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Fostering community research

'Doing with' not 'doing for' is the mandate under which her community-based organisation operates, says Anna Pinto, of the Centre for Organisation, Research and Education (CORE).

Anna, sponsored by SPEaR as a keynote speaker at the recent 10th Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect in Wellington, is Secretary and Programme Director of CORE, an indigenous peoples' policy research and advocacy organisation based in the north-east of India.



Anna Pinto

The organisation deals with a range of issues, from human rights violations to abuse of law by security forces, to health, education, children's rights, and women's rights issues. It is one of about 12 community-based organisations accredited to the United Nations as an expert organisation on indigenous issues.

Although CORE started 20 years ago, it remains a small, community-based and locally grounded organisation. Anna told the *Bulletin* it was important to stay small. "Otherwise it is not possible to keep within a human scale and framework. We ensure we keep close to where we come from and stick to what we know. We have only two hands, and we know where our feet are – that way, our heads can't be too far away."

But working on the ground demands a certain breadth. "We can't say we'll look at education only, and if you have a health issue, take it next door – we are the next door," Anna explains. "One of the gifts of this, though, is that we are able to look at situations holistically rather than as discrete and separate parts."

CORE employs between 11 and 15 people, with between 200 and 300 volunteers working on projects. The longest any project would last would be three years, and it always includes a component of research and documentation, an advocacy component and a training and capacity

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Fostering community research

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building component. The terms of engagement are decided in consultation with the target group, and an exit strategy and exit date are also set at the beginning of the project. "We foster independence. We don't want a group to come back for a second time for the same thing. In 20 years, we've never repeated a project."

The approach to research is not traditional. "We are very clear that we are not objective. Our job, when we research, is to reflect the views, opinions, position and aspirations of the subject group. We assist them to discover information for themselves, and we assist them to present the information in the way they decide and choose."

The organisation trains a self-selected group in basic research and documentation techniques. "We work with them to develop a research framework, the questions to be asked, how many people to be interviewed, developing the questionnaire, setting the time frames – everything. We then work with them to analyse and interpret the data and to present it. The data belongs to them. We hold it in trust. We share the data only if they ask that it be shared."

One of the challenges is to alter the attitudes of researchers, academics, and policy makers about validity and authenticity of the information gained.

As an example of how the organisation works, Anna cites a project done several years ago with a group of young people involved in commercial sex. "We became involved because, through a kinship relationship, we were asked to. That's how we work – we will only get involved if we are invited to."

ACCAN Conference

The 10th Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, held in Wellington in February and hosted by the Ministry of Social Development, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services and the Children's Commissioner, featured an exciting range of presentations from international, New Zealand and Pacific speakers. Key themes included the discipline and guidance of children, child abuse in the context of family violence, the research and practice connection, and children's voices. A range of papers presented at the conference will be published in the forthcoming issue of the Social Policy Journal of New Zealand. For more information, go to <http://www.msd.govt.nz/publications/journal/index.html>

One of the outcomes was that the young people were trained in sexual and reproductive health and sexual rights, with several going on to do further research or policy work.

"But that was not our aim. I have nothing to do with that initial group now. I cannot take credit for what they are doing today. Whoever is involved in the pilot becomes the trainer and they take it from there. We stick to our mandate of not 'doing for' but 'doing with'. We taught them how they can learn more if they want to.

"The ripples move outwards, and people become stones in their own right in their own ponds. We have no control and we do not want it. We are very small and that's the way it ought to be. We are information brokers. That's our job," Anna says.

FRST's request for proposals

From 1 July 2007, the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (the Foundation) will be investing approximately \$3 million a year in new research focused on social outcomes in New Zealand through its Building an Inclusive Society portfolio.

The Foundation will be issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) on 18 April 2006. The RFP can be accessed from the Foundation website (www.frst.govt.nz) from this date.

The Building an Inclusive Society portfolio has three Target Outcomes:

- Children and Young People Participating and Succeeding – all children and young people have

the opportunity to participate, to succeed and to make contributions that benefit themselves and others

- Participation in Employment – all New Zealanders have the opportunity to participate in quality, sustainable and productive employment
- Positive Ageing – all New Zealanders are able to age positively, are highly valued and are recognised as an integral part of families and communities.

The Foundation will be calling for research proposals that contribute to one or more of these Target Outcomes. It will invest in projects of \$200,000 to \$750,000 per annum for two to five years.

R&E shapes health policy

The Primary Health Care Strategy is a major government priority and the Ministry of Health is managing a portfolio of evaluations as an integral part of the implementation.

The portfolio seeks to answer questions on three key areas: the implementation of the strategy, the impact this has on the services delivering it, and resulting changes in the health of the population.

The central part of the portfolio is a three-year Evaluation of the Implementation and Intermediate Outcomes of the Strategy, jointly funded by the Health Research Council (HRC), the Ministry of Health and ACC, and led by Victoria University's Health Services Research Centre (see box on page 4).

There are a number of other projects funded by the Ministry which look more closely at aspects of the strategy. They include evaluations of the first year from the perspective of the Public Health Organisations (PHOs) (completed); the Primary Health Care Nursing Innovations, the implementation of Care Plus; the Primary Mental Health Care Innovations and a number of initiatives to reduce inequalities, mainly in access. In addition, the Health Research Council is funding important projects including an economic analysis of the strategy and the role of primary care for older people.

Stephen Lungley, Senior Advisor (Research) with the Ministry of Health, says the evaluations each contribute information to different aspects of the strategy's implementation plan. "Most of these evaluations have strong formative components – that is, findings are reported throughout the implementation with a focus on how we can improve implementation and design features of the strategy as we go."

The effectiveness of evaluation in affecting policy depends on several factors. "Keys to the effectiveness of these projects have been the willingness on the part of the researchers and policy makers to discuss issues, the timeliness of the results, the style of presenting the results, and an understanding of the importance of implementation issues as well as outcomes," Stephen says.

He says researchers and policy makers have many common interests. "We all want the research to make a difference. We want it to inform policy development, help improve health services, and to tell us if the strategy has worked – and why and how."

But researchers and policy makers work under different constraints and this can lead to tensions. "A key issue



Jackie Cumming and Stephen Lungley

for policy makers is often how to make the policy work. Evaluation is only one source of information. And they want reports to be accessible and timely. Analysts always need to know now!"

Researchers, on the other hand, need time to complete the evaluation and want to avoid rushed judgements. Constantly evolving policies make evaluation more difficult. And not least they need sufficient resources for their evaluation to meet expectations.

Stephen says the key to ensuring research is used in policy development is to have regular interaction among all parties. "We need to have regular feedback on issues as they arise. It is important for researchers to give presentations to all the key stakeholders about the research, and to ensure reports are accessible and set out the implications of the findings."

He says evaluation reports so far on the strategy have fed into policy papers. "For example around funding, the nature of community involvement, and the importance for providers to have a population health focus. The management review has resulted in an increase in the management fees for small PHOs, and the evaluation of Care Plus, which provides additional funding for people who use high levels of care, has been instrumental in developing the funding formula."

Stephen says there are many aspects of primary health care where significant questions about policy

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R&E shapes health policy

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and implementation remain. "We need research and evaluation to resolve issues such as variation in the provision of services, the most appropriate ways to target resources, and what types of services work best in different circumstances. The strategy is a large investment for the government, so we need to ensure it is achieving its aims."

Victoria University's Dr Jackie Cumming, who is running the lead evaluation, says it is important to work closely with the Ministry of Health to ensure understanding of how the strategy is evolving, and that the focus is on key issues as well as new issues that emerge as implementation takes place. "I value the positive working relationship we have with the Ministry of Health. There are tensions at times – especially around what can be done for the funding that is available and around ensuring high quality analysis while also providing timely results – but these issues can be worked around."

For more information go to <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/hsrc/reports/primary-index.aspx> and the projects page at <http://www.moh.govt.nz/primaryhealthcare>. A number of new reports will be published over the next months.

People in R&E

Dr Jit Cheung has been appointed lead researcher with the Social and Population Statistics Group with Statistics New Zealand.

Jit has a background in business and social research. After completing Bachelor and Master degrees in actuarial science and a short stint in the Australian insurance industry, he completed a doctorate in health demography at the University of Waikato. Over the past decade he has worked in the New Zealand health sector and other social and business sectors. Prior to his appointment at Statistics New Zealand, he was the Chief Analyst at the New Zealand Health Information Service, a Business Unit of the Ministry of Health. Jit took up the position at Statistics New Zealand late last year. It is a self-managing role that entails initiating ideas and projects and undertaking analysis and research on priority issues in the area of social and population statistics.



PHCS evaluation

The Evaluation of the Implementation and Intermediate Outcomes of the Primary Health Care Strategy, conducted by Victoria University's Health Services Research Centre, has reported on the first phase of research and is currently in the second phase of data collection.

Dr Jackie Cumming, of the Health Services Research Centre, says the researchers have completed one round of data collection for the evaluation and are about to undertake further research during 2006. This involves a second round of qualitative research with district health boards, primary health organisations (PHOs), and practices and practice staff, to see how the strategy's implementation is progressing and to identify key changes in service delivery resulting from the strategy.

The research team is also surveying PHO board members and managers, management services organisations, practices and practice staff about the impact of the strategy. Finally, a significant amount of work is under way using practice and national quantitative data sources to assess the impact of the strategy on use of services, intermediate health outcomes – such as immunisation and screening rates and use of hospital services – and quality of care. Attention is also being paid to the role of nurses in the strategy and to issues such as teamwork.

The first phase of the evaluation included interviews with more than 160 policy makers, stakeholders, and participants from both within and outside primary health organisations. The results, published in May 2005, showed:

- a strong positive response to the goals of the strategy
- fee reductions seemed to be leading to improved access for key population groups
- some concern about the sustainability of the strategy
- some preference for targeted funding
- good community representation on PHO boards
- some innovative approaches to primary health care (e.g. increasing role for nurses and community health workers; new services such as clinics and outreach services).

For more information go to <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/hsrc/reports/primary-index.aspx>

Family violence in NZ Asian communities

A recently completed study by University of Auckland researchers provides a snapshot of family violence among Asian peoples in the New Zealand context.

The study, Improving Particular Communities' Responsiveness to Family Violence: Combining Research, Programme Development and Evaluation, was funded by the SPEaR Linkages Programme and conducted by Dr Samson Tse, Dr Safia Akhter, Dr Janet Fanslow and Dr Peter Adams, of the university's School of Population Health.

It included interviews with individual migrants from China and the South Asian and South East Asian regions and practitioners working in the area of family violence, as well as focus groups involving service users, practitioners and trainees. The study identified a range of factors, causes and triggers for family violence within New Zealand Asian communities. "The key issues are related to difficulties in adjusting to living in a new country, in particular, finding suitable employment and financial hardship," Samson says.

"Men's dominance in some Asian families remains a concern, especially when men see control or abuse over their wives as a last resort to protect their cultural values and traditions. The power men hold over their immigrant wife's residency status, coupled with the racism and discrimination some women experienced in this study when they attempted to find paid jobs or solve their financial dependency issues, put women at extreme risk of abuse and violence."

Samson says the effects of family violence on individuals are far reaching. "In the case of the Asian immigrant communities, family violence impacts not only on immediate family members, relatives and parents in New Zealand, but also extended family members in their country of origin."

The study found that barriers in preventing or dealing with family violence in Asian communities are related to the perception that violence is a private matter among Asian peoples, the women's desire to keep the marriage or relationship intact, an absence of witnesses and limited responsiveness and capacity within the Asian communities.

"On the other hand, the strengths and capacities in preventing and reducing family violence are found within individual women, the immediate

neighbourhood, existing organisations and family violence services as a collective," Samson says.

A gaps and needs analysis focused on what is needed to prevent family violence, to provide effective crisis interventions and to help women or families to return to communities. "All these require concerted efforts across various government agencies, education to improve immigrants' English language skills, counselling and clinical services," Samson says.

The researchers developed a set of recommendations for improving community responsiveness to and prevention activities around issues of family violence in New Zealand Asian communities. "Because aspects of the study were exploratory and have methodological limitations, it's not possible to generalise the findings to the wider Asian population," Samson says. "However, the convergence of the findings from the literature review, individual interviews and focus groups suggest they provide a useful snapshot on family violence among Asian peoples in New Zealand."

The report will be available soon from the SPEaR Secretariat via info@spear.govt.nz

Asian health forum

The second International Asian Health and Wellbeing Conference, hosted by the University of Auckland's Centre for Asian Health Research and Evaluation and the Asian Network Incorporated, will be on November 11 and 13–14, 2006. The conference will consider the health and wellbeing needs of Asian peoples and how to respond to the challenges of providing health care and social services for diverse populations. Keynote speakers include Professor Paul B. Pedersen, Syracuse University, New York; Professor K. Srinath Reddy, All India Institute of Medical Sciences; Professor Edmond Chiu, University of Melbourne; and Dr Samson Tse, University of Auckland, together with 15 other featured speakers. For more information, go to <http://www.health.auckland.ac.nz/population-health/cahre/index.html>



Chair's comment

Managing for outcomes is the focus of much social policy attention in New Zealand. A project was formalised as "MfO" (Managing for Outcomes) and influence from that project is gaining in visibility.

For example, outcome-based investment is the focus for the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology's major investment in ecosystems research this year.

The emphasis on outcomes as targets is not new, but managing for outcomes is creating some interesting challenges. The outcome as a target is just one part of the equation – other critical ones are monitoring progress towards achievement of the outcome, and evaluating performance en route via intermediate outcomes.

Developing the knowledge base for managing for outcomes is posing some challenges both for government departments and ministries as well as for institutions such as Crown research institutes and universities. These organisations are much more familiar with managing for outputs. In the managing for outcomes environment, effective *evaluation* is a critically important determinant of performance. Building capability in the area of evaluation is a major priority if the outcomes-focus for policy is to be managed effectively.

SPEaR has made a significant effort to map the research

that departments and ministries have been doing in terms of the key knowledge questions and priorities for improving the knowledge base. During 2006, we need to devote more time and discussion to evaluating the extent to which social policy initiatives achieve outcomes.

A start in this effort to assess the impact social policy has on outcomes was made in 2005 in response to Cabinet's request for evidence that research does have an impact on social policy and, in turn, social policy contributes to the delivery of desired social, economic and environmental outcomes. In 2006 we will be strengthening our endeavour, with a stronger focus on evaluation.

SPEaR is well-placed to take a lead in coordinating the knowledge base for social policy priorities, and the Ministry of Social Development's Centre for Social Research and Evaluation, in particular, has a significant array of expertise to contribute to this project.

I look forward in 2006 to working with SPEaR and with BRCSS in building capability in the field of evaluation, as we attempt to deliver on managing for outcomes.

People in R&E



Alicia Wright has recently been appointed to the position of general manager of the Centre for Social Research and Evaluation at the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). Before that she was the manager

of the Older and Working Age People Research and Evaluation Unit. Prior to coming to MSD, Alicia worked as a director of her own consulting group and as a principal with Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, and conducted policy research and evaluation at the Department of Labour.



Simon Crack will take up the position of project manager for SPEaR in mid-April 2006. As project manager, Simon will be responsible for managing the functions and deliverables of the SPEaR work programme. Simon is currently seconded as a private secretary to Minister Ruth Dyson

from the Centre for Social Research and Evaluation, where he worked as a Research and Evaluation Analyst. He is a Master of Arts (human geography) graduate of the University of Otago.

Enhancing democracy through ICT

In this information- and technology-rich age, what role does information and communications technology (ICT) have in the democratic process? It is a question that Andy Williamson is exploring for his doctoral thesis, "The impact of ICT in facilitating and influencing the democratic processes in a regional community".

A management consultant specialising in the impact of technology on strategy and policy, Andy says e-democracy is about allowing new models for doing things to emerge from community, rather than doing more of the existing "top-down" way of communicating. "Developing e-democracy is not just about converting what you already have into an online process. It's looking for other solutions and allowing solutions to emerge that you have not thought of."

Andy has been awarded a SPEaR Linkages postgraduate scholarship to support his doctoral research. Although he is based in Waitakere, he is completing his doctorate at Melbourne's Monash University via distance learning – appropriate given his focus on virtual communities.

The first phase of his data collection was a national survey of people involved in the community – be it voluntary work or working in local or central government or a non-governmental organisation – and who used information technology as a communication tool.

"The results show that technology is an extremely powerful tool for linking and supporting people in organisations, helping them to get access to information and build their own knowledge and capacity.

"People saw computers and the Internet as a means of short-circuiting the usual communications networks. It made it easier for them to talk to the person they needed to talk to, particularly email."

Organisations were also able to publish community views without having to rely on newspapers for getting those views across.

"The downside is that often people do not have the resources or money to get the technology, or if they do have it, they may not know how to make the technology fit with the processes in their organisation – how to make effective use of technology."

The second phase of the data collection involves interviewing individuals in Waitakere City on their

use of technology.

"It includes people involved in community and voluntary organisations, council staff and local body and national politicians. The aim is to get details of the pros and cons of using ICT, find out what is and is not happening, and what the barriers are."



Andy Williamson

"I'm using what's called 'grounded theory', so it's very much an iterative process. I talk to someone, go back and look at the data, and build up models or sets of categories around the processes that are happening. It involves making constant comparisons, and looking for themes to emerge from what people are telling you.

"There's a process of audit and rigour built into the methodology and it involves always testing what is said. It's a complex analysis process."

Andy says that although it is still early days, some patterns are starting to emerge, including the need to disrupt the existing balance of power so a new way can emerge. "For effective e-democracy to happen, there needs to be a political and bureaucratic agenda for change – there must be a political mandate for change, and a bureaucratic will to enable it to happen.

"It is a challenge to the existing balance of power – flattening of power. Ordinary people have more access, and in more timely manner, to information and they are more able to contribute. It's also an issue of how to make people aware of what they can do, of having access to the technology, and having the skills to use it."

Andy says that e-democracy is often viewed as trying to replace representative democracy. "But it's not. It's a strengthening of representative democracy – politicians can become more aware of the issues of importance

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NZ initiatives lead the way

New Zealand is a leading country internationally in terms of its progress in linking social research to policy, says SPEaR Principal Analyst Raewyn Good.

New Zealand's approach to connecting social policy practice with research-based evidence was presented to an international forum in February, with Raewyn and Tania Rangiheuea, of the University of Auckland's School of Political Science, co-presenting two half-day workshops.

The occasion was the International Forum on the Social Science–Policy Nexus (IFSP), organised by UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST), and held in Argentina and Uruguay. It was a one-off conference that aimed to bring policy making and social science together, and develop dialogue among academics, policy makers and non-governmental organisations on social research and policy issues.

The forum covered five thematic streams with workshops presented in four cities: global issues and dynamics (Buenos Aires); social policies (Buenos Aires); population and migration (Cordoba); regional integration (Montevideo) and territorial decentralisation and urban policies (Rosario).

Raewyn and Tania's presentation, "Connections as Practice – Aotearoa/New Zealand initiatives to link social science and social policy", outlined how New Zealand had put the concept of evidence-informed policy into practice, starting with the Improving the Knowledge Base (IKB) Project in 2001.

As a result of the IKB Project, the government had agreed to four key initiatives – the SPEaR Committee, the improved Social Statistics Programme, a biannual Social Policy, Research and Evaluation Conference and the Building Research Capacity in the Social Sciences (BRCSS) initiative.

Raewyn says there was a lot of interest in the New Zealand approach, particularly the links between and among academic researchers, government social

researchers and policy makers, the BRCSS and SPEaR networks, community organisations, and the wider social sciences sector. "We talked about the growing dialogue and how having some common membership across organisations encouraged dialogue and helped build a more connected system.

"It was evident that we are at the vanguard when it comes to linking social research and policy. We have five years of putting the rhetoric into practice whereas many other countries are still talking about doing it.

"It is helped by being a country with a small population with a lot of inter-connections between academics, government agencies and community organisations. The Treaty of Waitangi framework would seem to have encouraged communication between peoples in a way that many other countries had not experienced."

The presentation was illustrated with several case examples, including references to the Family Violence Clearing House, as an example of a partnership between government, universities and non-governmental organisations, which uses technology to make research information (including research), available.

They concluded their presentation by saying that research can only be used if it is known about, accessible, relevant, timely and able to be understood by a busy generalist. And even if research meets these criteria, it is still only one source of information for advisers, decision makers and practitioners.

"It was heartening to see that what we are doing is innovative and ground breaking, even though it is not always easy and we do not always all agree. However, compared to many of the countries attending the forum, we are relatively privileged. Unlike in some countries present, we are not physically shot for disagreeing," Raewyn says.

Enhancing democracy through ICT

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to people and people are more easily able to raise issues and communicate their opinions. It creates an opportunity to build more deliberative decision-making around the system we have. It backs up the Local Government Act which legislates local authorities

to be more involved in their communities – to have a role in the social, cultural and economic good of the community. It's an area where Waitakere is already doing a lot and is ahead of the game."

For more information, contact andy@wairua.co.nz

Australasian housing research links

New Zealand has developed close links with Australia on issues of housing policy and research, through its involvement with the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI).

Housing Corporation New Zealand's chief advisor on housing sector policy, Dr Blair Badcock, has been a member of the AHURI advisory panel for the past three years. Before him, the position was filled by Professor David Thorns, of the University of Canterbury.

Blair says the link provides New Zealand with access to the \$2.5 million of research on housing conducted by seven geographically based research centres, each comprising a consortium of universities.

AHURI is funded by the federal and state governments, with member universities also contributing to the costs of the organisation. As far as Blair is aware, private research organisations are not involved in the university partnerships.

"It's their counterpart to our CHRANZ (Centre for Housing Research Aotearoa New Zealand). It was set up in this way about five years ago, and provides a different model for funding housing research."

He says Australia is now in a situation similar to that of New Zealand in the nineties of having to sell state housing stock. "So we can contribute to the Australian debate on policy and programmes. Their state agencies are facing the financial pressures that Housing New Zealand faced during the nineties."

There are significant differences. "We don't have the enduring homelessness. People will say it goes beyond rough sleeping. But we have nothing like the numbers of people rough sleeping as in comparable size Australian cities. It may be that the boarder's allowance, as part of the accommodation supplement, means we have less homelessness."

However, the other big difference is in overcrowding. "Crowding is not an issue in Australia, but it is here, both in private rentals and our own housing stock. So that's a point of difference."

In both countries, rates of home ownership are falling, "which is an interesting policy issue for both governments. People who miss out on home ownership could have a lifetime in the rental sector, so they have no accumulated savings for moving into retirement," Blair says.

"In New Zealand, we lack a lot of the contextual data. Australian research shows that about 45% of the people in the private rental sector have been in it for longer than 10 years. A generation ago, private rental was a springboard to owning your own house. That kind of access is being reshaped now. It's to our advantage to be able to draw on their research. There are differences. But there are enough similarities for it to be a benefit to us."

Blair will present a plenary address to the inaugural Australasian Housing Researchers' Conference in June in Adelaide on the differing housing policy settings currently operating in Australia and New Zealand. For more information, go to <http://www.ahc06.com.au>



Blair Badcock

Understanding inequality

Janet Gornick, an expert in work-life balance issues, will present a two-hour seminar in April on Understanding Inequality: How Might the Luxembourg Income Study Help Us? The seminar will focus on gender inequality and child poverty. Janet Gornick is Professor of Political Science, Baruch College and at the Graduate Center, City

University of New York, and Associate Director of the Luxembourg Income Study. The seminar, hosted by Victoria University's Institute of Policy Studies and sponsored by Statistics New Zealand, will be held on 20 April 2006, 10.00 am, Room 312, Railway Station, Pipitea Campus, Wellington. To attend, please RSVP to Barbara.Gillespie@vuw.ac.nz

SPRE Conference 2007

The third Social Policy, Research and Evaluation (SPRE) conference will be held in Wellington on 3–5 April 2007, with the theme of “Investing in social success: Developing our future agenda”.

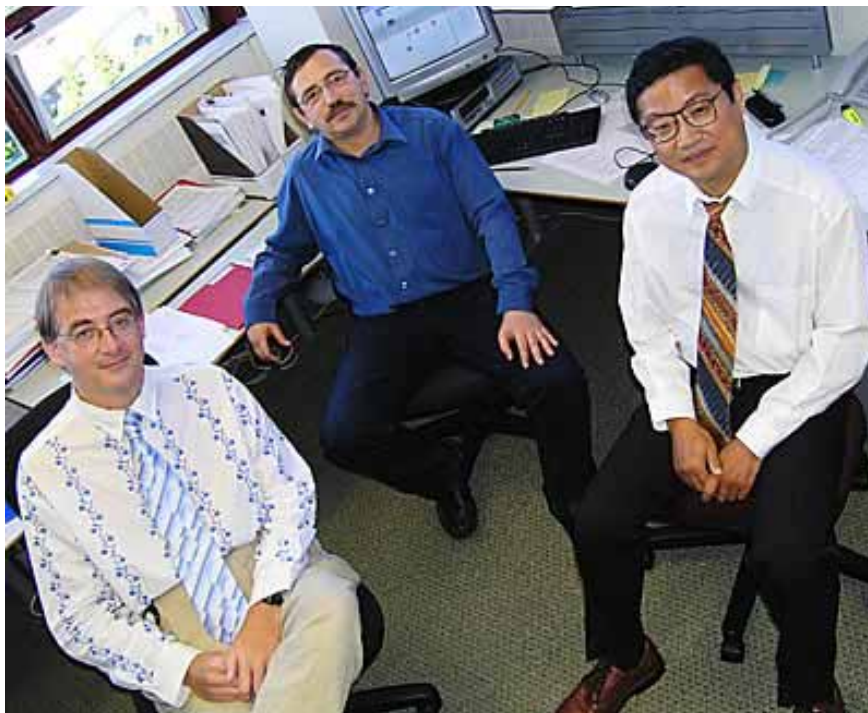
The sub-themes are:

- social investment – effective and sustainable social investment
- global context for social policy – building engagement to maximise opportunities
- social dynamics – implications for change and cohesion
- enduring social challenges – improving traction on critical issues.

The conference aims to: stimulate discussion and debate on strategic social issues facing New Zealand now and in the future; connect leading social development researchers and evaluators from all sectors; and engage with stakeholders and users of social policy research and evaluation inside and outside of government.

Marcel Lauzière, Deputy Chief Executive at the Ministry of Social Development, says the SPRE Conference is all about promoting the ongoing development of New Zealand's social policy knowledge base, which is essential to ensuring a strong and globally competitive New Zealand.

“The two previous SPRE conferences were very successful and we intend to keep building on that.”



New team: The Justice Department has a new forecasting and modelling team comprising (from left) Paul Henderson, Dino Corbu and Jason Wang, and Oscar Montes-de-Oca-Munguia and Darren Skidmore (absent). Paul says the team will develop what's known as the Pipeline Project, which involves cross-system modelling. "We'll look at the whole of the justice sector and build a way of forecasting that takes account of all the impacts across the system. For example, at the moment we can see the effect of a particular change on, say, the Police, but we can't forecast the downstream effects on the courts or the prison population. So we'll be building a model that will show the impact a new piece of legislation would have on the Police, Justice, Courts, Corrections and Child, Youth and Family. The model will be built on existing work but we'll be extending it so it can do more."

CDRP allocations

Six proposals from five government departments have been approved for funding from the Cross-departmental Research Pool (CDRP) for the 2006/07 financial year. The CDRP was established in 1997 to support cross-departmental research undertaken in government departments.

The 2006/07 allocation process was run by the Foundation for Research Science and Technology with input from the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology, the Social Policy Evaluation and Research Committee, Health Research Council and Statistics New Zealand.

The Ministry of Health has \$100,000 for 2006/07 to measure the social, economic and cultural outcomes of Māori-based collectives. The Department of Conservation has two contracts: the first for quantifying the relationships between measures of human pressure and the freshwater condition (\$1.05 million over three years) and the second for interpreting biodiversity indicators (\$1.2 million over three years).

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has \$158,000 for 2006/07 for the development of diagnostic capacity and capability for vector-borne diseases of significance to humans, wildlife and domestic animals. Police has \$125,000 for developing a New Zealand Drug Harm Index and the Department of Internal Affairs has \$80,000 for improving policy-related research and analysis about and with ethnic communities.