

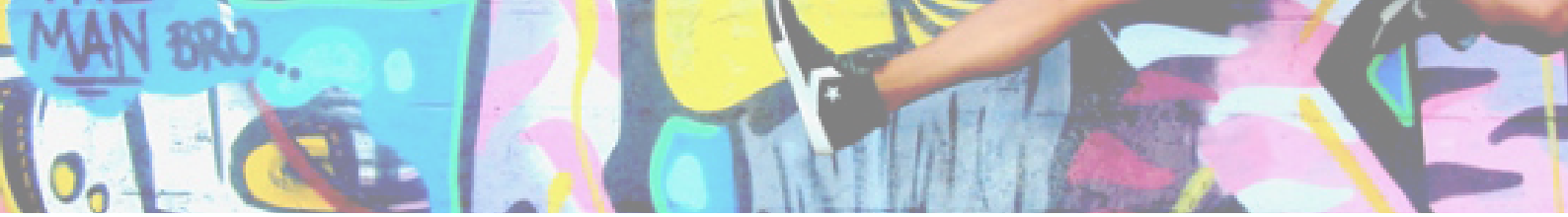
# WHANAKE

THE PACIFIC JOURNAL OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



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VOLUME 3 EDITION 2 2017



# WHANAKE

THE PACIFIC JOURNAL OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
VOLUME 3 EDITION 2 2017

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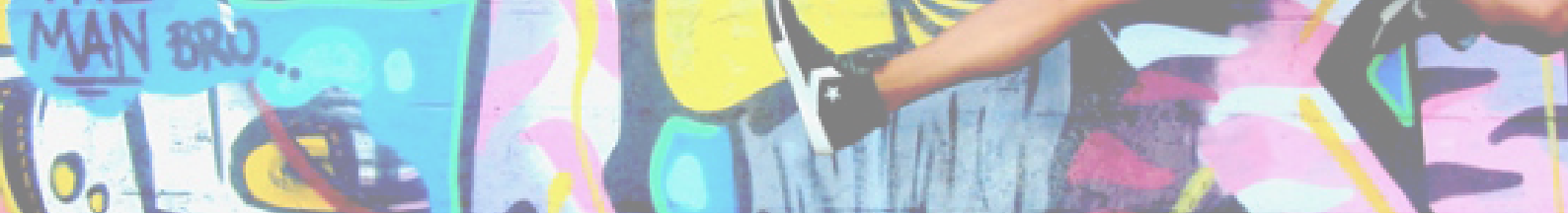
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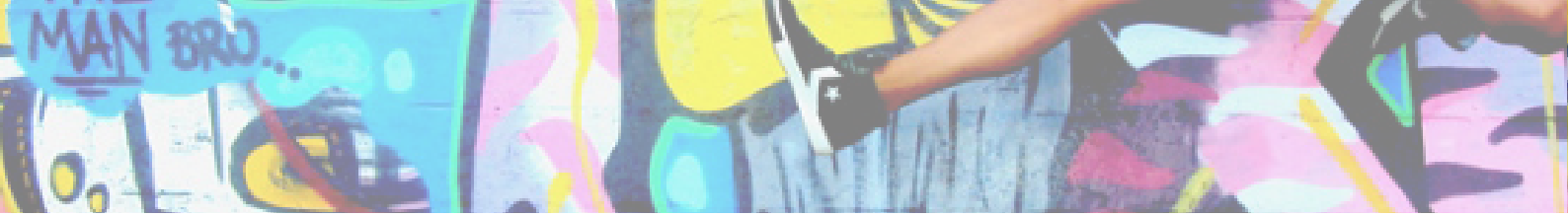
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# About Whanake

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*Whanake: The Pacific Journal of Community Development* is a bi-annual ejournal for practitioners and academics who love community development. The journal mission is to serve as a crucible of democracy, where people come together to share their dreams and plan their common futures. It has refereed papers of 3000-6000 words, reviews, practice notes from the field, and opinion pieces. The journal provides space for posing questions, documenting emerging trends in research and practice, and sharing case studies and biographies.

Community development journals exist in the UK, USA and Australia. We see this as a journal for Aotearoa New Zealand and the wider Pacific. As such it reflects cultural diversity and is about the WE, not the I.

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# Editorial

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We had planned for this issue to have an editorial on the implications for community development of the recent New Zealand Parliamentary elections. Almost seven weeks after the polls we now have a government and ministers have been sworn in. The MMP process has delivered a Labour-led coalition government and there is some optimism that we may see a more benign climate for community development and the community sector in general. The development of the coalition agreements has seen issues of fairness come to the fore and commitments to ensure we have an economy which delivers for all. It is, however, far too early for us to report on and discuss any new directions for the country.

In place of this we are delighted to publish a guest editorial from Charlie McConnell, Executive Officer and Immediate Past President of the International Association of Community Development. Charlie visited New Zealand for the 2017 conference, and our community may also remember him from the Rotorua conference in 2001. Charlie calls for a revitalisation of community development in local government in the UK and globally.

We in New Zealand have seen CD positions reduced, renamed, and repurposed across some local authorities. Whilst government has continued to invest in CD internationally through foreign aid, it has significantly withdrawn from funding CD and CD positions nationally. It is at the local level, in the development of the strong local communities so essential for thriving local government, that this loss will be most felt. The professional expertise of CD practitioners is as essential for a thriving local democracy today as it ever was.

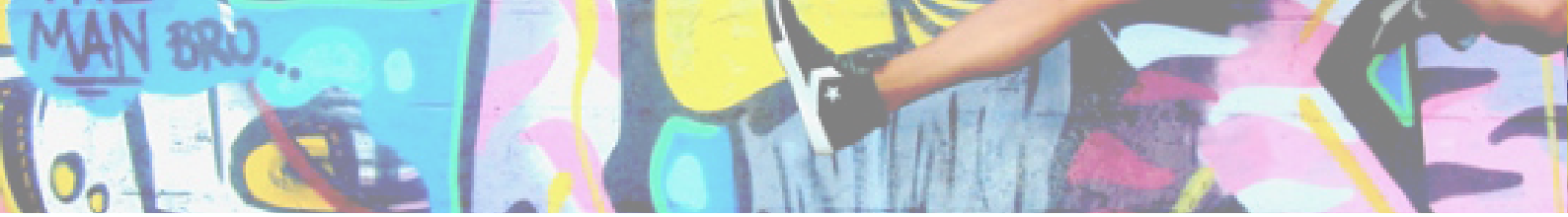
John Stansfield and Gavin Rennie, November 7, 2017

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY**

Since the neo-liberal ideological revolution swept across the world from the 1980s, we have witnessed a dramatic reduction in community development posts funded and employed by local government. At first, the closure in local-government-funded community development programmes and posts was relatively slow and uneven, but certainly since the 2008 financial crash we have seen a significant closure in programmes, evidenced most recently by the savage cuts proposed by the Trump Administration in the USA.

The rationale for this is that the neoliberals or, to put it more simply, right-wing politicians have an ideological mission to reduce central and local government public expenditure on social, environmental and local economic development programmes. Other than expenditure on law and order, i.e., the police and criminal justice services, and the military, their view is that government should get out of the way and let the so-called 'market' prevail. This, they have argued, will 'liberate' people to take self-help actions to improve their communities and tackle such problems as poverty or ill health. Indeed, they go on to argue that poverty and ill health are the direct consequences of the feckless behaviour of individuals and not due to structural inequality or systemic failure. It has had the added advantage of allowing them to significantly reduce progressive income and wealth taxes, which was their main driver anyway.

For forty years this ideology has been in the ascendancy in many developed and developing countries, and indeed promulgated in part by global organisations such as the World Bank. At the 2016 IACD conference a Vice President of the World Bank, when challenged by the then-President



of IACD about this, responded that governments, at both central and local level, were 'part of the problem' in many developing countries 'because they were not democratic' and because, as a result, international donor funds to such governments had ended up in the pockets of the local elites or dictatorships due to corruption, and had been of little benefit to communities most in need. As a result, they were now increasingly targeting their funds through non-governmental organisations, the argument being that NGOs (or, as some term them, aid or development charities) are less corrupt and more transparent. There is some credibility in the World Bank Vice President's concerns, but this is a different argument to the wider trend of the withdrawal of governments at central and local level from a responsibility to fund community development programmes.

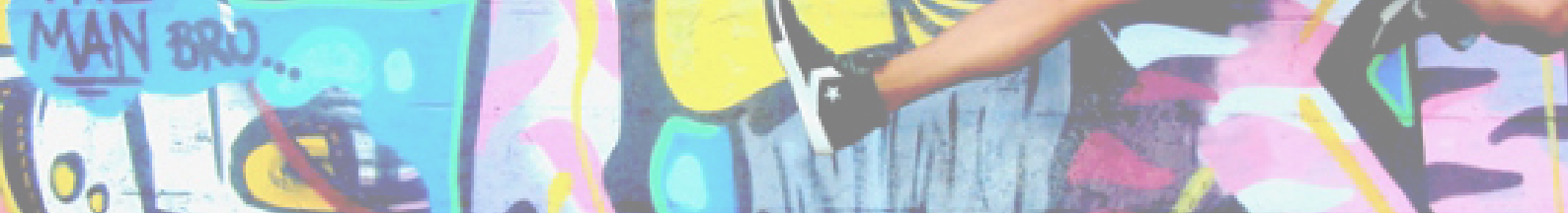
At the very heart of the ethics of community development is a firm commitment to democracy building and to increasing the participation of the less powerful in the decisions that affect their lives. But, also importantly, community development is about building and supporting sustainable democratic institutions, and a key part of that is democratically elected local government. So while we do understand the World Bank's apprehensions and experiences, we are against international programmes that might weaken democratic local governance, and are strongly supportive of measures by international bodies for helping developing countries (or indeed developed countries) to build/rebuild sound, democratically elected and accountable local government. And further, that where such tiers of government do exist it is democratically-elected local governments that should be encouraged and supported by international bodies and donors to play the lead role in shaping urban and rural development and community planning, in partnership with other stakeholders such as the private business sector and non-governmental organisations, AND especially with the people who live and work in these areas.

We should not, as community development practitioners and policy makers, assume that non-governmental organisations are somehow more democratic and transparent than local government. Indeed, most international, or indeed local, charities are run by boards that are far less accountable to local people and voters than a democratically-elected local council. So we are calling once again for a serious debate at international, national and local levels across our membership, about the role that local governments should be playing in community development.

Forty years ago, some IACD members played a role in shaping the Council of Europe's 1989 Resolution on Community Development that called upon all member countries of the Council of Europe area (this encompasses all European countries within the EU and beyond, such as Russia and Turkey), to support their local authorities to fund and play a proactive role in community development. We repeated this call in 2004 through the Budapest Declaration, approved at our conference in Hungary, and similar calls were made at our conferences in Africa and Asia in the four years that followed.

From the earliest days of state-funded and -employed community development work, between the 1950s and 80s, in both the newly-created postcolonial countries in the global south and in the developed West, it was generally acknowledged that local government should be playing a proactive role. This was also the case across most communist countries, although here there was still a strong fixation with top-down planning. As a result, thousands of community development workers (using a myriad of job titles) were directly employed by the local state or by NGOs funded by the local state.

Much of this is now a thing of the past, the direct result of the neoliberal ideological destruction of proactive local government, and, it should be added, a consequence of the lack of any statutory base requiring local authorities to do this. They did this in the three decades after World War Two, because there was a stronger foundation of socialist and social democratic interventionist beliefs in many of these countries, and a belief that governments should intervene in planning, social and economic development, and environmental protection. When the massive period of cuts began to occur from the 1980s, and particularly after 2008, it was local government posts such as community development work that were cut first, because there was little or no legal basis for that provision. The



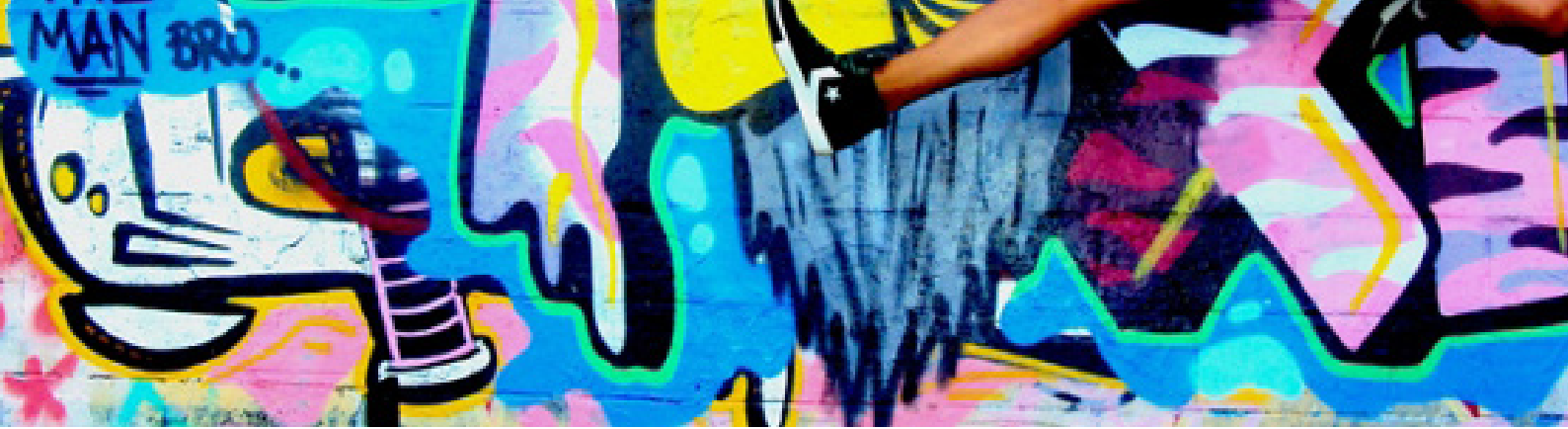
most recent attack on state funding for community development in the USA could well be realised by the Trump Administration, because these posts and programmes are much easier to cut, for example, than schools or teachers, where the legal foundation for provision is much stronger. This has certainly been the case in Western Europe, where, although a belief in social democracy still hangs on, the legal foundation requiring local government to provide community development support is pretty weak. In the UK, for example, local-government community development posts have almost disappeared.

So the IACD is calling for a debate across the association and amongst the community development practitioners and agencies about the need for proactive and democratic local government, and its role as a player in community development. The IACD is calling upon local governments to fund community development programmes and posts. And, of course, for central governments to increase the powers and funds available for local governments to do this, and to underpin the importance of the provision of community development support with statutes.

Strong, democratically-elected, accountable, well-organised and -administered local government needs to be there in place if the UN's Sustainable Development Goals agenda is to be realised. International bodies and national governments can do a great deal with the will and the investment, but it is at the municipal and local level that coordination between public, private, non-governmental and others, including a strong voice around the table for local communities, is vital. Community planning, a well-trying process involving agency coordination and community participation orchestrated by the local council, is critical. And as a part of that role, local councils must themselves have skilled community development expertise. A commitment to people's participation in addressing these challenges is a start. But to turn rhetoric into reality, staff skilled in community development need to be employed by the partner agencies, including the local authorities.

Charlie McConnell

*Executive Officer and Immediate Past President, IACD*



# Partnering with Educational Leaders to Advance Social Work Education in Vietnam

by Laurie A. Drabble, Edward Cohen, Hoa Thi Nguyễn, Alice Hines, Debbie Faires, Tuan Tran and Patrick Thanh An Ngô

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# Article

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## Partnering with Educational Leaders to Advance Social Work Education in Vietnam

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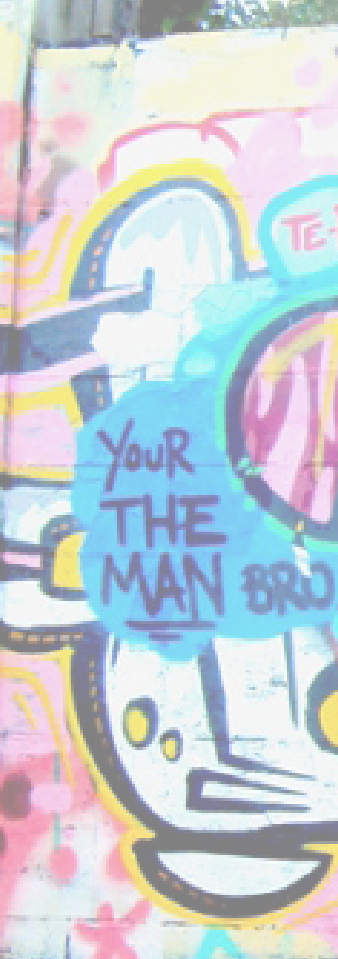
### ABSTRACT

This case study describes the leadership component of the Social Work Education Enhancement Project (SWEET), an international collaboration designed to strengthen the capacity of Vietnam's undergraduate social work programmes to deliver quality education. SWEET strategies for building capacity in leadership and administration include the following: 1) leadership development, 2) development of university-specific and collective strategic plans, and 3) improving collaboration among leaders. Thematic analysis of qualitative evaluation data identified eight effective elements of the leadership programme. Findings underscore the importance of partnership and flexibility in planning, as well as the value of supporting a leadership consortium to guide ongoing national efforts for improving higher education in social work.

### INTRODUCTION

Although social work services have been provided in Vietnam in one form or another since before the French colonial period (prior to 1962) (Oanh, 2002), the development of formal social work education programmes in higher education were only formalised in the 1990s (Hugman, Lan, & Hong, 2007). During the formative years of social work education, the Vietnamese government partnered with universities and funders (such as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund [UNICEF]) to facilitate consultation on curriculum and programme development from international experts (Hines, Cohen, Tran, Lee & Van Phu, 2010; Hugman et al., 2007). Data compiled by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs (MOLISA, 2014) underscores the need for professionally-trained social workers in Vietnam to respond to the concerns of approximately 1.4 million individuals in need of social work services including elderly populations; households living in poverty; people with serious mental health issues; people with disabilities; victims of natural disasters; and children who are orphaned, impacted by HIV/AIDS, or living with autism or intellectual disabilities.

Social work in Vietnam has advanced rapidly over the past decade. One of the key milestones in formalising social work education involved approval by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), which oversees higher education, of a core undergraduate curriculum in 2004. This was followed by implementation of an updated core curriculum in 2010 (Nguyen, 2010). In 2004, there were only four social work programmes (Nguyen, 2010); however, as of 2014, there were over 40 universities offering undergraduate degrees in social work (Ministry of Labour, 2014). Social work was officially recognised by the government as a profession in 2010 and plans were initiated to expand social work education as well as training for professionals (Vietnam Office of the Prime Minister, 2010). Formal recognition of social work allowed for development of salary ranks, professional standards, and other policy changes conducive to the development of the social work profession in Vietnam. Until recently, there was no consortium of social work educators in Vietnam (Hines et al., 2015), which was identified as an impediment to advancing social work educational standards and the field as a whole (Lan, Hugman, & Briscoe, 2010).



Social work education in Vietnam continues to evolve, but is impacted by many contextual factors. For example, a national shift in authority for the higher education curriculum from the Ministry of Education and Training to local universities has afforded new opportunities for strengthening professional education in social work and other fields (Khanh and Hayden, 2010). Although recognition of social work as a profession was formalised in policy, understanding about the mission and focus of social work and social work education is still evolving (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2017). Furthermore, differences in the health and welfare needs of different regions of the country underscore the need for both generalist and specialised social work training (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2015)

Despite the rapid growth in social work education in Vietnam, several key challenges continue to hinder the delivery of social work education. Specific challenges include underdeveloped curriculum resources; a dearth of Vietnamese-language texts and educational materials; few faculty members with social work teaching experience, practice experience, or higher degrees in social work; limited field placement opportunities with experienced supervisors; and a need for strong national associations of social work professionals and social work educators to help inform national policy (Durst, Lanh, & Pitzel, 2010; Hines et al., 2015; Hines et al., 2010; Lan et al., 2010). Challenges related to scarce resources and the need for stronger field-training infrastructure are also faced by other countries in the East Asia and Pacific regions (Furuto, 2013).

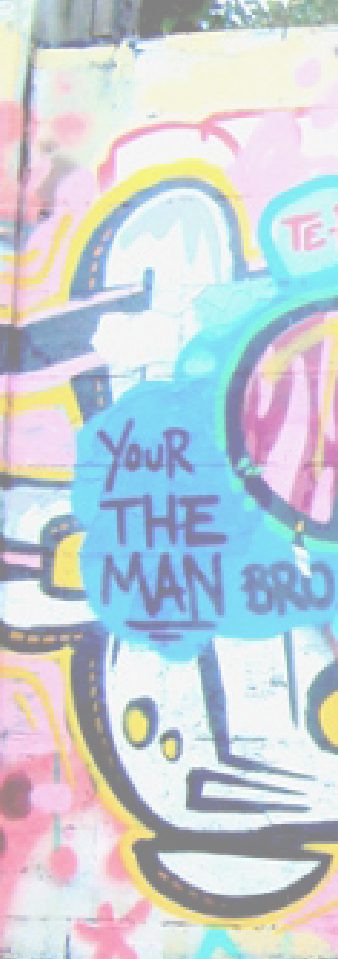
Rather than taking an approach that would see Western social work knowledge transferred uncritically, efforts to advance social work education through international collaboration require consideration of the local cultural and political context (Gray, 2005; Hugman, Moosa-Mitha, & Moyo, 2010). Successful knowledge transfer initiatives in countries such as Vietnam require the development of trust, bi-directional exchanges of ideas and information, and willingness on the part of foreign 'senders' to adjust approaches to knowledge transfer based on recipient capacity to receive, value, and use knowledge (Napier, 2005). Support from, and engagement of, senior administrators and leaders is crucial to the success of knowledge transfer initiatives, as such support is needed to explore how new ideas may apply to local contexts, to strengthen collaborative networks required for implementation of initiatives, and to reduce potential barriers to knowledge translation such as intergroup/university rivalry (Napier, 2005).

## THE CASE STUDY

The Social Work Education Enhancement Project (SWEEP), led by San José State University (SJSU), was implemented to address challenges in social work education in Vietnam, grounded in an approach emphasising collaborative planning and capacity building. San José State University's involvement in Vietnam began as part of a UNICEF-funded project which included the transmission of a foundation-level social work curriculum in the areas of policy, human behaviour, practice, and research (Hines et al., 2010). Relationships and insights from these early collaborative efforts created a foundation for a successful grant proposal to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to establish a three-year cooperative agreement to implement SWEEP. SWEEP was designed to address shared issues in four key areas: administration and management, faculty development, curriculum development, and development and training in technology to facilitate networking and communications (see Hines et al., 2015, for a description of the overall SWEEP project structure, staffing, goals, and activities).

Engagement of leaders and other stakeholders was pivotal to the success of the SWEEP project and the development of sustainable plans for continued advancement of social work education in Vietnam. In a political and social context where decision-making processes were typically hierarchical, cultivating relationships, credibility, and 'buy-in' amongst leaders was key to ensuring the success of all four areas of SWEEP. For example, strategies involving training, capacity building, and curriculum innovation with faculty members would not be feasible without the support of leaders. The leaders included university administrators responsible for the development of academic departmental programmes, department deans and directors, and representatives of key government ministries.

The overall approach in the development of the SWEEP project emphasised core values of collaboration, capacity building, and focus on local knowledge and solutions. From this perspective, the role of the SWEEP team involved supporting the development of a shared vision and creating opportunities to define and pursue shared goals. The SWEEP project engaged both leaders and faculty members from partner universities in a wide range of training and collaborative planning activities, which were grounded in an assessment of stakeholder needs and priorities. The needs



## Shared Needs of Partner Universities and Final SWEEP Objectives Related to Administration, Management and Leadership

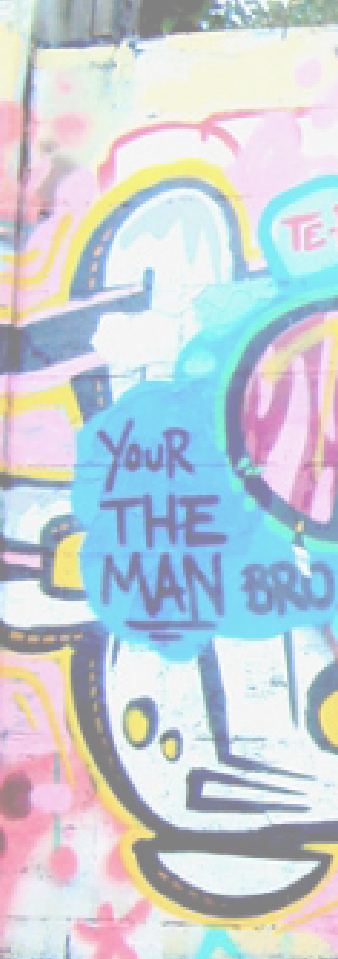
Needs Assessment Findings	SWEEP Leadership Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional management and human resource skills, including skills relevant to leading social work programmes</li> <li>• Introduction to social work principles and practice for leaders often trained in other disciplines</li> <li>• Additional management and human resource skills, including skills relevant to leading social work programmes</li> <li>• Introduction to social work principles and practice for leaders often trained in other disciplines</li> <li>• Strengthening collaborative capacity between universities</li> </ul>	Strengthening Leadership and Administration/Leadership Academy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity-building for leading and sustainable planning in relation to other strategic areas identified in the needs assessment, such as faculty development and curriculum development</li> </ul>	Strategic Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced use of technology to support teaching and networking</li> <li>• Additional opportunities to collaborate with other universities, particularly in relation to addressing gaps in social work education</li> </ul>	Consultation and Building Collaborative Capacity

Table 1

assessment was conducted in the first months of SWEEP (between January and May of 2013) in order to align project activities to the needs of stakeholders. A total of 159 respondents were interviewed in focus groups and key informant interviews, including university leaders, faculty members, students, government ministry representatives and community agencies. Findings from the needs assessment were presented at each partner university to check the validity of the assessment findings and to modify the regional and collective assessment as appropriate. Proposed SWEEP leadership activities were also reviewed and vetted through communication with leaders by SWEEP team members who were stationed in Vietnam.

Table 1 provides a summary of findings from the needs assessment related to leadership, administration and management (see Hines et al., 2015 for additional detail). Needs assessment findings were used to define priorities for the intensive training sessions designed for leaders, called Leadership Academies, including topics to address and foci for discussion for in-person training workshops (described in more detail below). Needs assessment findings were also used to guide individual and collective strategic planning consultation as well as formulate plans for consultation related to collaborative capacity, use of technology, and advancing shared goals. Leaders were engaged actively throughout the project in developing and refining strategies for the project as a whole, as well as activities specific to the training and planning needs of leaders.

To address the issues raised in the needs assessment, the three priority SWEEP activities for strengthening administration and leadership included the following: (1) leadership development, primarily through an annual Leadership Academy, (2) assistance in development of strategic plans for each university and across universities, and (3) ongoing consultation to facilitate collaborative communication and planning between leaders, support progress in strategic plan implementation, and respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. The purpose of this descriptive case study is to provide a brief overview and thematic analysis of whether or not, and if so, how the three core SWEEP leadership strategies served to effectively build capacity and support leaders in their efforts to advance social work education in Vietnam.



## METHOD

### Case study design

Descriptive case studies are ideal for describing a phenomenon in the real-life context in which it occurs (Yin, 2014). Taking a holistic approach to analysis of a single case is an appropriate approach for a longitudinal case, where the focus is on changes that occur over a specific period of time (Yin, 2014).

### Unit of analysis: SWEEP leaders

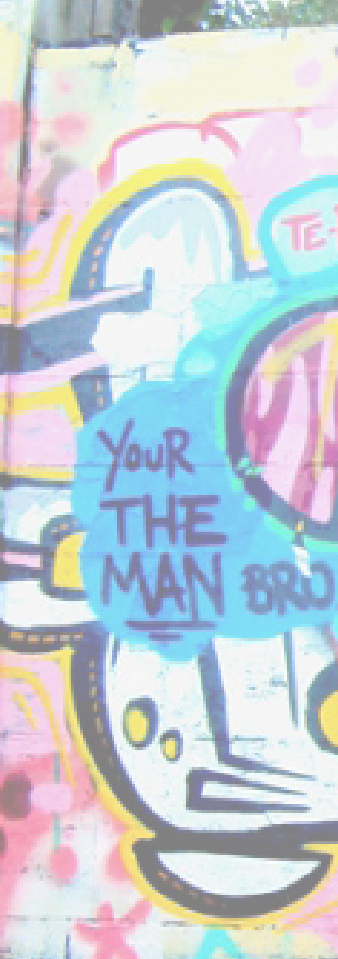
Leaders of organisations are frequently the primary subjects for case studies (Yin, 2015). The unit of analysis of the current case study primarily involved SWEEP leaders and, secondarily, documentation of initiatives in their own universities and their collaborative activities over the course of three years of SWEEP. SWEEP included leaders from eight partner universities. The eight participating SWEEP universities were selected based on geographical representation (northern, central and southern regions), a mix of urban and rural settings, and the willingness of universities' top leadership to participate in the SWEEP project. The initial five Vietnamese universities included three in the northern area: Vietnam National University, University of Social Sciences and Humanities (USSH) in Hanoi, University of Labour and Social Affairs in Hanoi, and Hanoi National University of Education; one in the central region (Hue University of Science); and one in the south (Vietnam National University, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ho Chi Minh City). The additional three universities were Vinh University, located in the north, Da Lat University in the central highlands, and Dong Thap University in the southern Mekong delta. A total of 33 leaders were actively involved throughout the SWEEP project (24 men and nine women). The core leadership group included three administrators (president, rector and/or dean) from each partner university, as these leaders all have responsibilities for directing the development of social work departments and curriculum. Because advancing social work education and practice is also linked to key government ministries in Vietnam, the leadership group included two representatives from the Ministry of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs, which has primary responsibility for the development of the social work profession in the country.

### Data sources and analysis

Multiple sources of data were used for the case study. First, process evaluations of the three core strategies of the leadership component of SWEEP were conducted through brief interviews with leaders by SWEEP team members based in Vietnam. The interviews focused on leaders' strategic plans for enhancing social work programmes at their universities and documentation of progress toward achieving collective goals defined by leaders. The SWEEP team also conducted telephone interviews with leaders six months after the initial university-specific strategic plans were completed to track progress, and again during subsequent training academies. Second, Leadership Academies were evaluated through participant feedback at the time of the Leadership Academies (including quantitative daily and final-day surveys as well as qualitative data from open-ended survey questions and final-day focus groups). Surveys elicited participants' views on the effectiveness and applicability of the Academy, the extent to which the Academy improved leaders' professional skills, and participants' recommendations for improving subsequent Academies. Finally, data included transcribed notes from SWEEP team debriefing at the end of each convening of leaders as well as meeting summaries and other archival documents. Thematic analysis of narrative data from evaluations, summaries from interviews with leaders, and SWEEP team debriefing transcriptions were used to 1) provide a brief descriptive overview and 2) identify key successes and lessons learned in each of following three strategic goal areas for strengthening administration and leadership: (a) leadership development; (b) development of a strategic plan for social work education at each university and across universities; and (c) improvement of collaboration among leaders. These goal areas were derived from a needs assessment of universities and stakeholders at the beginning of the SWEEP project (Hines et al., 2015).

## FINDINGS

Table 2 summarises themes related to elements of the SWEEP project that were perceived as effective from the perspective of leaders. Specific themes are described in relation to three goal areas: leadership development, strategic planning, and strengthening collaboration among leaders.



## Themes About Effective Elements of Final SWEEP Strategies for Strengthening Administration, Management and Leadership

Leadership Strategies	Themes
Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on translation of ideas to Vietnam context</li> <li>• Mapping out a structure for continued collaboration across universities</li> <li>• Importance of relationships and social capital</li> </ul>
Strategic Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concurrent attention to university-specific and collective planning</li> <li>• Engaging new leaders for continuity and sustainability</li> </ul>
Improving Collaboration among Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation to support initiatives that leverage long-term change</li> <li>• Emphasis on respectful partnership</li> <li>• Use of technology in support of communication and collaboration</li> </ul>

Table 2

### Leadership development

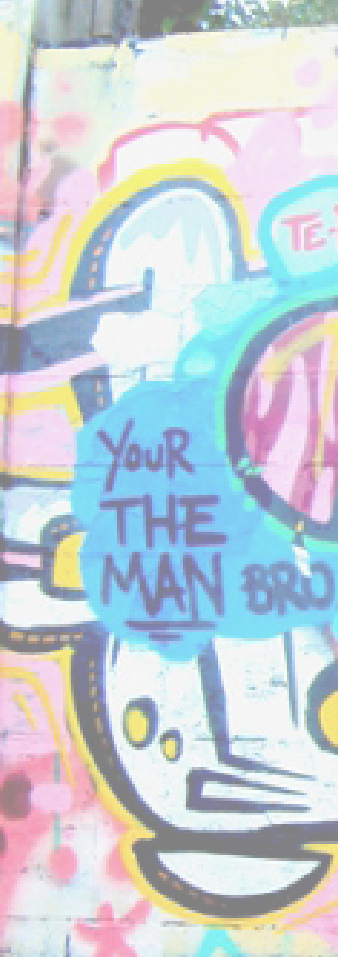
An annual Leadership Academy brought separate cohorts of university leaders together to provide intensive training and opportunities for discussion designed to advance the overall goals of SWEEP and to facilitate development of working relationships between leaders required to sustain development of social work education. The first two Leadership Academy events (in 2013 and 2014) brought leaders to San José for a week-long series of trainings, meetings and site visits to community agencies. The final Leadership Academy was organised in Vietnam as a two-day training for new leaders (in January, 2016), just prior to a three-day final planning session with all leaders.

Key training topics included strategic planning focused on expanding or improving social work educational programmes in the universities; strategies for strengthening infrastructure and expanding resources for faculty development in teaching and scholarship; and leadership and collaboration at university, regional and national levels. Leaders were also provided with an introductory training in use of Cisco technologies, since use of internet communication tools such as TelePresence and WebEx were essential to the project. Because many of the leaders were trained in other disciplines, the training also included an overview of core social work concepts, and trends in social work education and practice. The overall structure of the Leadership Academy involved providing brief presentations from experts about research, models, and/or best practices in topic areas followed by discussion about how ideas might be relevant to or adapted to Vietnam contexts. Site visits to local agencies afforded leaders an opportunity to learn about social service delivery and field education models in areas that were identified as priorities in needs assessments (e.g., social protection for children and elderly, hospital-based social work, mental health services and social work in school settings). Networking events were designed to introduce leaders to local Vietnamese American social workers, connecting leaders with social work professionals who speak Vietnamese, understand Vietnamese culture, and have experience and knowledge about social work education and practice.

Three themes emerged in relation to determining effective elements of the Leadership Academy: a) translating ideas to the local context, b) mapping out a structure for continued collaboration across universities, and c) the importance of relationships and social capital.

### Focus on translation of ideas to local context

Thematic analysis of narrative comments from evaluation data and interviews provided insight into both content and training strategies that were perceived as particularly valuable and effective. The practice of following presentations from experts with discussion about relevance or adaptation to Vietnam contexts was perceived as useful. A comment made by one participant, “The presentations help us understand the benefits and methods to apply these ideas to [the] Vietnam context,” was typical of the observations.



Leaders also valued the focus on topics relevant to their role as administrators, such as competency-based education, best practices in leadership, field education models, and models for collaboration in advancing social work education and workforce development. For example, one leader noted, “when other programs focus on specific content, SWEEP also focused on activities for leaders – this was especially significant as the leaders had chances to learn and share knowledge about their experiences in education administration with other leaders and scholars from a developed country like the US.” Another leader noted, “The training provided new scientific knowledge about management, but also helped the university administrators change the way they manage social work and other educational programs.” Participants also valued efforts to balance structure with flexibility throughout the event (e.g., maintaining a well-organised agenda while calibrating content to address emerging questions and adapting agenda to accommodate more discussion). “We learned a great deal from the content” summarised one participant, “and we also learned about how to organize a very effective training [session].”

#### **Mapping out a structure for continued collaboration**

One of the gaps identified in the first Leadership Academy was the absence of a formal national organisation of social work educators, and one notable outcome of the Leadership Academy involved progress in development of a national consortium for advancing social work education. The Leadership Academy included training and facilitated discussion with an expert from the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC), the largest state coalition of social work educators and practitioners in the United States. “The U.S. collaboration model is very interesting, and can be replicated in Vietnam,” noted one leader. The presentations and discussions with CalSWEC centred around models and strategies for organising stakeholders from university, community, and government sectors to develop common goals for workforce development, educational standards, and curriculum. By the final year of the project (2016), leaders agreed to sustain and formalise a national consortium of social work educators and other stakeholders to continue collaborative planning. “The establishment of a SWEEP consortium will help leaders discuss and create a road map to develop social work, solve common problems, and mobilise resources from member universities such as teaching materials, research experience, field practicum models, and relationships with social service agencies,” summarised one leader.

#### **Importance of relationships and social capital**

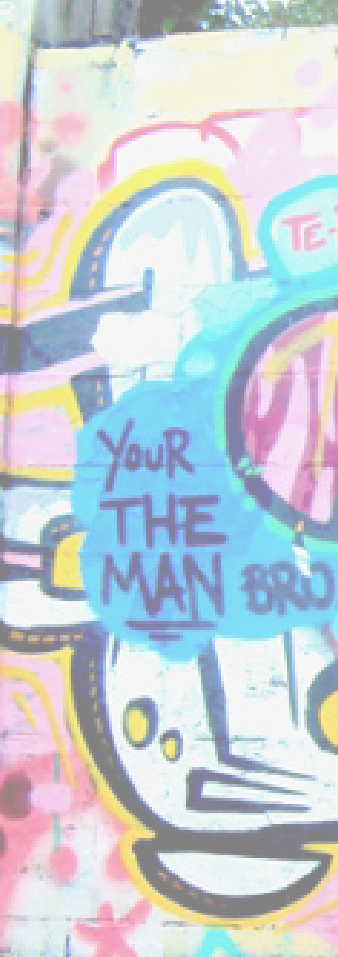
Leaders valued the opportunity for immersion in collaborative planning and discussion held away from their individual universities, both during the Leadership Academies and gatherings in Vietnam. This was important, since in the initial needs assessment leaders described an environment characterised by competition among the universities for resources and prestige, and they expressed a desire by leaders to collaborate more productively with each other in order to improve social work education in the country. Networking events, structured discussion sessions and time for informal conversations among leaders helped foster working relationships. “Participants had a chance to build personal and professional relationships; many of them had not met before the Leadership Academy. ... They were more tentative at first, but over the course of the week began to really talk with one another,” observed one SWEEP staff member who translated for, and worked with leaders throughout the training. These strengthened relationships were critical to fostering the willingness of leaders to create time and invest other resources toward advancing shared goals.

#### **University-specific and collective strategic planning**

SWEEP leaders each developed a strategic plan to improve social work education at their respective universities. SWEEP team members worked with leaders to refine the plans and to align training and consultation activities with common priorities. Two key themes emerged in this area: 1) the importance of concurrent attention to university-specific and collective strategic directions, and 2) the need to engage new leaders to ensure sustainability of collaborative planning.

#### **Concurrent focus on university-specific and collective planning**

Progress toward having a national impact was fuelled by helping leaders shift from a sole focus on university-specific planning to collective planning. Two strategies emerged as critical in this area. Firstly, SWEEP used Leadership Academy sessions in the U.S. as well as strategic planning consultation in Vietnam to establish and make progress on specific common goals and objectives. The following statement from a participant exemplified the impact of work on common goals: “We [leaders] developed strategies to improve social work education in our universities, enhance faculty’s capacity,



improve field practicum, and increase research opportunities.” Secondly, national summits in Vietnam and follow-up meetings among leaders using video conferencing (WebEx) were used to review progress in common goals, share lessons learned, and align efforts related to development of social work education in Vietnam. One ministry representative commented on how the collective work with leaders was immediately useful to informing the priorities of the Vietnam Vocational Training Association and Vocation Association (VVTA), an existing collaborative of government, university and trade school leaders, and internal planning meetings between leaders and the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), which has ultimate authority for educational standards and policies. This individual summarised the collective impact of this work, noting, “The SWEEP project not only had an important impact on SW education and training, but also influenced the government authorities in shaping SW policies and regulations.”

#### **Engaging new leaders for continuity and sustainability**

One challenge in engaging the partner universities in the sustainability effort was the high turnover rate of universities’ leadership. “The role of leaders in developing policies for social work development is crucial,” was echoed by many. Rotation of leadership is common throughout universities and over the course of the three years of the SWEEP project, there were several changes in rectors and deans. For example, in some universities rectors and deans who committed to SWEEP activities subsequently retired. To address this issue during the project, SWEEP staff in Vietnam actively engaged the new leaders, encouraged them to participate in SWEEP activities, and invited them to speak at SWEEP events so that they became familiar with the project. By the end of the project, leaders agreed to establish a memorandum of understanding between universities to formalise the commitment to continue collaborative planning between university leaders. This is important, as one leader commented, to “help leaders at other upper levels have a better understanding about social work, which will create favourable conditions for faculties in research and teaching.”

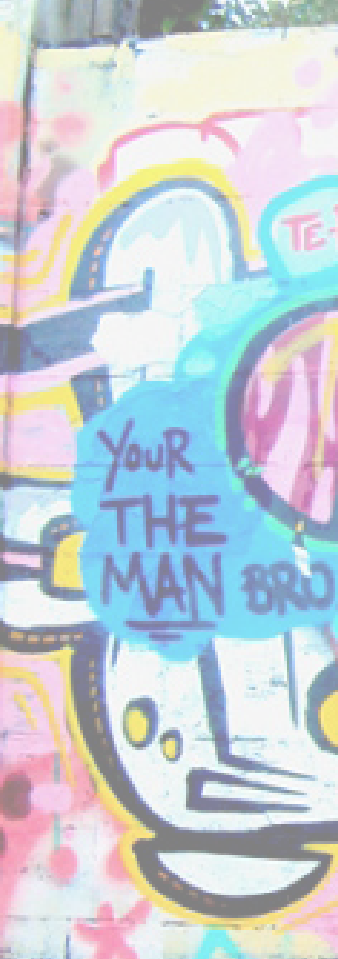
#### **Improving collaboration among leaders**

The SWEEP leadership project also provided ongoing consultation to facilitate collaborative communication and planning between leaders, support leaders’ progress in realising strategic plan objectives, and respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. Three key themes emerged in relation to effective elements of this strategic area: 1) the importance of investing in initiatives that leverage long-term change, 2) the value of respectful partnership, and 3) the utility of technology in creating networks and sustaining collaboration.

#### **Consultation to support initiatives that leverage long-term change**

Based on shared priorities revealed during the Leadership Academies, strategic plan reviews, and annual summits, the SWEEP team worked with leaders to provide special consultation in two areas: development of competencies for social work education and development of a Training of Trainer (TOT) model to assist in project dissemination and sustainability. SWEEP resources were directed toward the primary grant objectives; at the same time, with permission of the funder, some resources were re-allocated to respond to emerging priorities of leaders. For example, resources were re-aligned in the final year of the project, based on leader recommendations, to fund staff time, travel, and materials to support development TOT pilots in three regions of Vietnam.

During a leadership convening in 2015, leaders decided that development of a national set of competencies for Vietnam social work education was crucial for the standardisation of the profession. “Competencies will not only standardise social work education throughout the nation, reducing the gap among students graduating from different programs, but will also help set the foundation for certifying and evaluating programs in the future,” summarised one leader. Leaders identified the development of competencies as an important focal point for leveraging change in social work education for several reasons. Firstly, leaders believed that defining specific competencies more clearly was timely in a political context where responsibility for the higher education curricula was shifting to universities from the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). Secondly, leaders ascertained that the process of defining competencies would help to define and establish credibility for social work as an emerging profession that was not yet widely understood or appreciated. Thirdly, leaders felt that developing common core competencies was a reasonable approach to facilitating some consistency in training across universities while allowing individual universities to cultivate areas of specialisation appropriate to their regions. In subsequent meetings, leaders and faculty discussed explicitly avoiding approaches that were overly prescriptive and ensuring that competencies were framed in a way that would accommodate the priorities of different universities. The Vietnam



Vocational Training Association and Vocation Social Work (VVTA) was ultimately selected as lead in developing the competencies. VVTA drafted a new set of competencies based on materials provided by SWEEP universities and competencies from other countries, mainly the United States. Drawing from U.S. and international models, competencies were operationalised as knowledge, skills and values in key practice domains such as ethics; engagement, intervention and evaluation of practice with individuals, groups, and communities; respective diversity in practice; and connecting research with practice. Details about SWEEP activities related to competency-based social work education in Vietnam are documented in detail in another publication (Han et al., 2016).

Based on requests from leaders, the SWEEP team provided consultation, helped to convene university leaders, and finally helped to organise a national conference, inviting educators and experts from different regions of the country to provide input for the draft social work competencies. The final draft of the competencies was presented at the third SWEEP summit in September 2015. SWEEP partner universities identified key non-SWEEP universities in their regions to invite as participants in the summit. The following statement typified the perspective of leaders: “Competency-based education really transforms the way we teach and develop course material. Before, we just taught students what we know and based on the materials we have. Now, CBE challenges us further, makes us work harder to think about what students really need to know.”

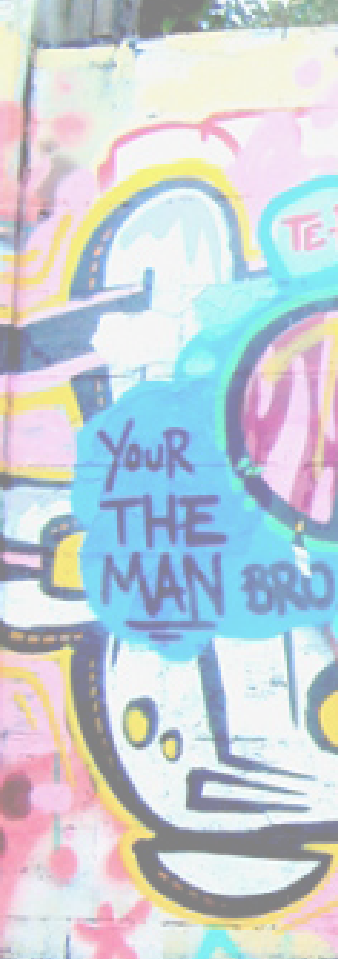
Another initiative resulting from leader recommendations involved supporting collaborative Training of Trainers (TOTs) in three priority areas: competency-based education, field education models, and social work research publication. One comment, “It is important for all eight schools to be the first cohort, but we need to figure out how to spread training to other schools,” typified leader concerns. Three pilot TOTs were conducted in three main regions of Vietnam: south (Ho Chi Minh City), north (Hanoi), and central (Hue) to provide training for faculties from non-SWEEP universities. The SWEEP team provided technical assistance in preparing pilot training materials and organising trainings, which were implemented primarily by faculty from the eight SWEEP universities. In addition to disseminating tools developed through SWEEP that were useful to other universities with social work programmes in Vietnam, the TOTs were designed to enhance the capacity of SWEEP universities to sustain the project after the end of funding. “There is clearly a huge audience in Vietnam for these TOTs, as all the social work programs in Vietnam are struggling with the issues related to curriculum, field education, and research,” noted one leader who was involved in regional TOTs. The same leader pointed out that participants left the TOT prepared to make changes at their various universities.

### **Emphasis on respectful partnership**

Throughout the project, leaders were recognised as the experts in priorities and strategies for advancing social work education in Vietnam. For example, universities in Vietnam have defined hierarchical relationships with the government’s Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), and all activities related to developing competencies and related curricular resources were discussed and refined based on leaders’ contextual knowledge of local politics. Bi-directional communication and exchanges of ideas with leaders informed implementation of SWEEP activities, large and specific. For example, comments from Leadership Academy evaluations and follow-up interviews revealed that participants valued the well-structured training that aligned with their priorities, as well as willingness of the SWEEP team to modify the schedule to address emerging questions, accommodate more discussion, or facilitate new site visits based on daily feedback. Evaluation narratives and debriefing notes identified listening, flexibility, and genuine mutual regard as an important theme. One leader captured this theme when reflecting, “besides training and content, it is very important that social work has heart – and I observed a lot of heart here.”

In addition to working in partnership with leaders to define and refine the activities of the SWEEP project, the team also worked to transfer ‘ownership’ of the SWEEP project to leaders over the course of the project. For example, three Annual Summits were held in Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh City, Dalat and Hanoi). These summits served to highlight lessons learned, share progress on SWEEP activities, and establish future plans. For example, summits allowed universities to showcase individual initiatives (e.g., institutionalising faculty training or social work curriculum improvements), engage in dialogue around shared concerns (e.g., development of common competencies), build relationships between universities, and participate in working sessions structured to identify immediate and longer-term actions for advancing social work education. The first summit was planned by SWEEP staff with leader input. SWEEP and Vietnam leaders co-planned, and presented at the second summit. During the third summit, the presentations were planned collaboratively between the SWEEP team and the university leaders and faculty, but presented entirely by the Vietnam universities. The final summit also focused on priorities for social work education that would continue after the end of the funded SWEEP project.





### **Use of technology in support of communication and collaboration**

Comments such as “Communication between the universities is difficult – however communication is critical in the success of the project,” typified leader observations at the start of the project. The primary tools employed for communication and collaboration in the project were Cisco WebEx and TelePresence for synchronous meetings, and Google tools, particularly Google Sites, for asynchronous communication and archival purposes. For example, WebEx technology was used to convene meetings among the Vietnamese leaders. These sessions were organised by a SWEEP team member in Vietnam and were held via WebEx. Attendance and participation in these sessions increased as the leaders gained more experience with connecting to the WebEx session and managing the interface. A gradual transition shifted responsibility to the Vietnamese leaders for managing the meetings. The meetings also enhanced the social presence of each of the participants regardless of their geographic location. “The technology is very impressive; it is hard to think the others in this session are half a world away,” typified observations from leaders. In addition, technology was used to gather, organise and share documents among all project partners. Google Sites proved to be an excellent platform, in that it was flexible enough to meet the varying requirements for privacy or public sharing of files. For example, a public SWEEP site was set up in Google Sites to archive and share project resources and to foster communication. (Resources from the SWEEP Google site remain archived and available for public access: <https://sites.google.com/a/sjsu.edu/sweep/home>).

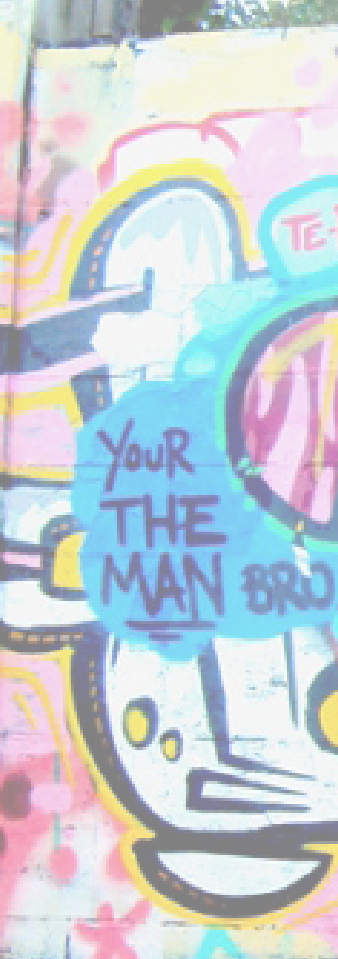
### **DISCUSSION**

The findings of this case study underscore the importance of collaborative approaches in working with regional and national leaders to develop sustainable educational initiatives. The expertise of local leaders is a critical ingredient to investigating successfully how best practices or models from one country may be adapted to a different social and political context. Furthermore, findings point to the value of leveraging technology to facilitate communication and collaborative relationships across countries and across geographies within a country. Finally, themes from the case study point to the importance of sustainability planning from the outset of any international effort to impact education. For example, identifying and investing in leverage points for change that may persist after the end of the project was critical (such as adoption of competencies to guide social work education and development of Training the Trainer resources to help with continued knowledge translation).

This case study has several limitations: Firstly, it focuses on a case example from a single country and does not offer comparison of similar initiatives in other countries. Consequently, it is limited in generalisability. Secondly, although multiple data sources were triangulated in analysis, all the data sources were from SWEEP leaders and team members. Limited resources precluded collecting detailed data from other stakeholders (such as leaders from non-SWEEP universities). Consequently it is difficult to generalise about the influence of SWEEP beyond the partner universities, or to account for the impact of other educational initiatives that may have also influenced social work education in Vietnam during the course of SWEEP. Finally, the case study is based on data collected during the three-year SWEEP project period, and thus does not document the long-term impact of the project. It would require follow-up research to accurately assess the long-term impact of the SWEEP project on the universities and the practices of leaders. Furthermore, because educational leaders continue to be resourceful in leveraging other collaborative opportunities for educational programme development (e.g., through partnerships with other universities and through international professional associations such as the International Association of Schools of Social Work [IASSW]), it would be difficult to assess the unique contribution of the SWEEP project. In addition, it is not possible in the current case study to assess the impact of the frequent rotation or change in leadership, either in relation to diffusion or dilution of leadership skills and approaches developed during SWEEP.

Despite these limitations, documentation and critical analysis of initiatives designed to strengthen education in health and human services are important to informing the work of other similar international collaborative projects in higher education in the Asia-Pacific region. For example, leaders ultimately recognised the importance of creating a consortium of leaders in national planning efforts. Specifically, the Leadership Consortium formed during SWEEP adopted plans to a) complete the development of the consortium’s organisational structure, b) continue organising how training content will be disseminated to the non-SWEEP universities, in collaboration with the national social work associations; and c) set priorities for inter-university collaboration in research, curriculum planning, continuing education and faculty development.

One of the challenges in Vietnam will be to address continued fragmentation of efforts. This



is a problem shared by many universities in other countries – initiatives are often fuelled by specific grant opportunities and existing individual relationships. Efforts to initiate large-scale, national-level change are often hampered by a lack of coordination of these efforts. However, SWEEP helped to put in place strategies to ensure the sustainability of initiatives developed during the grant period, including the leadership activities (consortium strategic planning, and communication network) described in this paper, use of technology for training and communication, and a website that archives training content for use by Vietnam’s stakeholders.

Another set of challenges is related to the early development stage of the social work profession as a whole, which is also relevant to other countries. Efforts to address these can be overwhelming to faculty and university leaders. However, the establishment of an academic consortium described in this paper has led to optimism by stakeholders that these challenges can indeed be surmounted over time. In addition, it is expected that the relationships established between the Vietnam leaders and SWEEP team members will continue beyond the end of the SWEEP project, as other opportunities for joint technical assistance and scholarship are identified.

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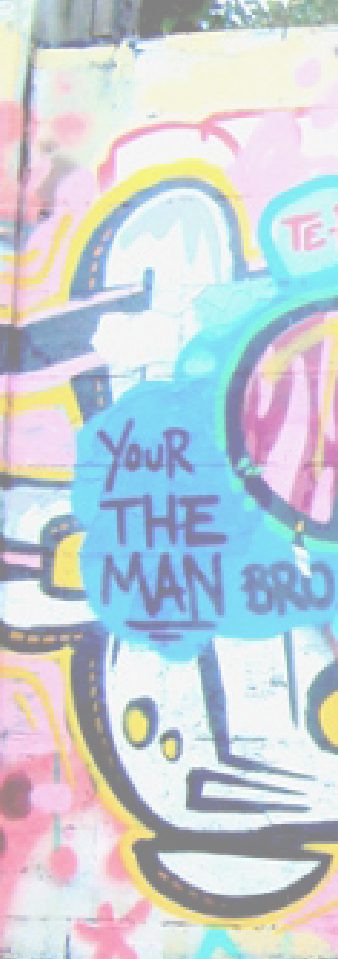
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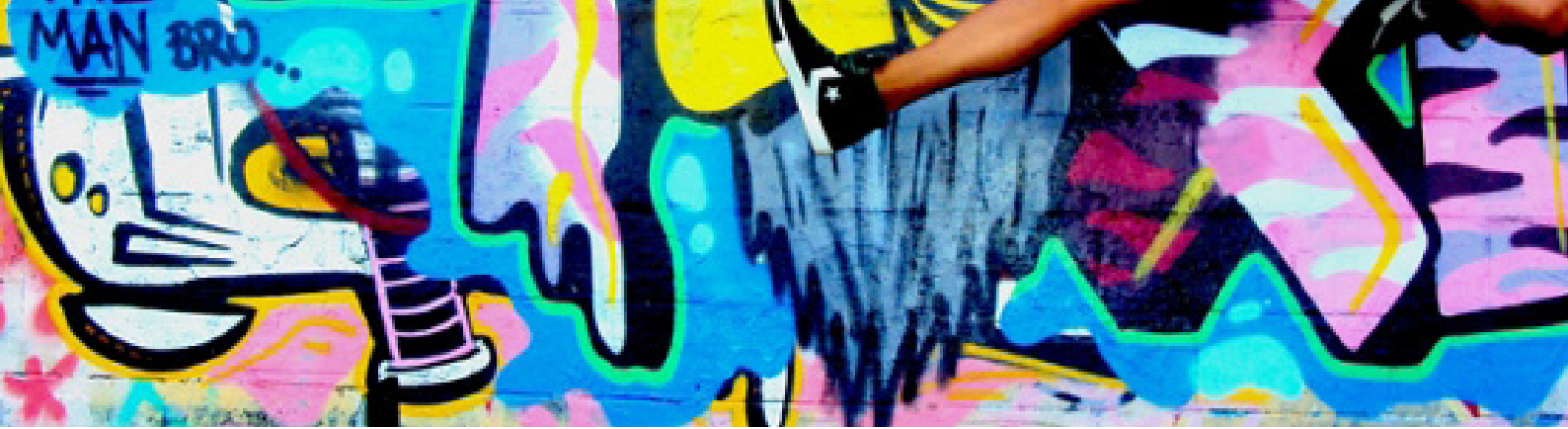
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# Perceptions of Community Safety in West Auckland and White Fragility

by Geoff Bridgman

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# Article

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## Perceptions of Community Safety in West Auckland and White Fragility

by Geoff Bridgman

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### ABSTRACT

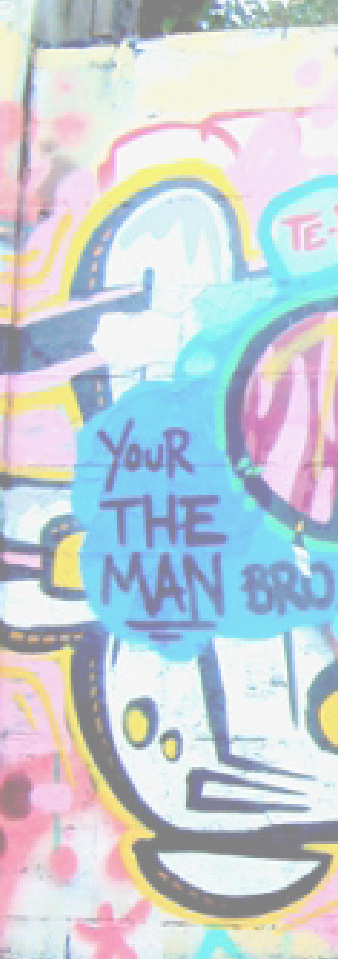
Unitec and Community Waitakere have recently completed a project supported by the Lottery Community Sector Research fund, looking at the contemporary issues affecting perceptions of safety in West Auckland communities. A review of eight recent surveys and research reports between 2012 and 2016 into community safety in West Auckland suggests that the negative perceptions held about the safety of our community and the people who are part of it have more impact than the actual amount of crime that is reported in the community.

Responses to questionnaires given to 159 people covering the age spectrum, female and male, and Pākehā/European, Māori, Pasifika, Asian and other cultures showed that despite a clear fall in reported crime rates in West Auckland people generally believed that crime had increased and was worse than in the rest of Auckland. In a number of different respects, the Pākehā/European participants were significantly more concerned about personal safety and crime than the other communities who participated in the questionnaire. The Pākehā/European participants were significantly more likely than the other groups to want more police patrols and a get-tough-on-crime approach, and were significantly less interested in a collaborative neighbour-to-neighbour community development approach.

The data suggests that perceptions of safety in the community are influenced by culture and that one or more minority cultures are likely to be seen as the problem by the dominant culture. This raises the issue of the role of 'white privilege' (McIntosh, 1988) and, particularly, 'white fragility' (DiAngelo, 2010) in considering community safety. 'White fragility' here refers to the challenges of over-reactive white sensitivity to suggestions that their position of privilege might impact on the wellbeing of people of other cultures.

### INTRODUCTION

The impetus for the survey on public perceptions of community safety arose from several violent murders occurring in West Auckland in the first half of 2014, culminating in the manslaughter of Arun Kumar, a Henderson dairy owner, by a 14-year-old boy, on June 10, 2014 (Dennett & Boyer, 2015). These events were widely reported and gave rise to a heightened level of public consciousness and general concern about safety within the community. These concerns had already been articulated in 2012 when an Auckland Council report, *Public Perceptions of Safety from Crime in the Auckland Region*, identified that residents of Henderson-Massey Local Board area generally felt more unsafe in their community than people from anywhere else in greater Auckland; that Henderson-Massey and Whau were two of only three local board areas where people felt their area was becoming more unsafe; and that Henderson-Massey was one of two areas where people felt they were most likely to be a victim of crime. The reasons given for feeling unsafe were the presence of people with any or many of the following characteristics – being young, aggressive, drunk, drugged, suspicious and/or homeless. Poor lighting, places where people could hide, having no one around, and scary media



reports all made things worse, it was reported.

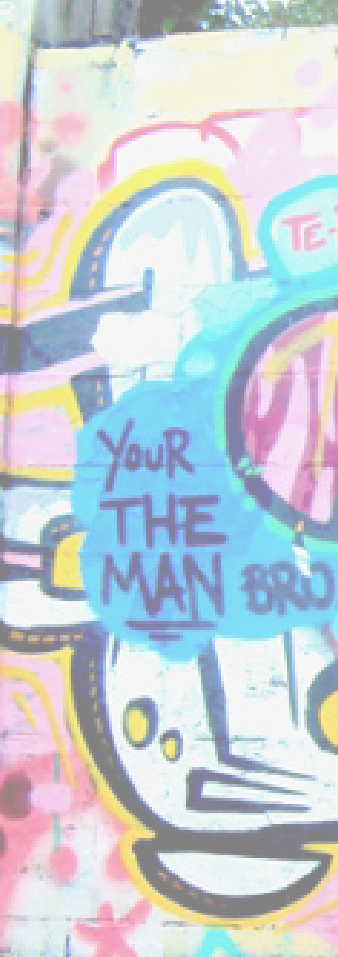
Our survey covered West Auckland, an area consisting of three local boards (Henderson-Massey, Whau and Waitakere Ranges). Henderson-Massey, as well as being the largest of the three boards, is also younger, poorer and has higher proportions of Māori and Pasifika peoples than in Auckland generally. It also has one of the four fastest-growing populations in the Auckland region, with 24% growth between 2001 and 2013 (Auckland Council, 2014a). Whau, in contrast, has a particularly high proportion of Asian people (35.4%), and the lowest household and personal income levels of the three West Auckland Local Boards (Auckland Council, 2014b). Compared to Henderson-Massey and Whau (and Auckland as a whole), Waitakere Ranges is older, richer, more Pākehā/European, and with much slower growth. West Auckland is a vulnerable community (Auckland Council, 2014c). A Ministry of Justice (2015) crime and safety survey lists demographic features which make people more likely to be victims of crime, including crowded housing, being a sole parent or unemployed, renting, having frequent money crises, being of Māori or Pasifika culture and being young and/or poor. These features are a major part of West Auckland life, particularly for Whau and Henderson-Massey residents (Auckland Council, 2014a and 2014b).

Following the Auckland Council (2012) report were another four investigations, one with a focus on the wider West Auckland region (Safer Communities, 2012) and three, commissioned by the council, with a focus on Henderson/Massey specifically (Stoks Limited, 2014; Thinkplace, 2014a; 2014b). These reports addressed:

- the establishment of broad-ranging and comprehensive safety standards covering areas such as safety in the workplace, traffic, home and water that the city could be held accountable for (Safer Communities, 2012).
- using the *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* (Jeffery, 1977) approach to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations to improve community safety through changes in street lighting, surveillance, tidiness and design, and extending the use hours of physical environments so that people are more comfortable using public spaces and transport during the day and at night (Stoks Limited, 2014).
- addressing the issue of “adverse perceptions associated with congregations of youth which comes to the forefront in all public safety perception studies” (Stoks Limited, 2014, p. 37). This was felt to be “perhaps the most important CPTED initiative” (p. 37). Narratives from groups who were often named as reason why the public felt unsafe – young people, gang members and the homeless – argued for a whole of community approach where everyone is “legitimate” with pop-up events in community spaces, odd-job and upcycling hubs and street games, adopt-a-grandparent schemes, and generally making those who are seen as a problem part of the solution (Thinkplace, 2014a;b).

Many of these recommendations have been taken up by the Henderson-Massey Local Board and by the council between 2011 and 2015, so it has been with some disappointment that in 2015 two more reports came out concluding that little had changed. The Waitakere Ethnic Board (2015) felt that despite the improvements in community policing, the introduction of CCTV and other developments in Henderson, young people were still considered threatening to Henderson people and businesses, and there was the feeling that they were insufficiently punished for the crimes they committed. The WAVES Trust (2015) Henderson/Massey survey repeated the same message about a perceived lack of safety in Henderson town centre and generally attributed this to youth crime, and drug and alcohol problems.

Two options present themselves: The actions taken in response to the recommendations above in design and engagement were not sufficient for change; and it is the community’s perception that there is a major safety problem that is the problem. These positions are not mutually exclusive. The first option is supported by cross-country European data about ‘fear of crime’. Hummelsheim, Hirtenlehner, Jackson, & Oberwittler (2011) argue that macro-factors such as a strong family and child-support funding, comprehensive education services, access to employment and support for people with a disability have a much greater impact on fear of crime (i.e., these factors explain a much higher percent of the variance related to fear of crime) than other factors such as actual crime rates, expenditure on unemployment rates or even income inequality. The second option (the disconnect between the community perceptions of safety and actual levels of crime) is supported by Bridgman and Dyer (2016) who have identified a halving of substantiated child-abuse rates in West Auckland over the period of 2010-2015 and a 27% drop in the crime rate in the Waitakere police district over the period from 2010-2014 – the fourth-largest fall in New Zealand – to the extent that it had a lower



Street artists Kakano Youth Arts Collective (vulnerable young people, many of whom have been homeless) celebrate their connection to Henderson.

crime rate than all but two of the 11 police districts in New Zealand (excluding Waitemata, of which it is a sub-district). These falls in rates of child abuse and crime mean “there were 676 fewer children suffering substantiated abuse in 2015 than there were in 2010” (p. 29) and “5000 fewer crimes in 2014 – just under 14 fewer crimes every day” (p. 30). Again, something other than levels of crime are driving perceptions of safety.

What is striking about all the research above is that it lacks a cultural analysis. What is the connection between the culture/s of those who are seen as the problem (the gangs, the homeless – those more identified with minority cultures) and those with the greatest concerns about safety (the majority culture)? In seeking an answer to this question we will draw upon the ideas of white privilege (Macintosh, 1988) and white fragility, which is “a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves [aimed at preserving white privilege]” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 54). White privilege is based on such ideas as cultural separation, an individualised world view where Western/European modes of thinking are treated as universals, a sense of entitlement to superior conditions of comfort and safety than others, and “constant messages that ... [whites] are more valuable” (p. 64) that are part of our media, education, justice and political systems.

## WHAT WE SET OUT TO DO

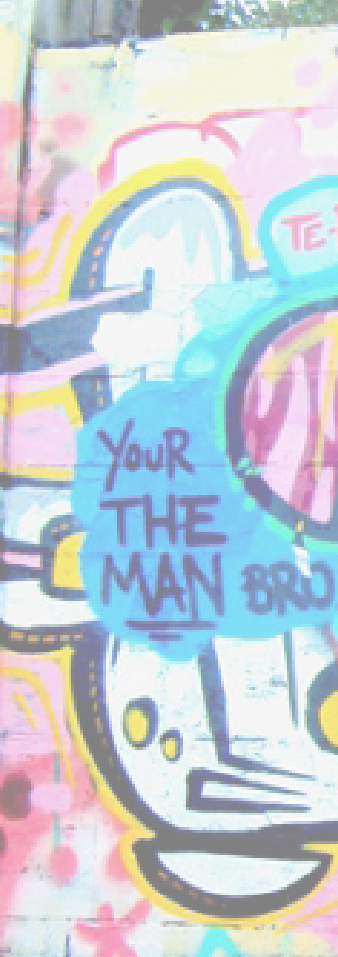
This paper seeks to confirm the generally increasingly negative perceptions of community safety held by people in West Auckland and to seek cultural explanations for them. Table 1 shows the convenience sample of 159 people who were participants in the survey. The survey asked questions about interactions with neighbours and the police; safety in relation to children, and to times and places; what it feels like to be safe or unsafe; relative levels of safety in West Auckland; and what should be done, and who should take responsibility for improving community safety.

Our analysis here looks at the correlations between the demographic features of the participants in Table 1 and the perceptions relating to safety of these different groupings. Correlation is not on its own a powerful statistical tool and our sampling method means that we cannot claim to have a representative sample. Therefore, showing that the findings for the sub-groups in Table 1 are representative will be demonstrated by the triangulation of significant correlations ( $p < 0.05$ ) with external data, which will help establish the credibility of the new findings relating to culture. I will begin by showing all significant correlations with gender, age and culture for the set of rating questions that started the survey. Only where there are significant correlations ( $p < 0.05$ ) are the differences of groups within factors (e.g., % of women vs % of men within gender) reported.

## FINDINGS

Correlations show the following significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ): Women feel less safe than men when answering the front door after dark (50% vs 16%); walking in the street after dark (57% vs 24%); and about their children going on their own to the local park (43% vs 12%).

Older people are more likely than younger to know their neighbour’s name (>44 years=78%



Factor	Groups	Number	%
Gender	Women	134	84.3%
	Men	25	15.7%
Culture	Asian, other	11	6.9%
	Māori	17	10.7%
	Pasifika	30	18.9%
	Pākehā/European	101	63.5%
Age	16-34 years	36	22.6%
	35-44	34	21.4%
	45-54	41	25.8%
	55-64	33	20.8%
	65 and older	15	9.4%
Location	<i>Eastern Fringe:</i> Avondale, Blockhouse Bay, New Lynn, New Windsor, Rosebank	39	24.5%
	<i>In the Bush:</i> Green Bay, Glen Eden, Titirangi, Laingholm, Parau	29	18.2%
	<i>Suburban Henderson,</i> Glendene, Kelston, Sunnysvale, Henderson, Henderson Heights, Te Atatu South	29	18.2%
	<i>Harbour Fringe:</i> Te Atatu Peninsula, West Harbour, Hobsonville	21	13.2%
	<i>Massey, Ranui</i>	30	18.9%
	<i>Bohemian West:</i> Oratia, Swanson, Waitakere, Karekare	11	6.9%
Length of time in community	Less than 12 months	12	7.5%
	1-2.99 years;	20	12.6%
	3-4.99	21	13.2%
	5-9.99	42	26.4%
	10-19.99	36	22.6%
	20 years or more	28	17.6%
Total		159	100.0%

**Table 1:** Characteristics of the survey participants



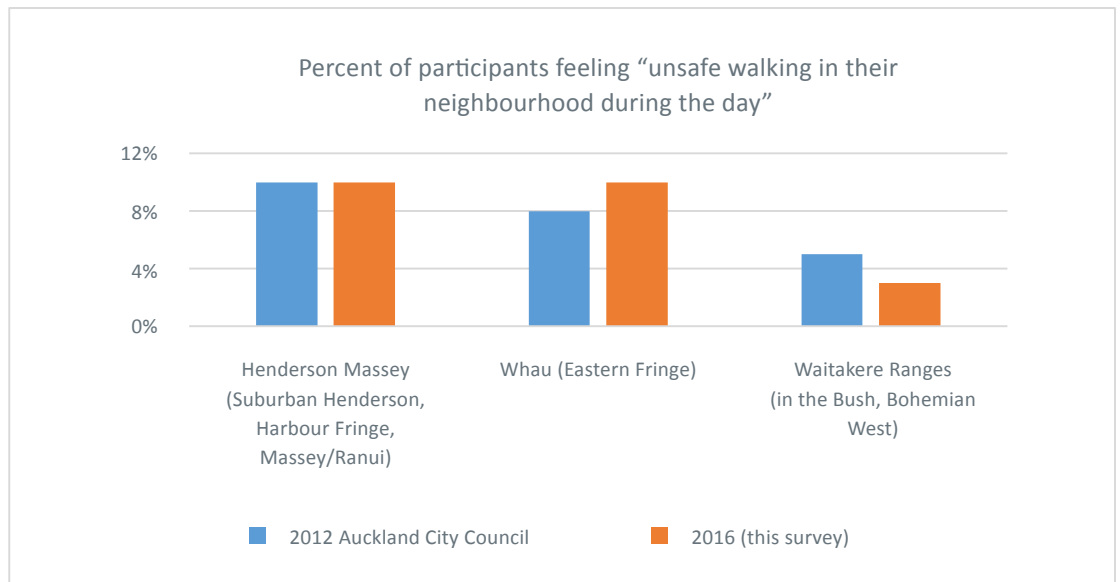
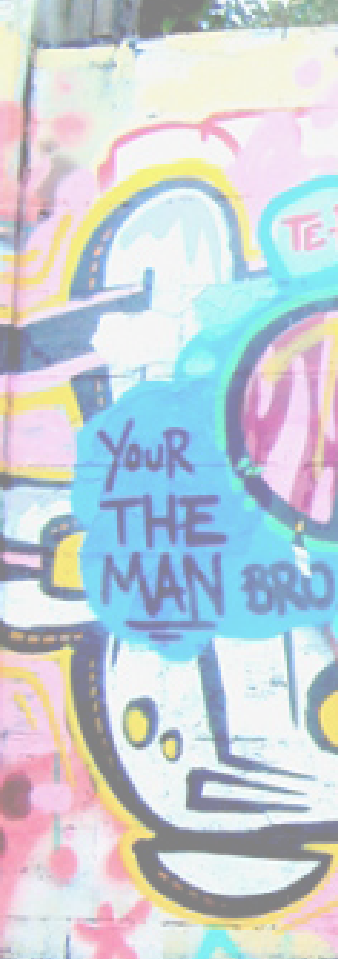


Figure 1

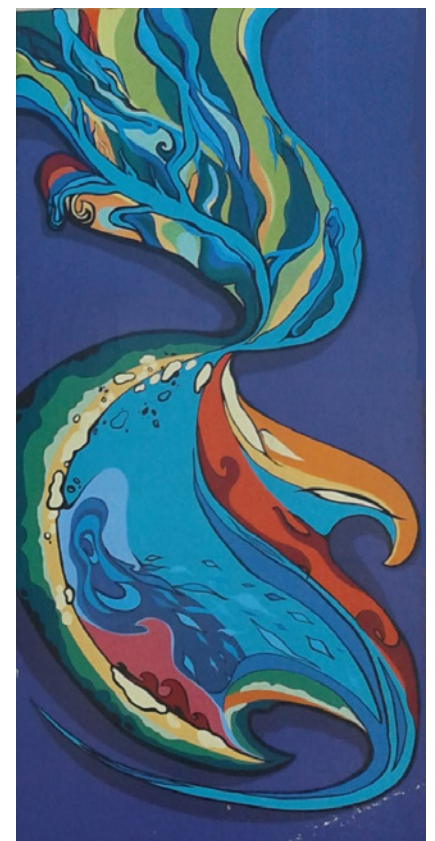
vs <45 years=55%) as are people who have lived in the community for longer periods of time (>2.99 years=72% vs <3 years=50%). Older people feel that people from different backgrounds get along in their neighbourhood (>44 years 75% vs <45 years 50%), and are also more comfortable interacting with police (89% vs 66%) than younger people.

Pākehā/European participants feel less safe at night walking alone than do other cultures (59% vs 38%); Pasifika participants are less likely to know their neighbour’s name than all other cultures (50% vs 76%) and Asian/other people feel more strongly that individuals should take responsibility for making the community safe (82% vs 63%). Pākehā/European participants were more likely than other cultural groups (43% vs 28%) to believe that their suburb’s crime rate is higher than the rest of Auckland and Asian/other participants less likely (9% vs 39%).

That women have more safety concerns than men is a routine finding of community safety surveys (Cossman & Rader, 2011). It is logical that older people and people who have lived for longer periods in the neighbourhood are more likely to know their neighbour’s name, as is the proposition that a population for whom English is not the first language (Pasifika participants, for example) are less likely to know their neighbour’s name. It is perhaps more surprising that the majority population might be the most frightened population, but this, too, is well supported in the literature (Quillian & Pager 2001; Drakulich 2012; Pickett, Chiricos, Golden, & Gertz 2012; Kuhn & Lane 2013).

Finally, one of the location questions in the survey was virtually identical to a question in the 2012 Auckland Council report. Figure 1 compares this survey’s responses to the 2012 report and finds them almost identical. Thus, the findings from this question and the alignment of significant correlations with external data suggest that the data from the survey is broadly representative, and that the relationship between culture and perception of safety could usefully be more fully explored. This will be done by looking at the narrative responses made to questions about an instance of “feeling very unsafe” and “one thing that would make neighbourhoods safer”.

One question in which there was general agreement across all demographics was the question on whether “concern about crime” had changed. Overall, 55% had increasing concern and



An example of street art created by homeless people (from the Kakano Youth Arts Collective in Henderson).

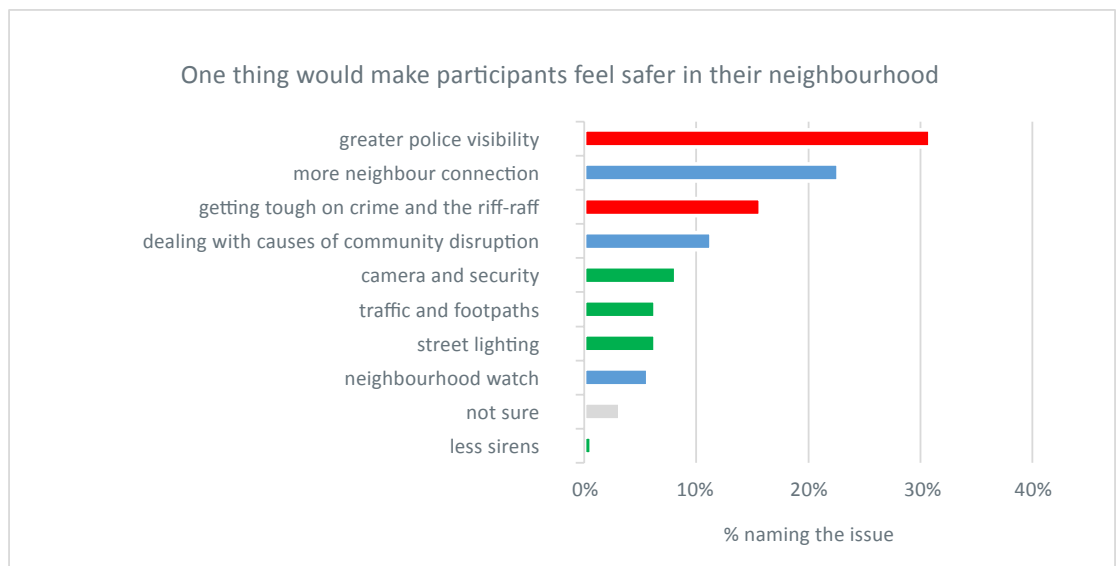
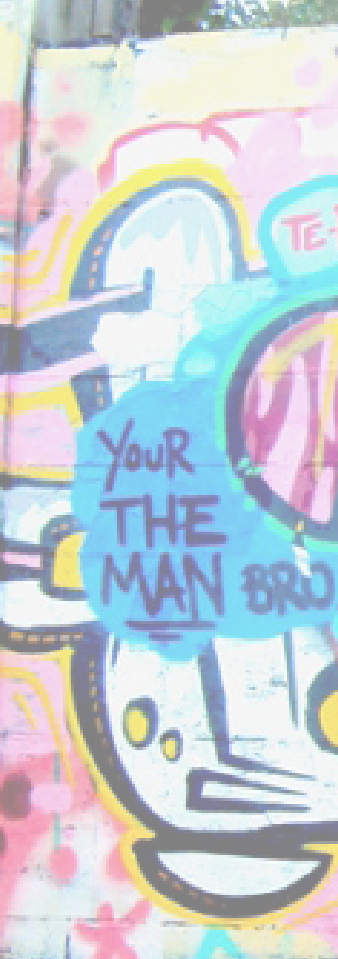


Figure 2

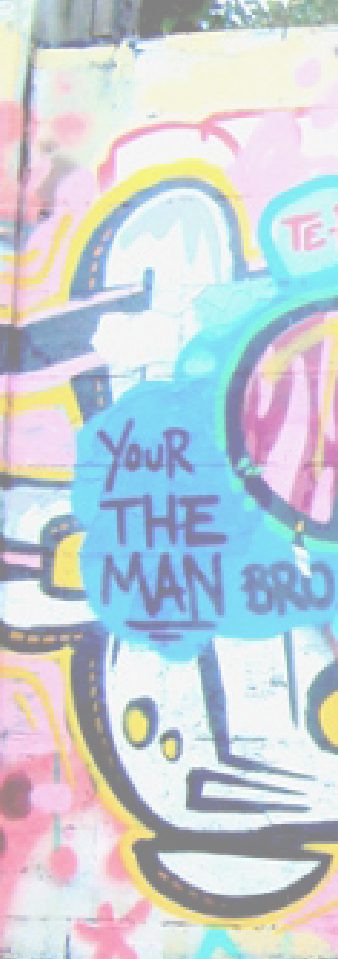
only 9% had a decreasing concern. Fear of specific locations, especially after dark, such as shopping centre “alleyways”, and “at night walking home from the train station”; and fear generated by media stories and by social media, particularly Facebook and Neighbourly, about local murders (“the recent murder of the lady in the Te Atatu Peninsula”), other crime (“an historic mass burglary of all houses in our street”), and stranger danger (“I noticed an unfamiliar car making slow trips around the street”) add to the general anxiety people have. These features were present in half (50%) of the narratives about feeling “very unsafe”.

However, while there is concern across all communities in these areas, the experience of feeling very unsafe has a distinct cultural flavour. For Pākehā/European participants, feeling very unsafe is often one of being in the presence of people who are felt to be dangerous – “the strange people”; the “youth ... loitering”, “the drunken mob”, the gangs, the drug dealers, “street-fighters”, “the scumbags”, “big troublemakers”, the robbers, the “sex offenders”, “beggars”, “people with mental health problems [who] scare me”, “the ‘so-called’ homeless”, and the “squatters ... under buildings”. In these descriptions, no actual physical harm, direct threat or rudeness to the participants is stated. Pākehā are much more likely to use this kind of labelling than the other groups (35% vs 12%). Pākehā/European participants are also significantly more involved in social media (89% vs 69% for all other groups) and the fear generated from its use. For example, “a recent murder” as a reason for feeling unsafe, is only mentioned by users of social media. Pasifika participants were significantly less likely to use social media than the other groups (60% vs 79% for all other groups).

When it comes to direct encounters with abusive and aggressive people, or experience of the aftermath of robberies or burglaries in their streets (as distinct from concerns about the possibility of such events) these were identified by more than one-third of participants when they were describing times when they felt very unsafe. These events range from verbal abuse such as “I’m going to fuck you, bitch” to accounts of physical assaults on people or their property (“a car window punched at traffic lights”, “a rock through my front door window” through to “a neighbour’s daughter ... [getting] raped in the house opposite”). Māori participants were significantly more likely to experience issues of actual abuse and aggression compared with all other groups (47% vs 18%).

Thus, we have a picture of two vulnerable communities, one more likely to directly experience abuse and aggression (Māori), and the other more likely to be isolated from neighbours and the mainstream media (Pasifika people); and a third less-vulnerable community (Pākehā/European) which not only appears to be the most fearful community, but also the least tolerant. The priority given by the four communities to the single best solution to the perceived lack of community safety will decide whether these differing pictures have substance.

The responses (Figure 2) fell into two major categories – one around protection and enforcement (red bars); one around community engagement (blue bars), and a third, much smaller category, around environmental change (green bars). Protection was about wanting greater police visibility (identified by 31% of participants). This would increase safety by having more police patrols, wardens, night security patrols, community constables and neighbourhood police getting involved with “the little kids ... [showing] they are their friends”. Also wanted was “giving the police



the resources to monitor ... criminal activity ... [and] help prevent ... crime". This set of solutions was significantly correlated with being Pākehā/European – 39% of Pākehā/European supported this compared with 14% for the other cultural groups.

On the enforcement side, 16% of participants believe that getting tough on crime would make a difference. Many comments refer to getting rid of people considered disreputable or undesirable (the 'riff-raff'). These participants want more resources put into catching the people doing "burglaries ... graffiti-ing", "marijuana", "dropping so much rubbish" and having out-of-control dogs. They wanted "the Justice System ... to be harder on convicted criminals", and one participant wanted "the right to bear arms". The getting-tough-on-crime solution was significantly positively correlated with being Pākehā/European, 22% of whom supported this solution compared with 3% for all other groups. Only two non-Pākehā/ European responses were in this category.

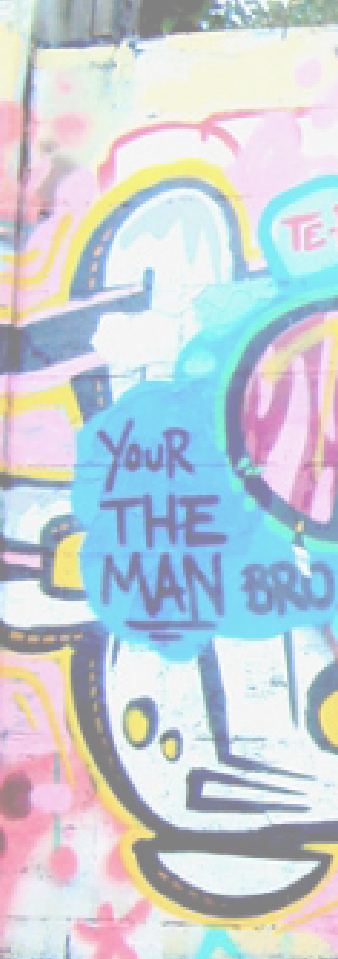
In contrast to the focus on protection and enforcement, there was also a strong push for solutions that involved greater community engagement (the blue bars in Figure 2). Twenty-three percent believe that having more neighbour connections and community events would make a difference. "People saying hello", "monthly BBQs ... sharing together, [getting] to know ... neighbours", "talking across ethnic groups" and creating "a strong sense of inclusiveness". The solution of community connection was significantly negatively correlated with being Pākehā/European – only 13% identified this option compared with 36% for all other cultures. The Pasifika participants had a significant positive correlation with this solution – 40% vs 19% for all other cultures. Aligned with, but separate from, the theme of community engagement is the suggestion of 'neighbourhood watch'-type initiatives from 6% of participants. This solution is also significantly negatively correlated with being Pākehā/European – only 1% supported this compared with 14% for the other cultural groups.

A small percentage of Pākehā/European participants (13%) made positive suggestions about addressing the causes of community disruption – poverty, inequality, better education and mental health services, anger management and parental support – at a level similar to the other groups. This was also true for the other area of change suggested – improving environments (better security systems at home and on the street, and better traffic management and street lighting).

## DISCUSSION

The data clearly shows that community safety is a growing concern, with no change in a key measure of safety (walking in local streets after dark) since 2012 (Auckland Council, 2012). The data confirms the hypothesis that the fear of crime is not directly connected to crime rates as reflected by police statistics, but is growing despite significant drops in the level of crime in West Auckland (Bridgman & Dyer, 2016). Also confirmed is that the group with the highest fear of crime is the Pākehā/European group, despite being the least vulnerable cultural group. Against these concerns we need to remind ourselves that we are talking about perceptions, and that as Gray, Jackson and Farrall (2008) have pointed out, questions that ask for overarching perceptions about safety (e.g., how worried are you about...?) generate large overestimates of concern when compared with questions asking about how often people have felt afraid in specific contexts of time period, place, direct experience, etc. Most of our questions have specific contexts and we might suggest, with only 9% overall saying that they are afraid to walk in their local streets during the day, that community safety is not a major concern. However, if we ask the same question about walking after dark, then the number rises to 52%, which could mean that a substantial proportion of the population (particularly women) would not use public transport after dark, which is a major problem. Similarly, it is a major problem when well over half of the parents in this survey feel reluctant to let their children go unaccompanied to the local dairy, school or park. The result is that children are transported everywhere (including to 'safe' schools with low non-Pākehā/European enrolments), connections between neighbours become weak, access to community resources becomes restricted, and those resources become degraded because of lack of use or vandalism.

The strong response of the Pākehā/European group, when asked for a solution, is to ask for more police protection and for the justice system to get tougher on crime. A similar survey in Rotorua of predominately Pākehā/European participants found that 55% of the solutions to improve community safety related to protection and enforcement (APR Consultants, 2015). It is an echo of the call regularly made for more to be spent on fighting crime, with the result that there are plans to provide 1800 extra prison beds at a cost of \$1 billion (Sachdeva & Kirk, 2016) and \$500 million for extra policing (Kirk, 2017). However, this massive expenditure will likely have very little impact at all on fear of crime (Hummelsheim et al 2011; Vieno, Roccato, & Russo 2013; Visser, Scholte &



Scheepers, 2013). The most vulnerable cultural communities, the ones whose members are most likely to end up in prison – the Māori and Pasifika communities (Department of Corrections and Statistics New Zealand, 2012) – want solutions that emphasise community engagement and connection. Hummelsheim et al. (2011) argue that macro-factors (a strong family and child-support funding, comprehensive education services, access to employment and support for people with a disability) that increase individual and family experience of being in control of their lives are the ones that have the greatest impact on reducing fear of crime. The solution of community engagement and connection also reflects a desire for individual and family experience of control. It is the neighbourhood solutions (saying hello to your neighbours, breaking down the cultural barriers, having community events and community barbecues, having a say in neighbourhood developments, keeping an eye out for each other and the children of the community) that increase people’s sense of control and engagement.

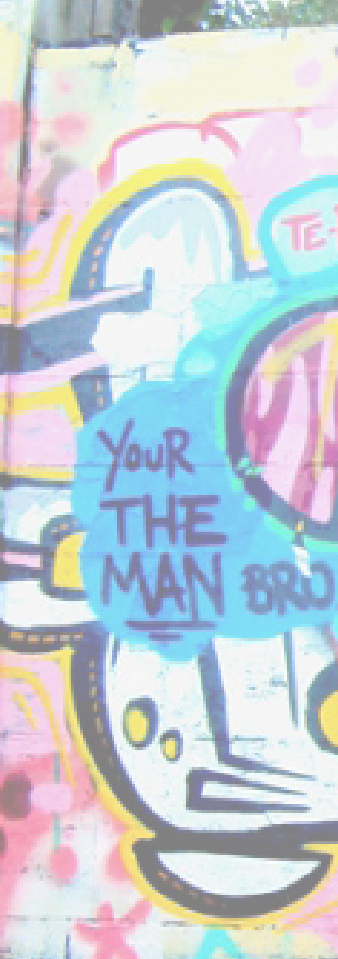
A big challenge of creating greater community engagement and connection will be getting greater Pākehā/European buy-in. DiAngelo’s (2011) “white fragility” thesis suggests that, in the US context, the ‘white’ population will react badly to the idea that the protection of their position of privilege limits the opportunities for community connection and reduces safety – it will create “racial stress ... triggering” resistance to change on their behalf (p. 54). She argues that racism is so embedded in ‘white’ culture that even those with enlightened positions on race are often unconscious of its presence. White culture also defines racists as being “mean” people (DiAngelo, 2015, para. 11), and that’s a good reason to be offended if you are a white person and you are called a racist. DiAngelo wants to get beyond the good/bad dichotomy of racism which is the “fundamental misunderstanding driving white defensiveness about being connected to racism” (DiAngelo, 2015, para. 11). Just having community conversations about white fragility won’t solve all the social, environmental and economic issues of poverty, housing, education and sustainability that are core to our sense of safety, but they will make it possible to get better outcomes in all these areas. Unless we address the issues of privilege and fragility, distrust and insecurity will continue to erode the quality of life in our communities.



Street artists from the Kakano Youth Arts Collective in Henderson celebrate the potential of community.

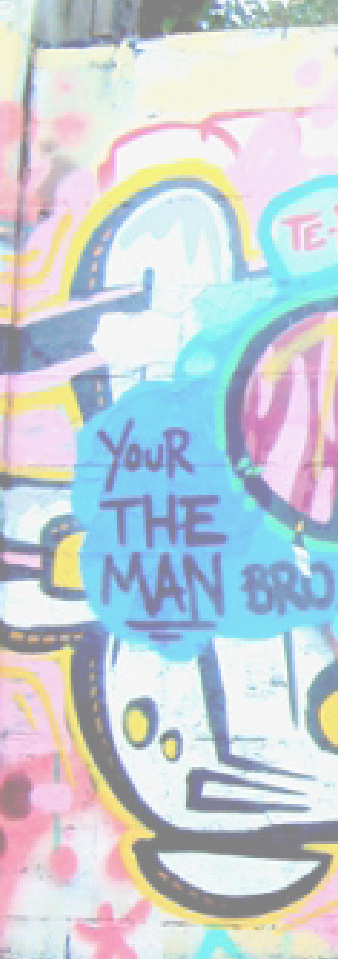
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**Dr Geoff Bridgman** has worked, taught and researched in the fields of disability, mental health and community development. He is Chair of Violence Free Communities, an NGO that creates and evaluates models for programmes that prevent violence and build community resilience. He is currently working with eight schools evaluating the *Jade Speaks Up* violence prevention programme, and a project exploring the experiences of deaf people receiving mental health services. He is a member of the Health Research Council’s College of Experts and teaches and supervises research in the Social Practice Pathway at Unitec Institute of Technology, Auckland.

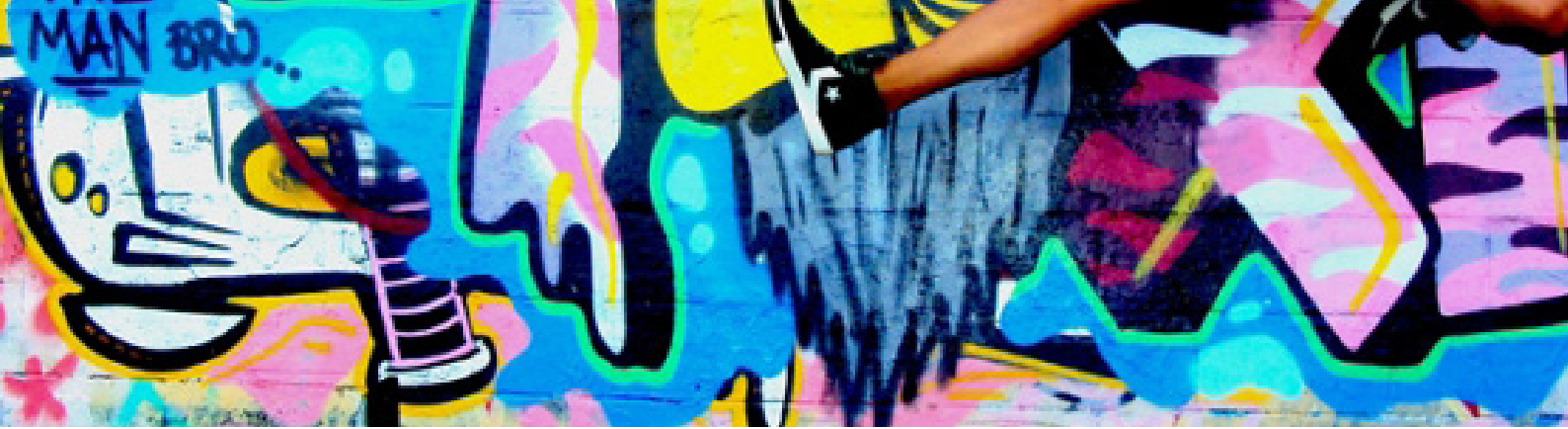


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# Achieving Gender Equality in Disaster Management: a case study of the integration of women into community groups in Indonesia

By Ashley Carvalho

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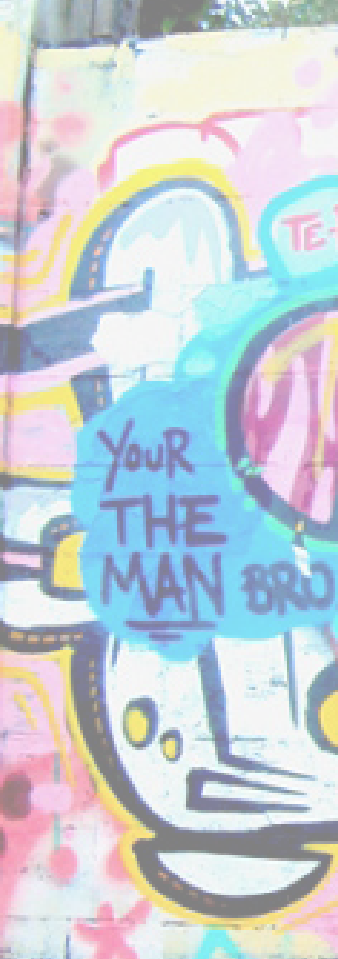
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# Article

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## Achieving Gender Equality in Disaster Management: a case study of the integration of women into community groups in Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

The recent international commitment to the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) continues to recognise the need for the international development community to focus on achieving gender equality on a local and global scale. The SDGs invite the academic community to once again ask themselves about the practices that are currently in place in order to best provide equal opportunities for men and women. It is apparent that, currently, men continue to be privileged over women. However, the growing acknowledgment that gender equality is key to achieving other developmental goals provides a great platform to improve the current policies and practices used around the world.

This paper will focus on the role that women can play in management of a disaster. With a case study in Indonesia, a country very prone to natural disasters, this paper explores how involving women in decision-making roles leads to an increase in overall community resilience in the face of future disasters. Furthermore, this paper will conclude that there is a great need for communities to recognise the invaluable role that women can play in building community sustainability during disaster preparation and response.

### INTRODUCTION

“Without the full participation and contribution of women in decision-making and leadership, real community resilience to climate change and disasters simply cannot be achieved,” said Sálvano Briceno, former director of the Secretariat of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (Gender Perspectives, 2008, paragraph 3). The emphasis placed on achieving gender equality and building sustainable communities within the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provides an unparalleled opportunity to re-evaluate the current practices and gender focus of disaster-management programmes. This paper suggests that gender equality and sustainable development goals are inextricably linked, and can therefore be best achieved through the integration of both at a policy level.

With the ever-increasing recognition that climate change will lead to an increase in disasters throughout the world, programmes that best enable communities to build resilience in the face of disasters is essential for the protection of human life and for the sustainability of communities. As a group that is disproportionately affected by disasters, women must be provided with full and efficient opportunities to participate in disaster management (Isik et al., 2015). This paper will be looking at Indonesia and how best to ensure the increased decision-making capacity of women at a local





level, namely within community-based programmes. Furthermore, this paper will discuss the need for gendered disaster management programmes and how to potentially best implement these into local communities throughout Indonesia.

## **GENDER INEQUALITY**

First, we need a general understanding of what 'gender inequality' refers to and how it manifests in contemporary society. Gender inequality refers to the marginalisation of a woman's status relative to men (Austin & McKinney, 2016). The inequality between men and women limits women's opportunities, participation, engagement and development outcomes (Hendra, FitzGerald, & Seymour, 2013). While men and women are different on a biological level, the notions of femininity and masculinity are socially constructed (Shreve, 2016). Women tend to lose out through this exchange of ideas. Gender inequality is pervasive and affects a multitude of other sectors of society, hence its central position within the new development agenda (Hendra et al., 2013).

On a global level women are marginalised in a number of areas. Women are systematically denied access to certain assets, are paid less than men in equal work and are concentrated in vulnerable employment situations (Hendra et al., 2013). Women face persistent beliefs that they are inferior to men (Koehler, 2016). Women are subject to physical and sexual violence at a much higher rate than men (Hendra et al., 2013). Women are constantly faced with a lack of control in the public and private spheres (Koehler, 2016). This has resulted in exclusion from political, social and economic leadership roles (Koehler, 2016). These gender disparities are further evident during times of crisis (Shreve, 2016).

## **GENDER IN DISASTERS**

Disasters impact men and women differently. Traditional gender roles are exaggerated during times of crisis, resulting in long-term detriment to women (Shreve, 2016). Particular vulnerabilities/factors that lead to women experiencing disproportionately negative effects in the face of disasters include the following:

- 1. Lack of decision-making power**

There is a history of under-recognising the potential for women to play a key role in disaster management. In the *UNESCO Science Report: Towards 2030* (2015) it was observed that, "women are not represented equally in the key climate-change related sectors of science as skilled workers, professionals or decision-makers" (p. 85).

- 2. Dependence on the natural environment**

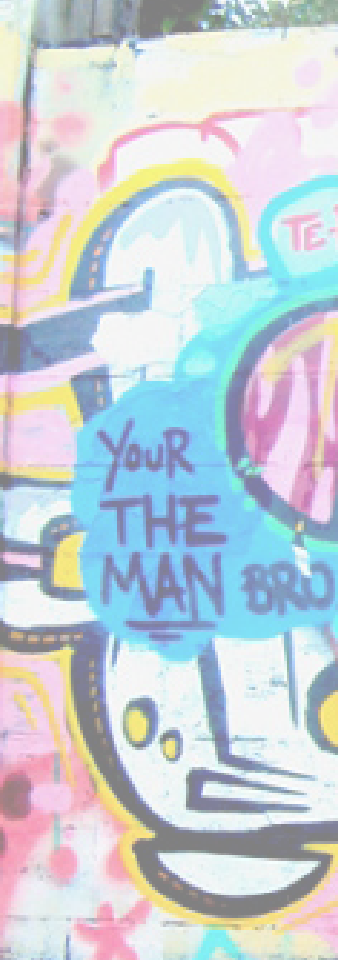
Gender inequality discourse argues that women are disproportionately affected by disasters due to their economic dependence on natural resources (Austin & McKinney, 2016). This is due to the patriarchal allocation of labour (Koehler, 2016). Women make up the majority of farmers on marginal lands, which are susceptible to droughts, floods and other hazardous events. These women, who live in less-developed countries, use the natural environment for household tasks such as fetching water, growing food and collecting firewood (Austin & McKinney, 2016). This means that women are often in the field during times of hazards and their source of income is often destroyed in the disaster.

- 3. Physical and sexual violence**

Violence against women is an ever-present phenomenon throughout the world (Hendra et al., 2013). However, this rises at times of vulnerability, such as during a disaster and the recovery period (Hendra et al., 2013). Furthermore, women experience a decline in sexual and reproductive health during such times (Shreve, 2016).

- 4. Unequal death toll**

Perhaps the most alarming difference between men and women in the face of disasters is the much higher mortality rate among women. Women are disproportionately represented in death and injury tolls (Haynes, Jonatan, & Towers, 2010). For example, in the 1991 Bangladesh cyclone and flood, the death rate among women aged 20-44 was 71 per 1000,



compared to 15 per 1000 for men (United Nations Development Programme, n.d.). This was attributed to the fact that women remained in their homes waiting for other family members (Pincha, 2008b). The case was the same after the tsunami in Asia in 2004, where women died at a rate of up to four times more than men (Oxfam, 2005). This outcome arose from a number of factors, such as women returning to save their children, and not being able to swim.

**5. Childcare and household duties**

Women, as dictated by social norms, are considered to be the prime caregivers for children and receive no pay in return. During times of crisis this means that women continue to have the burden of caring for children (Shreve, 2016). Women also have to continue with their household duties at this time, such as cleaning and resource collection (Isik et al., 2015).

**6. Lack of education**

In a number of countries, including Indonesia, women are often denied disaster risk education and training (Yumarni & Amaratunga, 2015). In these places, this leads to male domination in the areas of planning and training for disasters.

In summary, even if a woman survives a disaster, her physical and financial security, health, hygiene and nutrition are further impacted, and this leads to an increase in female suffering (Isik et al., 2015). Girls and women are too often denied the opportunities that would allow them to grow resilience in the face of disaster (Haynes et al., 2010). Resilience is an individual's tendency to cope with stress and adversity in their lives (Ayyub, 2014). For disasters, resilience describes the ability to bounce back to a pre-disaster state after a disaster strikes (Edwards, 2015). Furthermore, for women, sustainability is not just a humanity objective but is also a gendered concern due to the disproportionate rate at which they are affected by social inequality (Koehler, 2016).

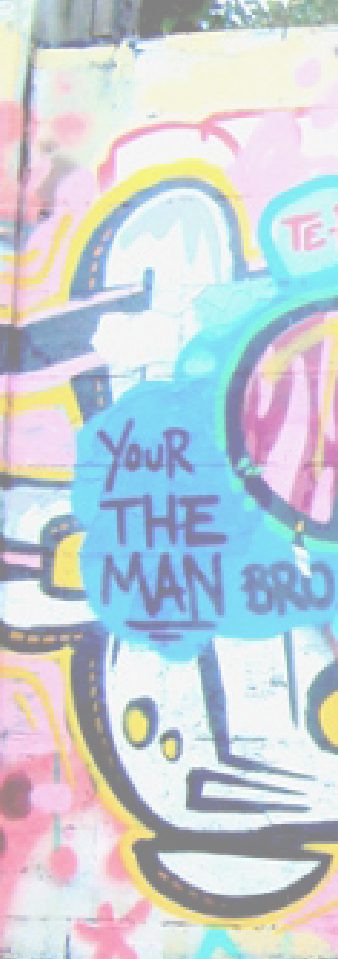
## **GENDER-FOCUSED DISASTER PROGRAMME BENEFITS**

Gender equality is a necessary component of reaching a prosperous and sustainable world (Sustainable Development Goals, 2015). Disaster risk reduction is the process of reducing risks through activities in order to reduce the effects of disasters and to mitigate any contributing factors of disasters (Sagala, Yamin & Rianawati, 2016). Disaster risk programmes look at the underlying reasons for a disaster occurring (Haynes et al., 2010). The incorporation of women into sustainable programmes is considered to be beneficial to women and the disaster preparation and recovery period for a number of reasons.

Firstly, it is because of the disproportionate amount of work that women do in fields directly affected by disasters that they have a weighted interest in sustainable development and better disaster management (Koehler, 2016). This disproportionate amount of work means that women are able to present unique perspectives and local knowledge of the impacts of disasters on the natural environment in ways that men are unable to. Women are therefore able to assist with the design of disaster mitigation programmes that cater to the protection of natural resources. This supports ecofeminist arguments that the incorporation of women into decision-making roles leads to greater environmental sustainability (Austin & McKinney, 2016).

Secondly, women hold unique views relevant to their lifestyles, particularly social problems that they face. For example, by placing women in positions of control in the design of post-disaster recovery, they can, by drawing from their shared experiences, try to create programmes that ensure greater physical safety for women in light of the increased physical and sexual abuse experienced. For women, having a step from which to speak and be heard means that policy won't trivialise women or de-prioritise their needs (Isik et al., 2015).

Thirdly, research by Austin and McKinney (2016) found that women use the power they have to promote programmes that are for the wellbeing of the entire community. Austin and McKinney determined that improving women's position in society reduces the number of deaths from disasters in developing countries. They further concluded that the inclusion of women in preparation efforts is invaluable because it leads to decisions being made that positively affect public health and mitigate the impact of future disasters. Gender inequality and gender-based discrimination are the two most widespread drivers of global inequalities (Hendra et al., 2013). Hence the international recognition



that by addressing gender inequality, other development imperatives can be targeted simultaneously (Hendra et al., 2013). For example, by providing women with equal access to health care, decent work and equal opportunities to hold decision-making positions, this will fuel the development of society at large (Sustainable Development Goals, 2015). Therefore, not only is the empowerment of women within the context of disaster relief beneficial to sustainability and community resilience, but it also improves the health conditions of the community.

Unless the status quo is to be perpetuated, disaster management must be more responsive to gender. This is what the SDGs hope to rectify.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

While the Millennium Development Goals were able to progress gender equality in the world, there is still a long way to go before equality can be achieved; the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) hope to achieve this by 2030. The SDGs, or *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* are 17 aspirational global goals that the development community wants achieved by 2030, with 169 targets overall. They replace the Millennium Development Goals and are reflective of the changes in development rhetoric. As a result, a strong focus has been placed on reducing inequality within and among the countries of the world (Koehler, 2016). Within these 169 targets, 24 relate explicitly to gender issues. Goal 5, the agenda's dedicated goal for bridging the gap in gender equality, can be observed as crucial to gender equality achievements in the future. There are nine targets within the goal. One such target calls for women's full participation in all levels of decision-making: to "ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life" (United Nations, 2015, paragraph 5.5). The SDGs articulate the need for women to have greater decision-making roles because the status quo sees women from all corners of the world being under-represented in both formal and informal decision-making settings (Hendra et al., 2013).

As a part of a change in the theoretical approach to development these new goals not only incorporate, but are named after, the concept of sustainability. Sustainability relates to the ecological environment and aims to produce and sustain a healthy planet (Koehler, 2016). There is a great emphasis within the SDGs on addressing climate change. The SDGs call for governments around the world to strengthen community and individual resilience, build on their adaptive capacity and reduce the impact of disasters (Austin & McKinney, 2016).

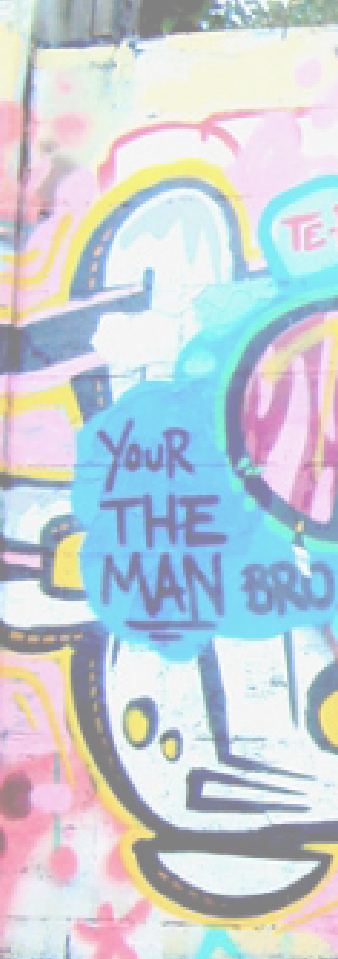
The SDGs provide a platform for the world's commitment to development to be re-kindled. Furthermore, for gender equality, there is an unparalleled opportunity to enact a transformative vision in the field of development (Hendra et al., 2013). The SDGs call for governments and NGOs to develop greater understanding of the structural constraints and unequal power relations between all groups within society (Hendra et al., 2013). However, even though the SDGs present prevalent focus topics, they do not articulate how to address systemic issues (Koehler, 2016). This paper connects the theory of the SDGs to the practical realities of Indonesia and how best to execute these developmental goals.

## **CASE STUDY IN INDONESIA**

### **Gender equality in Indonesia**

In order to be able to create gender policy within Indonesia, a greater understanding of the sociocultural environment of the country, where women face many challenges, is needed (Martam, 2016). In developing countries, like Indonesia, there are large obstacles in the way of women's empowerment (Martam, 2016). As in line with the rest of the world, Indonesia's public decision-making is the domain of men (Haynes et al., 2010). Gender violence is also a grave issue within Indonesia (Martam, 2016). Cultural practices often mean that women have to enter into early marriages, depriving themselves of a full education (Martam, 2016). This is particularly pertinent to women and girls in rural areas of Indonesia (Martam, 2016). In Lampung, South Sumatra, men can be shamed for cleaning their house or washing the dishes, because these are considered womanly duties (Martam, 2016). This is because traditional Indonesian culture says that it is a woman's role to care for children and the home, while the man, as the financial provider for the family, should be catered to within the home setting (Martam, 2016).

Transforming the husband-and-wife dynamic into an equal partnership is a long-term project for Indonesia (Martem, 2016). It requires challenging the sociocultural values embedded into



Indonesian life. The pervasiveness of such cultural norms was also apparent in a study conducted by Haynes et al. (2010), which found that the views and abilities of men were considered superior to those of women. Both men and women were surveyed and thought men's capabilities to be greater than women's. Gender norms, for both men and women, indeed start before one is even born (Hendra et al., 2013).

Being an Islamic country by majority, the interplay between religious and social views is key to understanding Indonesian cultural values. The introduction of Sharia-based regulations in the Province of Aceh presents a particular challenge for the Indonesian Government (Jauhola, 2010). Misogynist policies continue to be implemented in these areas (Afrianty, 2015). The presence of Sharia law is a reflection of the rise of Islam in Indonesian politics (Jauhola, 2012). Thus, discussion about gender norms in Aceh is part of the debate about local customs and the international concept of human rights (Jauhola, 2010).

### **Impact of natural disasters in Indonesia**

Natural disasters often occur without warning and present constant challenges to the world at large but are particularly harsh in less-developed locations (Austin & McKinney, 2016). Within Indonesia there are many areas that are very prone to the occurrence of natural disasters (Sagala et al., 2016); earthquakes, volcanoes and tsunamigenic earthquakes, in particular, are quite common (Haynes et al., 2010). In the western islands, flooding and landslides are frequent, while in the eastern areas drought and strong winds are common (Haynes et al., 2010). Some very well known natural disasters that have occurred in Indonesia include the 2004 tsunami in Aceh, the earthquake in Yogyakarta in 2006, and the Jakarta floods in 2007. Furthermore, it is the consensus of the scientific community that climate change and events that occur as a consequence (such as floods, storms, droughts) will continue to escalate in harshness and number (Austin & McKinney, 2016). This all means that Indonesia needs to ensure its disaster-management policy is best equipped to address these prevailing concerns.

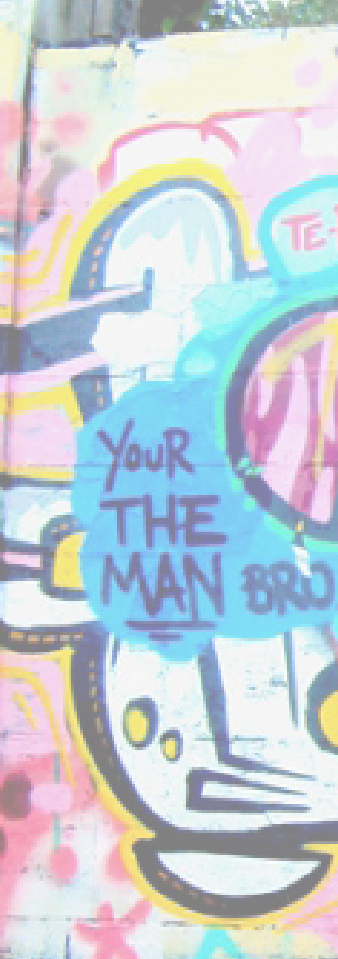
When it comes to addressing disasters and trying to build community and individual resilience, a disaster-management plan needs to be created. This process looks at all stages of the disaster-management cycle, which includes mitigation, preparedness, response and rehabilitation (Isik et al., 2015). It is often the case that while the Indonesian people are aware of the constant threat that natural disasters pose to their communities, they do not take a proactive, preparatory stance, but rather they respond to the aftermath. However, it has been found that effective planning and preparation before disasters occur is one of the best ways to mitigate the impact of a disaster (Austin & McKinney, 2016). Though the SDGs and other international documents encourage this approach in theory, in practice the focus is still predominantly placed on post-disaster efforts rather than pre-disaster preparation (Austin & McKinney, 2016), however, a transition of thinking from reactive to proactive in the face of natural disasters is evident in Indonesia. The Indonesian National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) was set up with the goal of building a resilient country in the face of disasters (Hiwasaki, Luna, Syamsidik, & Shaw, 2014). Furthermore, any sustainability development policies that incorporate women as key participants will need to ensure they are focused on proactive prevention rather than just having a limited focus on post-disaster relief. This will enable the most sustainable outcomes. Disaster management is most successful when risks are foreseen and used to optimise resources (Isik et al., 2015).

### **Current initiatives**

How can we ensure that women are given equal opportunities to have decision-making roles in disaster management, in particular, in Indonesia? Existing structures in place can be utilised for this purpose:

1. *Community Based Disaster Risk Management*

Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) schemes have been found to be an effective means of integrating local knowledge into disaster management within Indonesia (Hiwasaki et al., 2016). These groups, formed by local citizens, are made with the intention of mitigating the consequences of future hazards and thus adopt a more proactive policy stance (ICCO and Kerk in Actie, 2012). They are present in areas that experience constant disasters, and have to rely on their own resources rather than external support (ICCO, 2012). It is through CBDRM that disaster-risk-reduction programmes are often brought to communities for the first time. In West Aceh, in areas affected by the 2004 tsunami, a CBDRM programme was implemented in the villages (Heijmans & Sagala, 2013). These programmes, through the support of NGOs, lead to the formation of disaster preparedness teams, which led simulations for the local community. The community appreciated the



preparation teams and the simulations as it meant that they knew what to do should disasters occur in their villages in the future (Heijmans & Sagala, 2013).

In East Java, a CBDRM group was formed after the 2007 volcano eruption. This led to the formation of disaster preparation teams as well as a group called Jangkar Kelud, which was an independent information organisation made up of locals. The purpose of this group was to train other villages in what they had learnt in CBDRM training about disaster preparation, thus building a greater knowledge base (Heijmans & Sagala, 2013). CBDRM allows for the community to take ownership of their development (Haynes et al., 2010). It also assists in building a community's preparation for any future disaster (Heijmans & Sagala, 2013). Furthermore, CBDRM groups have provided an appropriate forum for communities to mobilise actions to assist them in disaster planning and relief. For example, a group of villagers who were a part of a CBDRM programme initiated a media campaign to lobby the government to address the flooding problem in the area in a more structural manner (ICCO, 2012). Again, a CBDRM team in Desa Kautamban, an area affected by flooding, stabilised riverbanks and slopes by getting the community to assist with the construction of gabions (Heijmans & Sagala, 2013).

On a practical level, every CBDRM programme is different in its design, structure and execution (ICCO, 2012). However, it was the observation of Heijmans and Sagala (2013) that CBDRM teams were made up predominately of individuals from less vulnerable groups within society, such as teachers and village officials. However, housewives were also listed as being a part of these programmes. It is important from a consistency perspective that such programmes are inclusive of women from all walks of life.

## 2. *PNPM*

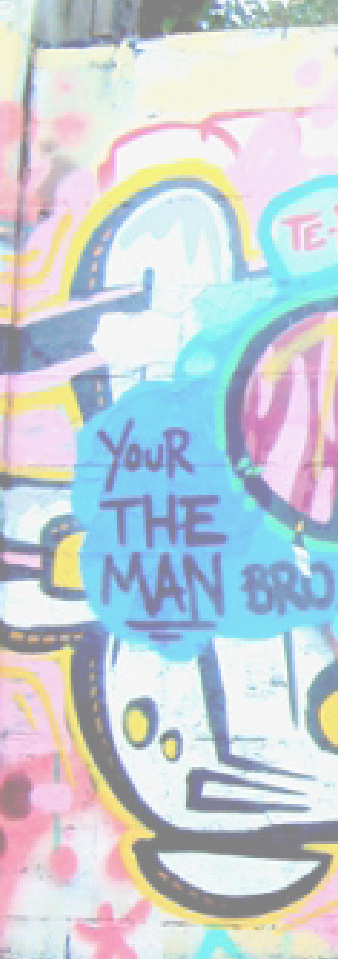
Social protection schemes have the potential to provide sufficient protection for communities and individuals to cope with natural disasters (Wu & Drolet, 2016). The Indonesian government has three clusters when it comes to social protection: family-based integrated social assistance programmes, community empowerment programmes and the development of micro-enterprises. The second cluster, the national programme for community empowerment (PNPM), is the focus of this discussion. It is a large programme that assists local communities to improve living conditions through the involvement of community resources and individuals (Sagala et al., 2016).

The findings of Sagala et al. (2016) in the districts of Indramayu and Sleman, where PNPM programmes were implemented by the Indonesian government, were that community resilience relies on the participation of community members in the design of any programmes. The Government of Indonesia used the PNPM to set up disaster-recovery-management support post the 2010 earthquake in the district of Sleman, located in the northern part of Yogyakarta Province (Sagala et al., 2016). It was through the PNPM schemes that cash-for-work programmes were implemented, which acted as strategic initiatives during the transition from the emergency to the recovery stage (Sagala et al., 2016). This assisted the most vulnerable at the time.

It is held that, though the PNPM funds are relatively small, PNPM programmes have the capacity to bring about collective action that assists a community with disaster management (Sagala et al., 2016). PNPM is particularly able to provide funds to communities to redevelop infrastructure that will be able to assist with a community's preparation for future disasters (Sagala et al., 2016). For example, PNPM has set up road infrastructures which have a number of positive relay affects, creating a way of commuting, engaging in economic activity, and providing an evacuation route in times of disaster (Sagala et al., 2016). In this way the social protection provided by PNPM programmes was able to provide short-, medium- and long-term assistance with recovery. With strategic gender integration of women within the programme, PNPMS can be appropriate structures for women to have key decision-making capacity in terms of policy.

## 3. *Village groups*

After the 2006 earthquake in Yogyakarta, known as the Bantul earthquake, it is the opinion of Yumarni & Amaratunga (2015) that the gender mainstreaming that took place in this recovery period was very effective. There was a large inclusion of women in the formation of disaster response. The input of women came from the village female groups, such as women's family welfare groups and women's credit associations. It was found that the



indigenous knowledge of women in the post-earthquake period was vital for the creation of sustainable recovery plans (Yumarni & Amartunga, 2015). These same organisations in the area have promoted the use of organic farming over modern farming practices, a reflection on knowledge and willingness to participate in decision-making processes (Yumarni & Amartunga, 2015). Throughout Indonesia there are women's organisations at the village level (Hiwasaki et al., 2014), for example, Empowerment Family Welfare (PKK) and Majelis Wirid Yasin. Hiwasaki et al. (2014) suggest that these forums can be utilised within the context of building disaster response and recovery (DRR) programmes.

### Future actions for Indonesia

1. *Increase women's role in community-based groups*

Despite the fact that children and women are largely the most affected by disasters, community-based groups in Indonesia are dominated by men (Haynes et al., 2010). Thus, the Indonesian government and local authorities need to understand the magnitude of positive flow-on effects of incorporating women into such groups, and to ensure that future policy in this area specifically incorporates female voices. In recognition of the call by the SDGs to increase female decision-making power, the Indonesian government should include the need for equal female representation in community disaster programmes within the next Indonesian National Disaster Management plan. The success of existing CBDRM and PNPM programmes can be enhanced by a requirement to have women present in numbers within the decision-making bodies. Furthermore, local village groups should be well resourced to ensure their existence and vital presence in times of emergency.

2. *Gain wider traction for gender equality*

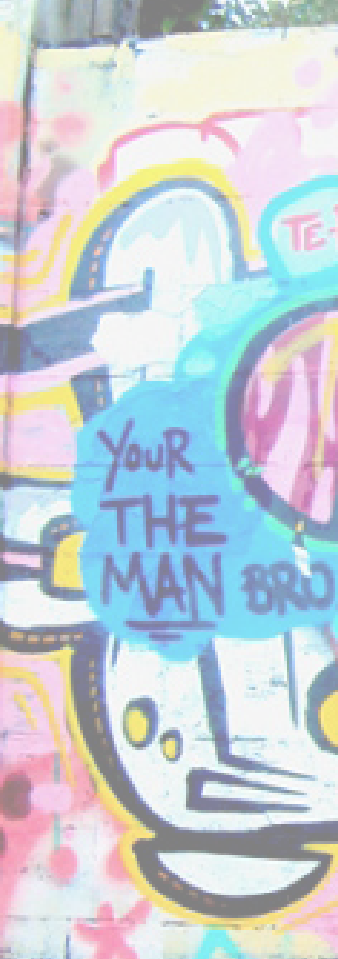
Due to the ingrained nature of gender inequality within Indonesian culture, a widespread campaign needs to be implemented to break down the stereotypes associated with men and women. Built-in mindsets must be altered in order for the best gender-oriented programmes to be created. Even if women are put in positions of decision-making through the support of policy, unless the men of the community, and women too, believe this to be of value, then attempts at gender inequality will go astray. To this end, a greater understanding of the relationship between the Islamic religion and gender also needs to be developed.

3. *Generate more data on this topic*

There is a great need for more data on gender to be gathered within Indonesia so that a better understanding of the disparities between men and women can assist with achieving the SDGs (Temin & Roca, 2016). There is international momentum for this cause, making it the opportune time for resources to be allocated to achieve a greater understanding of gender differences (Temin & Roca, 2016). The SDGs themselves place pressure on countries to update their gender data (Sustainable Development Goals, 2015).

### Policy design essentials

1. Women are given equal opportunity to participate in community-based disaster groups. Furthermore, women can't just be invited into these roles but must be actively encouraged in order for them to understand the importance of their role. Indonesia must learn from past experiences of using democratic processes to put women in power, but then not empowering these leaders to exercise authority in order to address women-friendly issues (Afrianty, 2015).
2. Within the construction of these community groups it is vital that transparency and accountability mechanisms are put in place in order to prevent corruption and misuse. This is particularly pertinent to Indonesia, which is notorious for its corrupt bureaucracy.
3. One of the strengths of the post-earthquake recovery in Bantul was the cooperation between the grassroots organisations and those providing resource support from NGOs (Yumarni & Amartunga, 2015). This can be drawn on for future policy construction – there must be good cooperation between the locals and other assisting bodies.



## Key stakeholders

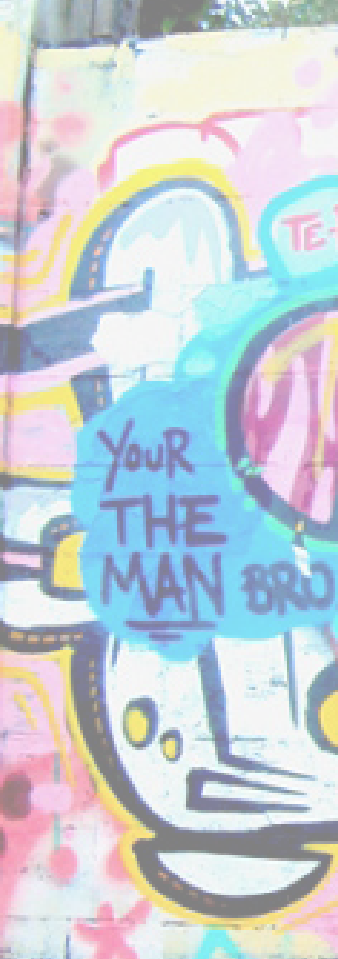
1. *Women*  
Obviously, a gender-focused disaster programme could not function without the co-operation and interest of the women of the community. It is often the women who have the indigenous skills and expertise that will build sound disaster strategies (Yumarni & Amaratunga, 2015).
2. *Government*  
Due to centralisation in developing countries, the local government is in the position to enact and implement gender-specific development policies (Yumarni & Amaratunga, 2015). However, overall backing and support from the national government is required for this to be effective.
3. *Community*  
The community members themselves must be approached and their specific desires and circumstances need to be taken into account.
4. *Men*  
It is essential to the success of gender-focused programmes that men are incorporated in planning and execution. Harden et al. (2013) conclude that the mobilisation of men and boys in gender relations is necessary. This is because the structural rigidities of society that underpin gender disparities are unable to be altered by one gender only, but rather require all of society to support such changes. Furthermore, men, the gender currently in power, are the ones who are best placed to call for changes to be made and ensure that they are in fact implemented. Study on the relations between the sexes in this field is severely lacking (Shreve, 2016). Hence, men and boys remain an untapped resource within the study and practice of gender equality (Hendra et al., 2013).

## Conclusion

Indonesia's proneness to experiencing natural disasters means that the construction of efficient policy in the area of disaster management is crucial for the wellbeing of those living in the community, as well as for the structural and natural environments themselves.

This paper calls for future policy in the area of disaster management to explicitly mandate the inclusion of women in positions of power. This will aid the pursuit of ecological sustainability whilst simultaneously providing one way to achieve gender equality. This paper has discussed how women continue to be affected disproportionately by disasters, which can be linked to their lack of voice in policy construction within this domain. Hence, there is a need for women to have an active role in the mitigating, planning, response and rehabilitation processes of disaster management. Decisions at all levels of the disaster-management process need to account for the productive and constructive role that women play at every stage. For Indonesia, this means equal participation in existing community groups and provision of support to local women's village groups that can be drawn upon in times of crisis.

Investment of resources into women's empowerment is not only beneficial for gender equality goals but has been shown to have a flow-on effect in reaching other development goals (Hendra et al., 2013). Thus, the allocation of resources towards gender equality is able to assist a great number of the Sustainable Development Goals. By empowering women, the ability of the community to respond to disasters is enhanced, making disaster management and gender equality inextricably linked (Austin & McKinney, 2016). In order to preserve human life, build sustainable communities, all at the same time as empowering women and redressing gender inequality, it is imperative that disaster development programmes mandate the inclusion of women as key active participants in the mitigation of disasters, thus, simultaneously achieving two key aims of the SDGs.



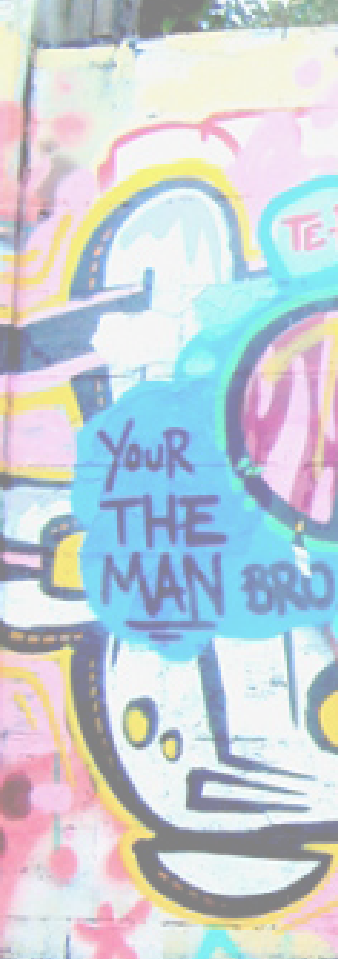
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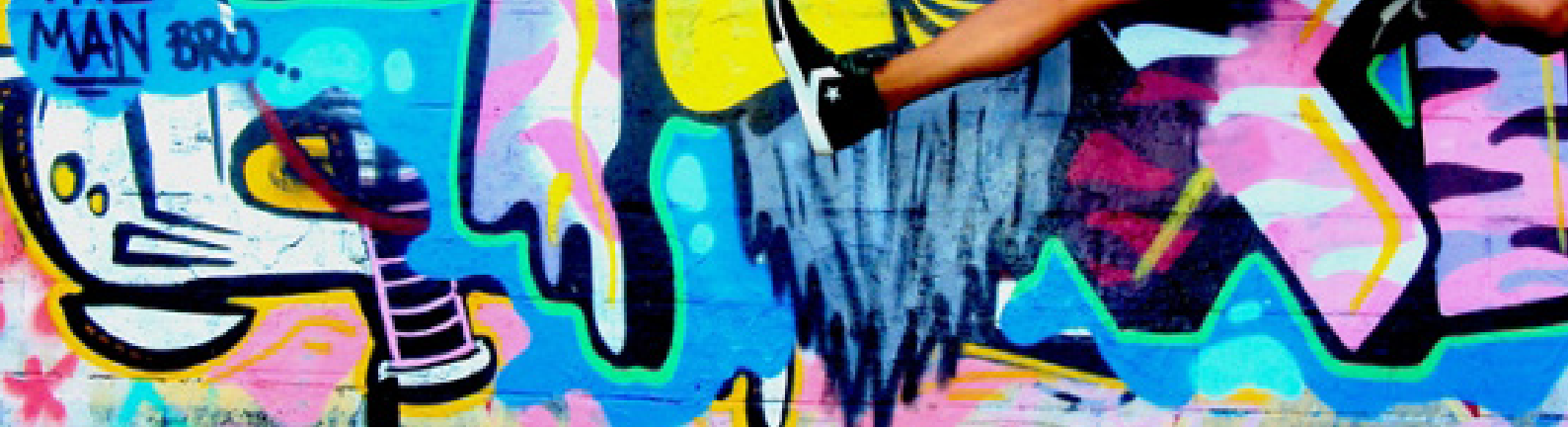
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# State Housing in Aotearoa New Zealand: What future after National?

by Alan Johnson

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# Article

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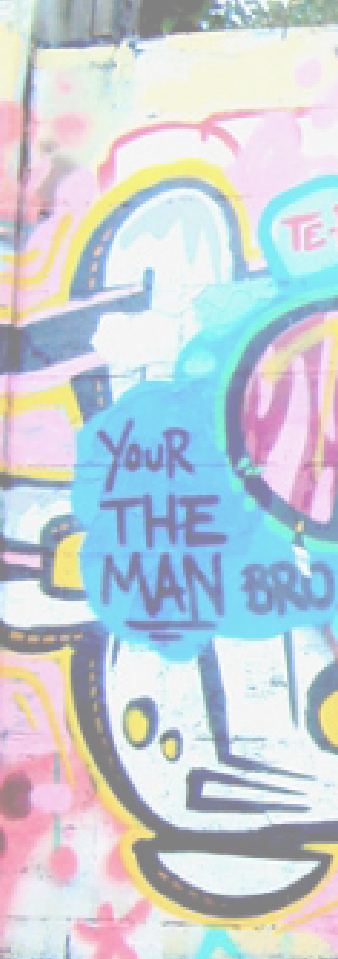
New Zealand's National-led government (2008 to 2017) made no secret of its plans to downsize the state's housing stock. This downsizing is being achieved through demolitions, transfers and sales. It all started quietly in 2011 when the number of state tenancies peaked at 69,700. By mid-2015 this number had diminished by almost 2,500 units and is set to fall even further with various transfers now underway.

The most notable of these transfers was on March 31st 2016 when 2800 state units in Auckland's inner eastern suburbs were given to the Tāmaki Redevelopment Company – a public-sector development agency jointly owned by the Government and Auckland Council. Further transfers of 1124 units in Tauranga and 348 units in Invercargill are underway at the time of writing, and it is expected that these will go to NGO- or iwi-based housing agencies backed by private capital interests. These private capital interests include John Laing Infrastructure Fund, Brookfields Global Integrated Solutions, Morrison & Co, and Trust House Ltd (New Zealand Treasury, 2016). Treasury suggests that by the end of 2017 the state will own just 60,000 rental units (New Zealand Treasury, 2015). This suggests that a further 3000 units are due to be transferred or otherwise disposed of over the next 18 months, and it appears most likely that these will be in Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch (New Zealand Treasury, 2015).

While the then government has presented its social housing reforms as providing “better services for tenants and fair and reasonable value for taxpayers” (p. 6), it is difficult to see these changes without imagining some level of privatisation. This subtle privatisation is occurring in at least two ways:

The redevelopment of Tāmaki is shrouded in commercial secrecy, so it is difficult to know what is actually going on. From the information available it appears that over the next 10 to 15 years around 2500 state rental units will be demolished and in their place 7500 new medium-density housing units will be constructed (Tāmaki Redevelopment Company, 2015). The promise here is that the number of social housing units will at least remain the same. In other words almost all the development potential lying in the relatively low-density state-owned properties in Tāmaki is likely to be developed by the private sector. There will no doubt be some profit to the state from this redevelopment process, and it is likely this profit will be used to build the replacement state units. But in a city where urban land for new housing is in short supply, no attempt is being made to increase the supply of social housing units through this redevelopment process. On any account these promises are vague, so the parameters for the redevelopment could change several times over the course of the project.

The second form of privatisation is in the use of private capital to bankroll so-called community housing initiatives. For example, one of the short-listed bidders for 1124 state houses in Tauranga is a consortium known as Hapori Connect Tauranga. Despite its local-sounding name, this consortium is made up of three international companies: a British investment fund, an Australian facilities-management company and a benignly-named organisation, Pinnacle Community Housing.



Pinnacle Community Housing is actually a British-owned firm, not a local community housing agency (Radio New Zealand, 2016).

But the writing was on the wall for the genuine community housing sector when in October 2015 the Social Housing Minister Paula Bennett told a national conference of community housing providers that they needed to build commercial models rather than expect capital grants from the state. Her offer to the sector was access to income-related rents and the use of private-sector credit to expand its housing stock (Bennett, 2016).

The economics of the former National Government's model simply don't add up, and the reason why is quite simple. The gross returns from market rents are mostly less than 4% and seldom over 5% unless the houses are in areas where people don't want to live (QV, 2017). By the time overhead costs are taken off these gross returns, the net returns are well below the financing costs which community-based housing providers would face if their additional housing stock was entirely debt-funded. The Social Housing Minister's comparison in her speech of a community housing provider with 'Mums and Dads' who pay off a mortgage and eventually own their home is somewhat fanciful, especially in housing markets where even those on average incomes are struggling to gain a foothold in the housing market.

To some extent the community housing sector brought this response onto itself both by being complicit with the Government's privatisation agenda and by failing to offer an alternative analysis which focuses on housing need. The sector's peak body, Community Housing Aotearoa, is essentially an agency of the state, as it receives the majority of its funding through government grants. Its most recently published accounts for 2013-14 report total revenue of \$291,000 of which 78%, or \$226,000, was from government grants (Community Housing Aotearoa, 2014a). As such it has tended to be narrowly focused on how it can persuade government to transfer public housing stock to its member organisations (Community Housing Aotearoa, 2014b) rather than on broader questions of housing policy and, in particular, housing supply and housing affordability.

Compare this performance against that of the Community Housing Federation of Australia, which took exception to the bias in Australia's federal tax laws, claiming that they exacerbate inequality and social exclusion (Australian Council of Social Services, 2015). This lack of independence of New Zealand's community housing sector, and its unwillingness to be an advocate for broader housing issues, tends to undermine its potential role in civil society as a legitimate and reliable alternative provider of social housing.

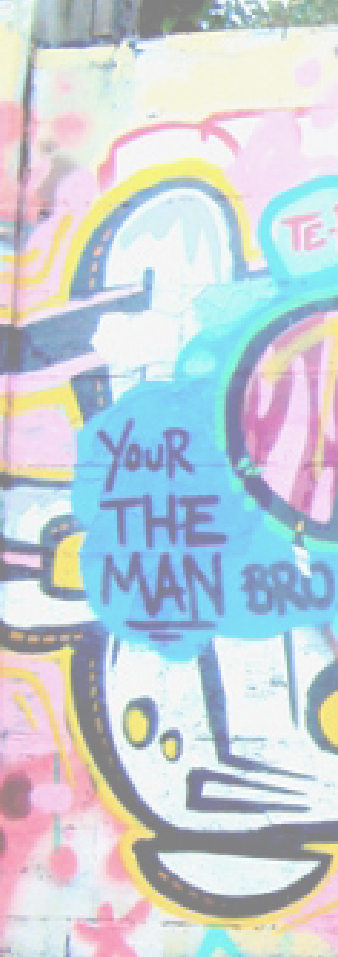
This initial discussion of the former Government's social housing reform agenda is relevant to any future direction for state housing for at least two reasons. Firstly, it is important to acknowledge that while this reform agenda is serving some definite ideological purpose, there was still a prior need for some reform. Secondly, these reforms, and in particular the admission of private sector interests into the ownership of social housing, potentially pose a number of legacy problems for any government keen to embark on a fundamentally different strategy.

State housing under the regime established and supported by the fifth Labour Government (1999–2008) was not as rosy and cosy as some on the left might have us believe. While the Labour Government did at least provide Housing New Zealand with some capital, and required few if any dividends, the organisation appeared to have a complicated mandate, was subject to political interference, and at times was poorly led. Over the six years between 2003-4 and 2008-9, Labour-led governments contributed \$716 million in new capital to Housing New Zealand and took \$219 million in dividends. Over the following six years (2009-10 to 2014-15) National-led governments contributed \$136 million in new capital and took out \$546 million in dividends (Housing New Zealand, 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013).

One result of this complexity was a stock of state houses which was not adequately maintained, poorly configured and not well located for the housing demand it should have catered for – emphasis was placed on building new stock instead of better maintaining and reconfiguring the existing stock (Johnson, 2014). As well, there was a political unwillingness to sell stock in regions of low demand and to use the funds provided to build additional housing in areas of high demand – such as Auckland.

Housing New Zealand was hopelessly compromised in its various roles as a social-development agency, a property manager and developer, a provider of policy advice and the administrator of funding to the community-housing sector. The community-housing sector is in many respects a competitor of a state housing provider. This tension was one of the reasons why the community-housing sector made slow progress between 2000 and 2009 under the weight of risk-adverse, burdensome policies which changed frequently and which were conceived of and administered by Housing New Zealand.

While the Labour-led Governments of this period showed some commitment to state



housing and Housing New Zealand, aside from the reintroduction of income-related rents in 2000, there was little other major increase in spending on housing. In comparison, spending on primary healthcare, early childhood education, subsidies for contributory superannuation (KiwiSaver) and family income support (Working for Families) increased significantly over this period. Many of these later programmes tended to benefit the middle class even at the expense of the poorest quartile of households, as in the case of the In-work Tax Credit component of the Working for Families (Child Poverty Action Group, 2017).

One reason state housing fared only averagely under these Labour-led Governments is because it is unimportant politically. State tenants and those who might need the assistance of the state to gain housing are not numerous enough to count as an electoral bloc, and on any account they either don't tend to vote or necessarily vote Labour, as witnessed by voting patterns in state-house suburbs. For the rest of New Zealand, and especially middle-class, middle-aged New Zealand who generally has comfortable housing, the politics of state or social housing are unimportant and not really considered relevant. As such, they are not really relevant to any political party which requires the support of middle New Zealand. This is the case for both the National and Labour Parties.

This unimportance is playing out today in the way in which the Labour Party was attempting to frame its opposition agenda. For example, in his pre-Budget speech in May 2016, the then Labour leader Andrew Little made frequent references to a housing crisis and children living in cars, but then went on repeatedly to offer expanded home-ownership opportunities as the answer, saying "We can restore the dream of home ownership" (Little, 2016).

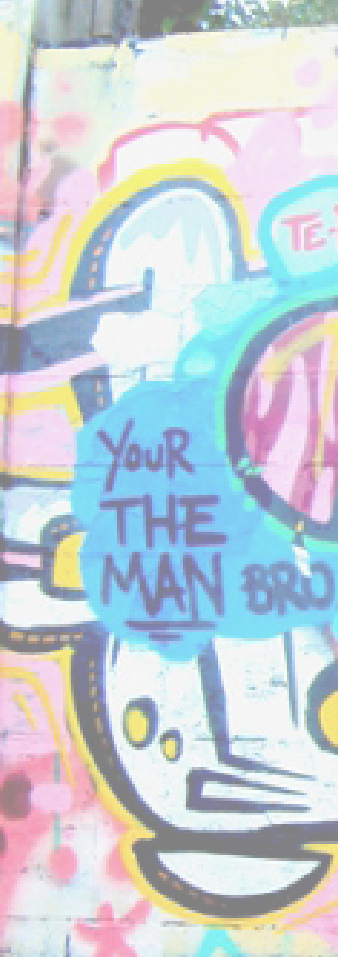
But the indifference and antipathy which most voters feel toward state housing is not just because of their preference for more aspirational rhetoric around home ownership and the Kiwi Dream, but because of the way in which state housing and state tenants are framed pathologically. This is in part because state housing has become welfare housing. It has become welfare housing because the criteria to gain entry into state housing is so stringent that households earning more than a basic benefit income are unlikely to become state tenants. In addition, the present government's policy of reviewable tenancies will flush out those state tenants who have done OK as state tenants and been able to build solid stable lives in employment. These are often the families who provide stability and leadership in state house neighbourhoods, and they are being displaced by families who are often in crisis and unable to contribute much to their wider community. Indeed, it is important that those families and households who are vulnerable and in crisis should gain priority access to state housing, but the reason that modest-income, working state tenants are being displaced is not because of their comfortable lifestyle or material success, but because the number of state and other social houses has not grown to meet demand.

The state-housing-equals-welfare-housing scenario wasn't always the case, however. When Michael Joseph Savage symbolically carried furniture into the first state house in Fife Avenue, Miramar, in 1938, this state house and the thousands being built at the time were for what might be called 'decent' working families. The indigent poor and unemployed were not housed in state housing and don't appear to have featured much in the housing plans of the First Labour Government (Schrader, 2006).

The role of the state as landlord changed radically following the election in 1949 of the First National Government led by Sidney Holland. In part, the 1949 General Election was fought on housing policy. Specifically, it was contested on the competing dreams of a social-democratic society, in which the state played a central role in providing decent housing to working class households, on one hand, and of a property-owning democracy on the other. Despite its merits, even given the privations of the Great Depression and Second World War, the rising prosperity of the times saw the social-democratic dream dead in the water (Trotter, 2007).

Things got worse for the image of state housing from then on. A moral panic around alleged teenage delinquency grew in Lower Hutt in the mid 1950s and led, in 1956, to the publication of the Mazengarb Report (Schrader, 2006). This report blamed such alleged delinquency in part on the physical and social environments created in state-housing neighbourhoods. The 1971 Commission of Inquiry into Housing brought sharp criticism of some aspects of state housing from such bodies as Plunket, the Public Service Association and the New Zealand Association of Social Workers (Schrader, 2006).

Beyond these accusations, state housing descended into a downward spiral where it increasingly became the housing option for people without choice, where the apparent behaviours of these people failed to match up the norms expected from middle-class New Zealand, where political support for spending on state-housing programmes diminished, and with this diminution the quality of the housing offered began to decline – all these factors entrenching the cycle further.



This decline was capped off when in 2007 the soon-to-be-elected Prime Minister John Key labelled McGehan Close, a state-housing neighbourhood in Auckland's Owairaka, "the street of shame" (Key, 2007). In a similar vein, while Social Housing Minister Paula Bennett was unable to report on how many homeless families are being housed, she was able and keen to tell the public how many state houses have been contaminated by methamphetamine manufacture and use (NZ Herald, 2016). The framing here is obvious, but the value of such information to a debate around social housing is more difficult to grasp.

This history of a deeply derogatory narrative perhaps points to the biggest challenge faced by those who still believe in state housing as an idea.

To achieve any worthwhile change for state housing we need large, sustained budgets – billions of dollars over ten years or more. To assemble such budgets you need political support. To gain such support you need to convince the voting public that state housing is not only worth doing, but that it can be done well. To do all of this we need to not only challenge this dominant and mainly dismissive and denigrating narrative but replace it with one which inspires and offers hope.

These aims require us to think beyond just reintroducing the old model of state housing. Instead we need to start by reimagining what state housing could be, and then based on this reimagining we need to reframe the narrative around state housing, as well as reposition state housing and the broader proposition of social housing in the political sphere.

## REIMAGINING

The problem for state housing has been it has been viewed since the late 1980s through the lenses of neoliberal thinking. Its tenets, that small government is best, individualism is morally superior and that markets and materialism define progress, are pervasive in political and public discourse. Those who reject such ideas struggle to find the means to build an alternative analysis that is coherent and compelling.

Perhaps this failure is at the level of essential ideas – that we lack the imagination collectively and individually to contemplate a different order of things. Consequently, we use neoliberal tools and tactics to argue for alternatives. Any alternatives thus offered are limited and fragile, in part because they have been signed off merely as concessions to the prevailing order of things. This was the case with state housing under the last Labour-led administration – these governments were essentially neoliberal, as was every other since 1984.

Any reimagination within the realm of social housing needs to begin with a re-examination of the respective roles of the state and civil society. Within such a re-examination come the complex questions of the nature of citizenship and the moral limits to the market. Such questions have been considered before, and they can be again.

For example, in the 1938 Budget speech in the lead-up to the passing of the Social Security Act on September 13th 1938, Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage asked:

I want to know why people should not have decent wages, why they should not have decent pensions in the evening of their years, or when they are invalided. What is there more valuable in Christianity than to be our brother's keepers in reality?

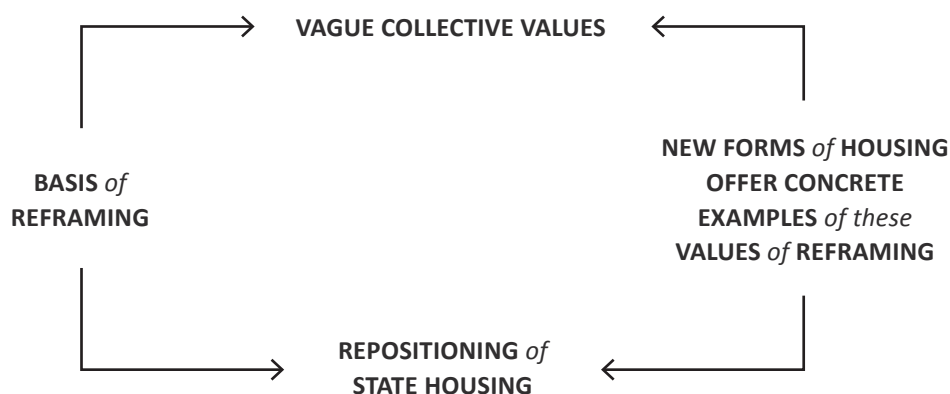
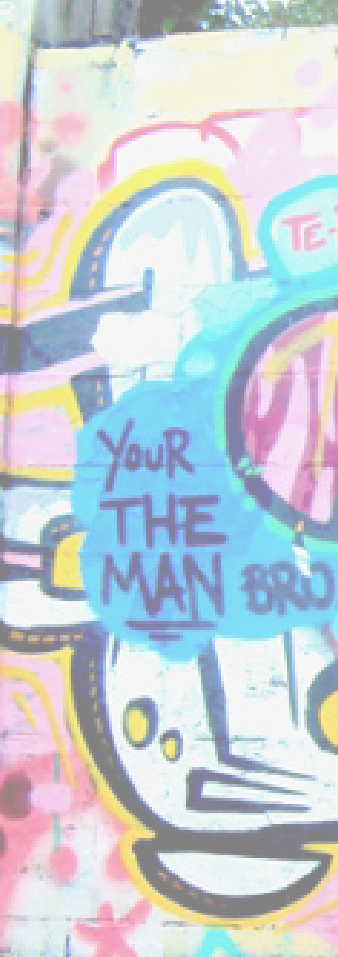
He then went on to say:

I want to see humanity secure against poverty, secure in illness or old age (Gustafson, 1986, p. 223-4).

Here Savage makes it clear that he sees it as the role of the state to secure people against poverty, and that we should as citizens see ourselves as our brother's keeper, to coin an old Christian metaphor from the Cain and Abel story.

Given the secular character of the New Zealand state, and our increasing lack of interest as a national community in organised religion and perhaps in any religious faith, it seems unlikely that an appeal to Christian moral positions will be very compelling as the basis for a reimagined state housing system. We still nevertheless need to find some moral cornerstone on which to base such a reimagination.

Such a moral cornerstone could be found in broad ideas of nationhood and 'Kiwi-ness' – an



appeal to some broadly shared but perhaps loosely conceived set of values. Such a set could be built on some essential ideas such as inclusion, togetherness, hopefulness and care. In a less racist New Zealand society, such essential ideas could even be expressed as Māori concepts like *maanakitanga*, *kotahitanga* and *whakawhanaungatanga*.

There is of course a potential dynamic being offered here. This dynamic might work in at least two ways, as illustrated in the above diagram. Firstly, a loosely-conceived set of values finds some concreteness or expression in a lived example – in the way in which part of our national identity finds expression in the All Blacks. For example, what we as a nation mean with such ideas as togetherness, hopefulness and care is expressed in the way we house our most vulnerable citizens. To some extent there is a reverse expression of these ideas in the way we as a society are allowing homelessness and inadequate housing to grow as problems. The second way in which this dynamic works is through the way policies are reframed, and programmes and projects are repositioned. These potentials are discussed later.

But simply introducing vague but appealing concepts as the basis for a new political narrative is at best naïve and at worst cynical. This has been well illustrated by Barack Obama and his ‘audacity of hope’ rhetoric (Obama, 2006), despite going on to bail out Wall Street (Roubini, 2010) and the continuation of extra-judicial killings of terrorist leaders in other countries in the so-called war on terror (eg. Osama bin Laden’s killing on May 2nd 2011).

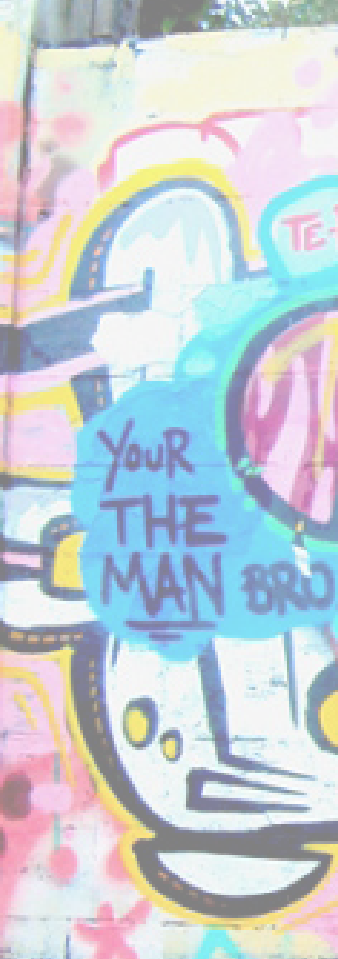
The challenge in this reimagining process is to reimagine some commonplace understandings of how the world is. These commonplace understandings include those around the role of the market, the nature of citizenship, and the relationship between civil society and the state.

The understandings, or at least the presumptions, the recent National-led Government would have had us believe is that markets can do almost anything, from owning social housing, to running prisons, to protecting abused and neglected children. The idea that the state, on behalf of citizens, fundamentally has such responsibilities is being lost, and part of any reimagining process is to find this understanding again.

In New Zealand, civil society has sat uneasily alongside the state in the provision of social services and welfare programmes. This is especially so in the area of social housing, and my ideas on this particular relationship are incomplete to say the least. There are a number of competing ideas on the subject in circulation, some of which have deep ideological underpinnings, and some of which are little more than misty-eyed liberal sentiment. I tend to occupy the liberal end of this spectrum myself.

Many housing activists resent the use of the term social housing and insist instead that we should stay with the idea of state housing. Some of these people might claim that the idea of social housing is a neoliberal fraud, and to some extent this is being proven by the sell-off of state housing as part of what the Government was calling its ‘social housing reform programme’.

Civil society, of course, includes both private-sector businesses and voluntary, mutual and charitable organisations. It is difficult in practice to distinguish precisely where some boundary is crossed between, say, a corporate charity, as many NGO housing providers are, and a charitable corporate, as some emerging providers claim to be. There is always the question of how any surplus is distributed, but even this is not as simple as it seems. Surpluses will be paid to the owners in most private for-profit businesses, but in not-for-profits they can as easily be captured by staff in the form of higher wages and better conditions, or by members or users in the form of lower prices for services such as rents.



I don't have the answers to these complex questions, but I suggest that in any reimagining of state/social housing we need to identify the shortcomings in any ideological position being offered so that we can avoid arguing for the inarguable. The state is not always the best deliverer of services such as housing. The private sector, left to its own devices with unfettered subsidies, such as Work and Income New Zealand's Accommodation Supplement, has been unable to deliver affordable, decent-quality housing. The community/NGO housing sector is not necessarily accountable either to the public or the people it claims it serves. On any account this sector in New Zealand has, to date, tended to work with those who might be called the 'deserving poor', and especially people with disabilities or older people, rather than with struggling families with children. I think there is, however, a legitimate and valuable role for the community/NGO sector in providing social housing, and that this activity should be seen as competing with both public- and private-sector housing providers.

Perhaps one of the biggest weaknesses in a state-provider model is that it tends to be bureaucratic and disconnected from the public who effectively own it, and who are meant to be served by it in some way or another. This means, of course, that the public have no sense of ownership, and that communities are not attached to state or other social housing in their area as they are to facilities such as hospitals and schools. One part of reimagining state housing is to address this deficit – perhaps through the idea of active citizenship.

Mother Teresa once said that "we think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty." In other words, the source of most poverty is a poverty of love. As a way of thinking about poverty this is quite a powerful idea – that poverty arises and persists because we don't care about the poor. In other words, if we did care about them we wouldn't let them live in poverty.

Perhaps the challenge for us in reimagining state housing is to have regard for the poor and vulnerable, and by doing so collectively find the purpose and resources to respond.

## REFRAMING

The idea of framing and reframing has been popularised by the American cognitive linguist and political philosopher George Lakoff. In his book *Don't Think of an Elephant*, Lakoff explains the success of the neoliberal agenda through the way in which it has framed political discourse. He claims that "[F]raming is about getting language that fits your world view. It is not just language. Ideas are primary – and the language carries these ideas, evokes these ideas" (Lakoff, 2004, p. 4).

Central to the idea of framing are metaphors. In an earlier book Lakoff and his colleague Mark Johnson argue "that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003, p. 8).

If the ideas of framing and the use of metaphor are relevant to the way we construct a persuasive political discourse, we should surely be able to identify it in the present government's discourse around state housing. I believe that it is possible to do so. Here are three examples:

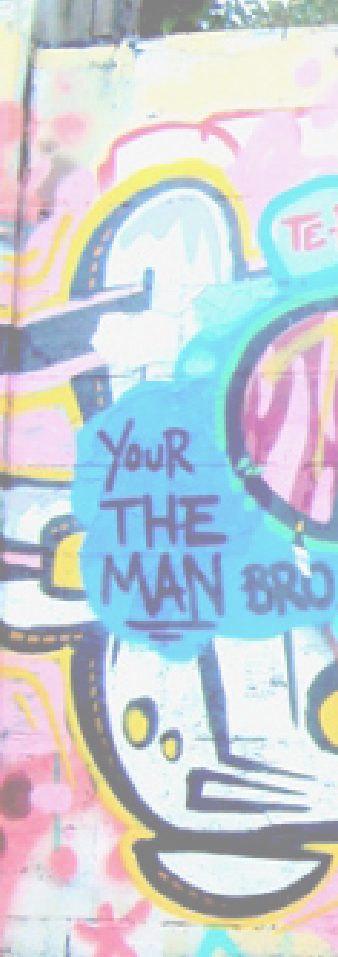
The Prime Minister, John Key's march down McGehan Close, a state-house street in Auckland, in 2008 led to it being labelled "the street of shame" (Key, 2007). This can be interpreted in several ways – that it was shameful how public policy had resulted in such poor social conditions, that it was shameful that people lived in such conditions, or more simply that the residents of McGehan Close were shameful. Whatever the interpretation, state housing was equated with shame, and the framing was neat and complete.

In a similar vein, when the then Social Housing Minister was quickly able to report how many state houses were contaminated with methamphetamine and how much it would cost taxpayers to repair this contamination, and she was unwilling or unable to tell us how many homeless people were being housed in state houses or what the cost of deferred maintenance on the state house stock was, her implication was clear – state house tenants are busy using and manufacturing drugs.

A third example is the way the recent National Government's social-housing reform agenda was framed. For instance, Housing New Zealand's most recent mission statement, as stated on its website is that:

We provide high quality, subsidised rental homes to people in the greatest need for the duration of their need. (Housing New Zealand, 2017)





While this mission statement is fairly un-compelling, the afterthought attached to it, “for the duration of their need” is a little too detailed for something like a mission statement, but is at least consistent with the previous Government’s social-housing reform agenda. This agenda has introduced reviewable tenancies for state tenants, because apparently they had formed the expectation that a state house was a “house for life” (New Zealand Treasury, 2015).

In its 2014 advice to Cabinet, Treasury suggested that it would be too costly to comb through tenancy lists every three years in order to identify the people who could be evicted from a state house because they no longer needed it. Instead it suggested that the Ministry of Social Development undertake a targeted campaign of 800 tenure reviews during 2014/15 (Ministry of Social Development, 2014). In its 2014/15 annual report, Housing New Zealand reported that MSD had during that year undertaken just 186 reviews and that 150 tenants had been moved on (Housing New Zealand, 2015). Furthermore, in this annual report Housing New Zealand reported that 95% of the 67,000 tenancies they were running were receiving an income-related rent subsidy. In other words only 5% of state tenants (around 3400) may be liable to be shifted out because they no longer qualify for assistance.

While it can seem perfectly reasonable to evict people from state houses once their circumstances improve enough that they can afford housing in the market, the political importance placed on such a policy given its actual scale and impact appears odd. There is of course an impression created by this political focus on reviewable tenancies with such rhetoric as “duration of their need”; and a “house for life”. This impression is that state tenants typically have only a temporary need for housing assistance, but that they have an expectation that the State will care for them for the remainder of their lives.

In order to gain public support for state and other forms of social housing, considerable effort needs to be given to reframing the idea of such housing. As Lakeoff says “Reframing is changing the way the public sees the world. It is changing what counts for common sense. Because language activates frames, new language is required for new frames. Thinking differently requires speaking differently” (2004, p. xv).

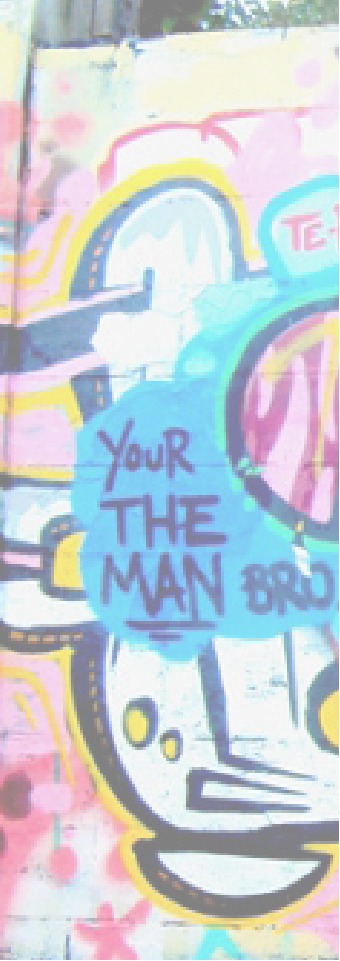
Some thought needs to be given to how such reframing is done, but it is important to directly challenge the framing of neoliberals without actually using their language. So, for example, the framing around dependency might be challenged by an alternative framing around vulnerability – that many people have had unfortunate lives and they will need the support of the public with their housing so that they can live with dignity.

In challenging the shame framing state and other social housing, this could be projected as offering opportunity – especially for children – to both secure people’s material wellbeing and to help them reach their potential. Such an idea could be illustrated with success stories of state tenants and former state tenants. (There is some evidence of this in a publication of good-news stories known as *Rise* which is published internally on a quarterly basis by the Ministry of Social Development.) Such a framing would also project a sense of hope to a wider community which most likely has little or no understanding of the lives of state tenants.

Beyond framing around such ideas as vulnerability, potential and hope, there remains an essential challenge of shifting the public’s sense of who state housing is for. The previous government’s Social Housing Minister’s keenness to cite problems with methamphetamine contamination of state houses effectively positions state house tenants as being on the margins of society. While this positioning does not claim that all state tenants are drug dealers or drug users it associates the two groups of people and allows us to see state tenants as being outsiders or ‘the other’. This means that state housing can be framed as being ‘housing for the other’. Any reframing needs to try to present state housing as being ‘ours’ in the ‘public ownership’ or ‘expression of who we are as a community’ sense. Such a reframing will be difficult but can be achieved through the use of appropriate language and by focusing more on some issues than on others. Certainly, the antisocial behaviour of some state tenants corrodes public support for state and social housing, and such behaviour needs to be addressed effectively and explicitly as part of repositioning exercise.

## REPOSITIONING

Lofty ideas of reimagining and the worthy rhetoric of reframing will only carry you so far without practical application. And any practical application has to be illustrative and legitimate. It needs to offer a clear example of the reimagined ideas in action and of the feasibility of the framing. It cannot be a tag-on example which could equally be applied to other philosophies or reinterpreted to suit other arguments.



For practical purposes this repositioning could serve at least two important philosophical functions: Firstly, it might be used to illustrate how philosophical questions raised in the reimagination phase might be resolved in practice. The role of the state and of civil society in the provision of social housing offers a good example for this. The example of civil society and active citizenship providing social housing for vulnerable people is a tangible and hopeful example of what can be achieved in practical terms. The previous government's social housing reform agenda could have achieved such outcomes if its stated intent of getting the not-for-profit housing sector more active in providing social houses was more than just a guise. As we have seen, this reform agenda is little more than extracting some financial value from Housing New Zealand's balance sheet and shifting risk to other parties. This is an example of the same policy idea being tagged onto competing ideologies.

Secondly, the value of any alternative philosophy or framing is best illustrated by its usefulness in responding to crises or entrenched problems. Crises offer us a good opportunity to effect change and the current status of unmet housing needs and homelessness offers considerable potential in this regard.

In my opinion, the burgeoning housing crisis has at least three components:

- A shortage of affordable housing (< \$400K) in high-growth areas such as Auckland and Queenstown, and perhaps increasingly so in Western Bay of Plenty and Northern Waikato.
- A shortage of social housing of the right size, similarly in these high-growth areas.
- Growing demand for housing assistance from retiring baby boomers who were not able to achieve debt-free home ownership before they retired (Johnson, 2015).

The expansion of state housing and other social housing is an obvious but perhaps not an automatic response to these growing problems. This discrepancy is on account of a possible preference by the new Labour-led Government for home ownership programmes ahead of state-house building and other social housing programmes. This preference and the electoral expectations which are set up by it are likely to be some of the major blocks to achieving a new and worthwhile future both for state housing and for other forms of social housing (New Zealand Labour Party, 2017).

## THE FIRST STEPS

There is a real danger that, with the change in government – a Labour-led coalition recently deposing National in the September elections – the Government will face a housing crisis or at least a big list of entrenched housing problems. The danger here is in knee-jerk responses, perhaps, as a reaction to the crisis narrative being run, or as a result of wishing to appear effective and empathetic, or simply as being subject to the bidding of policy bureaucrats who fear losing the policy agenda.

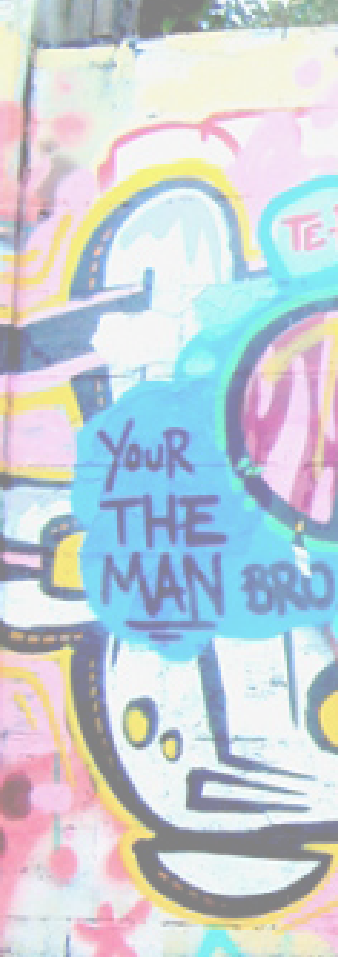
One way of avoiding knee-jerk responses is to spend time talking. This has been a common ploy of new governments especially in big gab-fests which can appear very inclusive and diplomatic but which are fundamentally dishonest (Watkins, 2009). They are dishonest in that they raise false expectations and waste the time of people and groups who will soon be excluded and ignored. In the past those being excluded and ignored have been from the community sector and those serving the marginalised.

Another version of the gab-fest tactic is to suggest a strategy. The previous Labour Government was great at this, and it wasted years of its term on such endeavours as the New Zealand Housing Strategy and the Māori Housing Strategy. This of course distracted their critics and was much cheaper than actually building homes. Furthermore, it neatly fitted the skill sets of the bureaucrats who advised them, and it helped them avoid taking risks.

It seems unlikely that any radical change in the way social and state housing is delivered will be achieved without the cooperation and buy-in of those who have to date been marginalised politically and economically. To work with any other groups seriously risks the recreation of the status quo, albeit in reformist language and dress.

While the post-election landscape for any new government is unclear, a number of circumstances seem likely. These circumstances will fashion the short-term responses of the new government, and they may even cast the die for longer-term responses. These circumstances will include:

- Prior commitments, perhaps to private-sector developers and investors that will be expensive to renege on and time-wasting to unravel.



- A budget round which will postpone any big spending decisions by at least six months.
- Organisational rigidity and resistance, perhaps masquerading as briefing papers to the incoming government – these will attempt to set the agenda in a very public way.
- A lack of capacity to effect change immediately – this paucity is in both budgets and institutions.
- Unrealistic expectations from the constituency which supported the new government.

The challenge of institutional capacity cannot be understated if it is the intention of any future government to play a more hands-on role in the development and financing of housing – be this for social renting or modest-income home ownership. The land development and house construction required to execute a programme on the scale the Labour Party's KiwiBuild programme is beyond anything attempted by the state for more than a generation. Such a programme, at such a scale, requires a broad base of empowering legislation. It also requires institutions with a variety of technical skills in design, development, construction and project management as well as a financial capacity for the allocation and administration of funding. It would be foolish to simply believe that it is possible to recreate a bureaucratic behemoth like Housing New Zealand into such an institution – its organisational culture, unhelpful and often punitive attitude of staff, and its dismal reputation suggest otherwise.

These constraints or circumstances suggest at least three tactical responses by an incoming government. These are as follows:

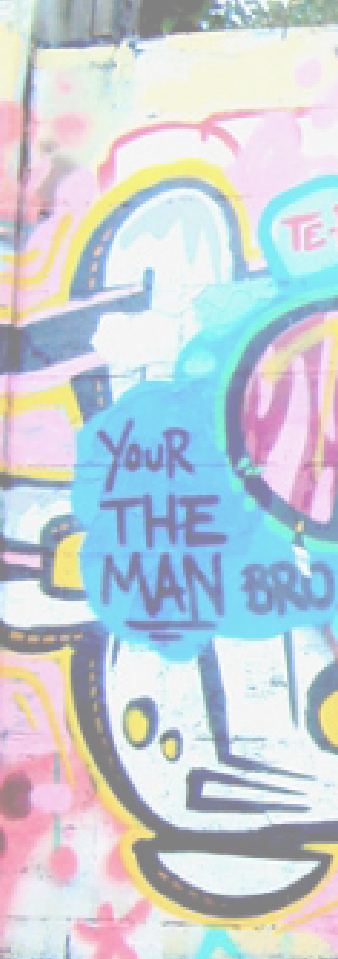
1. Choose your friends according to their commitment to providing more and better social housing.
2. Set expectations honestly and clearly and set them at a level where they have a good chance of success before subsequent elections.
3. Start building capacity immediately, based on what budgets might be gained and on the potential within existing partner organisations.

## CONCLUSIONS

The idea of state housing was 80 years old at the time of the recent election (September 23rd 2017). It seems clear that what state housing has become is a long way from the original vision. In particular, the 1930s recipients of state housing – 'decent working families' – have been replaced in the twenty-first century with a supposedly reckless-feckless welfare class. State housing, even under a centre-left government, will only have a future if we can change the dominant narrative around the poor and poverty in New Zealand. The Labour Party's current narrative around housing and 'the Kiwi dream' suggests that it is not giving adequate priority to state and other social housing – at the time of the election promising to build an additional 1000 state rental units each year. Without a greater priority it seems unlikely that any future government will have sufficient interest or energy to begin to reimagine what state housing is and could be – not only for the poorest New Zealanders, but for our sense of nationhood.

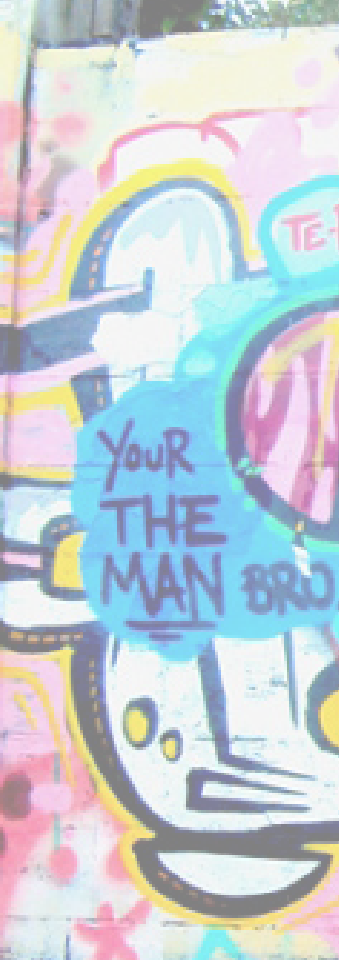
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**Alan Johnson** currently works as a social policy analyst for The Salvation Army's Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit in Auckland. He is the author of *Off The Track*, *The Salvation Army's 2017 State of the Nation Report*, and *Taking Stock: The demand for social housing in New Zealand (2017)*. Alan also wrote *Child Poverty Action Group's recent report Priorities for Family Housing (2017)*. He has an academic background in town planning and economics, and has been involved in Auckland local government for over 20 years both as a politician and bureaucrat. In his spare time he is a community activist in South Auckland, where he is active in local sports clubs and as a school trustee. He is currently a trustee of the Auckland Community Housing Trust and is chairman of the Wiri Licensing Trust. Alan has been recently appointed one of a panel of three by the Housing and Urban Development Minister to provide an independent review of the housing crisis by Christmas 2017.

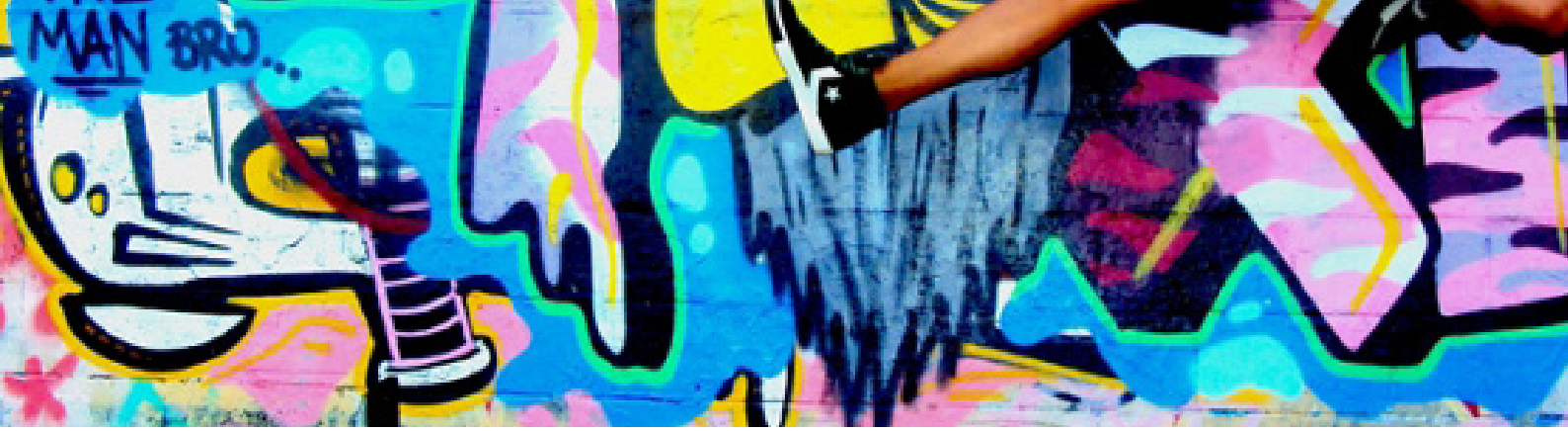


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# Community Development in Local Food Solutions

by John M. Stansfield and Amber Frankland-Hutchinson

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# Article

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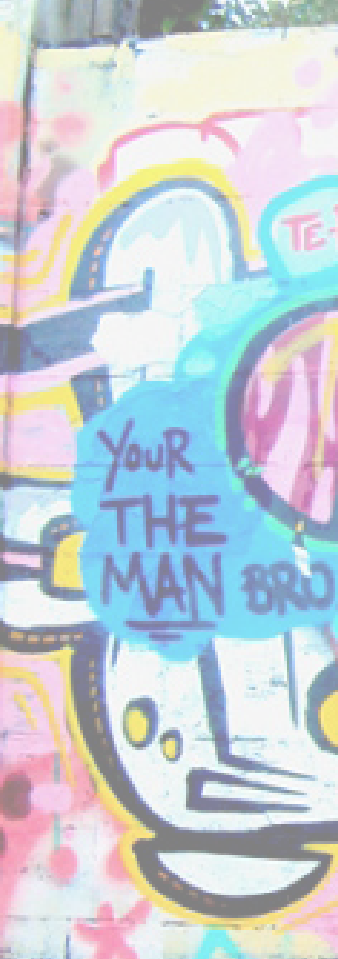
*A report commissioned by the Waiheke Resources Trust under the ITP Metro research voucher scheme*

### INTRODUCTION

Food security and food provenance are becoming topical issues in a globalised food market and a climate-insecure world. New forms of accessing food are emerging and forgotten forms being rediscovered, disrupting increasingly monopolistic commercial markets. Within this, 'local food' solutions have gained currency as consumers seek a range of satisfactions beyond price and nutrition. Little has been written on these solutions in the New Zealand context and this paper draws extensively on international literature. Here we examine several models of local food solutions and their relationship to community development. We follow the fortunes of roadside fruit tree planting on Waiheke Island, the varied levels of support or hindrance from local government and its impact on community practice. We report briefly on the results of our questioning and reflect on the expressive nature of community planting, its place in community building and impact on relationships with local government.

### BACKGROUND

Building on the response to a pesticide-poisoned food chain heralded in Rachel Carson's seminal environmental science work *Silent Spring* (1962) we have seen a growing distrust of the global food system and a growing interest in food provenance (Morgan & Marsden, 2006). The 1972-75 food crisis saw the prices of grain skyrocket as crop failure fuelled scarcity. The uncontrolled market took a huge human toll as famine ravaged the developing world, particularly in North Africa (Jachertz, 2015). This shattered a complacency that the modern industrialised world, with its open markets, could reliably feed everybody. The disquiet generated – as the world came to understand that the famine was being visited most harshly on food producers in poor nations who were exporting their crops, and driven by the trade policies in the developing world – a continuing interest in the social and political economy of food (Friedman, 1993). At the same time, a second early-1970s crisis, the oil crisis, sponsored a radical rethink of global economics. This is perhaps most famously expressed in E. F. Schumacher's profoundly influential critique *Small is Beautiful* (1972). This text introduced the notion of fossil fuels as a finite resource and not properly accounted for in the changing methods of food production and distribution. This theme was later developed with the lens of climate change, and small-scale farming and agroecology, and identified as "not merely less harmful than large-scale industrial food production", but able to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions (Lin & Chapple, 2012).



## THE REBIRTH OF LOCAL FOOD SOLUTIONS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The responses to this questioning were both structural and personal, with some concerned and informed consumers connecting social, economic and environmental issues, and supporting new food systems such as 'local food solutions'. So, despite the growth of corporate agriculture and the mega-farms, small farming has enjoyed a renaissance. At a global level, we have seen the emergence of the peasant and farmer alliance, La Via Campesina (Rosset, 2008). Locally, we see collections of citizens and consumers in grassroots social movements responding to climate change, such as the transition, or transition towns movement (Sage, 2014), community gardens, local food exchanges, and an emerging range of new forms addressing the personal concerns of consumers. And in many parts of this picture we can see the influence of community development, as

citizens come together questioning in whose interests the modern industrial food system works, and seeking solutions in which they are active participants. Community development's history of solutions-focused collective action for the common good has much to offer. Community development is seen as a key factor in successful US community gardens (Milburn, & Vail, 2011). A community development influence is, however, less visible in externally driven technocratic approaches such as the 'Sustainable Livelihoods Approach' (Brocklesby & Fisher, 2003).

Within the broad agenda of 'local food solutions' a variety of new social and economic relationships seek to disrupt and shorten the chain between producer and consumer (Starr, 2010). At a collective level, these range between the community food garden and community-supported agriculture, and address issues well beyond economics and nutrition (Turner et al., 2011).

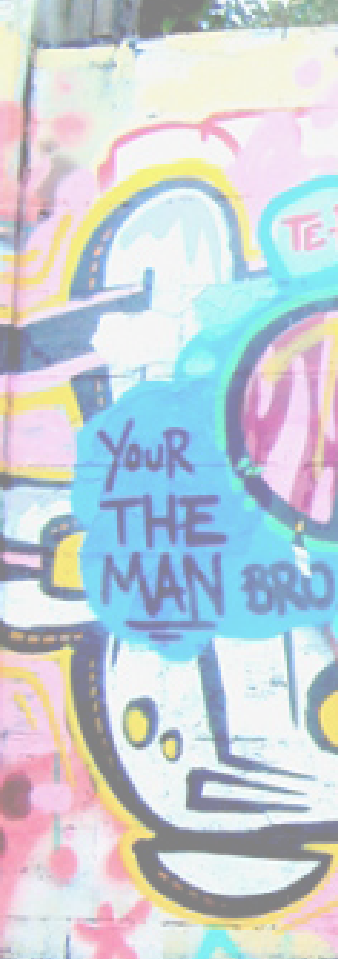
**Community Supported Agriculture [CSA]** is one such model, in which consumers pre-purchase a share of farm output. While the primary benefit of such a system is economic from the producers' perspective (Cooley & Lass, 1998), consumers are also motivated by having access to very fresh produce at reduced prices, and an opportunity to disengage from corporate and global supply chains (Schnell, 2010). The building of local community is also considered an important reason for community-supported agriculture, although some later authors (Pole & Gray, 2013) suggest motivations may be more instrumental and functional than collaborative and communitarian. As a relatively recent form, there is emerging diversity in community-supported agriculture, and it might be expected that this is an arrangement whose form and processes are evolving (Lang, 2010).

**Urban farms** are another response within the local food solutions portfolio. The antecedents of these are also varied. In trade-starved Cuba during the mid-1990s, urban farms annually produced 8500 tonnes of produce, alongside 7.5 million eggs and more than 3700 tonnes of meat (Altieri et al., 1999). Urban farms have also developed as a response to urban decay, occupying deserted lots in the brownfield renewal (Goldstein, 2009). These farms are also becoming a feature of disaster response and preparedness. In Christchurch, New Zealand's third largest city, a series of catastrophic earthquakes have left some central city sections vacant, and much land – in what has become known as 'the red zone', a huge area from the city to the sea – unsuitable for building. This has been quickly colonised by the NGO Cultivate as an urban farm and youth opportunity spaces.

As with CSA, urban farms often have social and environmental goals beyond production and, again, there is a range of commitment to these broader goals with those in poorer communities more likely to subscribe to food security goals (Dimitri, Oberholtzer, & Pressman, 2016). Like community gardens, urban farms are not universally welcomed as a positive force. They occupy a complex political space as both relieving the neoliberal state of obligation and at the same time giving expression to a community critique of capitalism (McClintock, 2014). Nor are urban farms without risk or cost, and increasingly there is a degree of due diligence required before financial and other investments are







made to develop such farms (Ivkovic, Domazet & Ivkovic, 2010).

**Community gardens** in first-world urban settings are another form of local food solutions enjoying somewhat of a Renaissance (Firth, Maye, & Pearson, 2011). This is less novel in the more collective developing world where over 2.5 billion people are fed from collective subsistence agriculture, in traditions which date back thousands of years (Alexandratos & Bruinsma, 2012).

Urban community gardens have a history of more than 100 years. In the 1890s, vacant city lots in the US were turned over to community garden groups as a form of relief for unemployed workers. Perhaps the biggest scaling up of community gardens was as a response to war. During World War Two, 20% of food in the US was grown in the 'Victory Gardens', a government-sponsored initiative for community gardening and food resilience. The definition of community gardens is by no means a cultural universal – in the US the term refers to a form of urban agriculture which dates back to World War One and is typified by a community-managed space in which gardeners have individual plots (Lawson, 2004). By contrast, contemporary community gardens in the New Zealand setting are typically gardens which are collectively organised and managed, generally on public land, by a group which any local resident can join and which manages and gardens the land together.

In common with other local food solutions, community gardens achieve a range of outputs beyond producing food, including building social cohesion, community bonding and building and linking social capital (Twiss et al., 2003; Firth et al., 2011). There are numerous studies examining the community development approaches and outcomes of community gardens (Armstrong, 2000; Ferris et al., 2001; Ober et al., 2008), and whilst these gardens are sometimes criticised as the preserve of the urban white liberal (Eizenberg, 2012), their antecedents in working-class estates and the success of African-American and migrant communities in the US gardens challenge this. These gardens have been important, culturally-specific gathering places from which collective organisation and political initiative have emerged (Saldivar-Tanaka & Krasny, 2004).

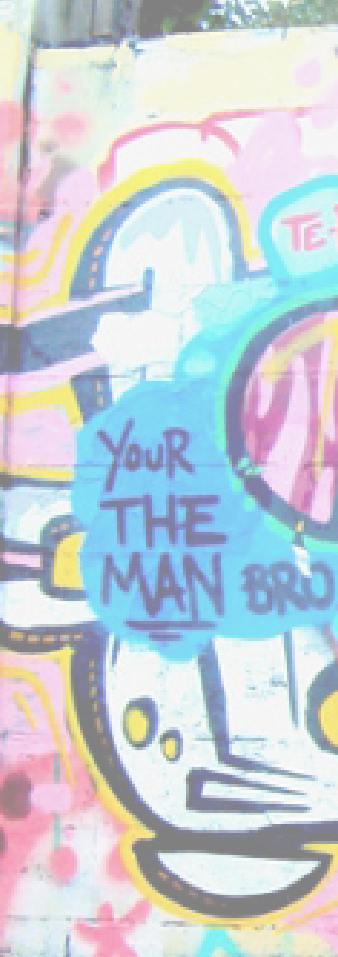
Less obvious in the literature is the appropriation of roadside verges for fruit production. These initiatives have often been part of urban resistance where engagement with the relevant authorities is eschewed, such as in the guerrilla gardening movement.

**Guerrilla gardening** is defined as the unauthorised cultivation of land belonging to another (Hung, 2017) or, in more counterculture terms, as the illicit cultivation of land (Reynolds, 2008); although the illicit here refers to 'without permission' rather than illegal or not permitted, as is more generally understood (Merriam Webster, 2017). This land is frequently public land and the use of the term guerrilla is a nod to the secrecy and skirmishing between guerrilla gardening groups and the authorities. Guerrilla gardening is perhaps best understood as a form of collectively cultivating with a political purpose. (Kato, Passidomo, & Harvey, 2013). The practice can reactivate environmental politics, making environmental relations a public issue with collective engagement (Certoma, 2011). Moreover, the practice is cited as a potential lever for the creation of new property rights (Hung, 2017), enhancing its reputation as a disruptor. The extent to which local food systems, including community gardening, can be seen as a universal threat to an established economic order is, however, the subject of some contention. The pervading neoliberal economic paradigms have the power to co-opt new social movements which might simultaneously contest and reinforce a neoliberal agenda (Crossan et al., 2016).

## THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

The use of public land is an important feature of community gardens in most countries. It brings with it a relationship with the custodians of that land, generally central and local government. This relationship is also significant for urban farms as well as other local food systems, and can be both enabling and disabling of the community aspiration. The practices and policies of the government, usually local government, have an impact on both the instigation and sustainability of community gardens, leading to some areas having thriving community gardens while immediately adjacent communities having none (Mintz & McManus, 2014).

Outside wartime, governments are typically involved in the promotion of local food systems for reasons which go well beyond food production. These include health promotion and the prevention of chronic disease, particularly in deprived areas (Larson et al., 2013; Armstrong, 2000); ecological, environmental and sustainability goals (Chen, 2012; Ohmer, 2009); economic development and community wellbeing (Phillips & Wharton, 2016), community development and community economic



development aspirations (Christensen & Phillips, 2016; Wright, 2014); providing culturally specific gathering and organising spaces for minorities (Salvadar et al., 2009) as well as leisure and visual amenities.

The extent to which government or local government is an obstacle, an enabler, or perhaps ignored in the development of local food systems, is dynamic (Lawson, 2004). Just as neighbouring towns can adopt vastly different approaches (Mintz & McManus, 2014), so can the same town when examined over a period of time. Often there are disputes about the appropriation of land and a contest between neighbours, such as was the case with Auckland's Basque Park evictions (Rudman, 2002). But councils are not always successful in their clearances, as was famously discovered in New York community gardens, where community resistance trumped government power (Staehele, Mitchell, & Gibson, 2002).

## A WAIHEKE FRUIT STORY

Waiheke Island, which styles itself as the jewel in the crown of Auckland's Hauraki Gulf, has a colourful history from early Māori settlement to being the playground of the rich and famous. It also has its own fascinating stories of local food, community gardens, a compost collective, a community produce exchange and, until recently, a community-supported agriculture farm. As well as having great fishing and fabulous beaches the island has been, from early times, a settlement with very productive fruit trees.

## METHODOLOGY

To study the history of community fruit-tree planting on Waiheke Island we:

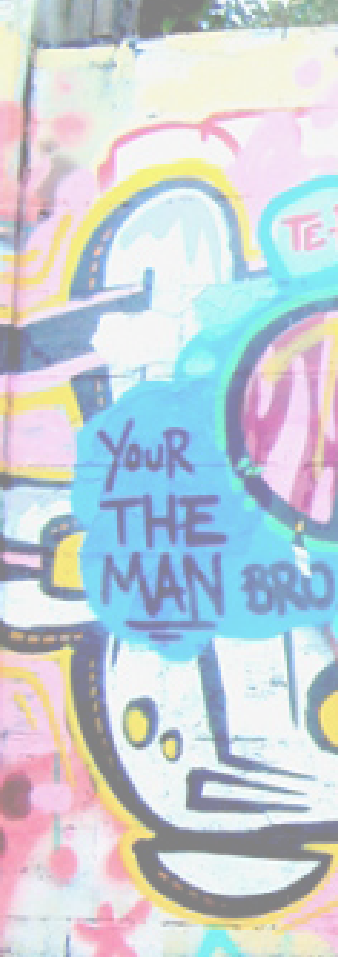
- Reviewed the existing literature, particularly the community newspapers.
- Interviewed key stakeholders using a semi-structured interview process.
- Visited the plantings.
- Held a focus group of stakeholders from two community plantings.

All stakeholders engaged in the projects were invited to take part in the interviews. These included those involved in the plantings, the representatives of community organisations, representative of the local board, suppliers, current and former council staff, and residents who had been involved in earlier roadside planting initiatives. Twenty-seven individuals and four organisations responded and were interviewed.

However, this is not primarily a report on research methods but a report on community development practice. A further report on the detailed methodology and findings of the study is due in December 2017.

The story begins in 1906 with Ethel Jones, my paternal grandmother, then aged six, travelling by schooner from Coromandel township to Auckland and stopping throughout the fruit season at remote Awararoa Bay on Waiheke Island where she and her brothers picked fruit, which they sold on the wharves of Auckland. The peaches themselves were in a sheltered orchard and were an unusual white-fleshed variety with a pink-blush skin. In the microclimate of the valley these peaches ripened almost a month earlier than peaches in Auckland, thus commanding young entrepreneurs a premium price. Descendants of these trees are sold in the spring at the local market, carefully preserved and raised by a local nurseryman who claims they are practically disease-resistant and extraordinarily productive (R. Morton, personal communication, July 29, 2017).

So prized were these peaches that a small group of women calling themselves the peachstoners set out to make sure the whole island had access to them. The women began by gathering the peach stones from the very orchard where Ethel had picked the peaches. On their daily walks, the women began planting peach stones on the road verges, to the delight of many but to the ire of local county council staff who were mowing the same verges. Council responded by banning the practice, citing traffic hazards and community safety concerns. By engaging their friends and neighbours, the women began to foil the council ban by asking residents whose properties adjoined the road to plant the peach stones just inside their boundaries, out of harm's way from the council lawnmowers. After a brief political tussle, and seeing the steely resolve of the women, the council staff began to collaborate and identify public land areas suitable for planting which their mowers would not reach.



On an island much denuded of trees, where giant kauri forests once stood, the women were an inspiration. When the Waiheke County Council was formed (1970–1989) residents were quick to seize the opportunity to shape their environment, passing a comprehensive pro-environment planning document which protected and encouraged tree planting. The council developed its own native tree nursery and every ratepayer had an entitlement of two free trees per year. Demand for fruit trees grew and the nursery diversified into the propagation of fruit trees, selecting stock from older well-proven island varieties. The nursery staff were very liberally managed and, with the encouragement of residents, soon began initiating plantings around the island, including small pockets of fruit trees on unused council land and on the perimeters of reserves.

Much loved by the residents, the nursery and trees were, however, in grave danger. The winds of political change saw the compulsory amalgamation of Waiheke into the new Auckland City Council, a contentious decision which islanders continue to relitigate. (Orsman, 2016; Peters, 2016). Initially, nursery staff were instructed to cease all plantings which had not been authorised by the new council's Auckland-based planners, and shortly after this the council divested itself of the nursery. However, it was not lost from the island, as local staff took it over and it flourishes more than 20 years later. The free-tree entitlement with your rates demand, however, was not so lucky and was discontinued.

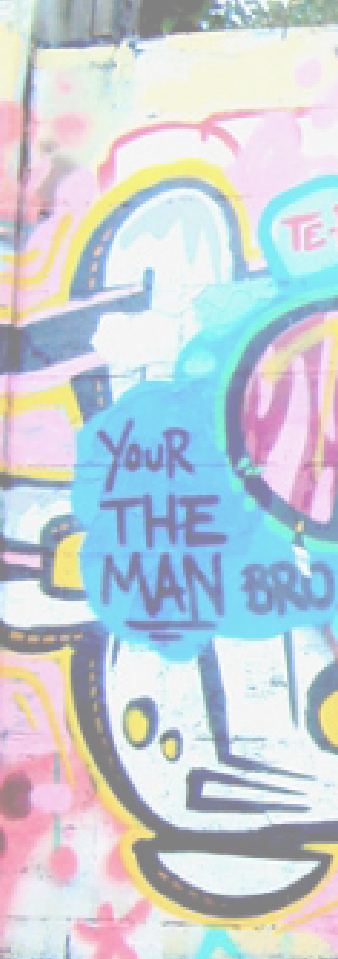
On Waiheke, a 2009 planting of fruit trees on a disused Surfdale reserve survives and has had a lot of recent attention by the Food to Soil composting project of Home-grown Waiheke, a local food-resilience-focused community development group. The history of this planting had been quite chequered. It was established by enthusiasts, many of whom were from outside the suburb, as a future food-forest. Maintenance was sporadic and the planting lapsed periodically into a very weedy lot. At some time it was also maintained by the council, who used the falling community involvement as evidence that community plantings would ultimately become a burden on the ratepayer and should not be permitted in the future.

In a more recent chapter, the master of the local Sea Scouts den found he was dealing with a lot of small boys who came to scouts hours early, often misbehaving and always hungry. He began to feed them toast and jam, and was astounded at how their behaviour improved. After some months, he reflected on a more sustainable solution and together with the scouts began planting fruit trees along the route used by the boys to come to the meetings. This kindness did not go unnoticed, and in short order, the planners and enforcement officials of the council-controlled transport organisation ordered the programme to stop. But, stop it did not – the scoutmaster went on to political life and became the chair of the council's local board, which then began to sponsor the fruit-tree planting in partnership with the community. A Waiheke community development group – Blackpool Residents Association (BRA), whose motto is “Uplifting and supporting the community” – organised the first community planting on the street verges in Blackpool, with a mountain of mulch supplied by the Waiheke local board, and fruit trees sourced from all over the country. A more planned approach in the future would see trees being exclusively sourced from a local nursery raising heirloom varieties selected for their low maintenance and disease resistance.

The local board reported receiving positive feedback from the plantings and resolved to roll the project out across the island. Waiheke Resources Trust (WRT), a local community development organisation already embedded in other sustainability projects with the community, was selected as the managing partner due to its capacity and established relationships across many of the island's communities.

The city-based council-controlled transport organisation, Auckland Transport (AT), responded by promising a policy review (Walden, 2015) which, after two years, produced a policy which allowed roadside plantings of less than two square metres, provided they were not above knee-height. Bonsai-style fruit trees, however, were not what the community wanted and the policy was both





ridiculed and blithely ignored. AT, however, went on to cause problems for community plantings elsewhere in Auckland (Thomas, 2017).

Amidst the uncertainty of the new council policy, the local board temporarily suspended the planting partnership with the WRT. Frustrated at the loss of the planting programme, local activists in Surfdale met with the nurseryman and established that there were trees ready to plant, and that the planting season would soon be over and the opportunity lost.

A leaflet drop in a Surfdale street, calling neighbours together to discuss roadside fruit-tree planting, drew no response at all. Community development, the lens through which we viewed this project, is essentially an exercise in very local participatory democracy and, as John Dewey is reputed to have said in a speech for his 90th birthday, “democracy begins in conversation” (Diggins, 1995). Mirroring this, the activists began conversations with neighbours in the street. A fruitcake was produced, tea was made and a plan was hatched to go ahead with the plantings just as if they had been council-sanctioned.

The boldness of the action was enough to unlock the impasse at the local board, who contracted the WRT to recommence the programme. The WRT again began engaging with communities and facilitating the roadside tree planting (Peters, 2016).

Using a community development approach to planting the verges involves the application of sound community development theory and practice, such as starting from where the people or community are (Campbell, Wunungmurra, & Nyomba, 2007). In practice, this means that different communities will approach an issue in different ways. The Blackpool community, for instance, is quite cohesive, having come together following severe flooding. It has its own neighbourhood association (BRA), has identified leaders and a history of collective community achievement. In contrast to Surfdale, where many of the neighbours had not previously met, the Blackpool residents saw the fruit-tree planting as a natural extension of the community activity to collectively improve their environment. Blackpool residents, in their responses to the questionnaire, noted that the exercise not only grew fruit trees but that the project had grown and strengthened their neighbourhood association. In Surfdale the project may have built the foundational relationships for further community development initiatives.

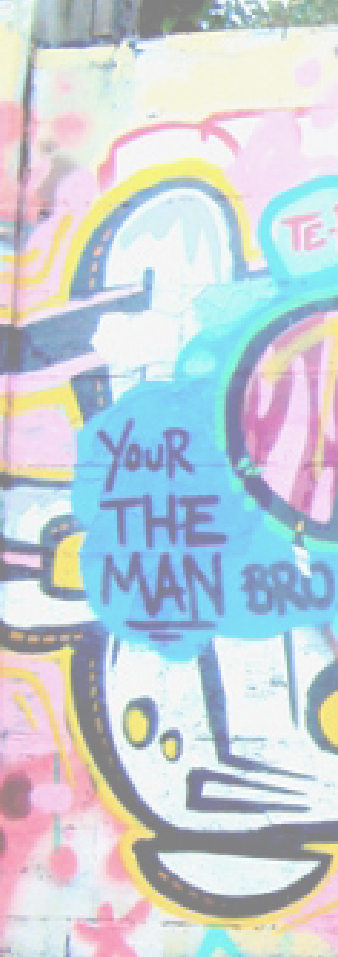
A further wave of political change sees the much-loved community fruit-tree project once again under threat, as the local board moves to cease its funding, responding to political pressure exercised in a less-united board, following recent elections. Interviewees noted that the very public and collective nature of the fruit-tree project put it on an ideological collision course with newly-elected members who had campaigned on a more conservative platform.

Community development might be said to be the crucible of democracy, the place where citizens come together to share their dreams and negotiate, plan and execute their common futures. In studying the various waves of community fruit-tree planting on Waiheke, two very strong themes have emerged:

Firstly, we are struck by the very human spirit of wanting to shape the environment around us in the image of values we hold. It was expressed simply and frequently by the participants in our study: “Wouldn’t it be great if there were fruit trees lining the streets so children had a good breakfast on the way to school and something to eat on the walk back home?” A spirit of hope and generosity expressed in an alley of fruit trees.

Secondly, we were struck by the desire to collaborate and co-create a new commons. Any of the participants we interviewed could, and most do, have fruit trees in their own backyards, but the roadside verge planting is a hugely symbolic act of sharing which has occurred in an era of individualism, privatisation and neoliberalism.





## SOME INITIAL FINDINGS FROM THE STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

What the interviews taught us about community development:

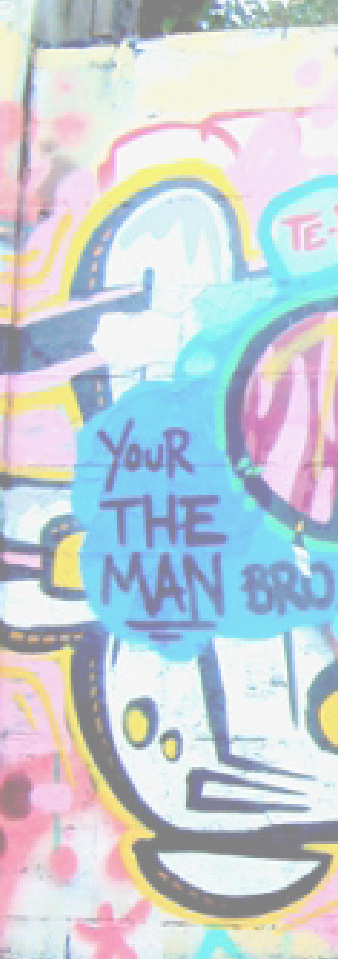
- Already-organised communities with local neighbourhood associations had the most successful outcomes, but the project itself can be used as a way of building local neighbourhood connections.
- Fruit-tree planting, together with your neighbours, is a deeply symbolic act where local people come together to take charge of the local environment.
- Waiheke has a strong local-community fruit-tree tradition, but many of the stories had been lost.
- Successful projects had local political leaders, local neighbourhood support and a degree of wilful deafness to negative regulations developed offshore.
- The education aspects of the project were most highly valued – people love learning together.
- The community sector marches on its stomach and the importance of a cup of tea and a piece of cake in building the relationships that made successful projects should not be underrated.
- The old community development adage, “If you are fun to be with, there will always be people with you,” held true in these projects, where the sometimes heavy physical work was tempered with good-natured fun.
- The importance of local identity and giving people the opportunity to build identity using local knowledge and local relationships improved the community’s sense of resilience.
- More attention to the diversity of participants should feature in future projects.
- A range of communication methods works best.

What the interviews taught us about community-government relations:

- Having a single, respected community organisation as the interface with council resulted in the best long-term relationships.
- Local government was most appreciated where it listened and enabled collective local aspiration. Conversely, remote decision-making, which did not involve the local community, was treated with contempt.
- Working with the community can improve the regard in which local government is held.
- Wise and sensitive officials can act as a bridge between the bureaucracy and the community, even when this relationship has been damaged in the past.
- There is currently an increased interest in the provenance of food.
- Ratepayers enjoyed the experience of getting something tangible back from their rates.

## CONCLUSION

Community development is a useful lens for examining local-food-solution initiatives. The theory and practice of community development contribute to the successful establishment and long-term success of local-food-solution initiatives. The relationship between the community and local government is an important feature of these initiatives and provides the stage on which relationships are expressed and interpreted, and where the roles of the parties are defined, negotiated and redefined. Limited literature in New Zealand suggests there is fertile ground for further research as this exciting field evolves. In particular, the range of benefits to participants might encourage governments to more actively promote local food solutions and adopt a more consistent approach to their development.

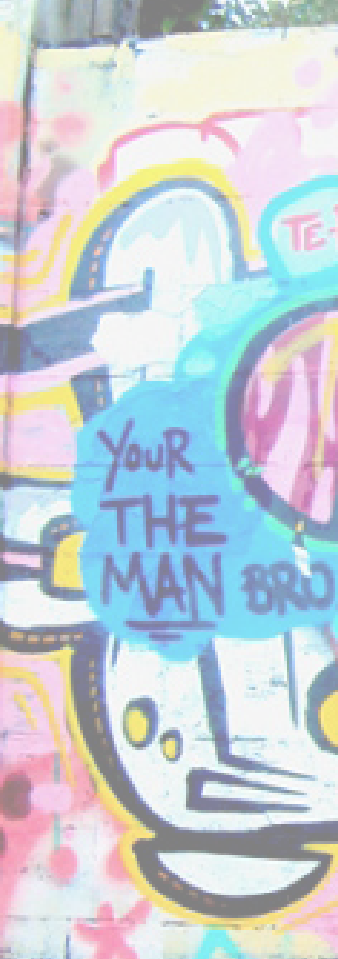


**John Stansfield** is a Senior Lecturer in Community Development at Unitec Institute of Technology in Auckland, New Zealand. John has worked extensively in the NGO sector in advocacy and leadership positions, and has campaigned on sustainable development issues for several decades. He is currently Chair of the International Association for Community Development, IACD, Education Subcommittee and is the President of the Aotearoa Community Development Association. He is Deputy Editor of *Whanake*, The Pacific Journal of Community Development. John holds a Master in International and Intercultural Management (MIIM, 1999), from SIT Vermont, USA, with a major in sustainable development; a Postgraduate Diploma in NGO Management and Leadership (NLM, 1997), from SIT, BRAC Bangladesh and a Bachelor of Social Work and Social Policy (BSW, 1983) from Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand.

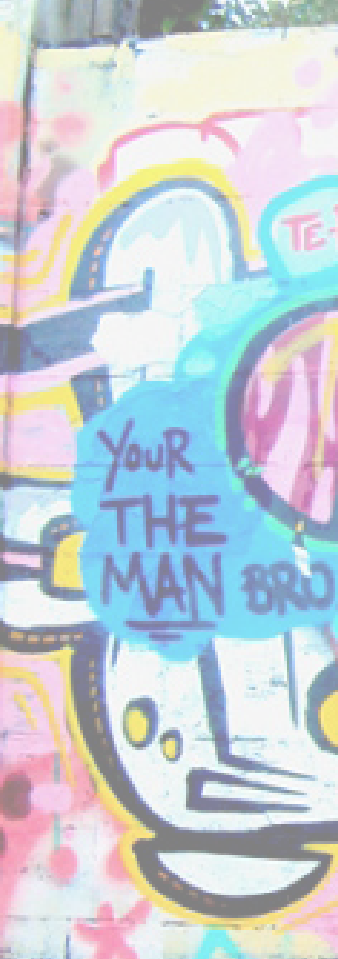
**Amber Frankland-Hutchinson** recently graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Social Practice (Community Development) from Unitec Institute of Technology. She began working as the Executive Officer for the Aotearoa Community Development Association (ACDA) as her final work placement in July 2016, and is continuing to work in this capacity as well as in the role of Conference Coordinator for the joint IACD and ACDA Community Development Conference 2017. Amber is also a trained advocate for Auckland Action Against Poverty's (AAP) beneficiary service, raising awareness of and advocating for people to receive what they're entitled to under the Social Securities Act. At the beginning of her career, Amber has dreams of working with children and youth to amplify their voices in political decision-making and to utilise her skills within her iwi.

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# Announcements

## Upcoming conferences and events

### World Community Development Conference 2018

Participation, Power and Progress:  
Community Development Towards 2030  
– Our Analysis, Our Actions

24-27 June\*, Maynooth University, Kildare, Ireland

This conference will provide a unique opportunity for practitioners, participants, academics, policy makers, funders and other stakeholders to share perspectives on current contexts and challenges for community work.

The conference will encompass cutting edge inputs, papers, creative installations and poster presentations on rights-based community development, addressing and engaging locally, nationally and internationally with key current issues including:

- Change and transformation
- Impact and outcomes:  
Measuring and monitoring
- The role of state agencies,  
regional and local authorities
- Current rural and/or urban  
challenges
- International development
- Community economic  
development
- Environmental justice and  
sustainable development
- Women's rights
- Gender
- Poverty
- Migration
- Racism
- Indigenous peoples  
and minority rights
- Disability
- Health
- Community development  
standards, education  
and training
- Community development  
and other disciplines
- Civil and political rights
- Economic, social, and  
cultural rights

Other suggestions welcome

Followed by an optional  
Practice Exchange

Visit [www.wcdc2018.ie](http://www.wcdc2018.ie) for special early registration prices and on campus accommodation. *Early booking advised.*  
For other enquiries please email: [info@wcdc2018.ie](mailto:info@wcdc2018.ie)

WDC2018 provides a unique opportunity to celebrate IACD's 65th anniversary.

\* 24 June – International Induction  
25, 26, 27 June – Main Conference



# Detroit 2018: Renaissance of Community

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## 49th Annual International Conference of the Community Development Society

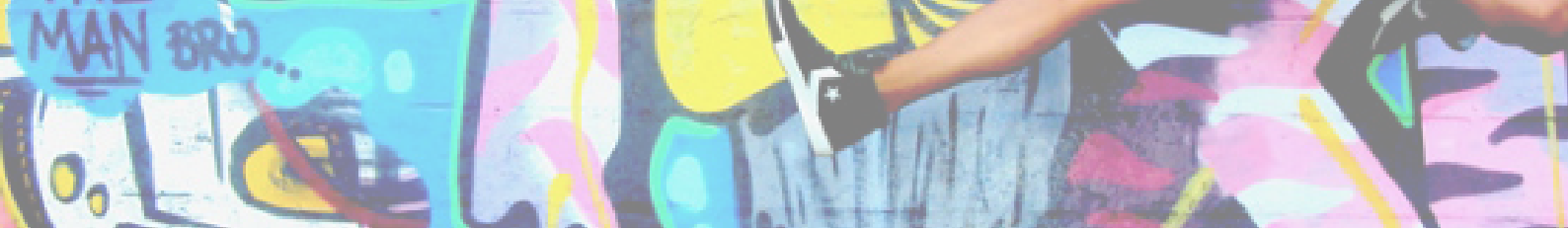
Detroit, USA 22–25 July, 2018

[www.comm-dev.org/networking/2018-conference](http://www.comm-dev.org/networking/2018-conference)  
#CommDev18

Detroit has been a city in flux for more than one hundred years. From its early days as a river trading post to the automobile era to the modern revitalization, Detroit never ceases to amaze with its ability to reinvent itself. There are many lessons in community development that practitioners and academics can learn from this city. For the Community Development Society, choosing Detroit for the 2018 international conference is a smart bet for the following reasons:

- It's a well-known place with a plethora of community development activity.
- Everyone knows the D and its struggles, but there are lots of great examples of grassroots neighborhood revitalizations, local government initiatives, philanthropic endeavors, and wry entrepreneurs working to bring Detroit into its next era that offer community development professionals ample learning opportunities.
- It's accessible.
- As a Delta airlines hub, Detroit is easy to access for US and international participants.
- Connect with passionate peers and world renowned experts in community development.





# Publishing in *Whanake*: submission guidelines

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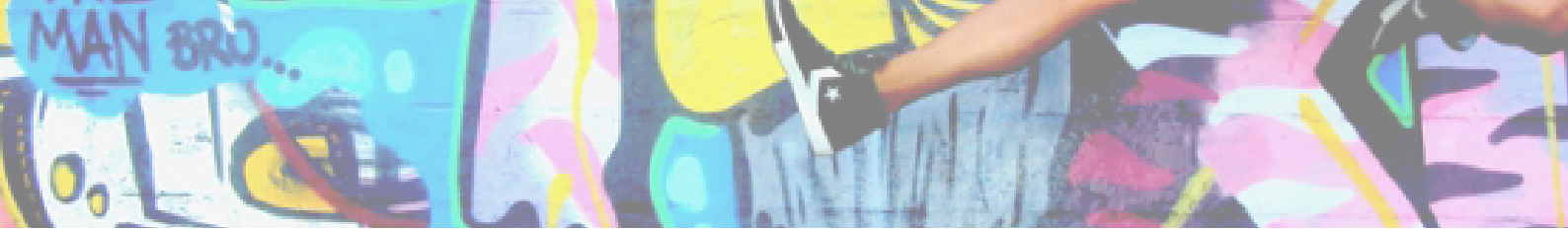
*Whanake* accepts submissions in the form of papers for peer review, opinion pieces, practice notes from the field, case studies, biographies, articles on emerging trends and research as well as reviews of books, plays, films, poems, songs and contemporary culture with a community development theme.

As an international journal, *Whanake* is using English as a standard language. Submissions will be published primarily in English.

Please note that submission is possible only by e-mail. All submissions should be in Microsoft Word format. All submissions should follow the APA style guide, 6th edition, for citations and referencing. A guide is available here: <http://libguides.unitec.ac.nz/apareferencing>

Contact [epress@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:epress@unitec.ac.nz)

Font	Arial, 12 point	
Tables	Send tables or figures in word or excel format	
Images	Images should be sent separately in .jpg format with their file names as the relevant figure #, along with a separate Microsoft Word document that lists the figures and codes them back to the .jpg file. In the submission document write 'Insert Figure #'	
Submission Length	Refereed papers	3000 to 6000 words
	Opinion pieces	Provocations which challenge practice and/or theory
	Practice reflections	2000 to 4000 words
	Practice notes	500 to 600 words
	Case studies and biographies	1000 to 1500 words
	Articles on emerging trends and research	Up to two pages
	Reviews (books, plays, films, poems, songs or contemporary culture)	One page or less



## Call for submissions

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*Whanake: The Pacific Journal of Community Development* invites submissions for the May 2018 issue (Volume 4, Issue 1). The deadline for submissions for refereed papers is 25 February 2018.

All submissions must adhere to the submission guidelines.  
Please send submissions and correspondence to [epress@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:epress@unitec.ac.nz).

## New submission category

Practice reflections are peer-reviewed works which reflect upon and discuss community development practice, and incorporate community development theory as well as contemporary and historical practice. They may take the form of an essay or a discussion and may be styled as a blog entry to encourage participation from readers and build a knowledge community. Submissions should be between 2000 and 4000 words and include a brief statement about the context of the work so that is accessible to an international audience.

## Call for guest editor/s

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*Whanake* is seeking expressions of interest from community development professionals in editing future issues of the journal. To increase the scope and reach of its content and the community, *Whanake* is inviting the input of guest editors or co-editorships for one issue per year. Guest editor/s could work with in collaboration with the existing editors if this is desirable to the interested parties. NB: Copyediting, proofreading and layout is provide by the ePress team. Contact: [epress@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:epress@unitec.ac.nz).

