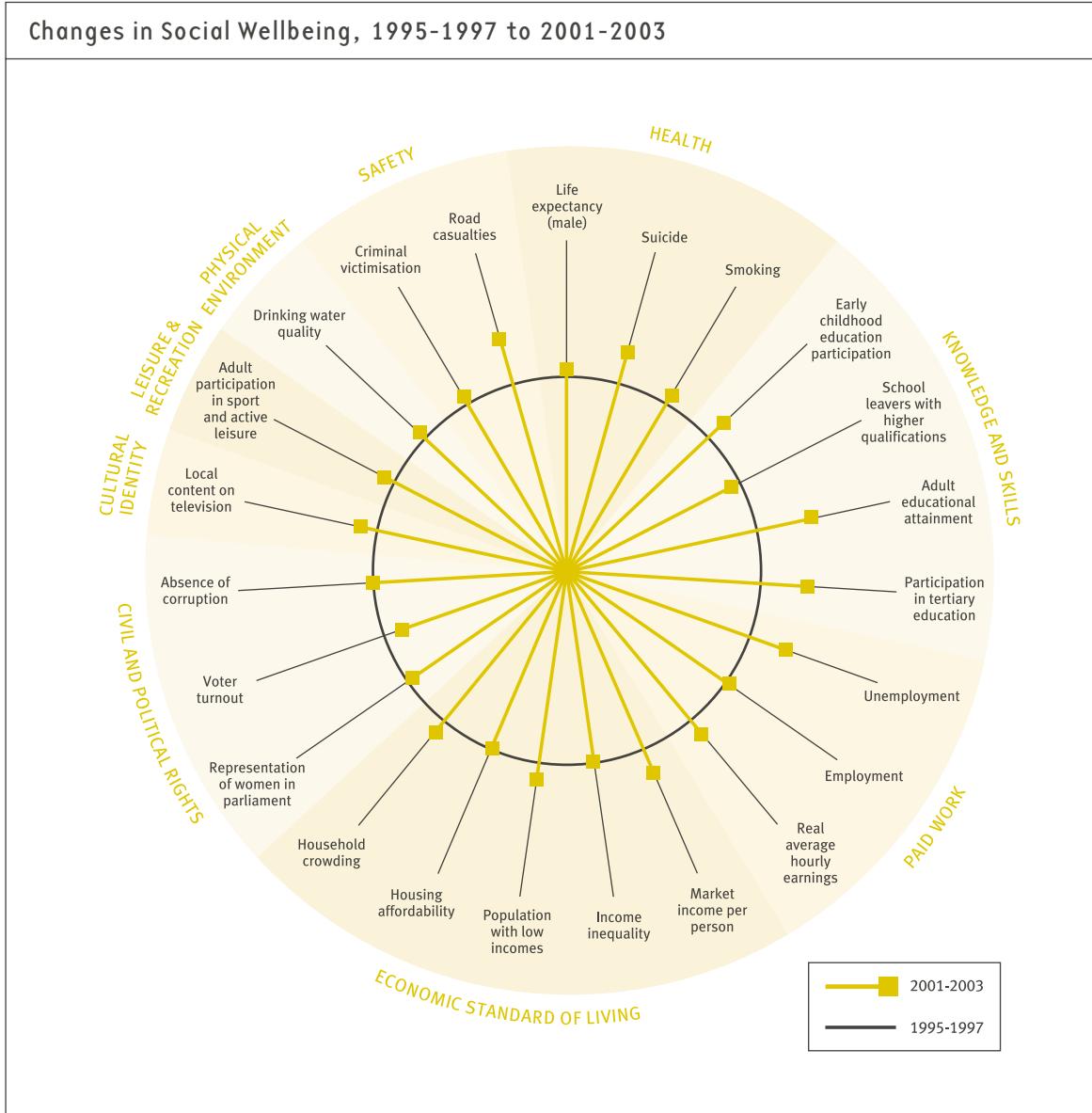
Regular social reporting tells us how we are doing, how we compare with other countries, and what areas the Government needs to address in its planning and decision-making. Social reporting also plays a role in promoting open, transparent and accountable government, and well-informed public debate on social issues.

The Social Report monitors the wellbeing of New Zealanders. *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* outlines what government is doing to improve social wellbeing.

As well as *The Social Report*, we are also developing reports that monitor the wellbeing of sub-groups within our society. Statistics New Zealand is leading a cross-government programme to develop and maintain official social statistics over the next 10 years. This picture is being further elaborated by the work undertaken by local authorities to develop indicators relevant to particular geographical locations.⁶ Together these reports are beginning to provide a richer picture of the wellbeing of New Zealanders that will allow us to plan social policy responses more effectively, at both a national and a local level.

Social Wellbeing at a Glance

In the diagram on page 17, the indicators are arranged like the spokes of a wheel. The black circle represents performance against each indicator in 1995/1997, and the spokes represent New Zealand’s performance today. Where a spoke extends beyond the circle, this means that performance today is better than during the mid-1990s, and the further from the circle it extends, the more significant the improvement. Where a spoke falls within the circle, performance in this area is worse than it was during the mid-1990s. The diagram shows how wellbeing has changed over time across a number of different areas.⁷



Recent Progress in Improving Social Outcomes

The Social Report 2004 paints a picture of broadly improving social outcomes for the population taken as a whole. Sixteen of the 23 indicators for which time-trend data are available have improved since the mid-1990s, two have deteriorated, and five have remained constant.

The Social Report 2004 paints a picture of broadly improving social outcomes.

The following are some of the key areas where social outcomes are good or improving.

- New Zealanders are living longer, healthier lives. We see gains in life expectancy, lower suicide rates and reduced prevalence of smoking.
- New Zealanders are generally better educated. Since 1996, significant gains have been made in participation in early childhood education, the overall educational attainment of the adult population, and the tertiary participation rate.
- In the area of paid work we see improvements in unemployment rates and average hourly earnings. Four out of five employed people report being satisfied with their work-life balance.
- The economic standard of living of New Zealanders is improving, with higher market incomes and fewer people with low incomes.
- In the area of safety, we see significant improvements in New Zealand's road casualty rate.
- New Zealand also enjoys low levels of perceived corruption, high voter turnouts and relatively high numbers of women in Parliament.

Social conditions in New Zealand compare favourably with those in other developed countries. New Zealand ranks in the top half of the OECD for roughly two-thirds of the 23 indicators for which internationally comparable data are available.

Overall life satisfaction is high in New Zealand compared with other countries, with New Zealand in the top quarter of OECD countries.

Continuing Challenges

These improvements in social outcomes are generally shared by all New Zealanders. However:

- The risks of poverty, low living standards and household crowding are all greater for children, particularly in the 29% of New Zealand families headed by a sole parent.
- A relatively high proportion of school leavers have no qualifications. Young people are more likely to be unemployed or affected by criminal victimisation than older age groups.
- Māori and Pacific peoples and people with disabilities generally experience poorer outcomes on average than the population as a whole. The cumulative effect of poorer outcomes can be seen in the shorter life expectancy for Māori and Pacific peoples. However, Māori and Pacific outcomes have been improving against most indicators for which we have time-trend data, and the improvement is greater for Māori than it is for the rest of the population in many instances. There has also been a reduction in the gap between outcomes for Pacific peoples and those for Pākehā/European New Zealanders against some indicators.

New Zealand also needs to make further progress in relation to per capita incomes, income inequality,

rates of child deaths by maltreatment, suicide, obesity and adult literacy.

A Changing Population

Any long-term strategic framework for the social sector must take account of New Zealand's changing population. Population issues for New Zealand have been reported in *Population and Sustainable Development 2003*.⁸ Summary information on New Zealand's population is provided annually in *The Social Report*.

The report on *Population and Sustainable Development* tells us that:

- New Zealanders can expect further increases in life expectancy, reductions in fertility rates and a higher proportion of older people in the population.
- Any population growth will be increasingly dependent on net migration gains. The population is projected to grow to 4.4 million by 2021, to 4.6 million by 2051, and then fall back to 4.2 million by 2101.
- New Zealand's population will be more mobile. External migration is expected to be the most volatile component of population growth.
- The Māori and Pacific populations are relatively youthful, and New Zealand's population is becoming more ethnically diverse.

Sustainable economic and social development must take account of New Zealand's changing population.

- Growth in the proportion of older New Zealanders will hasten after 2011, when

the large birth cohorts of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s start entering their 60s.

- Fewer people in the 25-44 age group and women having children later in life are likely to result in a drop in the number of families with dependent children, while the number of childless households will increase. There has been increased relationship breakdown and a corresponding growth in re-partnering, with more diverse family forms. The ability of families to provide care for family members with disabilities and for older relatives will continue to be limited by the high numbers of single-parent households and households where all adults work.

Some key policy issues facing New Zealand as a result of population changes include how to:

- invest effectively in children and young people so they have the skills to prosper later in life, and to participate responsibly in their families, communities and society
- take account of changes in family structure and functioning
- adjust to an older workforce, and enable older people to remain in paid employment if they choose to
- attract, retain, regain and use the skills New Zealand needs for sustainable economic development
- address infrastructure issues arising from changing patterns of settlement, especially in Auckland
- cater for the diverse needs of all people in New Zealand, and foster shared values among different ethnic and cultural groups.

Investing in Social Development

As part of its social investment strategy, the Government is committed to a proactive, “cycle-breaking” approach to improving social wellbeing, reducing disadvantage and promoting opportunity for all. This requires both:

- investing in people and in the social institutions that enable people to fulfil their potential, prosper and participate in the social, economic, political and cultural life of their communities and nation
- maintaining effective social protection systems to respond to the needs of individuals, groups and communities who have encountered difficulties.

Economic growth on its own will not deliver continuing improvements in quality of life for all New Zealanders. Investment is needed in social development to promote opportunity for all. And this investment must tackle the causes of disadvantage in a co-ordinated way, because disadvantage seldom springs from a single source. Low income, poor housing and ill health are linked, and together they can form a formidable barrier to employment and economic independence. Parenting strongly affects a child’s success in education and future employment opportunities.

The aim of social investment is to create a “virtuous circle”. Investing in social development results in a healthier, better educated, employable and productive population. This in turn contributes to economic development and the

continued prosperity of New Zealand and its people. It reduces future calls on social welfare. If we live in a healthy physical and social environment, in a nation with a strong economy, people will enjoy greater opportunities to live well without state social assistance.

The Government is investing in the long-term future of New Zealand and New Zealanders. Taxpayer-funded interventions are being weighted in favour of social investment, while continuing to maintain levels of social protection that can reasonably be expected in a fair and decent society.

Budget 2004 is this Government’s largest social policy investment yet. The Government has committed to total new operating spending of \$2.4b in 2004/2005, rising to \$3.8b in 2007/2008. Key investment priorities are:

- substantially reducing child poverty, and ensuring that low- and middle-income families can provide their children with a decent start in life
- ensuring that people are better off from working
- continuing to increase investment in health, education and housing
- rebuilding public sector capability
- preparing for the future by investing in the New Zealand Superannuation Fund to assist with the future costs of an ageing population.

What Government is Doing to Improve Social Wellbeing



The following account of what the Government is doing to improve social outcomes, and why it is doing it, is broadly structured by reference to the 10 domains of social wellbeing in *The Social Report 2004*. *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* does not, however, weight all domains evenly. While no domain is unimportant - and while overall life satisfaction arises from the interactions between all domains - governments must select areas they consider critical, given the state of social development at any given time.⁹ However, there is value in mapping government activity across all domains, to provide a broad, transparent account of how the Government is responding to the social conditions reflected in *The Social Report*.

Knowledge and Skills

DESIRED OUTCOMES: *New Zealanders have the knowledge and skills they need to participate fully in society. Lifelong learning and education are valued and supported. People have the necessary skills to participate in a knowledge society.*

Rationale

The Government invests heavily in education because it:

- enables people to develop the knowledge and skills to participate in society and the economy
- enhances New Zealanders' creativity, their awareness of their own and others' cultures and histories, their tolerance and their spirit of citizenship.

Objectives

The Government's two key priorities for education are:

- to equip New Zealanders with 21st-century skills
- to reduce systematic under-achievement in education, so all school leavers have the skills and knowledge to gain sustainable employment, pursue further education, contribute to society and become leaders and innovators.

Current Status

- Almost all New Zealand children participate in early childhood education (ECE) before they start school (94% of children have attended an ECE centre immediately prior to starting school). New Zealand has a diverse

range of ECE providers to meet the differing needs of parents and children. However, children from disadvantaged backgrounds do not always participate to the same extent as children from better-off backgrounds.

- New Zealand students perform highly in international comparisons but there is wide variation in educational achievement. Twice as many New Zealand 15 year olds were in the highest achievement category when compared with OECD averages in a recent international assessment of reading literacy.¹⁰
- New Zealand has stronger linkages between low achievement levels and low socio-economic status than most other OECD countries. This particularly affects Māori and Pacific students.
- More New Zealanders now participate in tertiary education and industry training, with participation rates having risen to the OECD average. Māori participation rates in tertiary education exceed those of non-Māori. Much of the Māori participation is in entry-level certificate courses but there are high rates of progression to further study. Pacific participation rates are lower than other ethnic groups, with low rates of completion and progression to further study.

What Government is Doing

Government is working with providers such as schools and early childhood centres, educators, parents, families/whānau and the community - both to equip all New Zealanders with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in

the 21st century and to address educational under-achievement.

The 2004 Budget injected an extra \$2b of operating funding for the education sector over the next four years, bringing the total annual operating expenditure to \$9.2b by 2007/2008. The Government is committed to lifting education standards so all young New Zealanders get the chance to aim high and succeed.

A selection of recent education initiatives is set out below.

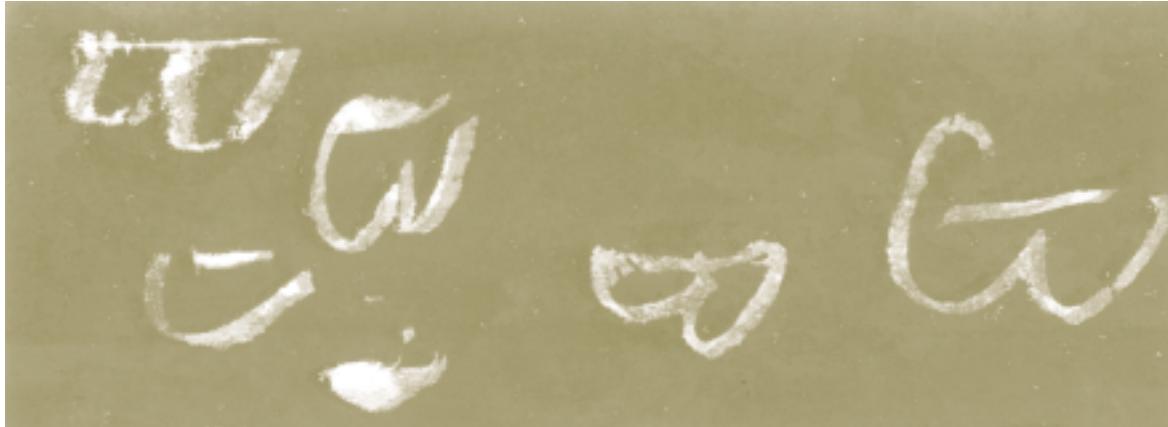
Equipping New Zealanders with 21st-Century Skills

- The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) has been introduced to provide a single, coherent qualification system for senior school students. The new system uses explicit standards to show what students know and can do. Compared with previous qualification systems it recognises a wide

range of skills and knowledge from and beyond the regular school curriculum and also in industry-related or specialist areas. This ensures a greater flexibility of pathways and access to qualifications for senior school students which starts them successfully on the way to lifelong learning. Level 1 of the NCEA also requires minimum standards of achievement in literacy and numeracy. Budget 2004 invested an extra \$17.8m over four years to lift student achievement through the National Qualifications Framework and the NCEA.

- Information and communications technology (ICT) is an essential feature of social and economic life in the 21st century. Government has provided software and ICT-based teaching resources for schools, and funded professional development to assist teachers to make the best educational use of ICT. *Project Probe* is extending broadband coverage throughout New Zealand, enhancing the ICT capability and inter-connectedness of schools and remote communities.
- The *Curriculum Project* will update the curriculum to reflect the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed by young people to participate in an information society. These include being able to think logically, critically and creatively, as well as being able to set goals and take increasing responsibility for their own learning.
- Budget 2004 also provided an extra \$4m for *Active Schools*, a primary school initiative to develop students' physical activity skills.





- The *Tertiary Education Strategy* is focused on meeting the knowledge and skill requirements for national social, economic and cultural development. Tertiary providers will increasingly align their planning and funding arrangements to national and regional priorities. There will be a greater focus on collaboration between tertiary providers and industry, regional development, Māori development and Pacific development. The Performance-Based Research Fund provides incentives to researchers to focus on areas of national interest and will help ensure high-quality research. Budget 2004 allocated \$149m to the Government's drive for greater levels of excellence in the tertiary education sector, and to connect teaching, training and research with New Zealand's economic and social needs.
- To make tertiary education more affordable, Budget 2004 invested \$246m in funding to tertiary education institutions to implement the fee/course costs maxima. An additional \$223m will increase the student allowance parental income thresholds: 12,000 more students will become eligible for a full student allowance, and 28,000 more students for a partial allowance.

Addressing Educational Under-Achievement

- *Pathways to the Future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki* sets out a vision for early childhood education (ECE). It aims for greater levels of participation in high-quality ECE services to provide strong early learning foundations. More people are now training to be ECE teachers and existing staff are raising their qualification levels to meet new quality standards. Budget 2004 invested an additional \$365m over four years in early childhood education. From mid-2007, three and four year olds in community-based centres will be entitled to 20 hours a week of free early childhood education and care. Early childhood education gives our children a crucial head start to go on and do well later in life.
- Budget 2004 invested \$16.4m to increase the number of low-decile schools with access to the *Social Workers in Schools* programme from 200 to approximately 330 by 2007.
- Following the success of programmes to improve literacy and numeracy teaching in primary schools, literacy programmes are now being offered in secondary schools.



- The *Student Engagement Initiative* addresses a range of factors reducing student participation, such as truancy. It builds on an earlier initiative that reduced the secondary school suspension rate substantially, particularly Māori suspension rates.
- New community education programmes provide foundation learning for adults who did not acquire adequate literacy skills or basic qualifications earlier in life.

Continuing Challenges

Challenges over the next few years in building knowledge and skills are:

- raising expectations so that families and teachers expect all students to achieve, irrespective of their backgrounds

- strengthening family and community involvement to support the educational achievement of learners
- focusing on quality teaching so the education needs of a diverse range of students are met, and they are equipped with 21st-century skills.

Of particular concern are:

- the need to improve the educational achievement of children from low socio-economic families
- the need to address severe behaviour problems in a small group of students which, if not addressed, can lead to extensive disruption within schools, distress among families and subsequent high social costs.

KEY GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES RELATING TO THIS DOMAIN

- Making a Bigger Difference for All Students - A Schooling Strategy Discussion Document (2004)
- Active Schools (2004)
- Education Priorities for New Zealand (2003)
- Pathways to the Future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki (2002)
- Tertiary Education Strategy (2002)
- New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001)
- Pasifika Education Plan (2001)
- Māori Education Strategy (1999)

Employment

DESIRED OUTCOMES: *New Zealanders have access to meaningful, rewarding and safe employment. An appropriate balance is maintained between paid work and other aspects of life.*

Rationale

Employment is a key area for government intervention because:

- it provides New Zealanders with economic independence and the means to provide for themselves and their families and to lead the lives they choose
- it provides meaningful activity and social contact that contribute to self-esteem and life satisfaction.

Objectives

Government policy seeks to spread the rewards and benefits of employment as widely as possible, ensuring that every New Zealander with the capacity to participate has opportunities to do so. Key objectives are to:

- maximise the number of jobs that provide opportunities to increase potential and enhance productivity
- minimise persistent disadvantage in the labour market and enhance the sustainability of employment
- improve the quality of people's working lives.

Current Status

Since the end of 1999, New Zealand's unemployment has been reduced. The official unemployment rate fell from 6.1% in the December Quarter 1999 to 4% in the June Quarter 2004. Numbers of unemployed fell

from 116,900 to 81,900 over the same interval.

Employment has seen strong growth. The total filled jobs rose from 1.4 million in the December Quarter 1999 to 1.6 million in the June Quarter 2004, a gain of around 200,000 filled jobs.



However:

- Some geographical areas have unemployment persistently higher than the norm. For example, in the year to March 2004, the unemployment rate in Northland was 6.7% and in the Bay of Plenty 6.1%.¹¹
- Despite recent improvements, the average unemployment rate in the year to June 2004 was for Māori 9.5% and for Pacific peoples 7.7%.¹² These groups are also over-represented in lower-skilled occupational groups. Youth, people with disabilities and sole parents are also under-represented in the paid workforce.

What Government is Doing

The Government is helping create employment opportunities, building people's capacity and helping match people to job opportunities. Work is also underway to improve the quality of

employment opportunities and the productivity of the workforce.

Promoting Employment and Improving Workforce Participation

The *Growth and Innovation Framework* sets a medium- to long-term direction to grow the economy and create new jobs.

The Government's *Employment Strategy* is designed to help create the right conditions for employment, and to maximise employment opportunities. The strategy is focused on seven specific goals:

1. ensuring macroeconomic policies enable sustained economic growth and job creation
2. promoting an "employment-rich, high productivity" economy
3. developing a flexible, highly skilled workforce that is responsive to the needs of the labour market and an innovative economy
4. developing community capability as a source of employment opportunities
5. promoting a fair employment environment that enhances working relationships
6. improving participation in employment, earnings and the quality of employment for disadvantaged groups¹³
7. improving participation in employment, earnings and the quality of employment for women, youth, mature workers, people with disabilities, and other groups at risk of long-term and persistent unemployment.

Workforce 2010 was published by the Government in 2001 to inform public debate about the challenges facing New Zealand's labour market.

Assisting People into Work

The main way in which New Zealanders are prepared for the workforce is through education and training (see *Knowledge and Skills*, pp 22-25). In addition to schooling and tertiary education, the Government has increased industry training. Over 6,000 young people are now involved in *Modern Apprenticeships*. Budget 2004 funded a further 500 apprenticeships by June 2006.

- Work and Income delivers a wide range of active employment assistance to jobseekers. In 2002/2003, almost 50,000 jobseekers were assisted by Work and Income into stable employment. One in three of these was Māori and over 11% were Pacific peoples: 2,514 of these job seekers had been unemployed for four years or more.
- The *Jobs Jolt* package of initiatives was introduced to tackle skill shortages and get more New Zealanders into work. Some important initiatives include:
 - *Job Partnerships with Industry* - a co-ordinated approach with industry to address skilled-labour shortages and develop industry-supported career paths for jobseekers
 - *Jobs Jolt Cyber Communities* - collaboration with the ICT industry to provide training, work experience and employment opportunities for long-term unemployed people
 - *Job Club and employABLE* - specialist programmes to help sickness and invalids beneficiaries who want to find work
 - *Enhanced Case Management* - assistance for sole-parent beneficiaries to develop employment plans to help manage both parenting and work commitments

During 2003, 24 unemployed people completed a 34-week carpentry course managed by Te Runanga o Te Rarawa in Kaitaia.

Seven of these are currently employed by the Runanga on a Housing New Zealand Corporation "Essential Repair" scheme, part of Te Rarawa's overall rural housing programme.

Steven Holloway is one of 15 students who has since signed up for a full Industry Training Association apprenticeship.

The Runanga's Commercial Manager, Vance Winiata, is encouraged by the results, as most of the participants had been long-term unemployed.

Work and Income has agreed to help sponsor a second entry-level carpentry course, and in 2005 the Runanga hopes to implement a similar scheme for plumbing and electrical training.



- The *Mature Workers Initiative*, which helps jobseekers aged 45-59 years find work - this involves understanding issues facing mature jobseekers and promoting mature jobseekers to employers
- *Mobile Employment Services*, which provide increased employment services to people in isolated areas
- *Clear, strong expectations*, which establish robust, consistent responses to work test failure, particularly for clients who lose employment due to drugs or who move to areas with limited opportunities.
- The *Working for Families* package announced in Budget 2004 encourages beneficiaries into paid work, and reduces disincentives for families with children to enter the workforce. Initiatives include:
 - increasing the rates of Family Support and the amount of income people can earn before their Family Support payments abate from April 2005, with a further increase in the amount people can earn from April 2007
 - introducing a new In-Work Payment specifically for working parents from 1 April 2006
 - raising the abatement threshold for the Accommodation Supplement from 1 October 2004
 - increasing Childcare Assistance from October 2004 (with a further increase from October 2005)
 - changing the rules so that, from December 2004, people on Invalids Benefit can trial working more than 15 hours a week for up to six months without losing benefit entitlement.

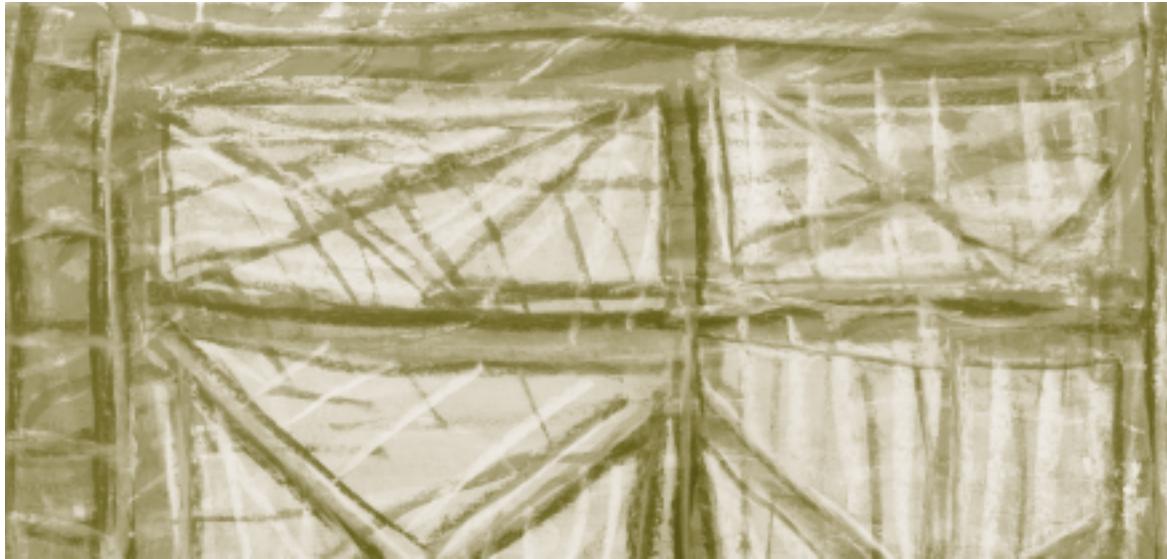


- Government has a shared goal with the *Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs* - that "by 2007 all 15-19 year olds will be engaged in appropriate education, training, work or other activities leading to long-term economic independence and wellbeing". A \$57m package of new and expanded initiatives in Budget 2004 is intended to provide all 15-19 year olds with a "kick start" to their working lives. The package includes the introduction of a new youth transitions service, personalised career planning for secondary school students and an expansion of the Gateway and Modern Apprenticeships programmes. A pilot programme is being established to determine whether the Training Incentive Allowance could be used effectively to encourage teenage parents to remain in or return to education.
- The *New Zealand Conservation Corps* and the *Youth Service Corps* are programmes run by the Ministry of Youth Development. They give young people opportunities to build personal and work-related skills, while making a contribution to conservation or local community projects.
- *Women in Enterprise* supports women in developing and growing sustainable businesses.

- The Government is changing benefit stand-down rules from 1 May 2005 to improve incentives for people on benefits to undertake seasonal work and other short-term employment.

Encouraging Better Work Practices and Increasing Productivity

- The *Employment Relations Act* has promoted fair employer-employee relationships, with more support for collective bargaining, good faith made central to the bargaining process, and improved mediation services and procedures to resolve disputes.
- The *Health and Safety in Employment Act* has been extended to ensure that employees have opportunities to participate in processes to improve health and safety in their places of work.
- A *Pay and Employment Equity Unit* will be established within the Department of Labour during 2004/2005.
- *Work-Life Balance* policies and practices can assist with recruitment and retention, reduce absenteeism and improve staff morale and commitment to the job, with associated impacts on costs and productivity. Legislation has been passed to give workers a right to a minimum four weeks' annual holiday from 2007.



- *Paid Parental Leave* has benefits for both parents and children, making it easier for women, especially, to continue their careers.
- *Childcare* and *Out of School Care* programmes have been significantly expanded so that parents can more readily access work and training.
- The Government has increased minimum wage levels for both adults and youth.
- The Government is considering a range of future policy options for lifting workplace productivity.

Continuing Challenges

The main challenge is to carry through on initiatives to improve labour force participation, especially for Māori, Pacific peoples, youth, sole parents, women, migrants and refugees, people with disabilities and other groups at risk of persistent and long-term unemployment.

Improving workplace productivity is also essential for sustained economic growth and achieving the Government's aim of returning New Zealand's GDP per capita to the top half of the OECD rankings.

KEY GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES RELATING TO THIS DOMAIN

- Working for Families (2004)
- Action Plan for New Zealand Women (2004)
- Framework for the Future: Equal Employment Opportunities in New Zealand (2004)
- Skills Action Plan (2003)
- Pacific Workforce Development Strategy (2003)
- Youth Transition Strategy (2002)
- New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001)
- Workforce 2010 (2001)
- Employment Strategy (2000)

Economic Standard of Living

DESIRED OUTCOMES: *New Zealand is a prosperous society, reflecting the value of both paid and unpaid work. All people have access to adequate incomes and decent, affordable housing that meets their needs. With an adequate standard of living, people are well placed to participate fully in society and to exercise choice about how to live their lives.*

Rationale

The Government wants to improve New Zealanders' economic standard of living:

- to enable people to obtain goods and services to fulfil their potential, enhance their quality of life, participate actively in society and contribute to their communities
- to avoid negative outcomes for children's health and educational achievement caused by low family income
- to ensure that New Zealand does not become a society that perpetuates inequality
- to promote social cohesion.

Objectives

The Government's objectives in relation to New Zealanders' standard of living are:

- to improve all New Zealanders' incomes through economic growth
- to make work pay - supporting labour market participation and helping people, particularly families with dependent children, move into and remain in employment
- to improve access to stable, affordable, quality housing.

Current Status

Since 2000, New Zealand has achieved high rates of economic growth, with increasing employment and rising real incomes.

- In 2003, New Zealand's economy grew by 3.5% compared with an average of 2.2% for the OECD as a whole.
- The employment rate rose from 65.3% in 1992 to 72.5% in 2003.
- Real Gross National Disposable Income (RGNDI) per person has grown steadily since 1992. In the year to March 2003, RGNDI per person was \$27,237 in constant 1995/1996 dollars, compared with \$22,573 in 1998. This represents an average growth rate over the period of 1.26% per year.

However, insufficient income continues to limit outcomes for many New Zealanders.

- In 2001, 29.1% of children were living in families with incomes below 60% of the median income after housing costs had been taken into account.¹⁴ In 2000, 4% of the population was suffering "very restricted" living standards.¹⁵
- In 2001, 24% of New Zealand households were paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs. The impact was worse for people on very low incomes, who were also more likely to suffer over-crowding.¹⁶
- Insufficient incomes and poor housing are more concentrated among Māori and Pacific peoples, families with children (particularly sole-parent families) and people with disabilities.
- Owner occupation declined from 73.8% of all households in 1991 to 67.8% in 2001.¹⁷

What Government is Doing

Government's top priority is to create the conditions for long-term, sustainable economic growth that will, in turn, increase the supply of quality jobs (see further, *Employment*, pp 26-30). Government also uses income support, in-work tax credits, housing assistance and various special needs subsidies to protect and support people who are unable to earn sufficient to support themselves and their families.

- The *Growth and Innovation Framework* sets a medium- to long-term direction for economic growth, to improve the material living standards of all New Zealanders. Key elements of the *Growth and Innovation Framework* are:
 - improving productivity
 - encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship and technological change
 - developing talents and skills
 - promoting global connectedness
 - attracting foreign direct investment.

The *Working for Families* package will make work pay and put more money in the pockets of New Zealand's low- and middle-income families from:

- increased Family Support and Family Tax Credit
- a new In-Work Payment for working parents
- increases to the Accommodation Supplement
- increases to Childcare Assistance.

- Between 2004 and 2007, the Government will deliver a package called *Working for Families*. By 1 April 2007, the package will be worth \$1.1b annually and nearly 300,000

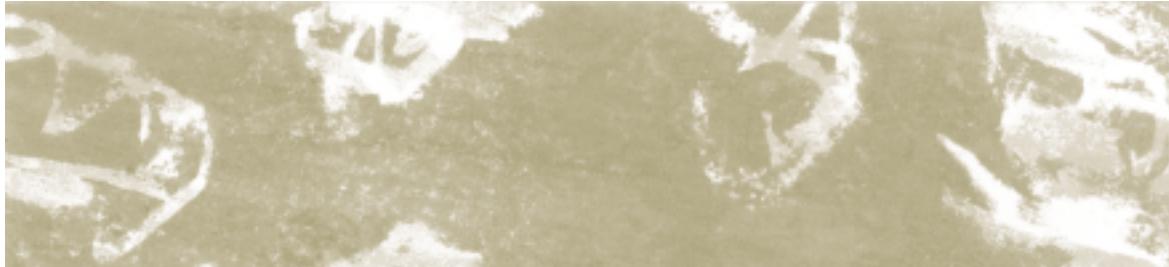
households will receive direct assistance. From 2007, over 60% of families with dependent children will benefit from increases in Family Income Assistance, with an average gain per family of \$66 per week. *Working for Families* aims to:

- address the broad range of issues that beneficiaries face in moving into and remaining in work
- ensure that people are better off as a result of the work they do
- ensure income adequacy, with a focus on low- to middle-income families with dependent children.

Using a poverty value measure of 60% of median household income before housing costs, *Working for Families* is expected to lead to a 30% reduction in child poverty by 2007/2008. Using a 50% measure, the expected reduction is 70%.

- Government has moved to improve the supply, stability and affordability of good-quality housing for all New Zealanders by:

- re-introducing needs-based allocation and income-related rents for state houses in 2001
- increasing the stock of state houses to help people on low incomes access affordable, quality housing
- using interagency approaches to address sub-standard housing and related problems in Northland, the East Coast and the Eastern Bay of Plenty, and extending these to other regions through the *Rural Housing and Urban Renewal Programmes*
- introducing a mortgage insurance scheme delivered as "Kiwibank-In-Reach Home Loans" to make it easier for low- to modest-income earners to purchase homes.



- Budget 2004 provided \$140m to build greater stability in the rental-housing sector. This includes \$126m capital to build another 3,000 state houses over the next three years and to provide essential housing repairs for New Zealanders in rural communities living in sub-standard housing, and support for tenants and landlords through better regulation.
- From 1 July 2005, the Government is extending eligibility for the Accommodation Supplement to retirement village residents who have a licence to occupy.
- The Government has invested in the future and is preparing for an ageing population by establishing the New Zealand Superannuation Fund. In 2040, the Fund is expected to contribute 36% of total anticipated New Zealand superannuation costs. The Retirement Commission's website, www.sorted.org.nz, promotes financial literacy and adequate preparation for retirement.

Continuing Challenges

Priority areas for ongoing attention include:

- encouraging New Zealanders to save for retirement
- improving access to adequate, affordable housing for all New Zealanders
- assessing the long-term impacts of the trend towards rental housing
- ensuring that people with disabilities have access to the support they need and incentives to supplement their income through part-time work
- developing a more highly skilled workforce and improving productivity, to drive economic development and a real improvement in standard of living for all New Zealanders.

A growing body of evidence shows that debt has become an increasing problem for low-income households, and is a barrier to participation and social inclusion.

KEY GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES RELATING TO THIS DOMAIN

- Working for Families (2004)
- New Zealand Housing Strategy Discussion Paper (2004)
- Action Plan for New Zealand Women (2004)
- Growth and Innovation Framework (2002)
- Supporting Sustainable Housing (2002)
- New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001)
- Pathways to Opportunity (2001)
- Pathways to Inclusion (2001)

Health

DESIRED OUTCOMES: *New Zealanders have the opportunity to enjoy long and healthy lives. Avoidable deaths, disease and injuries are prevented. All people have the ability to function, participate and live independently or appropriately supported in society.*

Rationale

Good health is critical to wellbeing because:

- it enables people to enjoy their lives to the fullest, take advantage of education and employment opportunities, and participate fully in society and the economy
- health can have a cumulative effect on life outcomes - poor child health is linked to poor adult health and also to broader poor outcomes including unemployment and crime.

Objectives

Government investment is focused on:

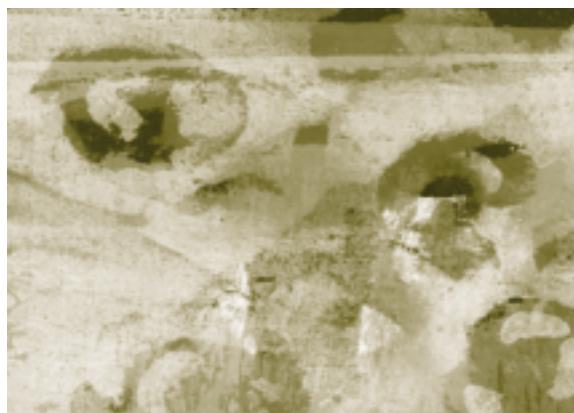
- improving the health status of all New Zealanders
- reducing health inequalities experienced by disadvantaged groups
- providing a publicly funded health and disability system that performs to high standards and that New Zealanders can trust.

Current Status

The health of New Zealanders is good and improving. However, improvement is not shared equally across society. Māori, Pacific peoples and people in low socio-economic groups are more likely to have poorer health status.

What Government is Doing

- The *New Zealand Health Strategy* aims to ensure that New Zealanders have timely access to a health system in which they can have confidence.
- In 2002, the Government agreed a three-year, \$400m-per-year funding package for the health sector. This has since been extended, with an allocation in Budget 2004 of \$550m in 2006/2007. The primary health component is increasing sharply, from \$48m in 2002/2003 to a total of \$497m by 2008/2009. The total operating expenditure in Vote Health has increased from \$8.64b in 2003/2004 to \$9.37b in 2004/2005. This is a huge investment designed to provide fair, strong and sustainable public health services in New Zealand.
- Improving health status requires the provision of health and disability support services to those in need, as well as measures aimed at promoting wellbeing and the prevention of poor health. Recent initiatives aim to promote healthier lifestyles through physical activity



and nutrition (*Healthy Eating - Healthy Action*, the *Push Play* campaign, *Green Prescriptions* and *He Oranga Poutama*) and healthier, more energy-efficient housing.

- The primary health care sector delivers services to improve, maintain and restore the health of individuals, families and communities. It includes general practice and a range of community-based providers. The Government is implementing its Primary Health Care Strategy and has made the largest ever investment in the primary health care sector through the establishment of Primary Health Organisations (PHOs).¹⁸ 3.7million New Zealanders are now covered by more than 75 PHOs. This will mean better co-ordination of primary health care services, and eventually lower-cost access for everyone enrolled in a PHO. Changes are being introduced progressively. So far, over half the population gets low or reduced primary care fees through PHOs, with further increases each July until July 2007, when all people enrolled in a PHO will receive low- or reduced-cost primary health care and \$3 prescriptions for fully subsidised medicines.
- *He Korowai Oranga* (the Māori health strategy) provides a strategic guide for the health and disability support sector as well as other government sectors, to help them work together with iwi, Māori providers, Māori communities and whānau to increase the life span of Māori, improve their health and quality of life, and reduce disparities with other New Zealanders. It sets a new direction for Māori health development over the next 10 years, building on gains made during the past decade.

WORKING TOGETHER TO PROMOTE HEALTH, FITNESS AND SAFETY

The Raukawa Trust Board Primary Schools' Triathlon was held in Tokoroa on 27 March 2004.

The triathlon was funded by local Primary Health Organisation Pinnacle Waikato, and organised by the Raukawa Trust with support from the South Waikato Pacific Island Health Committee, schools, Police, Sport Waikato, the South Waikato Sport and Leisure Board, Transit New Zealand, the Land Transport Safety Authority, Sun Smart, local sport and recreation clubs and local businesses.

Nine Tokoroa primary and intermediate schools fielded 431 competitors aged eight to 12 years.

The triathlon was designed to:

- promote healthy eating and training methods
- increase physical fitness
- improve awareness of road safety
- improve awareness of helmet safety
- provide new experiences, especially for at-risk children
- promote local clubs
- build community relationships.





- The *New Zealand Disability Strategy* aims to improve outcomes for people with disabilities by addressing a range of barriers they face in all aspects of their lives, including health.
- *Reducing Inequalities in Health* focuses on the performance of health, disability and wider social sector systems in reducing inequalities in health outcomes. For example, clinical priority assessment tools have been introduced, resulting in individuals and groups with comparatively poorer health status benefiting from increased access to elective services.
- In the last 10 years, funding for mental health services has increased by 127% in real terms. In response to the recommendations of the *Blueprint for Mental Health Services in New Zealand*, the sector has adopted a “recovery” approach, which aims to ensure that mental health consumers are given the support they need to take control of their own lives. Budget 2004 invested an extra \$250m over the next four years into implementing the *Blueprint*. The Ministry of Health recently

released a consultation document on *Improving Mental Health*. The document sets national objectives for the mental health and addiction sector for the next five to 10 years. The key priorities are:

- more and better specialist services
- improved access to mental health care and primary health care
- mental health promotion
- responsiveness of services
- more and better services for Māori
- systems development
- social inclusion - removing social and economic barriers to recovery.
- The *Health of Older People Strategy* aims to ensure that the structures and funding are in place by 2010 for a health and disability system that supports the positive ageing of growing numbers of older people.
- In 2004, the Public Health Advisory Committee developed *A Guide to Health Impact Assessment*

as a policy tool to assist policy analysts across government to anticipate the likely impacts of policy options on health and health inequalities and to promote wellbeing.

Continuing Challenges

- Inequalities in health status between population groups are reflected in disparities in life expectancy.
- There is a growing incidence of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease that, if not addressed, will create a huge increase in demand for remedial health and disability services in the medium to long term.
- While most older people are fit and healthy, a minority require high levels of health care, and disability and social support. The growth in the number and proportion of older New Zealanders raises concerns about their future quality of life and the need to continue developing policies and programmes across the social sector to promote “positive ageing”.
- Improved technology is providing benefits and

also improving life expectancy for some people with severe disabilities. This increases expectations and demands for a wider range of health and disability services, more personal choice among services, and better co-ordinated access to these services.

- Mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety significantly affect a number of social outcomes (particularly paid work, parenting and economic standard of living) and need to be addressed through the promotion of mental health, and increased and improved access to both primary and specialist mental health care.
- Tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug use continue to be leading preventable causes of poor health outcomes.
- Improved health for New Zealanders will only be achieved if central and local government agencies work together to ensure that determinants of good health and wellbeing (eg economic standard of living and good-quality housing) are in place.

KEY GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES RELATING TO THIS DOMAIN

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Achieving Health for all People (2003)- Healthy Eating - Healthy Action (2003)- New Zealand Cancer Control Strategy (2003)- New Zealand Injury Prevention Strategy (2003)- Improving Quality (IQ): A Systems Approach for the New Zealand Health and Disability Sector (2003)- He Korowai Oranga (2002)- Pacific Health and Disability Action Plan (2002) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reducing Inequalities in Health (2002)- New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001)- New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy (2001)- Primary Health Care Strategy (2001)- New Zealand Health Strategy (2000)- National Mental Health Strategy embodied in Looking Forward (1994), Moving Forward (1997) and the Mental Health Commission’s Blueprint for Mental Health Services in New Zealand (1998)- New Zealand National Drug Policy (1998-2003) |
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Social Cohesion

DESIRED OUTCOMES: *New Zealanders enjoy constructive relationships with others in their families, whānau, communities, iwi and workplaces. Families support and nurture those in need of care. New Zealand is an inclusive society where people are able to access information and support.*

Rationale

The Government promotes and supports social cohesion because:

- strong families and strong communities are critical to achieving good outcomes for children and young people
- building cohesion across all population groups makes for fairer and safer communities.

Objective

The Government is working with New Zealanders, their families and communities to promote social cohesion and build a strong, thriving and inclusive society.

Current Status

- Current social and demographic changes have significant implications for patterns of social cohesion in New Zealand. These include: population ageing; patterns of paid work; the growth of couple-only, one-person, and single-parent households; and increasing ethnic and cultural diversity.
- We have some data on patterns of social connections, but lack information on the *quality* of relationships people have with friends, partners, children, family, or co-workers.
- According to the 2000 Living Standards Surveys, a high proportion of the population

takes part in family/whānau activities (87%). More than two-thirds (71%) report having family or friends over for a meal at least once a month.

- In a 1999 New Zealand Election Study, 70% of respondents said they belonged to an organisation, group or club. The 1999 Time Use Survey found that 59% of those surveyed had spent some time in the previous month doing unpaid work for people or organisations outside their own home.
- Trust enhances people's ability to develop positive relationships with others and encourages co-operative behaviour. Results from the 2004 Social Wellbeing Survey indicate that over half of New Zealanders (57%) believe that people can "usually" or "almost always" be trusted.
- There is some evidence that discrimination against Asians, recent immigrants and refugees may be increasing.¹⁹ In the 2002 Quality of Life Survey conducted in eight major cities, around half of those surveyed said that increasing cultural diversity makes their city a better or much better place to live. A small proportion (12%) said that diversity makes their city a worse or much worse place to live.

What Government is Doing

Government is working to promote social cohesion by focusing on strong families, strong communities, and participation and inclusion.

Strong Families and Whānau

- The *Families Commission* has been established to promote the interests of New Zealand families, advocate for families, conduct research and advise Government on factors that strengthen families.

- *Family Start* focuses on vulnerable families where children are at risk of poor health and welfare outcomes. Co-ordinated interagency support is provided to ensure that young children get a good start in life. The scheme is being enhanced and extended to 24 communities over the next three years, reaching an additional 2,205 high-needs families by 2007.
- A *Family and Community Services* operation is being extended throughout New Zealand to ensure the co-ordination at a local level of government, community and non-governmental organisation services.
- Budget 2004 invested \$75.5m for parenting support programmes through the Supporting Families package. \$3.3m has been committed to home- and community-based mentoring programmes by older New Zealanders to support young families.
- Budget 2004 invested \$14m a year to support locally based whānau initiatives, with a focus on action and research programmes, sporting and cultural activities, and enterprise development.
- Central government contributes to strong communities in a variety of ways; eg community development advice (Department of Internal Affairs), capacity-building (Te Puni Kōkiri), various government-funded schemes, including Community Organisation Grants (COGs), the Community Internship Scheme, and the Community Initiatives Fund (Ministry of Social Development). The Government is investing more than \$4.6m in expanding its Community Development Programmes delivered through the Department of Internal Affairs.
- Budget 2004 invested \$3.2m to continue support for the seven communities piloting the Stronger Communities Action Fund in 2005 and 2006. The fund aims to improve outcomes for children and young people by building social capital in local communities through devolved decision-making processes, community needs assessment and management of discretionary funding.
- Community development will receive impetus from the *Local Government Act 2002*, which requires local authorities to develop Long Term Council Community Plans for the economic, social, cultural and environmental development of the communities they serve.

Strong Communities

Strengthening the relationship with the community and voluntary sector is a key Government goal.

- The *Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector* was established in September 2003 to provide a central policy contact point in government for issues that reach across the sector, to support and monitor government agencies' progress in strengthening relations with the sector, and to promote the sector's role in building strong and vibrant communities. \$3.4 million will be invested over the next four years to strengthen capacity within the community and voluntary sector.

Participation and Inclusion

- An inclusive society is promoted by the *New Zealand Disability Strategy*, the *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy*, *New Zealand's Agenda for Children* and the *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa*, and their accompanying programmes of action.
- Budget 2004 provided \$62m over four years to assist with the integration of recent migrants, refugees and their families into our society and economy. Some related initiatives are the Auckland Regional Migrant Resources Centre and a *Language Line* telephone interpreting service pilot. *Language Line* presently offers 35 languages on behalf of six government agencies.
- Local participation in the arts is promoted by the *Creative Communities Scheme*, a partnership between Creative New Zealand and 74 local authorities. *Creative Spaces* allows artists who have been clients of the health, justice, disability or social service sectors to come together to create art and to learn about integrating positively with the community.

A Chinese Heritage Trust is being established in recognition of the unique Chinese New Zealand identity, history and culture, and as a gesture of reconciliation following the Government's formal apology in February 2002 regarding the Poll Tax and other forms of institutional discrimination against Chinese people in New Zealand before 1952.

- Participating in sport and physical activity makes a major contribution to social cohesion in New Zealand.²⁰ The *Physical Activity Planning Service* (a partnership between Sport and Recreation New Zealand and the New Zealand Recreation Association) provides professional planning services to territorial local authorities.

Continuing Challenges

- It will be important to increase our understanding of the impact of social cohesion on broader social and economic outcomes.
- The effective integration of migrants into New Zealand society is critical to our social cohesion and to building more tolerant and inclusive communities.

KEY GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES RELATING TO THIS DOMAIN

- Action Plan for New Zealand Women (2004)
- Active Communities: Reaching our Potential Together (2003)
- National Immigration Settlement Strategy (2003)
- Ethnic Perspectives in Policy (2002)
- A Framework for Developing Sustainable Communities (2002)
- New Zealand's Agenda for Children (2002)
- Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (2002)
- New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001)
- New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy (2001)
- Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship (2001)
- Employment Strategy (2000)

Safety

DESIRED OUTCOMES: *New Zealanders enjoy physical safety and feel secure. People are free from victimisation, abuse, violence and avoidable injury.*

Rationale

The Government invests in the justice sector to create a fairer and safer society, in which all New Zealanders can live without fear of crime and violence, and in systems to reduce avoidable injury and accidents.

Objectives

The Government's key objective is safer communities, in which there is reduced crime and where safety and wellbeing are enhanced through partnerships.

Current status

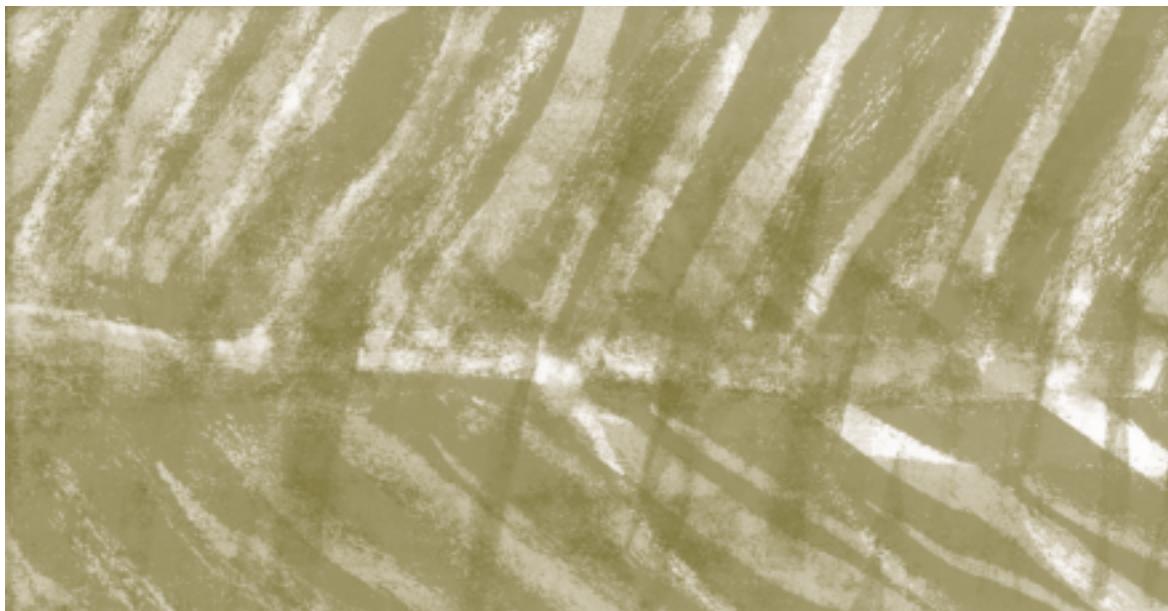
- The total number of recorded offences dropped by 4.7% between 2002/2003 and 2003/2004. The rate of national recorded offences per 10,000 population was lower in 2003/2004 (1,053.7) than it has been for more than 10 years.²¹
- The percentage of recorded offences that are resolved by Police (45% in 2003/2004) has steadily increased from 37% in 1996/1997 and is the highest it has been since 1983.
- The rate of criminal victimisation (31% of adults aged 15 years and over) remained constant between 1995 and 2000.²²
- Violence is an area of increasing public concern, but remains constant at about 10% of all recorded crimes.
- Total recorded sexual offences have declined since 2001/2002, and the resolution rate for

these has increased to 58% in 2003/2004.

- The largest crime category is dishonesty offences, including theft and burglary (57% of all crimes). Vehicle crime comprises nearly 17% of recorded offences, but the resolution rate for car theft and unlawful taking/conversion of motor vehicles has increased from 13% in 1996/1997 to 20% in 2003/2004. The resolution rate for burglaries has risen since 1994 to 18% in 2003/2004.
- Māori are significantly over-represented both in the offending rate and in the prison population. This is partly because a relatively greater proportion of their population is in the younger age group, which is more likely to offend,²³ but is also likely to reflect the low socio-economic position of a significant proportion of Māori.
- Child and youth offender apprehensions have remained stable since 1991, but continue to be 21-23% of all offender apprehensions.
- Road accidents place a significant demand on the justice sector and a high cost on society. In 2002, road crashes caused 404 deaths and 6,670 hospitalisations at an estimated social cost of around \$3b. In 2003, 461 people died as a result of motor vehicle crashes (11.5 deaths per 100,000 population), and a further 14,361 were injured (358.2 injuries per 100,000 population).

What Government is Doing

The *Crime Reduction Strategy* identifies youth offending, family violence, community and sexual violence, burglary, organised crime, serious traffic offending, theft of and from cars, and offending by Māori as areas for priority attention. The *Crime Reduction Strategy* is being implemented



through specific strategies for each of the priority crime areas. It is supported by the formation of new crime prevention partnerships with territorial authorities and local communities.

Reform of criminal justice legislation means the system is now able to target more effectively serious and recidivist offenders who pose a high risk to public safety. The new laws ensure that such offenders are less likely to be bailed, more likely to receive longer prison sentences, and less likely to be released on parole. New laws broadening police investigative powers in areas such as DNA and electronic interceptions, combined with a record investment in police resources, have also greatly increased the rate at which police are able to resolve crime.

- To address and prevent youth criminal offending, the *Youth Offending Strategy* focuses policy and co-ordinates delivery of youth justice services, including:
 - early intervention services for children and young people at risk and their families
- Youth Offending Teams with local practitioners from the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services, Police and the health and education sectors
- comprehensive and intensive interventions for serious recidivist young offenders.
- *Te Rito* (the *New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*) aims to create intolerance to domestic violence, and to ensure effective responses, eg by Family Safety Teams, to violence, abuse or neglect within families.
- The *Baseline Review of the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services* made recommendations for major improvements to organisational capability, and led to the announcement of significantly increased funding (up to \$260m over four years) in response to the growing demand for services for at-risk children and young people.
- To prevent offending against children, legislation has been introduced to enable the long-term

supervision of medium- to high-risk child sex-offenders after their release from prison.

- A comprehensive range of measures is in place to reduce burglary. For example, Police are targeting burglary hot spots and encouraging potential burglary victims to take preventive measures. The Criminal Investigations (Bodily Samples) Act gives the Police powers to obtain bodily samples for DNA identification to aid apprehension of repeat burglars.
- Organised crime is being addressed through a number of international conventions and protocols, through laws relating to terrorist activity and through initiatives to target gang-related behaviour.
- Over-representation by Māori in crime statistics is being addressed by community crime prevention work and strategies within Corrections, Police and the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services targeting Māori.

- \$180m over three years is to be invested in new prison construction, on top of \$225m already allocated. Tougher and longer sentences are driving a significant increase in inmate numbers. The new prisons will add around 1,500 beds and are expected to be completed between 2005 and 2008.
- Budget 2004 invested \$75m over four years to boost ACC contributions towards injury treatment.

Continuing Challenges

Areas for improvement include:

- the over-representation of Māori in the criminal justice system (forecasts indicate the relative proportion of Māori in prison is expected to increase)²⁴
- reducing crime (especially youth offending, drug-related offending, and family and sexual violence).

KEY GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES RELATING TO THIS DOMAIN

- Safer Communities Action Plan to Reduce Community Violence and Sexual Violence (2004)
- Action Plan for New Zealand Women (2004)
- Care and Protection Blueprint (2003)
- New Zealand Injury Prevention Strategy (2003)
- Road Safety to 2010 (2003)
- Protecting Our Innocence: New Zealand's National Plan of Action against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (2002)
- Te Pounamu: Manaaki Tamariki, Manaaki Whānau (2002)
- Te Rito: New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy (2002)
- Youth Offending Strategy (2002)
- Crime Reduction Strategy (2001)
- New Directions (2001)
- Whanake Rangatahi: Programmes and Services to Address Māori Youth Offending (2000)

Civil and Political Rights

DESIRED OUTCOMES: *New Zealanders enjoy civil and political rights. Mechanisms to regulate and arbitrate people's rights in respect of each other are trustworthy.*

Rationale

Civil and political rights provide foundations for a just and fair society in which all people have opportunities to fulfil their potential without interference or abuse of power by others.

Objective

The Government's key objectives in relation to civil and political rights are to develop and maintain a fairer, more credible and more effective justice system, and to promote active citizenship. Government interventions aim to:

- improve access to and delivery of court services and related child, youth and family services
- improve public confidence in the police, judiciary and other justice institutions
- improve relationships among the many communities that make up New Zealand
- improve laws governing family relationships and other private dealings
- promote voter registration and active citizenship
- enhance the transparency of government.

Current Status

- New Zealand has a long-standing commitment to implementing international human rights standards and has ratified the six core international human rights treaties.
- The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 affirmed the rights set out in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The

Human Rights Act 1993 set out prohibited grounds of discrimination and established the Human Rights Commission.

- A World Bank-sponsored survey placed New Zealand near the top of surveyed nations on a number of governance indicators, including the rule of law.²⁵ There are, however, concerns about the accessibility, timeliness and quality of court services.
- Voter turnout at the 2002 general election was 72.5% of the eligible population. Voter participation in general elections declined sharply from 89% in 1984 to 78% in 1990, increased slightly to 81% in 1996, then declined again in 2002. Non-voters are more likely to be people on lower incomes, younger people, and members of Māori or Pacific ethnic groups.

What Government is Doing

The Government is improving court services, promoting human rights, settling Treaty claims and promoting active citizenship.



- The Supreme Court of New Zealand will improve access to final appeals. The Government is considering its response to the Law Commission's recommendations on further changes to the Court system.²⁶
- In 2001, the functions of the Human Rights Commission were reviewed and it was merged with the Race Relations Office. The Commission now has a more strategic role in the promotion of the full range of human rights. As part of its new mandate the Commission has consulted widely on the recently completed *Status Report on Human Rights in New Zealand*, and will shortly publish a *New Zealand Action Plan for Human Rights*.
- The Office of Treaty Settlements facilitates the negotiation of fair and durable settlement of historical grievances relating to the Treaty of Waitangi.
- The Electoral Commission is actively promoting electoral enrolment and voter participation. The Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa promotes the active citizenship of young people.
- The Office for Disability Issues, the Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade are working closely with people with disabilities and disability sector organisations to contribute to the development of a United Nations convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.
- The New Zealand Disability Strategy is a

rights-based document and proposes a number of actions to ensure disabled people can exercise their civil and political rights.

- The launch of the e-government portal (www.govt.nz) in November 2002 has provided ready access to a wide range of government services and information 24 hours a day, seven days a week to New Zealanders with internet access.

Continuing Challenges

- Understanding and being able to access justice services in a timely manner is critical to the rule of law and justice, and improved social cohesion.
- Settlement of outstanding Treaty of Waitangi claims is important both for race relations and to strengthen just foundations for social development that promote opportunity for all New Zealanders.
- Some civil and political rights are exercised through regulatory frameworks, covering activities as diverse as bringing up children, buying a house and making a will; and laws governing private relationships. Changing social values, such as the increased prominence of extended families and the growth in technology, mean many of these laws require review.
- Building trust and confidence in political institutions and promoting active citizenship are essential to the effective functioning of democracy.

KEY GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES RELATING TO THIS DOMAIN

- New Zealand Action Plan for Human Rights (forthcoming)
- Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (2002)
- New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001)

National Identity

DESIRED OUTCOMES: *New Zealanders share a strong national identity, have a sense of belonging and value cultural diversity. All people are able to pass different cultural traditions on to future generations. Māori culture is valued and protected.*

Rationale

Government actively promotes and protects New Zealand's national identity, culture and heritage because:

- culture and heritage have value in their own right and contribute to a common sense of nationhood as well as to New Zealand's economic development
- Māori culture is unique to our country and forms part of our international identity.

Objectives

Government investment in culture and heritage will contribute to:

- a strong cultural identity that contributes to a sense of national identity in an increasingly global world
- promotion and preservation of a unique, shared social heritage
- the building of strong, creative industries.

Current Status

Defining and measuring cultural identity is not a simple matter. New Zealand is a small but diverse nation, made up of many cultural groups.

New Zealand's population is projected to become more ethnically diverse. By 2021, people who identify as Asian will comprise 13% of the total population, up from 6.6% in 2001. Similar

growth is expected for Māori (up to 17% from 14.7% in 2001) and Pacific peoples (up to 9% from 6.5% in 2001), with a corresponding decrease in the proportion of European/Pākehā (69%, down from 80% in 2001).²⁷

There is also considerable growth in the numbers of people reporting multiple ethnicities. For example, the number of Māori reporting multiple ethnicity rose from 26% in 1991 to 44% in 2001. One in five babies born in 2001 was identified with more than one ethnic group, including 59% of all Māori babies.

What Government is Doing

Government initiatives are focused on promoting national identity while recognising cultural diversity, and supporting the development of strong creative industries.

Promoting National Identity

- *Te Ara, the Online Encyclopedia of New Zealand,* will make a significant contribution to understanding New Zealand's unique culture and heritage.
- Government launched a website (www.treatyofwaitangi.govt.nz) in April 2004 as the first official website that provides a concise account of the history of the Treaty of Waitangi and the issues surrounding it.
- Establishing and funding the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, and contributing to regional museums, preserves and presents New Zealand's cultural heritage and natural environment and ensures that nationally significant collections are accessible to New Zealanders. Museums improve New Zealanders' understanding of our cultural and natural heritage and its relationship to our evolving national identity.

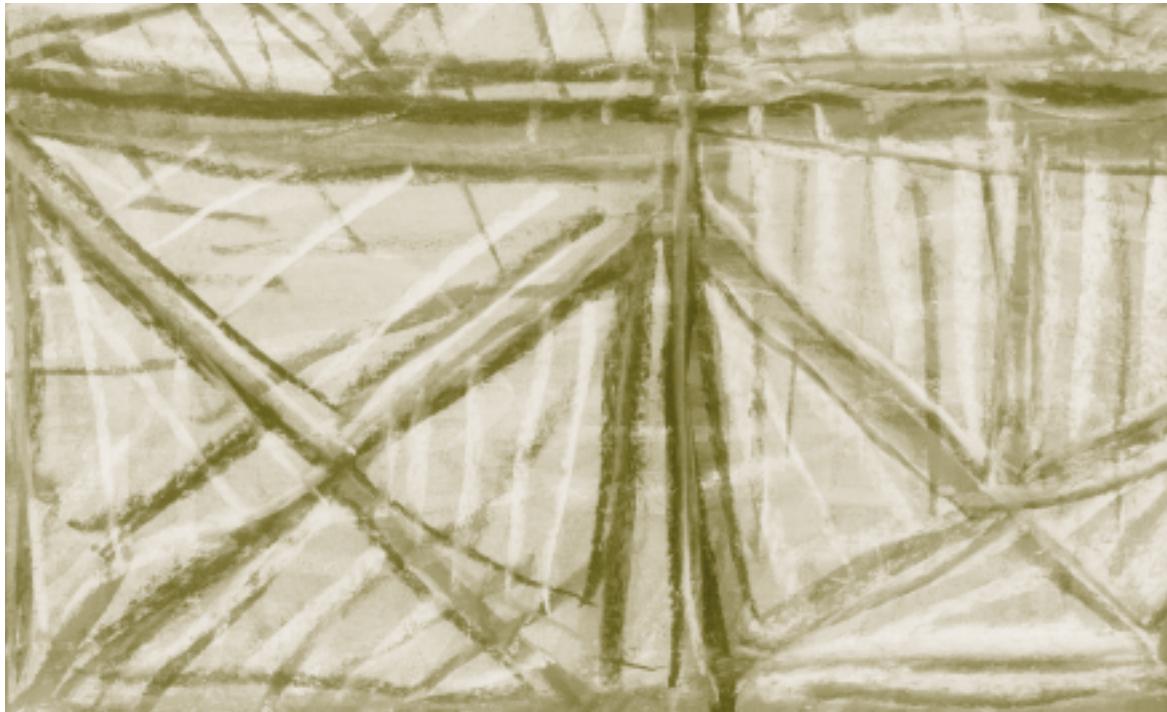
- Funding for Māori and Pacific language nests, kura kaupapa Māori schools, wānanga, and Māori and Pacific medium education in mainstream schools helps support unique cultural identities.
- New Zealand's national identity is promoted through broadcasting, funding for local content through NZ On Air and Te Māngai Pāho, the Charter of TVNZ and the Charter of Radio New Zealand. The Māori Television Service began transmission in March 2004. Budget 2004 allocated a total of \$20.6m to support broadcasters to get New Zealand stories and people on air.
- The New Zealand Sign Language Bill will officially recognise New Zealand Sign Language as a unique New Zealand language.
- Government has supported artists to profile New Zealand's national and cultural identity on the world stage.

Building Strong Creative Industries

- The screen industry is already a significant export dollar earner. *Whale Rider* was the first film to be financed from the New Zealand Film Fund. The success of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy continues to boost the reputation of New Zealand's film industry.
- The Government supports the music and book industries through the *New Zealand Music Industry Commission* and strategies to support the growing export industry of New Zealand books, particularly New Zealand literature. New awards for literature celebrate the contribution of writers to our identity.
- NZ On Air's music schemes contribute significantly to the New Zealand music industry.

Dreams of becoming a stilt walker have come true for a formerly unemployed Christchurch man. With the help of Work and Income's PACE (Pathways to Arts and Cultural Employment) programme, Nathan Kerr has been able to get work with Stalker, one of the world's best stilt-based performing arts companies.





- The involvement of New Zealand teams in international competition and the hosting of international events have major spin-offs for the economy. Sport provides a vehicle to reinforce and enhance our brand image, improve the value of traded products and enhance tourism opportunities.

Continuing Challenges

Defining and promoting “New Zealand-ness” and a common national identity in a global world is a continuing challenge.

The “indigenisation” of non-Māori New Zealanders requires new ways of thinking about the relationships between Māori as tangata whenua, and those who have subsequently made New Zealand home.

KEY GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES RELATING TO THIS DOMAIN

- General Policy for the Historic Heritage Managed by Government Departments (forthcoming)
- Towards an Active New Zealand (2004)
- Ala Fou - New Pathways: Strategic Directions for Pacific Youth in New Zealand (2003)
- Te Rautaki Reo Māori: Māori Language Strategy (2003)
- The Local Government Act 2002 includes the promotion of cultural wellbeing in the present and for the future as one of the purposes of local government.

Leisure and Recreation

DESIRED OUTCOMES: *New Zealanders are satisfied with their participation in leisure and recreation activities. All people have adequate free time in which they can do what they want and can access an adequate range of different opportunities for leisure and recreation.*

Rationale

The Government supports leisure and recreational activities because:

- physical activity provides considerable health and other social benefits
- arts, sport, cultural activities and access to the natural environment offer opportunities for inspiration, creativity and spiritual renewal.

Objectives

Government goals include:

- increasing the level of physical activity of New Zealanders
- encouraging, promoting and supporting the arts, sport and cultural activities.

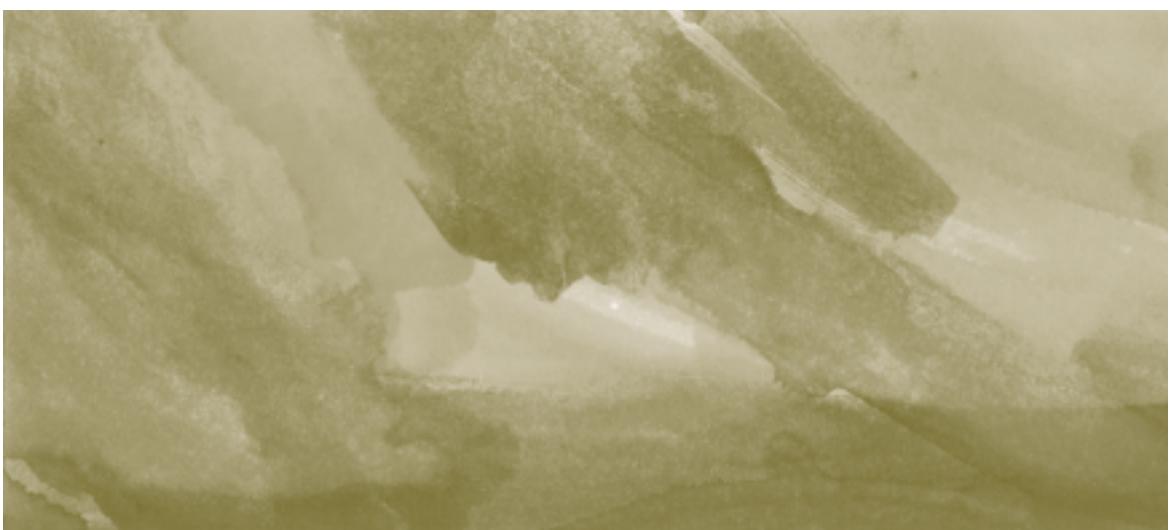
Current Status

- Recent data show declining activity levels for young people and inadequate levels of activity for most adults.²⁸
- New Zealanders report high levels of interest in a range of cultural activities with New Zealand content, including sport, theatre, music and literature.²⁹

What Government is Doing

Government policies focus on increasing levels of physical activity, encouraging, promoting and supporting arts, sports and cultural activities, and ensuring that New Zealanders have adequate free time to pursue their chosen leisure and recreational activities.

- SPARC (Sport and Recreation New Zealand) was established in February 2002 to promote, encourage and support physical activity and sport in New Zealand.
- The *Work-Life Balance* project, led by the Department of Labour, is addressing the objective of adequate free time to enjoy life outside paid work.



- The benefits of walking and cycling are promoted through the *Push Play* campaign (“Get off the sofa and into a more active life”) and through a new strategy to increase active modes of transport.³⁰
- Funding for outdoor recreation facilities on public conservation land in New Zealand has been increased dramatically.
- Government supports a wide range of sport and recreation organisations.
- Government contributes funding to activities promoting participation in cultural activities, such as the Rockquest music contest for secondary schools, and to professional arts organisations.

Continuing Challenges

- Physical inactivity contributes to more than 2,600 deaths every year (four times the road toll).³¹ A multi-sectoral approach to increasing physical activity and sport participation is indicated.³² *Towards an Active New Zealand*, a national policy framework for sport and physical activity, will be implemented in 2005.
- Lack of time and cost are the most commonly reported barriers to experiencing cultural activities more often, or at all.³³
- Urban design needs to incorporate a range of facilities for recreation and leisure activities.

KEY GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES RELATING TO THIS DOMAIN

- Towards an Active New Zealand (2004)
- Draft New Zealand Urban Design Protocol (2004)
- Action Plan for New Zealand Women (2004)
- Getting Set for an Active Nation (2001)
- New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001)
- New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy (2001)

Physical Environment

DESIRED OUTCOMES: *The natural and built environment in which New Zealanders live is clean, healthy and beautiful. All people are able to access natural areas and public spaces.*

Rationale

The state of our environment creates opportunities and sets limits for social wellbeing. For economic, social and cultural development to be sustainable, government must ensure that the benefits of development are not outweighed by degradation of New Zealand's unique environment.

Objective

The Government's objective is to improve New Zealanders' quality of life while protecting the quality of our environment.

Current Status

There are variations between large and small communities in drinking water quality throughout the country. Ambient air quality is generally good due to New Zealand's remote location, maritime climate and relatively low level of industrialisation. However, air pollution is a problem in some urban areas, with Christchurch, Hamilton and Wellington measuring high levels of fine particles that breach ambient air quality guidelines.

What Government is Doing

- The Government's *Sustainable Development Programme of Action* includes addressing the quality, allocation and use of fresh water, and the protection of water bodies with nationally significant natural, social or cultural heritage values.

- A *Clean Air Programme* is developing national policies and tools to maintain and improve air quality. The Government has approved the first national environmental standards aimed at air quality. The first of the air standards came into effect at the beginning of October 2004, banning specific activities that discharge dioxins and other toxins into the air.

- The *National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy* promotes a move toward a sustainable energy future for New Zealand through energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy.
- The Government has agreed that issues relating to the safety and quality of drinking water, and the safety and quality of raw water that is intended to become drinking water, will be the subject of a Health (Drinking Water) Amendment Bill. To complement the proposed drinking water legislation, the Ministry for the Environment is also developing a national environmental standard for the improved management of drinking water sources.
- The Auckland region has been identified as the most urgent candidate for action under *Sustainable Cities*. The work programme includes economic development and regional governance, alignment of transport and growth strategies, sustainable communities, migrant settlement, and child and youth development.

- The *Urban Affairs Statement of Strategic Priorities* sets out priority urban issues and a strategy for whole-of-government management and co-ordination of urban affairs. The *Draft New Zealand Urban Design Protocol* will be a national cross-sectoral



commitment to good urban design with a linked programme of action.

- Monitoring and review systems are being developed to measure progress towards sustainable development goals.³⁴
- Government's policy of establishing a network of high-country parks and reserves will protect a representative range of ecosystems.

Continuing Challenges

Most New Zealanders associate quality of life with New Zealand's "clean green" environment. For this to remain a reality for present and future generations, we need to:

- increase the use of renewable energy to meet present and future demand
- maintain water quality to meet all appropriate needs
- address the increasing size of our "ecological footprint"³⁵ and the impact of climate change on agricultural and horticultural production and ecosystems
- improve our urban design to promote physical activity, safety, social cohesion, leisure and recreation, and environmental sustainability.

KEY GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES RELATING TO THIS DOMAIN

- Statement of Strategic Priorities for Urban Affairs (forthcoming)
- National Environmental Standards for Air Quality (2004)
- Draft New Zealand Urban Design Protocol (2004)
- New Zealand Waste Strategy (2002)
- National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (2001)
- Biodiversity Strategy (2000)

Keeping a Big Picture

A lot of what the Government does to improve the quality of life of New Zealanders is focused on particular areas of wellbeing. There are, for example, government departments committed specifically to health, education, justice, social development and housing.

However, many government initiatives are planned and implemented on a cross-sectoral basis. Improving social outcomes and addressing the complex causes of disadvantage for particular population groups requires joined-up ways of working to achieve the desired results. From time to time particular issues come to the fore

and dominate public and political debate. Some of these also cut across more than one domain of wellbeing. For this reason the Government is committed to a number of key cross-sectoral strategies.

The following example (from the transport sector) illustrates ways in which “everything affects everything”. Transport does more than facilitate the movement of people and goods. It significantly affects the social wellbeing of New Zealand and its people, as well as economic development and environmental sustainability.

KEY CROSS-SECTORAL AND POPULATION STRATEGIES FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Action Plan for New Zealand Women (2004)
- High and Complex Needs Strategy (2004)
- Towards an Active New Zealand (2004)
- Healthy Eating - Healthy Action (2003)
- Pacific Workforce Development Strategy (2003)
- Sustainable Development for New Zealand: Programme of Action (2003)
- Key Government Goals to Guide the Public Sector in Achieving Sustainable Development (2002)
- New Zealand Transport Strategy (2002)
- New Zealand's Agenda for Children (2002)
- Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (2002)
- New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001)
- New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy (2001)
- Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship (2001)
- Reducing Inequalities (2000)
- Pacific Directions (1999)

Transport and Social Wellbeing

Transport plays a key role in all our lives, and in New Zealand's economic and social development, affecting most domains of social wellbeing.

Preventing the isolation of older people, overcoming barriers to mobility for people with disabilities, supporting the safe and independent movement of children within their communities, and providing access to health services, education and employment - all depend in part on being able to exercise a full range of transport choices.

The *New Zealand Transport Strategy* (2002) is the first that seeks to integrate the transport

system with the broader social, economic and environmental needs of the country. By 2010, the Government aims to have an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable transport system. The strategy is focused on five objectives:

- assisting economic development
- assisting safety and personal security
- improving access and mobility
- protecting and promoting public health
- ensuring environmental sustainability.

Summary

The Government's social policy and strategies for social development are focused on:

- achieving and sustaining improvements in social wellbeing for all New Zealanders
- reducing disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity for all New Zealanders.

Part 1 of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* has summarised what the Government is doing to improve social outcomes, and why it is doing it.

Part 2 highlights a priority set of critical social issues that require sustained interagency attention over the medium to long term to improve social outcomes further.

2. Critical Social Issues



Part 2 of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* presents five critical social issues that the Government has identified as priorities for interagency action over the next three to five years.

Introduction

The vision that inspires the Government's social policy is:

An inclusive New Zealand where all people enjoy opportunity to fulfil their potential, prosper and participate in the social, economic, political and cultural life of their communities and nation.

The Government's contribution to achieving this vision is broadly described in Part 1 of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*. Part 2 identifies a priority set of critical social issues for sustained interagency attention over the medium to long term to improve social outcomes further. These issues represent significant barriers to fulfilling a vision of opportunity for all.

Within the social sector we are sometimes faced with seemingly intractable problems on which we do not appear to make significant progress. *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* is a vehicle for co-ordinated attention to some of these issues. We are starting with a limited set of priorities, and directing government agencies to work together in new and different ways to make a difference.

How the Issues were Identified

The following criteria were used to identify a limited set of priority areas where we want to concentrate interagency efforts over the medium to long term:

- the issue affects a large number of people, or a small number of people is severely affected
- the issue impacts on other negative outcomes now or in the future
- the issue increases inequalities within and between populations
- the issue will still, without government

intervention, be important in five to 10 years' time

- the issue relates to the work of a number of government agencies, and requires their collaboration to deal with it effectively
- the issue is perceived to be of general public concern.

For each critical issue, *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* outlines the problem, summarises the current status and trends, describes what government is already doing to address it, and identifies lead agencies.

The Issues

Five issues have been identified as critical in this sense:

- improving educational achievement among low socio-economic groups
- increasing opportunities for people to participate in sustainable employment
- promoting healthy eating and healthy activity
- reducing tobacco, alcohol and other drug abuse
- minimising family violence, and abuse and neglect of children and older persons.

These are not the only social issues confronting New Zealand. They have been identified as priorities because they are issues where sustained collaboration by central government agencies can make a difference. Complex social problems cannot be dealt with in a single-dimensional way. All the issues dealt with in Part 2 of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders* require

co-ordinated, multi-disciplinary, multi-agency and multi-levelled responses over a number of years if we are to make progress on them.

What Government is Doing to Make a Difference

For each critical social issue identified in Part 2 of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*, information has been gathered from across the social sector on current status and trends, causes and effects, existing work programmes, and interventions that have been shown to work. The cluster of agencies that needs to be involved to make a difference is identified, and lead co-ordinating agencies specified.

The Government expects that agencies will use this set of critical social issues as a point of reference in prioritising their activities from 2005/2006 onwards.

In each case, the co-ordinating agency or agencies will provide leadership to identify whether and in what circumstances outcomes can be improved by any or all of the following:

- improved interagency collaboration
- further problem definition and research to identify causal factors
- joint definition of a desired outcome
- further analysis of evidence of “what works” to make a difference
- building on existing work, and developing new ways to work together.

As new ways of working together are developed for each project, progress will be shared so it can inform work on other projects.

Ongoing Review and Identification of Emerging Social Issues

The Government will continue to review its strategic priorities to ensure that we maintain our focus on the most important issues for social wellbeing. The Chief Executives of the Ministries of Education, Health, Justice and Social Development will meet regularly to assess changes in New Zealand’s social environment and to identify emerging social issues. Such a process will provide collective advice to social sector Ministers on priorities for government investment in social development.

Government agencies are developing new ways of working together to improve social outcomes for all New Zealanders.

It is also important to note that while the Government has selected this limited set of issues for sustained interagency attention, government work programmes will continue to focus on a range of priorities beyond this set. Many of these existing commitments are the “core business” of particular agencies. Government’s ongoing commitment to these is expressed in the various sector strategies outlined in Part 1 of *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*, and in annual departmental Statements of Intent. Progress will be made on critical social issues by building on existing work programmes wherever possible.

When progress is made on the current issues, we will move them off the priority list. This will allow us to shift the focus onto other social concerns that warrant priority attention by central government.

Improving Educational Achievement Among Low Socio-economic Groups

On the whole, New Zealand children have high levels of educational achievement. However, too many of our children are significantly under-achieving. There are clear links between low achievement levels, low parental income and low parental qualifications - and New Zealand's linkages between low achievement levels and low socio-economic status are stronger than in many other OECD countries.³⁶

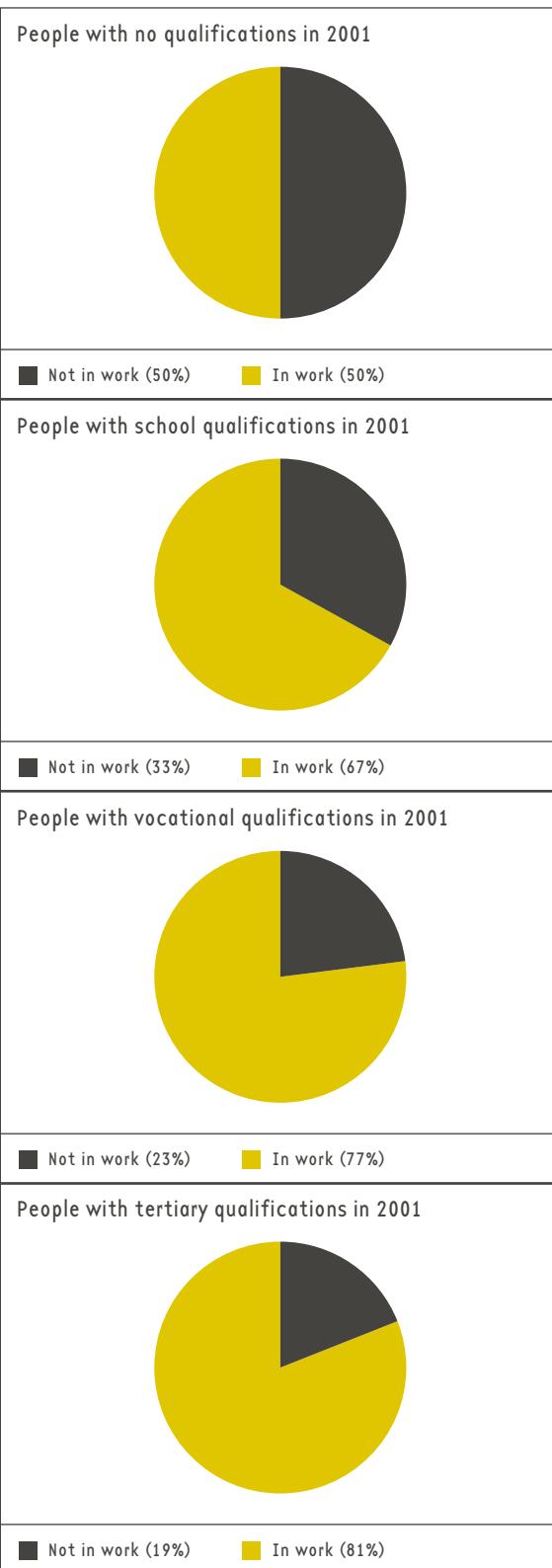
On average, young people from schools that draw their students from low socio-economic communities are much less likely than other young people to attain higher school qualifications.³⁷

Upper secondary education serves as the foundation for higher learning and training opportunities as well as preparation for direct entry into the labour market. Those who leave school early, with few qualifications, are at much greater risk of:

- unemployment or vulnerability in the labour force
- low incomes throughout their working lives.³⁸

Educational under-achievement is also associated with teen pregnancy, poorer physical and mental health, youth criminal offending and lower levels of civic engagement.³⁹

While there is some evidence that low parental incomes per se may be less important than parental education⁴⁰ and the quality of parents' interactions with their children,⁴¹ many children's outcomes, including cognitive development, are damaged by the persistent



effects of low incomes.⁴² Living in poverty for sustained periods during childhood has a significant impact on subsequent life chances.⁴³ Factors affecting cognitive development and children's learning that are associated with low economic status include sub-standard or crowded housing and insufficient food.

Good evidence now exists that family income received in the early years of a child's life significantly affects later educational outcomes. This effect appears to be strongest for low-income families.⁴⁴ Family income later in a child's life does not appear to be so significant for educational achievement and life outcomes.⁴⁵

Current Status and Trends

An international comparative study of reading achievement among 10 year olds,⁴⁶ *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study* (PIRLS), found that, in 2001, New Zealand had a high proportion of students in both the top and bottom levels of international achievement.⁴⁷

- 17% of children tested scored above the international top 10% benchmark.
- The mean reading score was significantly higher than the international average.
- 16% of children did not reach the international Lower Quarter (bottom 25%) benchmark. This compares with 4% of Swedish students, 10% of English students, and 11% of students from the United States.
- The range of scores for New Zealand was wider than the range for most other countries.

Students attending deciles 8-10 schools (in the most economically advantaged communities) generally achieved markedly higher scores than

those attending deciles 1-3 schools (in the most economically disadvantaged communities).⁴⁸

There was a considerable range of scores across all deciles but the spread was larger for students in the deciles 1-3 schools.

Differences in educational achievement in 2002 between low- and high-decile schools are illustrated in the following table:

	Left school with an A or B Bursary	Left school with no qualifications	Left school with three or fewer years of secondary schooling
Decile 1-3 schools	6%	31%	20%
Decile 8-10 schools	30%	10%	10%
Source: Ministry of Education			

Nearly one-third of New Zealand children are affected by low household incomes, ie they live in families with incomes below 60% of the median income, after housing costs have been taken into account.⁴⁹ There is a high level of child poverty among sole-parent households, corresponding to a lower rate of participation in paid work.⁵⁰

Low family incomes can affect children's access to quality housing and nutrition. National and international studies indicate an association between the prevalence of certain infectious diseases and crowding, and between crowding and poor educational attainment.⁵¹ In 2001, 42,900 dependent children lived in over-crowded houses that required two or more additional bedrooms. This accounted for nearly 5% of all dependent children.⁵²

Poor nutrition in infancy and early childhood has been found to affect children's cognitive and behaviour skills.⁵³ The 2002 National Children's

Nutrition Survey found that over 22% of households reported that “food runs out because of lack of money, *sometimes or often*”. About 18% of households said they ate less because of lack of money.⁵⁴ Children in deprived areas were less likely to have had something to eat in the morning before leaving for school than other children.⁵⁵

Studies using data from the United States Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project found that school-aged children who identified as hungry or at risk of hunger were more likely to have impaired psychosocial function, were more likely to be absent from or late to school, and were more likely to be using special education resources. For teenagers, these differences were dramatic: food-insufficient teenagers were more than twice as likely to have seen a psychologist, almost three times as likely to have been suspended, almost twice as likely to have a lot or some difficulty getting along with others, and four times as likely to have no friends.⁵⁶

A low family income in childhood is also often associated with high levels of family stress, a high incidence of unmet health needs, and a lack of resources in the home that assist learning (general knowledge, study support, books and computer access).

An OECD study of the relationship between educational attainment and earnings potential shows that people without higher secondary school qualifications tend to earn between 60% and 90% of the earnings of people who completed upper secondary education.⁵⁷

A literacy intervention study in Mangere and Otara shows that low rates of literacy are neither inevitable nor unchangeable in low-decile

schools.⁵⁸ Early childhood and new entrant teachers can assist children at risk of later school failure to develop competency in literacy to expected national levels of achievement.⁵⁹

Current evidence indicates that:

- improving educational foundations, particularly quality early childhood education, is effective and has long-term effects on educational performance
- improving teacher quality and increasing the overall performance of the school make effective contributions to educational attainment across the board
- early identification and intervention to address barriers to learning (eg initial reading difficulties, eyesight or hearing problems) can improve educational outcomes for children at risk of under-achievement
- multi-agency approaches to improve access to services and address cumulative disadvantage (eg low family income, poor child health) can contribute to improved educational outcomes.

A mentoring programme at Hastings Boys' High School is achieving positive results. The programme targets year nine students who are children of Work and Income clients and who are identified as at risk of under-achieving or leaving school early. Eleven students completed the first intake in 2003 with excellent results, according to Headmaster Rob Sturch. Eight students are participating in the programme in 2004. The students are mentored by Teacher Aid worker Waka Petera, with funding provided by Work and Income.



What Government is Doing

All New Zealanders need strong learning foundations if they are to participate fully in the social, economic, political and cultural life of the nation. To that end the Government is supporting quality early childhood education through the implementation of *Pathways to the Future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki* (2002). This is a 10-year vision for educating young New Zealanders. *Pathways to the Future* will ensure that more children, especially from disadvantaged backgrounds, have affordable access to quality early childhood provisions through:

- increasing staffing and qualifications levels of ECE staff
- supporting the development of new services
- creating centres of innovation to support and disseminate innovative ideas
- encouraging the participation of families whose young children are not enrolled with an ECE provider.

The *Working for Families* initiatives announced in the June Budget will provide further assistance to help families access ECE by increasing the

childcare subsidy. *Working for Families* will also make a significant contribution toward addressing child poverty in New Zealand, a factor closely associated with poor educational outcomes.

The Government has put in place a number of steps to enhance teaching quality. Recent teacher pay settlements will ensure that teaching remains an attractive career that attracts talented and capable teachers. There will be an extra 460 teachers in secondary schools from the beginning of 2005, as part of the Government's ongoing commitment to drive up education standards in our schools. In order to strengthen the quality of beginning teachers, the Ministry is working with the Teachers Council on a strategy to help prepare teacher graduates to teach diverse learners more effectively.

The Ministry is now disseminating research that shows what a huge difference can be made for Māori and Pacific students when teachers understand students' backgrounds and their family and cultural influences. To further strengthen teaching practice, the Ministry is also developing and disseminating assessment methods to help teachers develop a better understanding of their students' strengths and

weaknesses. These enable teachers to tailor their programmes to meet students' needs so that learning problems can be picked up early and fixed before it is too late.

The Government is seeking the views of the education sector and the wider community as part of the development of a *Schooling Strategy* aimed at lifting student achievement, especially for students who are currently not doing so well. This will complement the early childhood and tertiary strategies by setting clear priorities for action over the next five years focused on improving outcomes for all school students.

To ensure that more students have positive transitions from school the Government recently introduced a \$57m package of measures to assist 15-19 year olds make the transition from school. These measures include expanding the *Gateway* and the *Modern Apprenticeships* programmes and introducing a new Youth Transitions Service and more career planning assistance for secondary school students.

The Ministry of Education is leading development of a Schooling Strategy that will focus on improving educational achievement for all students.

It is never too late to acquire strong learning foundations. The Government's *Adult Literacy Strategy* is helping adult New Zealanders who did not acquire literacy skills earlier in their life to gain a level of literacy that enables them to participate fully in all aspects of life, including work, family and the community. The strategy involves many different learning opportunities that are available through workplaces,

community-based education providers and tertiary institutions.

For many students there are factors beyond school that lead to increased risk of student under-achievement. These are factors such as low family incomes, family mobility and health problems. Many of these students receive services from several government agencies as well as from schools. In recent times there has been a strong effort to ensure that when several agencies work with families, those agencies effectively align their efforts. One example is the Youth Offending teams that bring together Police, Child, Youth and Family, Health, and Education staff to co-ordinate responses to local youth offending problems.

Other examples of government departments working together include the Family Start home visiting programme, which supports families with very young children; and the Social Workers in Schools programme. As a result of recent budget decisions the Government is expanding both of these programmes in order to improve educational achievement by addressing some of the multiple disadvantages that affect some students and their families.

Next Steps

Cabinet has directed the Ministry of Education to co-ordinate interagency action to improve educational achievement among low socio-economic groups. Key agencies likely to be involved include the Ministries of Health, Economic Development, Social Development and Pacific Island Affairs, Te Puni Kōkiri, the Department of Building and Housing, and Housing New Zealand Corporation. Particular projects may require additional input from other government agencies.

Increasing Opportunities for People to Participate in Sustainable Employment

Sustainable paid work provides people with economic independence, and the means to provide for themselves and their families, and to lead the lives they choose. It also provides meaningful activity and social contact that contribute to self-esteem and life satisfaction.

As noted in Part 1, a continuing challenge for New Zealand, given projected demographic changes, is to improve both workforce participation and productivity. Unless these improvements are made, it will not be possible to achieve the Government's goal of returning New Zealand's GDP per capita to the top half of the OECD rankings.

Proposals for improving New Zealand's workforce participation and productivity are currently being developed by the Department of Labour. This work relates closely to the *Growth and Innovation Framework* - the Government's strategy for economic development.

A recent OECD report on New Zealand's economic outlook notes that, while raising productivity growth is the foremost challenge facing New Zealand, a second is to extend to groups with low workforce participation levels the good labour-market outcomes that most New Zealanders enjoy. Currently, about 9% of New Zealand's working-age population has been on a benefit for more than a year.

Consequently, increasing opportunities for people to participate in sustainable employment has been selected as a priority for the contribution of the social sector to sustainable development for New Zealand.

The following groups are more likely to have lower levels of participation in employment: Māori, Pacific people, women, youth, mature

workers, people with disabilities and migrants. A number of factors have been identified as affecting labour force participation. Greater workforce participation can be achieved by:

- improving the availability of suitable jobs
- lifting the skill levels of people wanting to participate in employment
- addressing the barriers to paid work that some people face
- improving the gains from working and conditions of work.

Some individuals have been unemployed long term, which is closely associated with low levels of education and skills, poor health and disability, inadequate housing and a range of other poor social outcomes. Further, it appears that in some circumstances these factors can be transmitted from one generation to the next.⁶⁰

While average unemployment rates for Māori, Pacific peoples and people of other ethnicity continue to be more than double the average unemployment rate for European New Zealanders, trends for these groups significantly improved between 1999 and 2004.⁶¹

	2004		1999	
	%	n	%	n
European	3.2	51,600	5.5	83,400
Māori	9.5	19,200	18.6	31,100
Pacific	7.7	7,300	14.8	11,500
Other	6.6	10,700	13.3	13,200

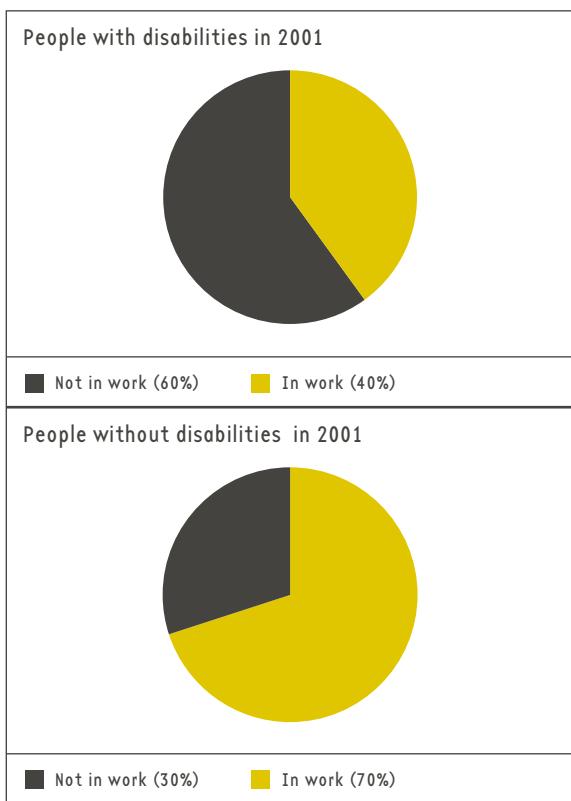
Source: Statistics New Zealand

Existing government approaches to improving employment outcomes for sole parents and young adults are generally working well, resulting in improved outcomes for these groups. However, there remains a sub-group of New Zealanders who have complex needs, face multiple disadvantages, experience a degree of social

exclusion, cycle between various income-tested benefits (or remain on a particular benefit long term), tend to fall between systems, and for whom getting a job may be the least of the hurdles they face.

The Government is concerned to increase opportunities for people to participate in sustainable employment.

People with disabilities are less likely to be in work than the rest of the working-age population. For many, if appropriate rehabilitation and support can be provided, employment is a realistic goal.



Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2001 New Zealand Disability Survey

The Government recognises the complexity of needs experienced by long-term beneficiaries, but does not accept long-term welfare receipt as a desirable social outcome. Government agencies need to work together in new, "cycle-breaking" ways to enable at least a degree of economic independence and social inclusion for people who currently experience disadvantage.

Current Status and Trends

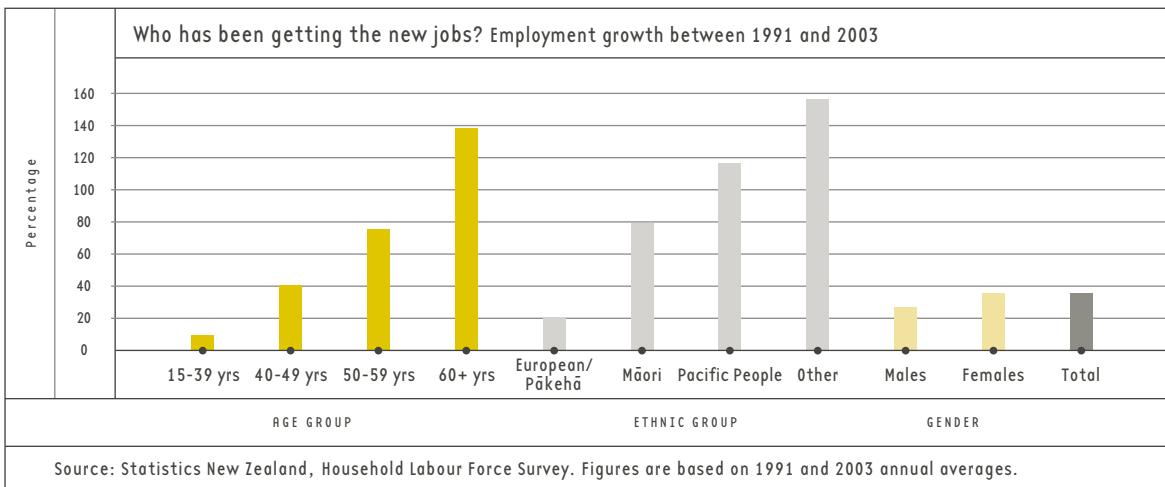
Employment has increased over the last decade. Approximately 500,000 new jobs have been created, raising employment by just over a third. These new jobs have increasingly been taken up by older people, Māori, Pacific people and people from other ethnic minorities. Groups that are under-represented in the workplace have, in the past decade, seen the strongest employment growth.

Between 1991 and 2003:

- employment of Māori grew by 78%, an increase of 80,000
- employment of Pacific people grew by 114%, an increase of 46,000
- employment of people from Other ethnic minorities grew by 155%, an increase of 86,000.

Traditionally, men have made up a greater share of people in employment than women. However, this gender imbalance has been declining for some time. Between 1991 and 2004, employment of women grew by 34%, compared with 28% for men, increasing women's share of employment from 44% to 45%.

While female labour force participation has increased over a long period of time, it is lower during the main childrearing years of 25-39



years. However, employment rates for both sole and partnered mothers have been growing since the early 1990s. As at June 2004, 67% of partnered mothers and 45% of sole mothers were in employment.

Despite employment growth, a number of people have received the Unemployment Benefit continuously for 10 years or more, although the number has reduced. People on disability-related benefits such as Invalids Benefits are more likely to experience longer periods out of the workforce. The number of people experiencing ill health or disability and needing income assistance is growing across the OECD, as well as in New Zealand. The reasons for this are not clearly established.

Sickness Benefit

In New Zealand the number of working-age sickness beneficiaries has increased steadily since the late 1990s.

At 31 March 2004, 42,217 working-age people (aged 18-64 years) were receiving a Sickness Benefit. Over the year to 31 March 2004, the

number of Sickness Benefit recipients increased by 3,902, or 10%.

Of the clients receiving a Sickness Benefit at 31 March 2004:

- 51% had received a Sickness Benefit continuously for less than one year
- 39% had received a Sickness Benefit continuously for between one and four years
- 2% had received a Sickness Benefit continuously for 10 or more years, but 11% (approximately 4,650 people) had received a benefit continuously for 10 or more years, taking into account periods of time receiving all income-tested benefits
- around 9% were registered jobseekers (compared with nearly 14% at 31 March 2001).

Invalids Benefit

The number of people on Invalids Benefit has increased steadily since the late 1990s. Very few people move from an Invalids Benefit into paid work or onto another benefit.

Grant Kelling now works over 30 hours a week at McDonalds Nelson City. He has limited use of his right arm. He says when he was a teenager, having a disability was no big deal, but as he got older, job hunting got tougher.

He has been helped to find work by CCS and Work and Income, and now has a supportive employer.

Grant's message for other employers is to "look beyond the disability. You never know, they could end up being your most valued employee".



At 31 March 2004, 69,783 working-age people (aged 18-64 years) were receiving an Invalids Benefit. Over the year to 31 March 2004, the number of Invalids Benefit recipients increased by 3,220 or 5%.

At 31 March 2004, 3.5% of people receiving an Invalids Benefit were registered jobseekers. A similar percentage (3.6%) were registered jobseekers at 31 March 2001.

At 31 March 2004, 28% of Invalids Benefit recipients had received an Invalids Benefit continuously for 10 years or more. This reflects

the requirement that Invalids Benefit recipients have a "permanent and severe" incapacity. However, if spells receiving all income-tested benefits are considered, 46% (approximately 32,400 people) of Invalids Benefit recipients at 31 March 2004 had received a benefit continuously for 10 or more years.

Long-Term Recipients of Unemployment Benefit

At 31 March 2004, 75,164 working-age people (aged 18-64 years) were receiving an Unemployment Benefit. Over the year to 31 March 2004, the number of recipients of an Unemployment Benefit fell by 25,822, or 26%. Over the five-year period from 1999 to 2004, the number of people receiving an Unemployment Benefit at 31 March has nearly halved (from 144,895 at 31 March 1999).

Of the clients receiving an Unemployment Benefit at 31 March 2004:

- 51% had received an Unemployment Benefit continuously for under one year
- 1% had received an Unemployment Benefit continuously for 10 years or more.

However, if time spent receiving all income-tested benefits is considered, 7% of Unemployment Benefit recipients (approximately 5,260 people) at 31 March 2004 had received an income-tested benefit continuously for 10 years or more.

In addition to people who receive benefits from Work and Income, as at 30 June 2004, 13,890 people had received earnings-related compensation from the Accident Compensation Corporation for more than 12 months. Many face a range of significant barriers in returning to paid employment.

What Government is Doing

Working for Families will increase direct income support for low- and middle-income families. It will also provide incentives to move from welfare benefits into paid employment.

Providing opportunities in employment and economic development for people with disabilities is an objective of the *New Zealand Disability Strategy*.

From July 2004, people on Invalids Benefit will be able to trial working more than 15 hours a week for up to six months without losing benefit entitlement. From 1 July 2005, the Government is improving access to vocational services for people with disabilities by streamlining funding for services and removing the need for people to use their Disability Allowance to pay for them.

Employer-Focused Account Management will provide assistance to employers to take on people who are Sickness and Invalids Benefit clients. Employers will be assisted to provide training and work experience, so that it is easier to employ people they may not previously have considered.

A *Sickness and Invalids Benefit Strategy* was launched as a pilot project in Manukau in April 2004 to provide greater employment opportunities for sickness and invalid beneficiaries. It will bring existing employment initiatives and new health and rehabilitation services together. Case managers will spend more concentrated time with clients allowing them to identify their employment barriers, and to address clients' individual specific needs, providing health and rehabilitation services where appropriate. The pilot project is being advanced through agreements between Work and Income and locally based employment

support and health providers, including Counties Manukau District Health Board. Sickness and Invalids Benefit clients will be assisted through occupational medicine planning and interventions, and employment consultancy and job planning.

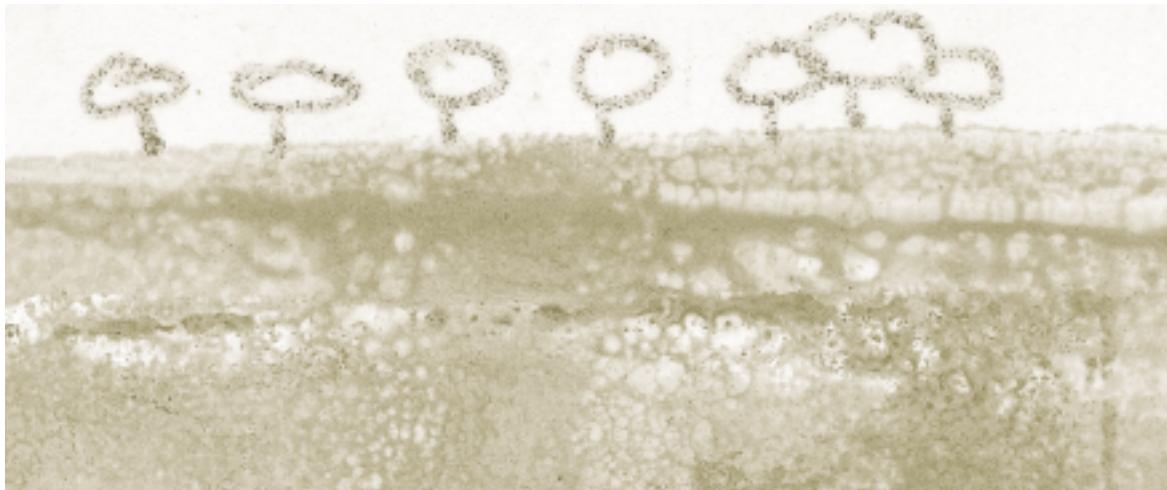
The Ministry of Social Development is co-ordinating work to remove barriers and increase incentives for people on welfare benefits to move into paid work.

Extra Help for Long-term Unemployed is underway in all regions. It gives a strong focus of support to long-term unemployed, and is particularly aimed at those who have been out of work for more than eight years. These clients receive a specialist assessment service to identify their particular barriers to employment, which can include transport, language, lack of confidence, lack of literacy or numeracy skills, little experience in applying for a job, or grooming. Case managers work one-on-one with clients to address these barriers. (Through this initiative the town of Opotiki reduced its long-term unemployed number from 12 to one in the six months to December 2003.)

The Government is changing benefit stand-down rules from 1 May 2005 to improve incentives for people on benefits to undertake seasonal work and other short-term employment.

Enhanced case management has been introduced to support sole-parent beneficiaries to develop employment plans to help manage both parenting and work commitments.

Further work will be undertaken to reform the existing benefit structure and reduce the complexity of social security legislation.



Legislation enhancing parental leave entitlements is currently before Parliament. These changes will enable employees with between six and 12 months' service with the same employer to access paid parental leave and job protection. The amendments will also progressively extend the duration of paid leave from 12 to 14 weeks by 1 December 2005 for all employees. These changes contribute to addressing the disadvantage that employees may otherwise face on the birth or adoption of a child.

The Government has endorsed work proceeding on the recommendations of the report of the *Taskforce on Pay and Employment Equity* relating to the public service, public health and education sectors. This includes establishing a dedicated pay and employment equity unit within the Department of Labour, and developing audit and gender-neutral job evaluation tools. The Government will consider other aspects of the Taskforce recommendations in December 2004.

The *Work-Life Balance Project* was set up in August 2003 to identify and promote policies to help people successfully combine paid work with

other activities that are important to them. Many people find it difficult to participate fully in paid work while also looking after family members and carrying out cultural and community responsibilities. The Project will advise Government on where it can best contribute to achieving work-life balance, and will promote practical solutions to the general public and to employers.

Next Steps

Cabinet has directed the Ministry of Social Development and the Department of Labour to co-ordinate interagency action to increase opportunities for people to participate in sustainable employment. Key agencies likely to be involved include the Ministries of Education, Health, Economic Development, Pacific Island Affairs and Women's Affairs; the Treasury; Te Puni Kōkiri; the Accident Compensation Corporation; the Inland Revenue Department; Creative New Zealand; and the Office for Disability Issues. Particular projects may require additional input from other government agencies and will need to be pursued in collaboration with the community and private sectors.

Promoting Healthy Eating and Healthy Activity

Improving nutrition, increasing physical activity and reducing obesity are the three goals of the *Healthy Eating - Healthy Action (HEHA)* strategy.⁶² These three goals are inextricably linked. Eating healthy food (as defined by the food and nutrition guidelines⁶³) and being physically active are behaviours that will reduce New Zealanders' risk of obesity. Development of obesity is linked to many chronic, debilitating and life-threatening diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and some cancers. Self-esteem, ability to learn, social participation, employment, income,⁶⁴ and depression, particularly for women, are also affected by weight status.⁶⁵

Obesity in adults is defined as having a Body Mass Index (BMI) greater than 30 for New Zealand European/Other, or greater than 32 for Māori and Pacific people. However, the risks associated with BMI are continuous and graded and begin at a BMI under 25.

Social and physical environments in which people consume excess energy through food and drink (particularly diets high in fat and energy), and expend insufficient energy through physical activity, result in a population that is increasingly obese.⁶⁶ Workplaces and schools are key settings where support for healthy eating and physical activity is needed.

Work to improve nutrition, increase physical activity and reduce obesity requires co-ordinated activity across government, non-government and industry sectors.

Current Status and Trends

The 2002/2003 New Zealand Health Survey⁶⁷ indicates that:

- one in five (21%) adults is obese and a further 35% are overweight

- one in five adults aged over 45 years report they have been diagnosed with heart disease
- one in 12 adults aged over 45 years report they have been diagnosed with diabetes (obesity is the most important modifiable risk factor for the development of type 2 diabetes)
- two out of five adults (42%) do not meet Ministry of Health recommendations to eat at least three servings of vegetables each day and at least two servings of fruit
- one out of four adults takes part in less than 2.5 hours of physical activity each week.

New Zealand has a relatively high rate of obesity compared with other OECD countries. In the late 1990s, New Zealand ranked poorly, at 22 out of 27 countries, for the rate of obesity in the adult population.⁶⁸

More than 3,000 people in New Zealand are estimated to die each year from overweight- and obesity-related health problems such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes.⁶⁹ Cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death in New Zealand, accounting for one-third of life years lost between the ages of 45 and 64 years. Diabetes is an increasing cause of disability, including avoidable vision loss, and premature death.⁷⁰

A conservative estimate is that in 1991 obesity cost the health sector alone around \$135m. Extrapolations from this data suggest that in 2000 the cost to the health sector may have been \$303m.⁷¹

Obesity trends in New Zealand are worsening.

- In 1989/1990, 10% of adult males and 13% of adult females were obese.
- In 1997, 15% of males and 19% of females were obese.⁷²

- In 2002/2003, 19% of males and 21% of females were obese.

There was a 50% increase in adult obesity between 1989 and 1997. Obesity increases with age, peaking at the 45-64 year age group, then declining at the older age groups. Females are more likely to be obese at all ages but men are catching up.⁷³

Māori and Pacific people have higher rates of obesity than other ethnic groups. In 2002/2003, 27% of Māori males and 27% of Māori females were obese. For Pacific peoples, the figures were 36% for males and 47% for females. This compares with 19% for European/Other males and 21% for European/Other females.⁷⁴

Rates for children from the 2002 Children's Nutrition Survey show that, in terms of an international definition of child obesity, 10% of New Zealand children aged 5-14 were obese, with a further 21% overweight.⁷⁵ Māori and Pacific children had higher rates than European/Other children. Obesity in childhood increases the risk of obesity in adulthood, so has serious implications for the long-term health of New Zealanders.

The Ministry of Health's food and nutrition guidelines provide evidence-based nutrition advice for New Zealanders, in seven population-specific background papers and accompanying health education materials.

Physical activity guidelines included in the food and nutrition guidelines recommend that adults do at least 30 minutes of "moderate intensity" physical activity on five or more days a week.⁷⁶ By this definition, 61% of adults are insufficiently active to maintain good health, and activity levels for young people appear to be declining.⁷⁷ It is conservatively estimated that

even a 5% increase in physical activity could result in health savings of \$25m per year, and that if all New Zealanders were physically active, \$160m could be saved.⁷⁸

The New Zealand Sport and Physical Activity Surveys indicated that, while most people would like to be more physically active, significant barriers include:

- personal and social barriers (such as cultural and social perceptions, disability or health status, and family commitments)
- structural and environmental barriers (such as location, transport, personal safety, access and facilities).⁷⁹

Most obesity experts believe that the obesity epidemic has yet to peak. Hence any interventions are unlikely to result in a reduction in the incidence and prevalence of obesity, but more likely a slowing in the rate of increase.

What Government is Doing

The *Healthy Eating - Healthy Action: Oranga Kai - Oranga Pumau (HEHA)* strategy was launched in 2003 and an implementation plan developed and released in 2004.⁸⁰ Closely linked to HEHA are the Ministry of Transport's active transport strategy, *Getting There - On Foot, By Cycle*, Walking School Buses and Green Prescriptions.

Primary Health Organisations are strengthening the capacity of primary health care providers to work with other sectors and the community to address population health issues such as obesity. Aspects of the PHO model - such as moving from an individual to a population health focus, the better integration of public health, community involvement in governance and better links to other sectors - all provide opportunities to address obesity more effectively.

The health sector alone cannot effectively address obesity. Central government is responding to the obesity epidemic by co-ordinated planning to improve nutrition, increase physical activity and reduce obesity.

The *HEHA* implementation plan identifies 87 specific actions to achieve the inter-linked outcomes of improved nutrition, increased physical activity and reduced obesity.

Recognising that not all actions can be achieved at once, nine priority actions have been grouped into a “start here” list. A six-year timeframe, divided into three two-year phases, has been established to give effect to all actions. Agencies involved in each action are identified and collaborative processes proposed.

HEHA actions include the development of existing policy and programmes promoting healthy food and physical activity in a variety of settings including early childhood centres and schools. There are considerable opportunities to make a difference to participation in physical activity and sport within the education sector. Research supports efforts to increase physical education time and increase out-of-school participation in regular activities.⁸¹ Sport and Recreation New Zealand and the Ministry of Education have begun to address the findings of the 2001 Graham Report on Sport, Fitness and Leisure⁸² with the development of a strategic partnership.⁸³ Examples of this collaborative approach include a *Pilot Primary Physical Activity Project* and the co-ordination of physical activity for students in secondary schools.

The design of our built environment also influences the amount and the quality of people’s physical activity. The recently developed *Draft New Zealand Urban Design Protocol*

outlines practical steps to improve urban design and promote more physically active communities. The Ministry for the Environment is responsible for the development and delivery of this project as part of its urban affairs work programme.

The Joint Action Plan for Auckland is the first of the regional programmes to come out of the *Sustainable Development Programme of Action*. This is a whole-of-government programme led by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry for the Environment. Key action areas include “Urban Form, Design and Development” and “Transport and Urban Form”.

The Ministry of Health is co-ordinating the implementation of *Healthy Eating - Healthy Action* to address obesity, nutrition and physical activity.

Next Steps

Cabinet has directed the Ministry of Health to co-ordinate interagency activity to promote healthy eating and healthy activity, including implementing the *Healthy Eating - Healthy Action* strategy to address obesity. Key agencies that have been involved in the development of the *HEHA* implementation plan to date are Sport and Recreation New Zealand; the Ministries of Education, Transport and Social Development; Local Government New Zealand; the private sector; and non-government organisations. Other organisations likely to be involved in the future include the Department of Labour and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Reducing Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse

Tobacco, alcohol and other drug abuse impact negatively on the health and wellbeing of New Zealanders. Tobacco smoking is a leading risk factor for cancers, cardiovascular disease and other diseases.⁸⁴ While alcohol consumption is embedded in New Zealand culture, it also causes great damage in society, particularly through its association with street and family violence, injury and accident. Use of illicit drugs results in serious harm to many New Zealanders' physical and mental health, as well as crime and other forms of social disruption. Tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug use affect not only the individual users, but also the family and community in which they live.

Current Status and Trends

Provisional results from the 2002/2003 New Zealand Health Survey tell us that in 2002:

- one in four New Zealanders aged 15 years and over was a cigarette smoker
- almost one in six adults had hazardous drinking habits
- one in seven adults had used marijuana in the past year.⁸⁵

The 2004 annual survey of year 10 students conducted by Action on Smoking and Health showed that the proportion of students aged 14 to 15 who are smoking daily has fallen from 16% to 12% between 1999 and 2003.

The number of apprehensions for illicit drugs other than cannabis rose from 1,306 in 1994 to 2,012 in 2000.⁸⁶

Tobacco

Tobacco smoking is the greatest single preventable cause of premature death in New Zealand. Each year about 4,700

New Zealanders die from cancers, cardiovascular disease and other diseases caused by smoking, accounting for approximately 17% of all deaths. There is also increasing evidence of harm to children and adults from exposure to second-hand smoke. It is estimated that between 300 and 400 people die each year from exposure to second-hand smoke.⁸⁷

Tobacco smoking is the greatest single preventable cause of premature death in New Zealand.

The prevalence of smoking declined from 30% in 1986 to 25% in 2001. However, most of the decline took place between 1987 and 1991, and the rate of decline has slowed since then.⁸⁸ Loose tobacco increased as a proportion of total cigarette equivalents released for consumption from 11% in 1989 to 19% in 1999.⁸⁹ Māori women have the highest rates of smoking in New Zealand (over 50%).⁹⁰ An Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) national survey of year 10 school students reported regular (daily or weekly) smoking prevalence figures for 1992, 1997, 1998 and 1999 at 18, 25, 24 and 23% respectively for girls, and 16, 18, 19 and 19% respectively for boys.⁹¹

Smoking in young people is a major influence on the future social burden of tobacco-related disease. The addictive properties of tobacco make quitting difficult. High smoking levels in the young therefore usually translate into high smoking levels in the older population.⁹²

Alcohol Abuse

The New Zealand Health Surveys show that the proportion of adults with hazardous drinking

habits remained stable between 1996 and 2002 at about 17%.⁹³ However, the number of young people using alcohol and the amount drunk per “typical occasion” appear to be increasing. The 1990 Regional Drug Surveys found that 12% of people aged 14-17 years consumed six or more drinks on a typical occasion in 1990. By 1999, that proportion had risen to 25%. Across the board, this age group was drinking about three drinks per typical occasion in 1990. By 1998, they were drinking five drinks per typical occasion.⁹⁴

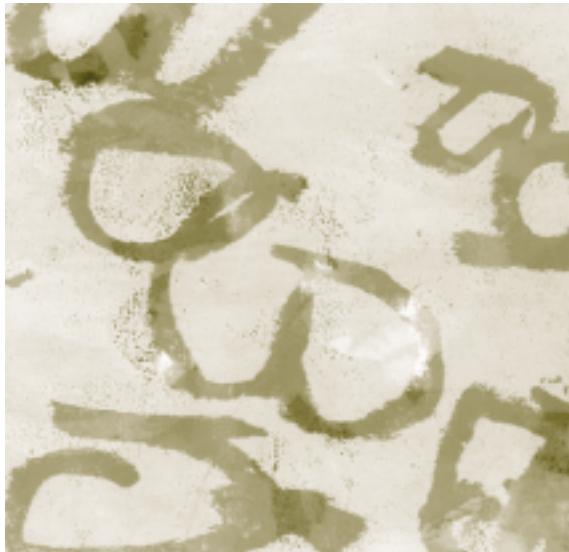
More young people are using alcohol and indulging in binge drinking.

Drinking drivers contributed to 23% of all fatal motor vehicle accidents and 14% of all injury motor vehicle accidents in the year ended December 1999.⁹⁵

A survey of student drinking conducted by the Injury Prevention Research Unit at Otago University found that, as a result of other students’ drinking, one-tenth of the women surveyed and a fifth of the men were assaulted at least once in the four weeks preceding the survey. One-fifth of the students had their property damaged.⁹⁶

While estimating the cost of alcohol abuse is difficult, two studies have estimated that the sum of social costs ranges from approximately \$1b to \$4b each year. These costs include such things as lost production, reduced working efficiency and unemployment as well as direct costs related to hospitals, ACC, treatment of alcohol-related disease and policing.⁹⁷

Gambling is also associated with unhealthy alcohol and other drug use. Sullivan and Penfold state



that, “There is strong evidence to suggest that misuse of alcohol and gambling problems coexist to a degree that is of clinical significance”.⁹⁸

Illegal Drug Abuse

The New Zealand illicit drug scene is a complex and changing environment that continues to challenge enforcement agencies. Because substance use and abuse is a covert behaviour, its true prevalence is unknown.

During 2003, the Customs Service made 28 seizures of commercial-scale illegal drugs at New Zealand’s border. These large-scale importations reflect the growing targeting of New Zealand by overseas-based trafficking syndicates.⁹⁹

The number of convictions for use of illicit drugs other than cannabis increased from 334 in 1994 to 734 in 2003. Convictions for dealing in illicit drugs other than cannabis increased from 379 in 1994 to 651 in 2003.¹⁰⁰

There has been a rapid increase in the New Zealand-based production of amphetamine-type substances. This has developed a new drug market that is linked to other societal problems,

such as violence and property crime.¹⁰¹ There is evidence that methamphetamine use is increasing, along with the numbers of people (including young people) presenting for treatment.¹⁰²

Injecting drug use is a largely invisible but significant cause of poor health outcomes, as shared needles contribute to the transmission of both Hepatitis C and HIV. Health practitioners are concerned about methamphetamine injecting, as methamphetamine injectors are not necessarily connected with needle exchanges and may not currently be reached by safer injecting messages.

More young people are trying drugs, and at a younger age.

More young people appear to be trying drugs at an early age. The 1990 Alcohol and Health Research Unit's Regional Drugs Survey found that 13% of respondents had been introduced to marijuana by age 14 and 69% by age 18. In 1998, 20% had been introduced by age 14 and 80% by age 18.¹⁰³ In the 1998 National Drugs Survey, 43% of males and 27% of females aged 18 to 24 years had used marijuana in the preceding 12 months.¹⁰⁴

Possession or use of alcohol and other illegal drugs was the most common reason for students to be suspended from school in 2003, and directly accounted for 1,494 cases of school suspension in 2003.¹⁰⁵

What Government is Doing

The Ministry of Health's approach to tobacco control is outlined in its five-year plan, *Clearing the Smoke*. Among the activities the Ministry funds is *Quitline*, which aims to reduce the

number of New Zealanders who smoke tobacco, with a particular focus on Māori smokers. The service takes 90,000 calls a year, with about a third leading to ongoing advice and support. Quit rates for callers show 20.5% have stayed off cigarettes for at least six months. *Quitline* also provides subsidised nicotine patches and gum. The Ministry also funds smoking cessation programmes for Māori (*Aukati Kai Paipa*), some hospital patients and pregnant women. Media programmes highlight the dangers of smoking and risks from second-hand smoke. There is also a wide range of health promotion programmes in schools and local communities aimed at preventing the uptake of smoking.

The Ministry of Health is implementing the amendment to the Smoke-free Environments Act which among other things will require all workplaces, including restaurants and bars, to be smokefree. It is also leading a review of the *National Drug Policy* (NDP) 1998-2003. The current NDP aims to minimise harm caused by tobacco, alcohol and drug use to both individuals and communities. The review is intended to establish the priorities for a forward-looking, whole-of-government, workable and generally agreed approach for the next five years.

This year, 15 new Community Action Youth and Drugs programmes were funded throughout New Zealand. These programmes involve partnership with communities and aim to increase informed debate on drug issues, promote safe behaviours, spread best practice and forge alliances to minimise the harm from drugs at a community level.

The Ministerial Committee on Drug Policy is charged with reviewing progress in implementing

the *National Drug Policy*, and deciding which new policy initiatives should be implemented. The Committee consists of 12 Ministers representing Health, Customs, Police, Justice, Corrections, Transport, Education, Social Development, Māori Affairs, Youth Development and Broadcasting. It is currently overseeing the implementation of a 32-point Alcohol and Illicit Drugs Action Plan as well as a 19-point Methamphetamine Action Plan. The Interagency Committee on Drugs, made up of representatives from 15 agencies, services and makes recommendations to the Ministerial Committee on Drug Policy.

As part of the *Crime Reduction Strategy* led by the Ministry of Justice, New Zealand Police are responsible for a strategy to target and reduce organised crime.¹⁰⁶ Organised crime (including gangs, family crime groups and career criminal groups) is closely associated with the production and sale of illegal drugs.¹⁰⁷

The Ministry of Health is co-ordinating work to reduce the incidence of tobacco smoking, and alcohol and other drug abuse.

Budget 2004 invested \$40m of new funding over the next four years to improve Police capability to respond to methamphetamine-related offending, develop a new “early warning” illicit drug monitoring system and other strategic research projects, including a pilot alcohol and other drug early intervention programme. Nearly \$15m over four years has also been invested in other drug-related initiatives, including provision for three more drug detection dog teams to stamp out the supply of drugs into, and within, prisons.

Government has also directed more attention at the harms associated with alcohol abuse in the community. For example, a focus on alcohol-related violence has been identified as one of four priority areas in the recently launched *Action Plan on Community Violence and Sexual Violence*, and increased resources have been allocated to the Alcohol Advisory Council to embark on an ambitious project to change cultural mores that reinforce or tolerate binge drinking and intoxication in New Zealand.

The Ministry of Youth Development is producing a handbook for school-based drug education with support from an interagency advisory group of representatives from the Ministries of Education, Health and Justice, Te Puni Kōkiri, the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand and New Zealand Police.

Customs funding has been increased for border enforcement, particularly investigations and intelligence positions. This will result in a significant improvement in Customs’ ability to combat drug smuggling.¹⁰⁸

Next Steps

Cabinet has directed the Ministry of Health to co-ordinate interagency action to reduce tobacco, alcohol and other drug abuse. Key agencies likely to be involved include New Zealand Police, New Zealand Customs Service, the Ministries of Education, Justice, Transport and Youth Development, Te Puni Kōkiri, the Accident Compensation Corporation and the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.

Minimising Family Violence, and Abuse and Neglect of Children and Older Persons

Family violence is a significant social issue, directly affecting the wellbeing of adults and children.¹⁰⁹ Family violence is violence or abuse of any type, perpetrated by one family member against another family member. It includes physical, sexual and psychological abuse.

Common forms of violence include:

- partner or spouse abuse
- child abuse and neglect (including serious sibling abuse)
- elder abuse and neglect (including abuse of parents by adult children).¹¹⁰

Partner abuse is physical or sexual violence, psychological and emotional abuse, or threat of physical or sexual violence occurring between intimate partners.¹¹¹

A caring society does not tolerate the abuse and neglect of its most vulnerable members.

Child abuse and neglect means the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person. A body of New Zealand and international research has identified links between partner abuse, and child abuse and neglect.¹¹²

Elder abuse and neglect is when a person aged 65 years or more experiences harmful physical, psychological, sexual, material or social effects caused by the behaviour of another person with whom they have a relationship implying trust. This may occur in many different settings including private homes, rest homes and hospitals.

Current Status and Trends

Due to methodological and data limitations, it is difficult to provide an accurate impression of the level and nature of violence within New Zealand families/whānau. However, common themes consistently emerge from official New Zealand records, New Zealand studies of prevalence and incidence, and literature on the nature and effects of family violence.¹¹³

In the year 2002/2003, Police attended 49,682 incidents of family violence.¹¹⁴ In 2001, 45% of reported violence occurred in private homes.¹¹⁵

Research indicates that an effective multi-faceted approach to family violence prevention includes:

- placing greater emphasis on early intervention and prevention
- raising public awareness through education
- strengthening community action and responsiveness
- providing appropriate crisis intervention and treatment services.¹¹⁶

Partner Abuse

In New Zealand, there is evidence that partner abuse affects a substantial number of individuals. The New Zealand National Survey of Crime Victims 2001 found that among currently partnered heterosexual people surveyed, 3% of women and 1.8% of men had experienced some form of violence by their current partner in the previous 12 months. Violence occurred over a continuum that ranged from relatively mild (grabbing or pushing “that could have hurt”) to severe (use of a weapon).¹¹⁷

An earlier New Zealand survey found that 15% of women surveyed had experienced some form of violent behaviour by their current partner.¹¹⁸

Researchers noted that as it was “clear from the outset that the [earlier] survey was specifically about violence against women by their male partners, rather than about crime victimisation in general”, women may have been more open about the abuse they had experienced.¹¹⁹

The effects of partner abuse can be extreme. Ninety percent of partner homicides in New Zealand were committed by men against their female partners or ex-partners.¹²⁰ Victims of partner abuse use health care services more than non-abused women, both for abuse-related and non-abuse-related complaints.¹²¹

Child Abuse and Neglect

About 10 children are killed in New Zealand every year in domestic violence.¹²² In 2000, 52% of the 53 murders in New Zealand were family-violence related.¹²³ Thirty-three percent of the victims of family-violence-related murders were children.

For the year ended 30 June 2003, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services received a total of 31,781 notifications of possible abuse or neglect: 27,394 of these required further action; and 7,361 children were assessed as abused or neglected by CYF. This was a substantiated child abuse rate of 7.4 children for every 1,000 children under 17 years of age. As at 30 June 2003, a total of 4,682 children were in care placements made by CYF.¹²⁴

Māori children are more likely than non-Māori children to be assessed as abused or neglected. In 2003, the rate per 1,000 was 11.9 for Māori and 5.9 for non-Māori.

About one in 10 girls and one in 20 boys are exposed at some time in their life (up to the age of 21) to serious sexually abusive acts.¹²⁵ There is little gender difference in rates of abuse among

children under 10 years, but at age 14-16 years females are much more likely to be abused than males. Most sexual abusers are not biological parents but rather male acquaintances or strangers.¹²⁶ There is much less information on the incidence and prevalence of physical abuse and neglect. Perpetrators are much more likely to be parents, and women.¹²⁷

Available evidence indicates that there is substantial overlap between the occurrence of child abuse and partner abuse in families, with 30-60% of families who report one type of abuse also experiencing the other type of abuse.¹²⁸ The likelihood of co-occurrence of child abuse rises with increasing frequency of partner abuse. Males who have committed 50 or more acts of violence against their female partner are almost certain also to have been physically abusive to their children. For females who have hit their partners, the association with perpetration of child abuse is less pronounced, with 30% of chronic female partner abusers likely to have physically abused their children.¹²⁹

Children who experience violence in families are more likely than children who have not experienced any form of family violence to:

- develop severe cognitive and behavioural problems: poor general health, poor sleeping habits, excessive screaming (infants), distorted emotional development including attachment disorders, and altered development of the central nervous system¹³⁰
- exhibit externalising effects such as aggression, disobedience and destructiveness¹³¹
- become violent themselves as adolescents and in adult life.¹³²

Police recorded a total of 25,586 family violence offences for the year ended 30 June 2003, of

which 22,279 were resolved. (These numbers do not include Police call-outs to domestic incidents that did not involve offences.)

In the year ended 30 June 2003, 54,947 children were present during family violence incidents attended by New Zealand Police; 37,935 were under 10 years old, and 17,012 were aged 10-16 years.

Elder Abuse and Neglect

Elder abuse and neglect occur across a wide range of social, economic, ethnic and religious groups. They can affect those living in the community as well as those receiving residential care. For the victim, elder abuse or neglect may have wide-ranging and long-term effects on their physical and mental health, finances, living arrangements and family/whānau relationships and supports. It reduces the participation of affected older people/kaumātua in society.¹³³

Research conducted to date indicates that 2-5% of the older population are victims of elder abuse.¹³⁴ Most victims depend on their abuser for care, help and support. Abuse often goes undetected and unreported.

National administrative data collected by the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services for the Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention Services Programme indicates that the majority of clients are female, New Zealand/European and aged between 70 and 84 years. The main abuse types experienced are psychological abuse (36% of clients) and material or financial abuse (28% of clients). Clients may experience more than one type of abuse.¹³⁵

What Government is Doing

The Ministry of Social Development is leading the implementation of two key strategies to improve child and family safety and security:

Te Rito - New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy, and the *Care and Protection Blueprint 2003*. This work is being advanced in collaboration with other government agencies and the family violence and care and protection non-government sector.

Te Rito and the *Blueprint* have been progressed as separate strategies, but because of the interfaces between partner abuse and child abuse and neglect, they are being integrated. Work is currently underway to align and integrate responses to family violence and care and protection interventions.

Government priorities for 2004/2005 are:

- improving case-by-case co-ordination for care and protection cases requiring statutory intervention
- addressing identified barriers to interagency co-ordination, collaboration and communication
- addressing service capacity and priority workforce issues
- responding more effectively to children and young people at risk of abuse, neglect or insecurity of care, so they do not require statutory intervention.

The Ministry of Social Development is developing advice to Government on the provision of early intervention services, to ensure that children aged six years and under who are at risk of poor outcomes have access to co-ordinated services.

The Government has established a Family and Community Services function within the Ministry of Social Development to provide leadership and co-ordination of services supporting families, with a focus on “at-risk” families.

In Budget 2004, the Ministry of Justice, Police

and the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services secured \$15.2m of funding to set up four family safety teams as a pilot project. Each team will consist of a supervisor, three Police investigators, and three adult and three child advocates. The first two teams are scheduled to begin work early in 2005. The effectiveness of this approach will be evaluated over a three-year period.

\$20.7m has been committed to expand the successful Waitakere Family Violence Intervention Pilot Programme to all 12 Work and Income regions, and to work with Pacific community leaders on family violence prevention strategies for their communities.

Under *Te Rito* and *Blueprint* work programmes, the following are some continuing priorities:

- research to enhance screening and risk-assessment mechanisms used by government and non-government agencies that work with children and families
- developing standards, competencies and best-practice guidelines for identifying violence in families
- family violence prevention public education, led by the Ministry of Health
- developing assessment and data management procedures, to improve the information base about the outcomes of safety and security interventions by the care and protection sector.

Te Puni Kōkiri has recently released the second edition of *Transforming Whānau Violence: A Conceptual Framework*. Te Korowai Aroha o Aotearoa will pilot the implementation of the framework over the next two years.

A *Framework for Preventing Violence in Pacific Communities* was released in July 2004. Funding

was provided in Budget 2004 to provide information resource kits and workshops for three years to leaders of Pacific communities in New Zealand. These will promote safer communities and zero tolerance by Pacific communities of violence in families.

The Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention Programme (EANP) is currently administered and part-funded by the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services. Services are contracted across 22 sites throughout New Zealand. The programme provides an assessment and referral service to elder abuse intervention and follow-up services. It also provides education to carers and other people working with older people, and community awareness initiatives. EANP was reviewed in April 2004. The review has made a number of recommendations to strengthen the present programme, both in the short term and medium term.¹³⁶

Government passed the Retirement Villages Act 2003 to address a number of issues that materially disadvantage some older people who have chosen to live in retirement villages.

Next Steps

Cabinet has directed the Ministry of Social Development to co-ordinate interagency action to minimise family violence, and abuse and neglect of children and older persons. Key agencies likely to be involved include the Accident Compensation Corporation, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services, the Children's Commissioner, the Families Commission, the Office for Senior Citizens, the Ministries of Education, Health and Justice, New Zealand Police, Te Puni Kōkiri and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.

Conclusion

This is the first time any New Zealand Government has published a summary account of its strategies to improve social outcomes.

Opportunity for All New Zealanders represents a commitment to transparency and accountability. But more than that, it is a significant step towards a more considered and coherent approach to central government investment in social development.

The Government's two overarching social policy goals are:

- achieving and sustaining improvements in social wellbeing for all New Zealanders

- reducing disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity for all New Zealanders.

The Government aims to invest in people, families and communities in ways that break cycles of disadvantage and give all New Zealanders a fair go, both now and in the future.

Securing a better future for all New Zealanders requires the active engagement of individuals, families, and communities, supported by a strong economy, and with leadership and investment by local and central government.

We welcome your response to this document - and your personal commitment to our common good.

Together we can make a difference.

Together we can make New Zealand a land of opportunity for all.



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Endnotes

A Vision for New Zealand and its People

- 1 This vision statement was first developed by the Science and Innovation Advisory Council and has been expressed in *Growing an Innovative New Zealand* (2002) New Zealand Government; *Sustainable Development for New Zealand: Programme of Action* (2003) Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet; *Growth and Innovation Framework: Benchmark Indicators Report 2003* (2003) Ministry of Economic Development.
- 2 Sustainable development is “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. See further *Sustainable Development for New Zealand: Programme of Action* (2003) Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
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The State of the Nation

- 5 *The Social Report 2004* identifies 10 domains that collectively comprise wellbeing and summarise “what matters” to New Zealanders. These have been developed through ongoing review and consultation with a range of government and non-government social policy experts, and draw heavily on the work of the Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988) and the previous Royal Commission on Social Security (1972).
- 6 *Quality of Life in New Zealand’s Eight Largest Cities 2003* presents a picture of wellbeing, similar in many ways to that of *The Social*

Report, which addresses the wellbeing of New Zealand’s population as a whole.

- 7 There are, however, some important limitations on this style of presentation. In particular, we cannot directly compare the size of changes for different indicators. The graph shows the relative size of any change in the indicators compared with their level in 1995/1997. It does not tell us how important that change is for overall wellbeing. The graph is also limited in that it shows the change between two points in time, not movements in the intervening years. Further, we cannot show all the indicators used in *The Social Report 2004* in the graph because, for some of the indicators, we do not have data that goes back far enough.
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What Government is Doing to Improve Social Wellbeing

- 9 A clear majority of respondents to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Economic Development rated the following lifestyle and personal factors as most important to them: quality of life, quality of the environment, quality of education, and quality of health services. Growth and Innovation Advisory Board (2004) “Research on Growth and Innovation”: 3.
- 10 OECD (2000) *Knowledge and Skills for Life*, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

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- 13 As well as increasing the participation of Māori in employment, the Government is encouraging initiatives to enable Māori to develop the skills to move up the income ladder, enjoy better job security, and contribute to New Zealand's future development.
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- Critical Social Issues**
- Improving Educational Achievement Among Low Socio-economic Groups**
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- 38 Ministry of Social Development (2004) *The Social Report 2004*: 40. See also OECD (2000) *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, Education and Skills*, OECD, Paris: 294, which presents a strong, positive relationship between earnings and educational attainment.
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