

Social Cohesion Framework

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New Zealand Council Of
Christian Social Services

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Organisation Name:	New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS)
Organisation description:	<p>The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Social Cohesion Framework.</p> <p>NZCCSS has six foundation members; the Anglican Care Network, Baptist Churches of New Zealand, Catholic Social Services, Presbyterian Support and the Methodist and Salvation Army Churches.</p> <p>Through this membership, NZCCSS represents over 250 organisations providing a range of social support services across Aotearoa. We believe in working to achieve a just and compassionate society for all, through our commitment to our faith and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Further details on NZCCSS can be found on our website www.nzccss.org.nz.</p>

Tirohanga Whānui | Overview

We support this Government's commitment to social cohesion. We question the development and implementation of a framework without first connecting to the mahi that is already occurring. As such, we provide a range of feedback in relation to the proposed approach, but in consideration that the framework may continue, specific feedback on that which has been developed.

Taunakitanga | Recommendations

Our overarching recommendations are:

1. Consideration of what is already working:

We question the development of a framework, before ensuring that there is deep and genuine understanding of what already exists across the motu.

We are aware of a range of excellent, evidence based and measurable programmes doing this mahi in a variety of communities large and small, across the lifespan and with a range of demographics. These are large, qualitative research programmes such as Growing up in New Zealand, etc... but also those doing delivering programmes as part of a community, such as [Inspiring Communities](#), the [Bishop's Action Foundation](#), [Challenge 2000](#), [Mafana Youth Development Network](#).

Once there is an understanding of what is already occurring, and where, and a review of effectiveness, then would be the appropriate time to create a principle-based framework to support and grow these kaupapa.

Recommendation Proposal One: Complete a stocktake of who is doing this mahi, with support to review its effectiveness and from that, development of a principle-based framework

2. Strengthen what exists:

We question the funding of implementing this framework without first considering funding the evaluation of the variety of services already operating in the community. There are many existing spaces, places and programmes creating social cohesion. Funding to evaluate these programmes creates the possibility of early identification of what works, as well as potential to then grow / replicate programmes.

Rather than starting with the assumption that services should fit a framework for measurement, funding evaluation would allow identification of innovation *and* areas where there are gaps. It would also honour that work that occurs in our communities every day, while growing connection between community and Government.

Recommendation Proposal Two: Fund evaluation and growth of what is already working in communities, from there identify the gaps.

More specific recommendations / areas for clarification or strengthening of the framework are:

3. Ensure commitments are made to those who most need them:

The framework would be strengthened by clarifying and privileging those most in need of its implementation.

Far clearer commitments need to be made to specific under-served groups across our national demographics – e.g. by age, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexuality, ability and economic status

Recommendation Proposal Three: Clarify who this framework serves, and ensure the most vulnerable are privileged.

4. Commit to a definition of the determinants of wellbeing:

The document chooses to leave broad the concept of determinants of wellbeing. We believe in doing so this risks a long-term lack of clarity and challenges in relation to measurement of / research against the framework.

It risks cherry picking of models and leaves any measurement open to inaccuracy. In order that something be measured and researched, it must first be defined. The clearest example of this in recent times is the current Prime Ministers insistence on a Child Poverty measure.

Recommendation Proposal Four: Chose a definition of the determinants of wellbeing.

5. Clarify what in the tables is new / what is BAU:

Much of what is indicted via the tables is business as usual (e.g. On-going consultation with communities, assessment of impact of policies, etc). It would be useful to clarify what will be new work, and what is existing or normal.

Without doing so risks losing opportunities for innovation, or identification of new opportunities. Without doing so risks continuing doing what has always been done.

Recommendation Proposal Five: Ensure that there is identification of BAU to allow focus on innovation and change.

6. Ensure coverage of all aspects of society

Currently the tables miss a key range of community spaces:

- Schools
- Universities / Polytechnics

- Hospitals
- Government services such as WINZ
- Ministries

Recommendation Proposal Six: Include all parts of society in tables.