

# A new approach to measuring changes in people's wellbeing

We're developing a new approach to analyse the impact of social services on the wellbeing of New Zealanders. This can help funders, providers and others understand whether these services are making a genuine and lasting difference to people's lives, and inform better decisions about where to focus effort to improve people's wellbeing.

Our new working paper *Are we making a difference in the lives of New Zealanders – how will we know?* introduces our wellbeing measurement approach.

**SIA working paper, November 2018**

---

*Are we making a difference in the lives of New Zealanders – how will we know? A wellbeing measurement approach for investing for social wellbeing in New Zealand*

[Download](#)  
[\[PDF, 1.8 MB\]](#)

## On this page you'll find:

- [How the approach supports better social service decision making](#)
- [How the approach reflects New Zealand values and conditions](#)
- [How the approach complements other efforts to measure wellbeing](#)
- [How you can work with us to measure wellbeing](#)
- [Disclaimer](#)

## Our approach supports better social service decision making

Our wellbeing measurement approach helps us to think about how people's wellbeing changes in response to a social service and how effective that service might be for groups of people in similar circumstances. The approach may help decision makers in

government and the social sector get a new perspective on how to invest in what works for better lives. It can be used to monitor and evaluate the impact of a social service on the lives of New Zealanders.

Specifically, the approach can support decision makers to:

- identify who might benefit from a particular service
- better design services that are more likely to improve wellbeing
- assess the investment required to achieve a change in wellbeing
- analyse and choose between service options
- commission social services with clear expectations for improvements in wellbeing
- consider how to invest to improve future wellbeing.

## **Our approach reflects New Zealand values and conditions**

We've organised measurement of wellbeing into 12 domains including health, social connections and ūkaipōtanga or cultural identity. These domains come from the internationally regarded OECD How's Life Framework that we have adapted to New Zealand conditions. They help guide us when choosing which aspects of a person's life to consider when measuring wellbeing outcomes.

# Domains of wellbeing



We have used these domains to organise our analysis of the impact of social housing on people’s wellbeing. See:

[Measuring the wellbeing impacts of public policy - social housing](#) .

## Our approach complements other efforts to measure wellbeing

Efforts to measure wellbeing are underway globally. Our approach complements activity undertaken by other New Zealand government agencies to monitor or measure national level or sub population impacts on wellbeing. Uniquely, our approach focuses on how wellbeing changes as a result of a specific intervention, or social service.

## Work with us

We're releasing this working paper to share our work and encourage feedback on our wellbeing measurement approach. We will continue to refine the approach before publishing the paper as final report next year.

Please get in contact if you have [feedback](#) or would like to [work with us](#) to apply the approach to your work. Your contribution will help refine the approach, develop new insights and build wellbeing measurement capability.

## **More information**

For a detailed explanation of the approach, read our working paper

[Are we making a difference in the lives of New Zealanders – how will we know?](#)

[\[PDF, 1.8 MB\]](#)

For media enquiries [click here](#).

## Disclaimer

The results in this working paper are not official statistics, they have been created for research purposes from the Integrated Data Infrastructure managed by Statistics New Zealand.

The opinions, findings, recommendations and conclusions expressed in this working paper are those of the author(s) not Statistics NZ, or other government departments.

Access to the anonymised data used in this study was provided by Statistics NZ in accordance with security and confidentiality provisions of the Statistics Act 1975. Only people authorised by the Statistics Act 1975 are allowed to see data about a particular person, household, business or organisation and the results in this paper have been suppressed to protect these groups from identification.

Careful consideration has been given to the privacy, security and confidentiality issues associated with using administrative and survey data in the Integrated Data Infrastructure. Further detail can be found in the Privacy impact assessment for the Integrated Data Infrastructure available from [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz) .

The results are based in part on tax data supplied by Inland Revenue to Statistics NZ under the Tax Administration Act 1994. This tax data must be used only for statistical purposes, and no individual information may be published or disclosed in any other form, or provided to Inland Revenue for administrative or regulatory purposes.

Any person who has had access to the unit record data has certified that they have been shown, have read, and have understood section 81 of the Tax Administration Act 1994, which relates to secrecy. Any discussion of data limitations or weaknesses is in the context of using the Integrated Data Infrastructure for statistical purposes, and is not related to the data's ability to support Inland Revenue's core operational requirements.