



Hui Rangahau Tahī



B R C S S
n e t w o r k

Building Research Capability in the Social Sciences (BRCSS)

BRCSS Portfolio Research Programmes Survey 2007

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1. Executive Summary

Introduction

The BRCSS Network was set up in 2004 to promote and develop research activity and capability within the social sciences. The Network was formed around a portfolio of social science research programmes and the leaders of these programmes. The BRCSS Portfolio Programme Survey explored the research capability building that has occurred within the programmes that comprise the BRCSS research portfolio.

In November 2006 when the survey commenced there were forty five programmes in the BRCSS research portfolio. Research undertaken by New Zealand's eight universities and two non tertiary sector social science research organisations was represented. Most of the surveyed programmes were investigator initiated and funded by public good funding agencies (Marsden Fund, the Foundation for Research Science and Technology and the Health Research Council).

The survey investigated the staffing structure of the research programmes and the capability building activities that had taken place within the programmes in the following areas:

- Research training
- Relationships with Maori, Pacific and New Settler communities
- Dissemination practices
- Relationships with end users
- International relationships
- Inter and trans disciplinary practices
- Engagement with BRCCS activities

Methodology

This BRCSS Portfolio Programme Survey collected two types of information: descriptive data on individual members of the research team for each programme; and accounts of research and capability building activities occurring within each programme from the perspectives of the research leaders and new and emerging researchers.

Descriptive data relating to the personnel employed on 37 research programmes were collected via a brief questionnaire completed by the research programme leaders. Data on research capability building activities and barriers and enhancers to capability building within research programmes was gathered via interviews conducted with the leaders of 42 portfolio programmes and 33 new and emerging researchers.

The descriptive data on programme team members was aggregated across the portfolio programmes. Thematic analyses of the interview data were undertaken independently for the lead researcher and NER interview datasets.

Key Findings

Research programme structure

- Research team size (programme leaders, research staff and post-graduate students) ranged from one to thirteen. Three quarters of the programmes had less than six research team members.
- Only 14% of the workforce spent more than 75% of their time on a specific research programme. Twenty five percent of the sample spent less than 10% of their time on a programme and 65% spend less than 30% of their time on a single BRCSS platform programme.
- Research assistants and post graduate students made up 11% of the workforce and post doctoral fellows and researchers and lecturers a further 28%. Thirty five percent of the programme workforce held professorial or research director positions. Numerically this was the largest group but they were also the group with the smallest time allocation to a programme. The more junior members of the workforce had higher time allocations to programmes.
- Fifty eight percent of the research programme personnel were female and 61% were between 40 and 60 years of age. Women exceeded men in numbers for all age bands other than over 60 years.
- Researchers were predominantly of European ethnicities (62 %). Maori comprised 19%, Samoan 7 % and Chinese 4% of the research programme workforce.

Building capabilities: lead researcher and new and emerging researcher accounts

Capability building – key factors

Lead researchers

- Access to longer term social science research funding is essential for the recruitment and retention of skilled research personnel, a fundamental aspect of capability building. Discontinuities in funding and multiple short term contracts are common and undermine efforts to build capability.
- Individuals with the necessary expertise and personal attributes to become skilled social science researchers are in short supply. Universities can not compete on salary with government organisations and have limited incentives available to attract and retain staff other than the opportunity to complete post graduate qualifications.
- Two distinct approaches to capability building were evident; research centres attempt to train and retain staff to meet research programme outcomes and academic departments more commonly use research programmes as a context for training a series of post graduate students with the expectation that they will move on to new, and often non research roles.

New and emerging researchers

- Building research skills was only possible where funding was available from scholarships and fellowships or via a research programme position.
- A highly valued form of capability building was working alongside senior researchers and learning by doing.
- A need for better access to methodology teaching at under graduate and post graduate levels was identified.
- Access to research networks widened the skill base and advice available to NERs.

Research Training

Lead researchers

- An apprentice style on-the-job approach to training and mentoring junior researchers and post graduate students was the preferred model for building social science capabilities. It was also considered an essential approach if skill shortages at career entry level are to be addressed. Few examples of formal research training programmes were evident. Those that were related to specific technical needs of the programme.
- A more diverse research team in terms of skill levels and areas of expertise was seen as beneficial for training NERs and for capability building generally.

New and emerging researchers

- NERs also identified on-the-job training as the most effective approach for building skills. It was not uncommon for NERs to describe their initial experiences of working on research programmes as overwhelming and being 'thrown in the deep end'. They felt they lacked necessary skills and needed more assistance that was on offer from senior colleagues.
- Accessing training opportunities was often initiated by the NER.

Building the Maori, Pacific and New Settler workforce

- Maori and /or Pacific research capability building were prioritised in many programmes. Positions and scholarships were targeted at specific ethnic groups particularly when consultation with these communities was required by the programme. The appointee would have responsibility for relationships between the research team and the community.
- To have Maori, Pacific or New Settler researchers leading programmes and modules of programmes directed exclusively at Maori, Pacific or New Settler issues was seen as the ideal but this was not the situation in all programmes.
- New Settler researcher capability building was largely limited to New Settler specific programmes

Relationships with Maori, Pacific and New Settler communities

Lead researchers

- Research programme relationships with Maori and Pacific communities took two common forms. Current programme relationships were based on long standing relationships established by the research leaders over time or alternatively relationships were built and maintained by junior researcher who

identified with the ethnic group of interest and were employed for, or delegated to, the role. The personal networks of individuals often provided a link between the research team and community.

- The relationships were facilitated by familial links, established relationships of trust and by researchers who were from the communities of interest.
- Relationships were hindered when expectations of the community and research team differed, communities had many competing responsibilities and where suspicion outweighed trust.

New and emerging researchers

- For Maori NERs relationships were facilitated by being Maori, having established relationships of trust, often based on whakapapa, and working alongside elders. Where NER did not have links to a community themselves working with others who did could effectively bridge the relationship.
- Relationships were hindered by a lack of understanding of the specific communities, a community's prior negative research experiences and differing expectations.

Research dissemination

Lead researchers

- Capability building practices varied from minimal NER input into report and article writing to single-authorship by NERs.
- Dissemination to communities was often a role for NERs whereas policy sector dissemination was led by the lead researchers.
- Mentoring in dissemination practices was mostly informal through feedback on drafts of presentations and papers. A doctoral school was an example of more formal mentoring on dissemination practices.

New and emerging researchers

- Common first steps on the dissemination ladder were preparing project reports, and giving presentations to community groups, hui and conferences.
- Preparing draft papers was seen as a more advanced step than presentations in terms of learning the practice of research dissemination.
- Not all NERs felt that adequate support was available or that it was well matched to their needs. Specific training needs were identified.
- NERs appreciated the opportunity to learn dissemination techniques by observing colleagues.

Relationships with end users

Lead researchers

- End users identified included central, regional and local government agencies, representatives of particular industries, professional groups and community services and organisations. These relationships were generally seen to have greatly enhanced the research enterprise.
- End users contributed to social science capability building through increasing the research team's relevant knowledge base and understanding of pertinent local issues, extending the reach of the research, providing channels for

dissemination to different audiences, and increasing the visibility and potential implementation of research findings.

- End user relationships were varied and included informal interpersonal contact, advisory groups, secondments and joint workshops.
- End user relationships were funded from varying sources; by end users themselves, from programme funding, and profits from past contracts.
- The involvement of Maori communities was generally funded by research programmes and this was seen as essential to the research process.

New and emerging researchers

- For NERs end users relationships was often associated with working with community groups and advisory boards
- End user contact was valued in diverse ways, for example for building confidence to engage with unfamiliar groups of people, establishing enduring networks with people with common interests and receiving advice and research support.

International Relationships

Lead researchers

- Relationships of longstanding were common. These were refreshed as research interests morphed.
- Relationships ranged from informal opportunistic encounters between individual team members to structured project specific joint research activities. The capability building potential of international linkages included access to data, exchange opportunities for post graduate students, contextualising, comparing and validating current research and bench marking standards.

New and emerging researchers

- For NERs the benefits of international relationships were similar and included the opportunity to situate their research within an international context, develop more extensive research networks, build research confidence, enjoy the stimulation of exposure to new ideas and validate methodological approaches

Inter and trans disciplinary practices

Lead researchers

- Most of the BRCSO portfolio programmes were described as inter or trans disciplinary. The complex nature of social issues and engagement with the policy sector were seen to have precipitated the surfacing of inter and trans disciplinary research practice.
- The merging of disciplinary knowledges to create new ways of conceptualising social issues was seen to stimulate innovative and productive social science research.

New and emerging researchers

- Working in an inter or trans disciplinary environment did not change the disciplinary orientation of NERs but expanded their research repertoire to encompass perspectives and or methods from different disciplines.

- Maori and Pacific NERs were aware that their cultural skills made them valuable contributors to social science projects on diverse topics that could be framed from a number of disciplinary perspectives. They became adept at applying core skills in a range of projects.
- As a consequence of working on multiple research projects in inter and trans disciplinary environments some NERs found assigning themselves to a specific discipline was not meaningful

Funding the development of new ideas

- Common strategies were utilising internal university funds as seeding funding and ‘leveraging’ from current programme resources. The ideas themselves generally emerged from the skills and knowledge base of the research team and from new questions that arose through the analysis of data from earlier research projects.
- Maintaining the inspiration and energy within a research team, particularly of post graduate students, was a necessary part of resourcing the development of new ideas.
- Engaging with external stakeholders and drawing on new and existing academic relationships and networks were also important for developing new ideas.

Continuity/discontinuity of research employment

Lead researchers

- Maintaining continuity of employment for highly valued researchers was a major frustration and challenge for programme leaders and was seen to be an inevitable consequence of the low funding base of investigator initiated social science research and the short term nature of contract funding. University employment policies were seen to exacerbate the problem.
- Short term contracts, and casual, often part- time work created an unstable working environment for researchers. Higher financial rewards and the employment stability of government departments contribute to the vulnerability and instability of university-based research teams.
- A scarcity of funding and skilled researchers promotes a competitive rather than a collaborative research environment.
- The less secure the funding environment the more flexible researchers need to be to maintain their position. Retaining individuals with specialist rather than generic skills is difficult.
- Juggling people and funds between projects to maintain continuity of employment was a common practice for programme leaders.

New and emerging researchers

- Building a social science research career can be a precarious exercise from acquiring the first research job, to maintaining a series of short term roll over contracts, to securing funding for a longer term position.
- A career path into social science research is often not transparent. It requires being in the right place at the right time, having interpersonal networks, and being able to take on casual or part time work until something more secure comes along.

- Issues of job security and career uncertainty featured less in the interviews with Maori and Pacific NERs who were aware of the limited supply and high demand for their skills.
- Strategies NERs adopt to stay in the social science research workforce include networking within academic circles so that they are aware of forthcoming project opportunities, developing a broad skill base and being flexible and willing to take on any task. Some maintain an alternative revenue stream as a safeguard against funding shortfalls.

Career choice issues

- Some NERs commented that the expectations placed on research staff to fulfil a range of roles and produce a range of outputs are unrealistic.
- The importance of weighing up and balancing work with other aspects of life was a recurring theme. Funding and salary levels were important considerations in the decision on whether research was a manageable and desirable career in the longer term.
- Non-monetary attractions of research work were also weighed up against the comparatively low salaries.

BRCSS awareness and participation

Lead researchers

- All lead researchers were members of the BRCSS Research College. Awareness of activities ranged from individuals who claimed to have a vague knowledge of BRCSS to those who reported a detailed knowledge of activities and frequent participation.

New and emerging researchers

- Awareness of BRCSS related activities range from a NER who had not heard of it to other who were well informed and had participated in BRCSS events and /or received BRCSS funding. There was no systematic mode through which those who knew of BRCSS had heard about it or any consistency in what they knew.
- Getting on the BRCSS email list was a significant step in enhancing knowledge of events. Conferences, grid seminars and workshops and research awards were the BRCSS related activities most frequently known to NER. Grid seminars and workshops were the most common form of participation.

2. Introduction

The BRCSS Network, a Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) funded programme, was set up in 2004 with the aim of promoting and developing research activity and capability within the social sciences. In 2006 the first of three complementary national surveys was completed. The National Survey of Social Scientists 2006 provided baseline information about social scientists employed within the New Zealand University sector (Witten et al. 2006). The second phase of the BRCSS survey of the social sciences was designed to provide a snapshot of research capability building practices that are occurring within the portfolio of externally funded, multi-year research programmes that comprise the BRCSS research platform (www.brcss.net). These programmes are led by some of New Zealand's most prominent social scientists and represent a substantial number of the larger, currently funded social sciences research programmes in the country.

The BRCSS Portfolio Research Programmes Survey 2007 has investigated, from the perspectives of lead researchers and new and emerging researchers, what is and is not working in efforts to develop a workforce to meet New Zealand's need for high quality social science knowledge. Capability building strategies adopted by the BRCSS Network over the coming year will be informed by the survey's findings. Among the topics covered are activities designed to strengthen the Maori and Pacific workforce and the interface between research and policy, both identified by the Social Sciences Reference Group (2005) report *Coming of Age* as areas for further development.

In November 2006 when the survey commenced there were forty five programmes in the BRCSS portfolio. The portfolio was not a representative sample of the social science research being undertaken across New Zealand at the time but it did contain a diverse range of programmes. Research undertaken in New Zealand's eight universities was represented as well as two programmes led by non tertiary sector research organisations. A broad range of disciplinary perspectives, subject areas and institutional collaborations were represented by the portfolio programmes.

Most of the surveyed programmes were investigator initiated and funded by public good funding agencies (Marsden Fund, the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology and the Health Research Council). A few of the programmes had been commissioned or contracted by government ministries and two were associated with post doctoral fellowships. The survey investigated the staffing structure of the research programmes and the capability building activities that had taken place within them in the following areas:

- Research training
- Relationships with Maori, Pacific and New Settler communities
- Dissemination practices
- Relationships with end users
- International relationships
- Inter and trans disciplinary practices
- Engagement with BRCCS activities

3. Methodology

This BRCSS Portfolio Research Programme Survey aimed to collect two types of information: descriptive data on individual members of the research team for each programme, and accounts of research and capability building activities occurring within each programme from the perspectives of the research leaders and new and emerging researchers.

Descriptive data on the research programme personnel were collected via a brief questionnaire completed by the research programme leaders. The information sought included demographic data, qualifications, position, disciplinary background, and the part time/fulltime status of research programme staff.

Data on the research capability building activities taking place within BRCSS portfolio programmes, and barriers and enhancers to capability building were gathered through individual interviews with research programme leaders and new and emerging researchers employed on the programmes. Interview schedules were designed to gather data on the list of topics areas noted earlier. The schedules were piloted with lead researchers and new and emerging researchers (NER) associated with research programmes that fell outside the BRCSS portfolio. The interviews were designed to be administered either by telephone or face-to-face and to take between 20 and 30 minutes to complete.

Ethics approval for the survey was sought from and granted by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, Albany (application 06/056)

3.1 Recruiting and interviewing participants

Lead Researchers

The 45 research programmes that form the BRCSS portfolio were identified along with the lead researcher(s) for each. Initial contact with lead researchers was made via an email which gave a brief overview of the survey's aims and asked the leaders to participate in a semi-structured interview. Approximately one week later, potential participants were contacted again via email to arrange a suitable date and time for an interview. The number of contacts by phone and email required to secure an interview varied from 2 to 10. It was necessary to accommodate the variable work and travel schedules of the lead researchers.

Extended interviews were conducted with individuals who were leaders of more than one research programme so as to cover data relating to all programmes. One lead researcher declined to participate due to personal circumstances, a second withdrew from the survey and a third was excluded after ten attempts had been made to arrange an interview time without success. Interviews were conducted via the telephone (except for two that were conducted face to face and one that was completed via email with a lead researcher who had relocated overseas). The lead researchers for 42 of the 45 portfolio programmes completed interviews. The interviews were tape recorded

and transcribed. Lead researchers also provided demographic data for 37 of the 42 programmes. For the remaining five programmes this information was not received.

New and Emerging Researchers

The research team data provided by the team leaders were used to identify a diverse group of potential NERs to be interviewed. Five programmes did not employ a NER and a number of programmes had more than one. A single NER was selected and invited to participate in the survey from programmes that had six members or less and in the larger programmes two NERs were selected and invited to participate. Sampling was purposive with the aim of recruiting a heterogeneous group of NERs.

NERs were contacted and followed-up in the same way as the lead researchers. Initially it was proposed that a mix of face-to-face and telephone interviews would be conducted with NERs, however due to time and logistical constraints, all but one of the interviews were conducted via the telephone. Interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. Thirty three new and emerging researchers participated. Four NERs declined to participate, one withdrew from the survey, and two were excluded after a number of failed attempts to contact them.

3.2 Analysis

Descriptive data on programme team members was aggregated across the portfolio programmes. Thematic analyses of interview data were conducted independently for the lead researcher and NER interview datasets. This form of analysis generates what Patton (1990) has termed ‘thick description’ of data; rich, diverse, detailed accounts, often built around verbatim data excerpts. A recent paper by Braun and Clarke (2006) updates and articulates a clear process for use of thematic analysis in the social sciences. Interview transcripts were imported into QSR’s Nvivo qualitative software package and coded. Working analyses were produced by close reading of the data and consideration of the commonalities and variations in the coded materials. These were adjusted by two of the authors (MG and KW) until the emerging themes were a stable and an accurate reflection of the data.

4. Findings

4.1 BRCSS Portfolio Research Programmes: funding and personnel

The Foundation for Research Science and Technology (FRST) was the primary funder of 19 of the 42 research programmes on which interview data was collected. Six programmes were funded by the Marsden Fund and three by the Health Research Council (HRC) alone and a further three by the HRC in partnership with other agencies. A range of government ministries funded the remaining programmes.

Table 1: Funding sources for BRCSS Portfolio Programmes

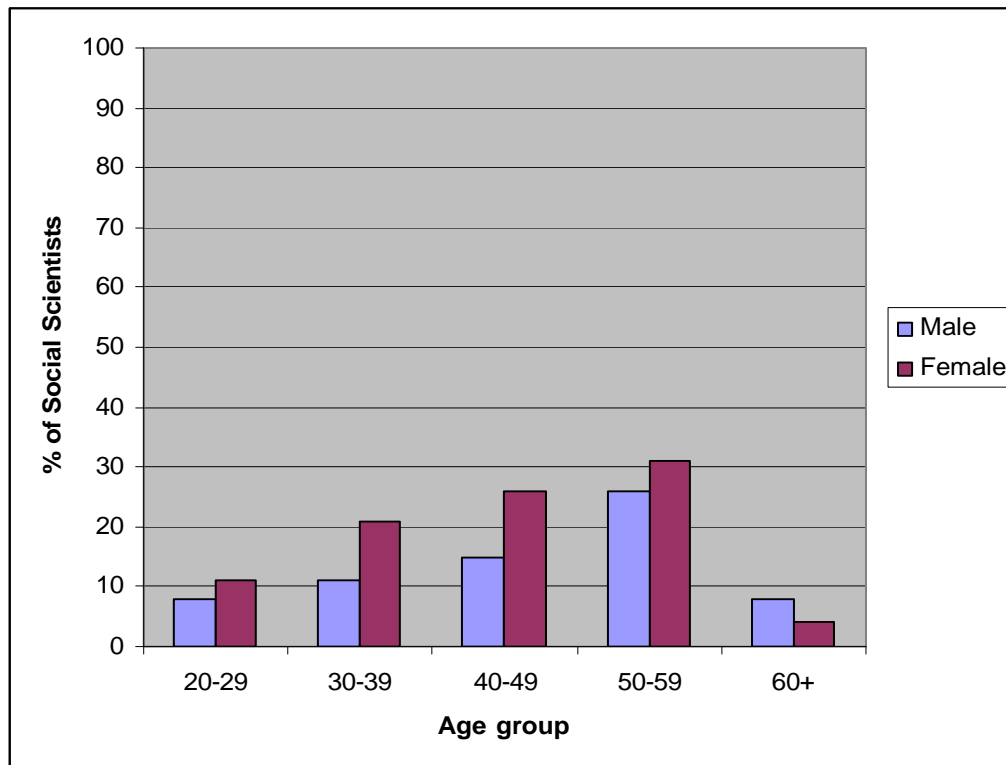
Foundation for Research Science and Technology	19
Marsden Fund	6
Health Research Council	3
Ministry of Health	3
Ministry of Social Development	1
University of Canterbury (Post Doctoral Fellowship)	1
James Cook Fellowship	1
Health Research Council /Ministry of Health /ACC	1
Health Research Council / Ministry of Health / State Services Commission / Treasury	1
Ministry of Social Development /Land Transport Safety Authority Ministry of Transport	1
Health Research Council / Foundation for Research Science and Technology	1
Marsden / Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	1
Housing New Zealand	1
Chiang Ching Kuo Foundation	1
Statistics New Zealand	1

Of the 42 research programmes, 40 were hosted by one of New Zealand's eight universities and two were located in non tertiary sector research organisations. The number of research team members working on the 37 programmes for which additional data were gathered ranged from one to thirteen. The number included programme leaders, research staff and post-graduate students. Twenty eight programmes had less than six research team members and nine programmes had seven or more team members.

The research undertaken on four of the research programmes was conducted entirely by the programme leaders and two programmes were post doctoral fellowships. The disciplines which participants most commonly reported their research fell within were human geography, economics, education, history, anthropology, Maori knowledge and development, psychology, sociology and public health.

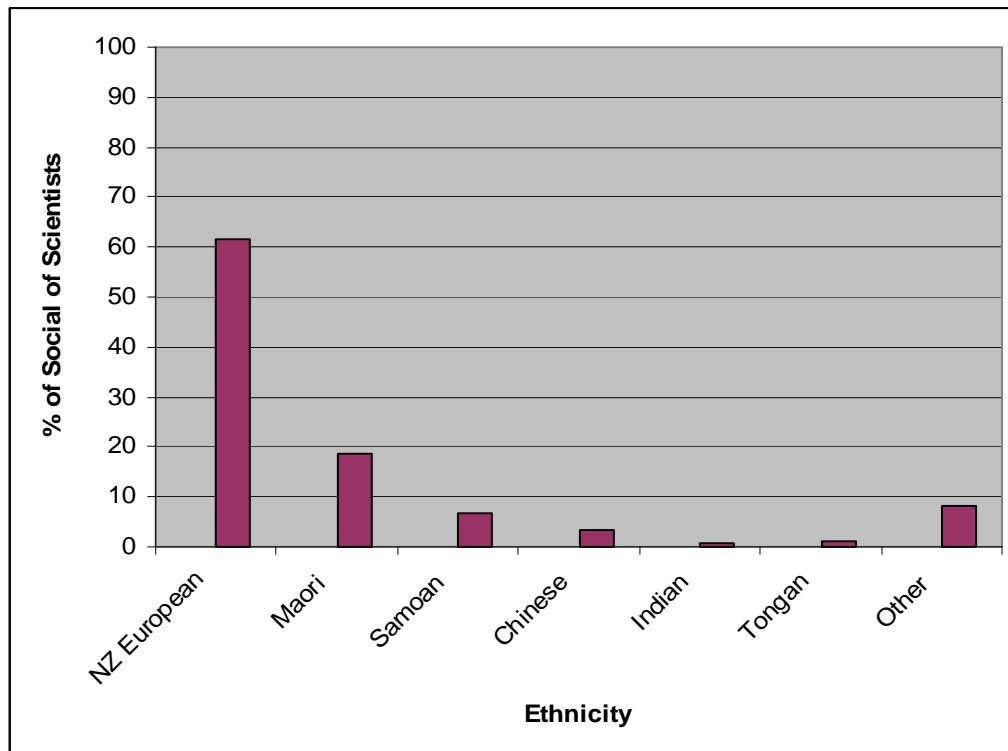
The information provided by research programme leaders on the age, gender, ethnicity, position and time allocation of the personnel working on programmes has been combined and is presented below.

Table 2: Age of social scientists by gender ($n = 161$)



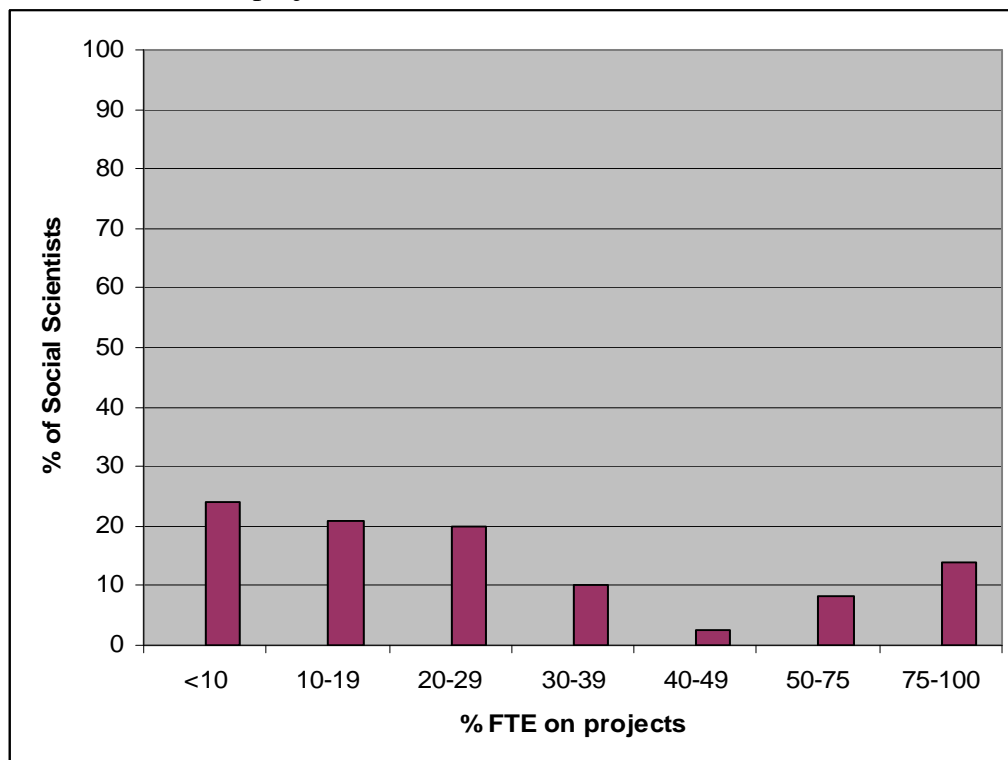
Fifty eight percent of the 161 personnel on which data were provided were female and 61% were between 40 and 60 years of age. Women exceeded men in numbers for all age bands other than over 60 years.

Table 3: Ethnicity of social scientists ($n = 161$)



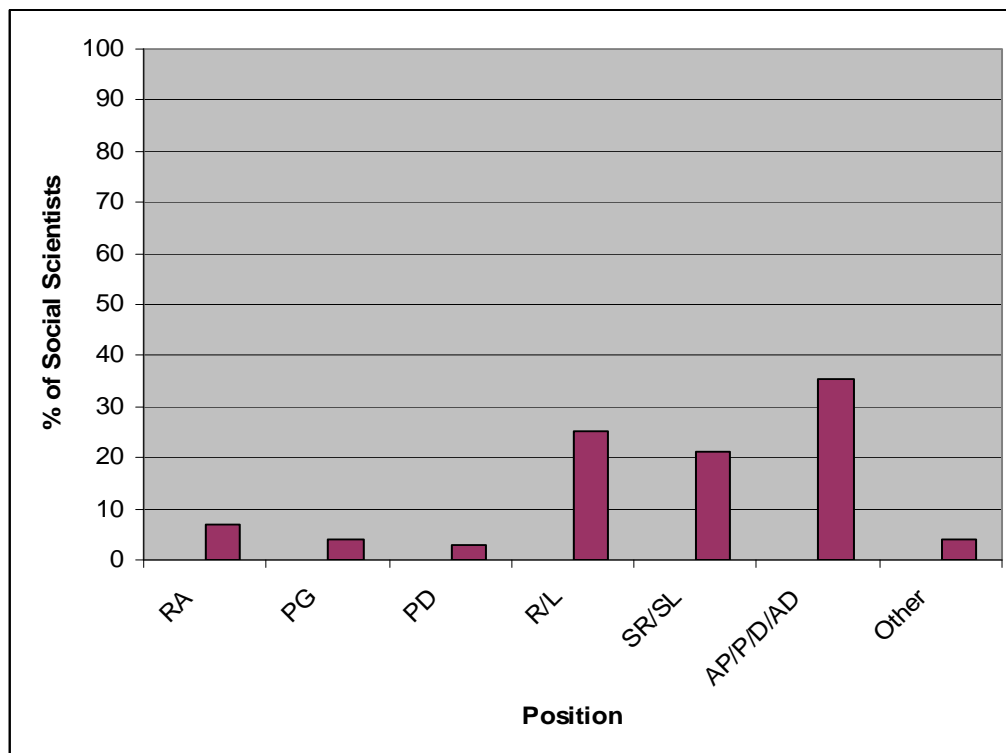
Researchers were predominantly of European ethnicities (62 %). Maori comprised 19%, Samoan 7 % and Chinese 4% of the research programme workforce.

Table 4: % FTE on projects for social scientists ($n = 157$)



The time allocated to programmes as a FTE percentage is presented in Table 4. Only 14% of the workforce spent more than 75% of their time on a specific research programme. Twenty five percent of the sample spent less than 10% of their time on a programme and 65% spend less than 30% FTE on a programme.

Table 5: Position of social scientists ($n = 170$)



Research assistants and post graduate students made up only 11% of the workforce and post doctoral fellow and researchers and lecturers a further 28%. As a group, professors, associate professors, directors and associate directors were numerically the largest of the position categories represented in the research workforce, comprising 35%, but they were also the group with the smallest average FTE allocated to a programme.

4.2 Building social science capabilities: lead researcher and new and emerging researcher accounts

The thematic analyses of lead researcher and NER interview data are presented under the following section headings: Capability building – key factors; Research Training; Building the Maori, Pacific and New Settler workforce; Relationships with Maori, Pacific and New Settler communities; Dissemination; Relationships with end users and external collaborators; International Relationships; Inter and trans disciplinary practices; Funding the development of new ideas; Continuity/discontinuity of research employment; Career choice issues; and BRCSS awareness and participation.

Under each section heading an analysis of the lead researcher interview data is presented followed by that of the NERs. Not all questions asked of the lead researcher were asked of the NERs. As far as possible the words of the interviewees have been used to convey the ideas expressed.

4.2.1 Capability building – key factors

Lead Researchers (LR)

Lead researchers were asked to identify the most important factor that makes it possible, or not, to build capability in their field of social science research. Capability, for the purpose of the survey was defined as the sum of expertise and capacity. The two most common responses to the question were funding and access to people with appropriate research skills. Expanding on their responses a number of participants described the highly interrelated nature of these factors.

There was discontent at the total level of funding allocated to social science research nationally compared to other areas of science, a situation that was seen to have implications for the scope and scale of research that could be proposed. Limited access to longer term funding was seen to undermine efforts to build capability. Discontinuities in funding contributed to uncertainty and a lack of security for research staff. The consequences of a low funding base were seen to have adverse impacts at individual and sector levels.

“because funding is so uncertain, it’s very difficult to put your hand on your heart and say this should be a career for somebody. It’s very hard to do” LR

“Biggest one is the piece meal funding and uncertainty behind it. Lack of respect for the fact that social science research needs some sort of capability behind it that can not be bought off with these piece meal approaches” LR

The level and duration of research funding were seen to impact on the expertise of the people recruited into research positions and the probability of retaining good people.

“the quality of people we can employ depends entirely on the money available. If you have the money you can employ the quality people, if you don’t you fall short” LR

Building a team and developing research capability when the funding environment is one of multiple short term contracts was recognised as extremely difficult. In this context, to retain staff working on some programmes, research leaders described picking up additional contracts to fill in time between more substantial projects.

“we don’t have enough money in the funding cycle to allow us to do anything more than short term fixes” LR

Only the larger research groups had the capacity to buffer and retain staff in times of funding shortfalls. To survive in this funding environment it was suggested that researchers need to develop the intellectual agility to move between subject areas and research paradigms.

“People have to be pretty flexible, they need to move between areas. There can be a dip in funding whilst you’re waiting for the next round. Good generic skills they can apply to different areas” LR

“People tend to work on a wide range of things because that’s where funding is based on government priorities. Sometimes it means diverting emerging researchers away from their qualifications because they have to work on something else as well” LR

In the following quote an individual reflects on the consequences of this process:

“I have had to actively manoeuvre through the whole period of post doc and get involved in a series of initiatives that ideally I wouldn’t have been involved in, not things I would have wanted to have done. I had to do things that are not good for anyone to make myself appear less dispensable” LR

Research leaders mentioned that there are often few incentives available to them to retain people in research. Efforts to build capability at an individual level can end abruptly if research funding ceases and ‘fill in’ funding cannot be secured. In this situation it can be hard to compete with the security and levels of remuneration available for social scientists in the government sector.

“I don’t think we’ve always done well in terms of giving people other types of rewards and incentives making it a job they don’t want to leave. You can’t compete with central government in terms of the salaries they offer” LR

An implication of turnover in research staff is the need to continually recruit and train new people.

“in our meetings, we want to attract students. We have some success, I can see that people move on. We can’t keep them, very few opportunities at universities. The good ones move on and we just need to keep training them. We don’t have the money to fund higher salaries” LR

While adequate funding was clearly signalled as necessary to recruit and retain research staff and post graduate students, over and above the issue of funding there was concern about the availability of people with the skills required to undertake social science research of high quality. It was noted that a broad set of capabilities is often required, personal capabilities as well as specific research skills. The pool of people with the skills who want to undertake social science research was considered very limited.

Circumstances were described where respondents had been unable to recruit staff with appropriate expertise so had opted for training someone up on the job. However retaining people long enough for them to acquire the necessary skills and to contribute to the research programme was also noted as challenging.

Skill shortages in particular disciplines and subject areas were also noted.

“we have real problems getting people with quantitative and economic skills. two areas it is hard to find people and encourage them into research careers because they have so many options...we are not training enough people and we are struggling to find anyone who can do various bits and pieces. We have money but no people” LR

“my area is [family research] and finding graduates who are interested in doing postgraduate work or PhD’s or post docs in the area and it’s not because they’re not interested but simply because there aren’t many of them around and there is very little if any undergraduate work that prepares them for this work... ..it’s not easy.” LR

Lead researchers also identified a shortage of senior people to train and mentor the more junior workforce.

In addition to good role models and access to individuals with the expertise to train and mentor new and emerging social scientists a number of participants mentioned the importance of a nurturing research environment.

“I’d say having the right environment for people to work in and that includes having the support, nurturing... collegial environment, supportive environment” LR

The recruitment and retention of Maori, Pacific and New Settler social scientists were seen as especially challenging. They are in short supply and demand for their skills is high (see section 4.2.3).

Two distinct strategies for staffing portfolio research programmes and building capabilities were evident, the ‘retain’ and ‘recycle’ approaches. In the ‘retain’ approach research leaders aimed to build a stable team by recruiting, training and retaining researchers. The expectation was that the research team would continue well beyond the duration of specific programmes and that continuing employment would be available within the team for valued researchers. This model was clearly favoured by research centres. Proponents of the alternative ‘recycle’ strategy viewed positions on research contracts primarily as opportunities for post graduate students to gain hands on research experience. A regular turnover of post graduate students was anticipated and even welcomed. After completing their studies the students were expected to move on to higher paying jobs usually outside the university setting and the training cycle would begin again and new students recruited to the programme.

The ‘retain’ strategy is described in the following comment.

“We’re not out to build a major empire as we can’t afford to keep finding the money to keep everyone going and we just want a reasonable research capability that we can deliver on the types of things we are interested in. trying to ensure the people who are working with us are rewarded. We do lose staff but that’s not surprising. In general our strategy is to retain rather than recycle” LR

The rationale for capacity building that underpinned the ‘retain’ strategy was that a skilled workforce is essential to be able to produce research of a high standard. The emphasis was on the research as the output. The rationale for the ‘recycle’ strategy, as illustrated by the following comments, was more commonly aligned to an output of well trained post graduate students.

“Yes, some students graduate and are successful and go on to new things. We just need to get new ones and train them and then they move on. I want them to move on. It takes nurturing which is a lot of work but it’s what it’s all about” LR

Some research leaders noted the potential for post graduate students to retain links with a programme and its staff and to collaborate in future research activities.

“I don’t have the capacity to do that through 3 years funding and they graduate. You can’t say to them, don’t do that. They all get good well paid jobs and you are happy for them. They will come to flourish and still participate in the project and do their own work. They are an inspiration to the new comers which is excellent” LR

Discontinuities in funding for the research groups and centres impacted on their capacity to retain staff whereas discontinuities in funding in the ‘recycle’ approach reduced opportunities for capacity building through training post graduate students.

New and Emerging Researchers (NER)

NERs were asked what made it possible, or not possible, for them to build their research skills. Access to good mentors and supervisors and adequate research funding were the most common responses. For post graduate students, the support and guidance of their individual supervisor/s was identified as a key factor in building research skills and competency.

*“The availability of experienced researchers for support and guidance really”
NER*

In the following quote a NER talks about valuing the chance to learn the research craft by observing more senior colleagues engaging in various aspects of the research process.

“I think being involved in projects and getting to see the bigger picture of the project, like when you’re a junior you get the little tasks but being able to be in on meetings where high level decisions are being made, the conversations and discussions and things like that you can slowly pick out the skills that make up the more experienced researcher” NER

Consistent with the comments of lead researchers, funding was identified as essential to building a research career. The funding sources available to NER depended on their position as post graduate student and /or research assistant on external programme funding or tenured academic. Scholarships and fellowships were noted by post graduate students and external programme funding for those employed as contract researchers.

“Certainly funding that leads to long term employment in the field of research so having funding for a project enables me to be employed” NER

“I guess it comes down to PhD scholarship funding I received, without that nothing would have been possible” NER

Access to internal university research funds was seen as essential to building a research base for the following NER who held a tenured lecturing position.

“...research is an expected part of the job and I now have access to funds to make that happen through the university so we’re quite fortunate compared to some universities because there’s still internal university funds to support projects” NER

Post graduate qualifications were viewed as a prerequisite to building a research career and without scholarship or equivalent funding to complete masters and doctoral programmes for many respondents there would be no social science career path to be pursued. Funding to take the next step in a research career on completion of the qualification was also seen as critical. For the NER quoted the next step in building a research career was the opportunity to publish from their thesis research.

“This funding actually allows me to get a publication out of meeting [supervisor] who has much experience through the university system and he’s working to help me make that next step because when I did my Master’s and finished in 2000 the external examiner encouraged me to write a journal article but I didn’t really have the confidence at that time or the support” NER

In addition to funding and mentoring as key enabling factors in establishing a research career a number of NER identified access to research networks. Research networks widened the skill base and advice available to the NER. The NER quoted below was employed by a multidisciplinary Maori research group which gave her access to a breadth of expertise.

“...the network with other researchers helped and they’re all from different walks of life. Different ages, different background – so I think that’s what probably helped me and having the different educational background and they come from different disciplines” NER

Limited access to research methodology teaching at undergraduate and post graduate levels was identified as an obstacle to the development of a research career. A number of NERs felt they entered the research workforce with little understanding of the research environment and few research skills. Consequently they felt unprepared to meet the expectations of research programme leaders. Working alongside experienced researchers had involved not only skill building but also becoming realistic about what research outcomes were achievable.

“.., there was a definite shift to be realistic when you’re doing actual research. I am not sure what universities in terms of when you’re studying could have done more to make you prepared to be a researcher. I just did one

methods course. I think those things should be compulsory, maybe I should have done more. Sometimes methodology isn't valued as much as different sorts of themes. Those things are really important" NER

"It was only really at probably post-graduate level that I really started to do more complex stuff and I think by that time it's too late and we should be starting to learn about methodology in the practical sense from day one as far as I can tell particularly for producing greater level of research" NER

Initiative on the part of the NER was also noted as important to effectively utilise the expertise available.

"Obviously building networks with people is very important. I think a lot of that needs to be driven by individuals if they really want to make that happen. They have to be willing to get involved and stuff like that to push it forward. It's not necessarily something that will come to you on a plate" NER

In light of the importance of accessing diverse funding sources to build a research career it was felt that better mechanisms are needed to keep NERs informed of funding opportunities and to increase their understanding of how different research funding processes operate, including funds internal and external to the universities.

4.2.2 Research training

Lead Researchers

An apprentice style on-the-job approach to training and mentoring junior researchers was the preferred model for building social science capabilities. It was also considered an essential approach if skill shortages at career entry level are to be addressed.

"Personally I'm a strong believer that it is apprenticeship that makes the difference in terms of people really learning research skills and that they need to be working alongside skilled people for a reasonable period of time before they're anywhere near skilled and experienced themselves and I think that ideally how people should be trained is with much more hands on experiential training at the university" LR

Examples of formal training were seldom mentioned.

"In-house training, more to do with learning alongside more senior researchers...not so much about specific training but more about observing people...an apprenticeship scheme, very informal" LR

For the post graduate students training generally occurred while they were supported by Master's and PhD's scholarships, sometimes supplemented by employment as a research assistant either a few hours a week or over the summer months. The two post doctoral programmes included in the portfolio had been explicitly designed to mentor and develop the research skills of post doctoral fellows.

The following excerpt is from the research leader of a programme which catered for three PhD students and four masters students over the duration of the project. Semi formal training situations were described.

“ People have been able to get a degree out of it...do guided research, take part in regular reading and writing groups, as well as do the research” LR

One of the few examples reported of a more formal research training opportunity within the context of a portfolio programmes was that of a PhD student who attended a one week workshop in the USA to learn to use new software. Programme staff attended courses run by staff development and training units within universities but these were not considered to be training provided within the context of a specific research programme.

Descriptions of on-the-job apprentice style research training provided for research staff were often little different to those provided for post graduate students. An exception was sometimes a greater emphasis placed on writing for publication for post graduate students. The following quotes refer to the types of training and mentoring offered to research staff.

“Build them into everything we do...on the job training” LR

“Being involved in a project and being given aspects of the project to work through themselves with me supervising them and being able to have actual hands on experience of the actual project. I have found that over the years I have employed and they have expressed quite a bit of satisfaction with the amount of research training they’ve had. It’s not a formal arrangement, I don’t take people on and say this is a training opportunity but by working on the project they do get training on the job” LR

A more diverse research team in terms of skill levels and areas of expertise was seen as beneficial for training NERs and for capability building generally.

“No formal courses, as a research team with different levels of expertise and by working together there has been professional development” LR

Examples of more formal training for research staff tended to occur when the programme had a need for specific skills that required specialised training or when an individual requested training in a particular area.

“All training was initiated by individual researchers in response to specific needs” LR

“We’re also just at the moment looking at maybe doing some training around GIS as well because a number of people are interested in that” LR

Funding constraints were identified as a barrier to the provision of training for research staff although in the following example limited funding was reported as a reason for developing in-house training opportunities.

“We’ve had very little money, very underfunded...so we’ve taken on quite an explicit training role, you know, attempted to put the formative evaluation as a kind of start development training along with the community workers”LR

New and Emerging Researchers

Variation in the availability of training opportunities was reported across the portfolio programmes. In general the training on offer was described as informal and ‘learning as you go’. Many of the NERs felt they lacked the skills needed to perform well at the research activities they were asked to undertake and indicated that they would have appreciated more active guidance from senior research colleagues and /or more formal training. It was not uncommon for NERs to refer to their experience of working on research programmes as ‘overwhelming’ and being ‘thrown in the deep end’. The quotes below convey this perspective.

“...learn as you go and just try to make sense of it...it was kind of overwhelming at first” NER

“At times I have found that I have been floundering a little, just because maybe the expectations were more than I knew and so maybe a bit more mentoring, being chummed up with another researcher that I could ask things that might be quite useful”

“.., when you come on board a project that’s been running for a while and ...it’s not your field of expertise more than anything you just need lots of grounding and I have felt like I’ve been you know, floating around that particular project because ...it’s not really my knowledge base. But I don’t know if that reflects a need for more training, it’s more for me...for more background information I think” NER

“Perhaps more regular meetings and understanding more about the project because it’s only now that I got additional funding to do more in-depth work that I totally understand what’s been going on with the project whereas when I started in 2002...just being thrown in at the deep end” NER

Better orientation to a programme in the early stage of employment is a need identified in several of the comments above.

When training and supervision had been provided it was highly valued by NERs. Much of the training related to the specific needs of the research programme but there were also examples of mentoring provided to NERs by senior colleagues on general research and career related issues. A range of diverse situations were portrayed as providing opportunities to build research skills. The following quote illustrates this point.

“Courses as such - no - but practical training in the form of being sent to Wellington, working with colleagues down there and the BRCSS programme and we have regular advisory meetings and on those occasions I get to talk with people like [...] and things like that. It’s been a form of training in that they’ve guided me and helped me hone in my skills by editing articles that I write and giving me feedback” NER

“Nothing formal, only informal mentoring which is hugely important by the way” NER

A recurring theme in the NERs interviews was that building research skills was primarily the outcome of doing research.

“I’ve learnt something but I think it’s only the consequence of doing the ongoing research” NER

A scarcity of formal training opportunities was noted in a number of programmes.

“There were no formal training things I can think of” NER

“Not that I would consider as a training opportunity, no courses, nothing like that. I got to go to a couple of conferences but no formal training” NER

“I have to say pretty minimal certainly as far as I can recall ‘cause it was a while ago, there was no formal kind of training opportunity” NER

Several NERs noted that while they had not been offered formal research training while working on the research programme they were confident that if they had identified a training opportunity or asked to attend a specific course they would have been supported to do so by the team. The following quote describes one of the few examples mentioned of a formal in house training programme offered to research staff.

“There’s just been on-going evaluation training opportunities, always the latest...the very latest of evaluation methods and techniques have been available and I have offered myself to those opportunities and most of my colleagues do because it’s just so exciting. Evaluation workshops happening, new ideas and methods for us to trial” NER

Not all plans for training had come to fruition for those interviewed.

“We were talking at one point about doing some training on SAS but it didn’t end up happening. I think that would have been quite good if I had been able to do that.” NER

“Yes, SPSS...I had to basically just learn how to do it myself. I would’ve liked the opportunity to have formal training on it” NER

NERs had attended training sessions run by university training and development units. Most of the examples given related to doctoral training courses but methodology seminars were also noted.

“No specific research related training that’s from the project, but obviously I’ve had available those that are provided for doctoral students and other research students by [name] university” NER

“I have had access to some training through student learning centre and so I’ve gone to courses on end-note and excel and some computing stuff but not directly through the project more as part of the university I guess” NER

Several individuals identified specific formal training needs (eg software applications and media training) but generally the desire was for more on-the-job training to overcome gaps in training or knowledge.

“I think having a more apprentice style might have been useful so I think having a kind of closer liaison with a senior academic who is more knowledgeable in this field would have been useful” NER

“One of the things I did express that I would be interested in is if it could be set up for me to perhaps go, because this is a longitudinal research project, if I could actually go and have spent time with maybe one of the chaps down south that do the longitudinal research down there to just learn about their techniques and stuff like that” NER

While another felt that more formal, professional development beyond academic training would be useful:

“I think some kind of professional development course wouldn’t be a bad idea in research and policy probably. There is a certain amount people get when they’re doing honours degrees and then masters and the doctoral stuff but it’s not the same as something that’s consolidated around here’s how you can do it” NER

For the NER quoted below building her research capability and skills was more individually driven.

“I think more so it’s been again my own drive to say this is what I want and it was a bit difficult at first because I didn’t really know what was there and was trying to prove myself as a researcher and you’ve got the hierarchy thing being a junior versus senior... and sometimes it’s a bit hard to break through... I’ve just said to people this is what I need and I also joined up with mentoring programme at the university as well and I actually chose the mentor that was not related to social sciences but it has been very successful and getting grants and stuff like that and knew more about the systems of the university and I feel that was valuable just to have that”. NER

Most of the 33 NERs interviewed felt that they had gained skills or expertise by working on the current research programme. Support, encouragement and acknowledgement were extremely important to many NERs. This often came from post graduate or research supervisors but as noted in the quote below the quantum of supervision NER felt they needed was not always available.

“It’s very hard to get a very good supervisor who has time to help you out. If you do get a good supervisor, they’re good because everybody always wants them and that’s one other issue that’s really hard... because people are always

on boards and everything else, and I had that with my supervisor, it was always hard to get time with her, even though the time we do have, we get a lot done but I still need more, for that mentoring to take place a lot more is needed” NER

Other respondents noted that there were people within their collegial networks who provided valuable personal support.

“Particularly to have supportive people around me... Having his [a colleague’s] support and saying ‘know you can make it’ and ‘we need up and coming people like you’ so I’ve really appreciated that” NER

4.2.3 Capability building: the Maori, Pacific and New Settler research workforce

Lead Researchers

Participants were asked if their research programmes prioritised capacity building for Maori, Pacific or New Settler social science researchers. Prioritisation was reported in a number of programmes and in several different situations. Firstly there were programmes undertaken by Maori or New Settler researchers that were directed at Maori or New Settler issues where it was seen as essential for the programmes to be largely or exclusively staffed by Maori and /or New Settlers researchers. Secondly there were programmes that had been funded for a research module that related specifically to a particular ethnic group. The latter programmes were not always led by researchers of the ethnic group concerned but the specific components were to varying degrees.

“Yes, Maori. One MA scholarship was specifically for a Maori researcher and a significant proportion of the programme devoted to Maori research. The current research would fall under the category of kaupapa research in that the Maori researchers are defining the terms and parameters of the way that research is being carried out – young and relatively new researchers participating in it” LR

As in the example quoted, positions and scholarships were sometimes targeted to researchers from a specific ethnic group. The employment of Maori researchers on projects that were undertaken in Maori communities was described as being ‘central’ or ‘essential’ by several research leaders.

“Yes, there have been two less experienced Maori scholars who have had the opportunity to work with senior scholars on specific parts of the project. It was within the application, could not do the project without them, they are central to what we are trying to understand” LR

“Maori and Pacific researchers, essential to engage with sites and their issues that we had these researchers establish this rapport” LR

In light of the scarcity of Maori, Pacific and New Settler researchers, planning for and establishing a relationship with new and emerging researchers was viewed as strategically important. This is illustrated by the following quote.

“Yes, actively sought a Maori Post Doc. We actively built a relationship two years prior to getting the Marsden with the PhD student and supervisor as we knew we wanted to involve Maori researchers” LR

A third form of prioritising capability building, most notable with respect to Maori research development, was unrelated to the needs or foci of a particular research programme. Lead researchers frequently referred to the importance of strengthening Maori research capacity in all fields hence the desirability of recruiting Maori whenever the opportunity arose. However, despite attempting to prioritise the recruitment of Maori researchers a number of research leaders noted that they had had limited success at doing so.

“There was an attempt to recruit a Maori researcher in the original proposal, tried through networks without success. We have a Chinese master’s student, not as a substitute for Maori but as a consequence of the work” LR

Similarly, a number of projects prioritised capacity building for Pacific researchers but with seemingly even more difficulty with recruitment than for Maori researchers.

“A priority in the study for Pacific researchers but not always easy, sometimes we have to look elsewhere otherwise we wouldn’t have any post grad students. Any Pacific students coming through we try to grab them” LR

“I tried very hard to target this years summer studentship because the topic has been on Pacific Island and youth settler job holding and I found it very difficult to recruit someone and in the end I have recruited a Pakeha woman who is doing a good job. We found it impossible to recruit an actual Pacific Islander” LR

Prioritising for New Settler researchers was less commonly mentioned across the research programmes. As the research leader quoted below observes, this may be due to the fact that New Settler research is still a relatively young topic area:

“[We] don’t prioritise New Settler researchers as it wasn’t in the language we were thinking in terms of in 2000” LR

However, as a New Settler research leader noted New Settlers want to set their own research agenda and demand for New Settler researchers will follow.

“Our priority is to encourage New Settler researchers....., the Maori and Pacific will have their own priorities and our New Settler research is parallel to them” LR

4.2.4 Relationships with Maori, Pacific and New Settler communities

Lead Researchers

Each programme's relationship with Maori, Pacific and /or with New Settler communities was investigated. Some programmes had no relationship with any of the communities. Of those that did the relationships had often developed in one of two ways. Firstly a number of research leaders indicated that they had personally played a key role in establishing relationships with one or more of the ethnic communities in the early stages of a programme's development with the objective of informing the development and implementation of the research. These research leaders either tapped into networks they had developed in former roles or earlier studies or set about developing new programme specific relationships. The second and more common response when asked the question was to refer to a role played by Maori, Pacific or New Settler researchers who were working either on the programme or within their department. The networks of the individual researchers, either personal networks or those developed explicitly to further the research objectives, were seen to provide a conduit through which the research programme had a relationship with a specific ethnic community. The latter process is described in the following accounts.

“We have an objective that is Maori, an independent researcher leads and has a number of relationships around the country” LR

“We have a team of Maori researchers, any communication goes through them, I don't approach them directly” LR

“We have two Maori researchers who bring with them their extensive networks and local community groups” LR

“Members of staff are Pacific” LR

The nature or purpose of the programme's contact with specific ethnic communities, and the roles of the researchers involved, were variously described as consultation, 'working collaboratively to identify issues for Maori', dissemination and data collection.

When asked about factors that had facilitated relationships between the research programme and the specific communities, research leaders cited the personal and cultural connections along with the hard work of those team members working with the communities. There was an acknowledgement that the research could often not have taken place without the relationships that existed or were developed and sustained by the researchers involved.

“Workers deeply grounded in their communities so have that trust. Lots of suspicion about research but we have been successful over a long period of time which has given communities confidence in our research” LR

“The efforts of the team to ensure a Pacific voice in the research” LR

Developing a reputation for listening and responding to the specific needs and issues of communities was seen as paramount for developing successful long term research

partnerships with communities. Trust was seen to develop as relationships were maintained over time. Similar relationship attributes were noted as important at the individual level between Maori and Pacific researchers and other members of the research programmes to which they were affiliated.

“The Pacific teams who have done interviews are still with us now, have been there at all stages...we have grown and learned together which has made the study a success” RL

Respondents also noted the importance of having senior research team members and colleagues with knowledge and expertise to facilitate the research process:

“I think it is essential to have a senior member of the research team who has that cultural understanding and knowledge and contact and so forth” LR

“The fact that my colleague is our assistant vice chancellor of research and situated in the Maori research group has greatly assisted” LR

Research leaders were also asked to talk about factors that had hindered developing and maintaining a research relationship with Maori, Pacific and /or New Settler communities. A number of issues were raised. The competing demands placed on individual researchers and on communities were seen to limit whether ideas were picked up and the rate of research progress.

“Overload on Pacific researchers” LR

“Progress is slow in part because of custom but primarily because the hapu and iwi representatives are overloaded. The expectations and the pressures that are put on Maori are overwhelming. Most of them are working for free and voluntarily ...so it’s slow progress” LR

Differing expectations held by the research team and community representatives, as illustrated in the following quotes, were noted to hinder the development of relationships in some circumstances.

“Difficulty in that we have a Western approach and then you try to do a Pacific Island approach. The researchers had to work hard with what the group wanted to explore and took it off into different directions so that can be a problem when we are trying to reconcile both approaches” LR

“I think sometimes organisations think that we’re a free consultancy service and we’re not” LR

Along with expectations, respondents observed that there was often a degree of suspicion among communities in relation to research. Research teams had to overcome that suspicion and build trust and an understanding of community viewpoints.

“A certain amount of resistance on the part of the ethnic based community co-ordinators. They had a level of suspicion possibly about the project or any

research. It made it a little bit harder to work with them. Once we got to do the interviews it was fine, once you got round to talking to people face to face it was fine” LR

“If you are from one ethnic group the battle is to convince other ethnic groups that you can appreciate their situation as well. Certain amount of suspicion as to which ethnic group you belong to” LR

Reluctance on the part of some researchers to engage in research with ethnic communities was also noted.

New and Emerging Researchers

For the programmes that had a relationship with ethnic communities, NER described their involvement principally as consultation and dissemination, sometimes alone and sometimes alongside other research team members. Much of the talk on this issue was by Maori NERs commenting on the roles and relationships that enabled them to forge links between Maori community groups and the research programmes. Factors that helped and hindered this process were also noted.

In terms of what facilitated these relationships, researchers talked about being “Maori” and being from a particular iwi:

“Certainly being Maori has opened doors ...that’s been really key to knowing and identifying the key players so then it’s possible to network into those communities and knowing how to fit within the Maori protocols e.g. speaking in Maori” NER

“What facilitated the relationship, one has been my tribal link, being Maori myself from these tribes, that facilitated the relationship, that’s got me in the door and access to a lot of people and information” NER

The importance of pre-existing networks and relationships and being available to meet and communicate through all phases of the research process were emphasised. Where NERs were working within their own iwi they felt they had a sense of trust. For one researcher, an elder working along side facilitated the relationship:

“I am a young female, and it’s better to have elder male to, when we were interviewing elders and he sort of leads the way so he’s been awesome for it I think” NER

Non Maori NERs also placed importance on pre-existing relationships with communities or the willingness of others with significant relationships with the community of interest to provide a bridge between the programme and the community.

“I think being introduced by stakeholders who had previously a long established relationship with these communities certainly helped from the start in terms of credibility and I’d say from that point it’s really been about

sustained involvement over a number of years with the community to establish trust and credibility” NER

Relationships were hindered by a lack of knowledge and understanding of the communities.

“Yes, working with senior project manager who didn’t understand how it works was difficult” NER

Other NERs noted that historical relationships between a team and a community could be problematic as well as advantageous for them as new researchers coming into a research programme.

“I sort of found maybe sometimes the older researchers on both sides can be a lot quite distrustful off each other. That can actually be passed on to younger ones who might be more willing to think ‘hey true partnership lets us get on with it and work together’” NER

“..people that have not necessarily carried themselves out in the ideal way certainly leaves a legacy behind them” NER

One researcher describes how the team’s relationship with Maori was hindered due to the fact that they were expected to take on more than the original research role taking the focus away from the task:

“There was still an anticipation by the iwi that while this was my job they also wanted me to assist in the broader development more strategic development of research so any time a research issue came to the organisation I was expected to participate in that and help them out.... So it didn’t hinder in a sense of ‘oh I wouldn’t have done it’ but it diverted from the main task” NER

There was very little comment by NERs on relationships with Pacific and New Settler communities.

4.2.5 Dissemination and Capability Building

Lead Researchers

Lead researchers were asked about the dissemination practices of the programme and the capability building activities that had occurred to engage NERs in this process. Broadly speaking, the programmes can be described as being in the early, mid or late stage with respect to the development of dissemination practices. Several programmes in the early stages of development had not considered dissemination; others had dissemination plans but were yet to act on them. Programmes that were mid way through their funding term were more likely to have commenced various forms of dissemination and leaders of completed programme commonly described an on going dissemination process that was expected to continue for several years beyond the programmes funding period. Although this general pattern prevailed there were programmes at various stages of the funding cycle that were yet to start the

process of dissemination, and therefore yet to consider opportunities for capacity building in the practice of dissemination.

“The project is in the middle stages so don’t have any great take home messages yet” LR

Standard lists of dissemination formats were mentioned: journal articles, conferences, technical reports, meetings with stakeholders, community groups and other end users. The involvement of post graduate students and other new and emerging researchers in dissemination practices ranged from minimal input to single-authorship of journal articles. In some teams dissemination was said to be led primarily by senior members with some involvement from a NER, whereas in other teams the NER had similar levels of involvement to other team members.

“They do it, they front up equally” LR

A common first step for new and emerging researchers was to prepare and present papers at conferences and workshops and feedback research findings to end user groups.

Where NERs contributed to writing papers for publication several research leaders specifically mentioned an inclusive approach to authorship.

“Wherever possible involve them as joint authors, pretty generous attributes and try to get them as named authors” LR

The role of disseminating research findings to communities was noted to often fall to new and emerging researchers and especially to Maori researchers working on Maori programmes or Maori modules within programmes.

“The Maori group, very much. They do it all for Maori communities” LR

Mentoring NERs in the process of dissemination was generally informal. It commonly involved helping with drafts, providing feedback on presentations and general encouragement. An example of a more formal approach to mentoring for dissemination was a “doctoral schools” programme which provided additional training and supervision to PhD candidates. Mentoring for research staff appeared to be similar but if anything even less formal than for post-graduate students:

“They are part of the team. They always participate in the programme meetings we have. They learn by engaging with the senior members of the research team and they learn by participating in and drafting the types of dissemination that we enact” LR

NERs were acknowledged to be more skilful than senior research staff in some areas and a relationship of ‘mutual mentoring’ was described as in the following quote.

“[they’re] usually better at doing power point presentations etc so I learn from them. Mutual mentoring” LR

"[NER] taught us more than we taught him on this project, it was very technical and his area of expertise" LR

One lead researcher talked about programme funding being used to pay a Maori mentor to provide a cultural mentoring experience to complement the academic mentoring offered to a post doctoral fellow.

"...someone she can debrief to. To make sure she has another Maori colleague she can relate to" LR

However, as one respondent points out, mentoring and 'building capabilities' through disseminating research can be problematic due to the time needed and the lack of funding available to do it:

"Social science research is generally labour intensive therefore funding is provided for a certain time. ...We have so much data to write up it would be mad to head into a new project before making the most of disseminating from the current project. It's a bind, it compromises disseminating in a big way" LR

Funding to write up research was generally seen as hard to get other than via post doctoral fellowships.

New and Emerging Researchers

The type of dissemination practices and the level at which NERs were involved in these varied across the projects. NERs had been involved in writing technical reports, conference presentations, reporting to communities, producing material for websites and writing articles for publication and working papers. Past experience and levels of confidence with the various forms of dissemination differed widely within the group of NERs interviewed. The level of assistance sought with different dissemination practices and the perceived adequacy of the training and support provided varied accordingly.

Dissemination was not a topic all the NERs interviewed considered relevant to their position. The reasons for not seeing it as relevant included the circumscribed nature of their particular role on a programme, for example interviewing, to working on programmes yet to commence dissemination. The latter situation still provided a training opportunity for the NER quoted below.

"What we're doing is we're actually working on the [dissemination] plan now, we're fleshing out the plan. We are thinking, how are we going to it ...what's the scope of this...what's the scope that's manageable for us to actually deal with, what's going to be good value ...it's very complex trying to figure out exactly how to put together but we've been working on that for the past couple of weeks" NER

Common first steps on the dissemination ladder were preparing project reports, and giving presentations to community groups, hui and conferences. These reports and presentations were often prepared with input from several team members for delivery in individual or joint formats. There was some notion of a hierarchy of dissemination

audiences that determined who within a team would participate in certain dissemination practices.

“The level at which I was involved with was feeding back was mostly people I was directly involved with at the sites I was working with, higher level feedback was pretty much managers” NER

Preparing draft papers was seen as a more advanced step than presentations in terms of learning the practice of research dissemination. NERs who came to their positions as post docs or with prior research experience had often written papers for publication before and some post-graduate students had written an article arising out of a thesis with support from a supervisor. Others had no experience of journal writing so NER needs for advice and guidance in this area varied widely.

In light of this diversity of publication experience it is not surprising that the level and nature of the mentoring NER reported receiving also varied. Some researchers described being mentored quite closely in the early stages of their dissemination with the level of support diminishing as their confidence and abilities grew.

“For either writing of the reports, preparing for it, especially in the early days I basically had my hand held you know, here’s how we’re going to do it, here’s how you can organize it, here’s what you need to do and as I got more confident I’ve been given a bit of more free reign to tackle it myself” NER

“Not for some time. When I first began obviously the project leader gave me some advice and steered me a little bit for a year but since that time, no” NER

Not all NER felt that support was available or that it was well matched to their needs. A few indicated that they had struggled to access adequate guidance on research dissemination and some quite specific training needs were identified.

“No because it was more like I was doing this project myself” NER

“I guess confidence is still a big issue for me and yeah I am an excellent interviewer and have no trouble getting information out of people and obtaining data, but I still feel that I am not skilled with the output side of things especially in writing executive summariesI feel that there’s some more that I could definitely be mentored on that area” NER

At the other end of the spectrum there were NERs who felt that support was always available and if they took the initiative senior colleagues were willing to advise and were generous with their time.

“we are really self directed and able to identify our own skill gaps and needs and then take advantage of all the other skills and knowledge and expertise in amongst our team, yes for the past four years I have taken advantage of the skills based in amongst our team and made sure to whenever I felt there was a gap in my own knowledge and skills. Id’ just go out and ask for it, seek it quite actively and it’s there” NER

“[supervisor] helps me every step of the way with whatever I need. Checking over what has been written, guidance on how to do reports and presentations”
NER

It was not always research leaders who provided valuable advice and peer review of reports and presentations. In some instances guidance also came from individuals beyond the immediate research programme and /or supervisory team.

“Writing papers, we sent them back to members of the advisory committee to edit, in fact all written material we have sent back to the advisory committee to edit...I then use my academic colleagues to ensure that we always had double back up in terms of editing our material” NER

One researcher talked about the difficulty they had experienced in the mentoring process, in part precipitated by working as part of an inter disciplinary programme:

“Well, I think co-writing is a difficult practice so there’s all sorts of things come to play and I didn’t actually find an easy thing to do to co-write with [mentor] partly because we have quite divergent academic backgrounds and interests so while we were trying to find something, it wasn’t actually easy for us to come up with shared argument that we worked across the paper so it’s not straight forward easy thing to do.” NER

When asked about how they felt mentoring had contributed to building their confidence in disseminating research findings, respondents gave mixed responses. Some felt they had been confident from the outset in certain areas of dissemination so mentoring had not really helped them, but as illustrated by the following comments many of the NERs felt that mentoring had significantly increased their confidence to produce research outputs on their own.

“Yes in a huge way. With the mentoring, I guess referring to my own papers and books which is monographs, a number of working papers, conference addresses and workshop... my mentors are experts in these particular areas and they read through my research and commented and edited and suggestions and so on, and so I guess once you get the thumbs up by the experts in that area, then that gives you the confidence to disseminate” NER

“Yes absolutely. There’s no way I would’ve been able to do it without them”
NER

Building capability in generating research outputs was also seen as an iterative process with skills and confidence accumulating over time through repeated practice and mentoring.

“I thought the feedback was really good but I guess you need feedback on more than one bit of work that you do to get confident that you can do your own work. I guess over time repeating that process would definitely give me the confidence” NER

One NER noted frustration at not having adequate time within the context of a programme grant to undertake analyses and write articles that were more than descriptive accounts of research findings.

4.2.6 Relationships with end users and external collaborators

Lead researchers

A range of end users were identified by research leaders. These included central, regional and local government agencies, representatives of particular industries, professional groups and community services and organisations. The relationships developed with research end users were generally seen to have greatly enhanced the research enterprise. Their contribution to capability building occurred through avenues such as increasing the research team's relevant knowledge base and understanding of local issues. The following quotes provide two quite different examples of this process.

“Collaborators and industry people have helped us tremendously to understand the industry and advise us with what we are trying to achieve. Huge contribution to getting us up to speed” LR

“They have been terrific especially nurses in that area, they came on to the project and gave us a pragmatic overview of the situation in NZ. A very crucial part of training that we as researchers went through” LR

Examples were also given of end users assisting research programmes to identify new research directions and to interpret research outcomes. In the following example advice was provided on the development of a survey tool.

“They served as a reality check in terms of what was going to be useful and what information they needed in creating surveys, getting the language right and refine research plans so they made sense” LR

The broad role end users can play in social science capability building through extending the reach of the research, providing channels for dissemination to different audiences, increasing the visibility and potential implementation of research findings was observed by many of the lead researchers interviewed. Their role as potential employers of social science graduates was also noted.

“It's been valuable because of the links with officials in the area has extended our research capacity beyond academic and into the actual policy making” LR

“what we're doing is making sure that whatever we do as academic researchers is being guided by people who are going to implement the policy at the end of the day” LR

Connections between research team members and end users – individuals and groups - had often built up over many years. Networks were extended when groups undertook new work in a field and built up a reputation for completing useful work.

“We’re known in the field for doing research on [topic] so we just approach them and because of our track record they are prepared to come on board. So we build on that track record that the school’s got” LR

“Over years you build up connections, keep working with them and eventually they start to come to you. Then you need to ensure that younger researchers are drawn into those networks and connections and start networking. Unless they do they won’t get the invitations from the end users to make a bid for a contract or be a potential provider” LR

Establishing networks with end users was seen as an element of capacity building for NERs.

As research areas morphed and merged new combinations of end users were seen to be needed. Research leaders described fairly straight forward approaches to setting new networks in place.

“Some of them were pre-existing and many of them we went out and sought their organisations, met with them and actively developed those relationships” LR

The emphasis placed on effective end user relationships by funding agencies was the spur for some groups to develop their end user links.

“When we first decided to apply for the grant, we got the message that having links with research users would be important so we started contacting people who we thought would care about the research. Initial conversations and then asked them to be a part of the advisory board” LR

Maintaining visibility within a range of central government ministries was a strategy used by the research leader quoted below.

“Making sure you are not invisible, be seen in the corridors in Wellington and meetings with groups who want input in themes. Being accessible to take part in advisory committees. Build strong connections with the public sector who are our main end users and when they want someone to do something they come to you” LR

The nature of relationships with end users varied widely. Some appeared to be informal and based on inter personal relationships whereas others were set up more formally through mechanisms such as programme advisory groups, secondments and joint workshops. The involvement of many end users in research programmes was funded by the end user organisations themselves. As the second of the comments below suggests participation may be in an organisation’s longer term interests.

“They do it with their heart” LR

“In kind support for us, they participate, provide documentation, come to workshops, host workshops. In kind support from them for the research. The

outcomes of which should benefit them if not immediately then certainly in the long run” LR

In other situations the programmes funded the involvement of end users, sometimes from budget provided explicitly for this purpose by the research funders and at other times through savings made on other research activity.

For the Maori based programmes the cost of community engagement was met by the research programme.

“Yes in every case we had to fund that partly because we use Maori research process where you do fund the engagement and partly because you need to provide that resource so we have to go to them for meetings and we tend to resource those. The funding comes from the project and we include it in the project grant but I have to say that the dissemination bit tends to the bit that’s not always funded. We have to do it from our own resources” LR

“Various forms of Koha paid for Hui and other activities” LR

Funding the involvement of Maori communities in research was seen to be an essential aspect of the research process.

New and Emerging Researchers

NERs were asked about their involvement with end users as part of their research work. The term ‘end users’ was interpreted widely and for different NERs covered community groups and organisations as well as advisory panel members and other academics with whom the research team worked collaboratively. Not all NERs indicated that they had contact with research end users.

“...with organisations and groups, the relationship there has been interviewer myself and interviewee them, then sometimes bit of reciprocal help I guess, like they’ve let us interview them and then they wanted us to speak to the young people at the school about universities and things like that” NER

Individual NERs noted that establishing relationships with end users had been valuable for their career development in the following ways: gaining the confidence to engage with unfamiliar groups of people; establishing enduring networks with other people with interests in a common topic; and receiving advice and research support. In the following quotes a range of perspectives on the positive benefits of end user engagement are noted.

“In a way they’ve been mentors, they have been mentoring me and giving me a lot of guidance in terms of what I’ve been researching, where to go about it, who to see and so on, as well as editing in dissemination, they played an integral role” NER

“Yeah immense value. I’ve built a research profile around those collaborations within the research fraternity and amongst the iwi groups and certainly number of key end users and cross institutions so that certainly furthered my own personal profile” NER

“Oh yes definitely, just the nature of working with young people and with research participants broadens your research portfolio because you have to learn different ways of handling different situations etc” NER

“I think it contributed quite a bit. I think it showed what I did know and didn’t know. I think it challenged some of my thinking about evaluation which has been quite good because you can go and try and address some of those issues” NER

Exposure to different methodological approaches, contact with collaborators from different disciplinary backgrounds and the opportunity to discuss research ideas with specialists in the field were also all identified as useful to the process of building research skills.

“Every person you have something to do with helps – they work differently.” NER

4.2.7 International relationships

Lead Researchers

Linkages with research colleagues working in similar fields internationally were highly valued. The most common scenario was for a research leader to have built up longstanding relationships in their fields of research over several decades. A new project provided an opportunity to refresh or extend these links. Research leaders who were newer to a field or who for other reasons did not have a network of international colleagues talked about their efforts to network internationally. Their efforts had met with mixed success. Approaching and visiting selected overseas research centres appeared to have been a more successful strategy than attempting to forge links through conference attendance but data on both scenarios was limited.

“Made contact with UK research centres and tried and succeeded in establishing relationships” LR

“I did present in Europe earlier this year and had contact with Finland and the USA but wasn’t close enough to this project to provide anything fruitful” LR

The nature of relationships between the BRCSS portfolio programmes and international colleagues range from fairly informal opportunistic encounters between individual team members to structured project specific joint research activities. Accounts of more formal international relationships that had either been established or extended through the current projects included:

“People are working with us closely anyway, kind of like an advisory role but a little bit more than that. It’s joint work, they are co-authors etc” LR

“Met up with Canadian researchers working on indigenous TB [tuberculosis] in Canada. We had a visit from them and then we went to Canada and are producing a joint monograph with them” LR

Developing international relationships in a number of projects had led to discussions on the possibility of future joint research collaborations:

“Developing a relationship with sociologists at La Trobe university. They were attracted by our project and have suggested a long term collaboration and as a result we have developed joint workshops, planning joint work, a guest journal issue that I will edit and include work from our postgraduate researchers and the idea of developing capability and dissemination of their work” LR

When asked about the benefits of establishing or extending international relationships, a number of research programme leaders described the relationships as essential or very important in terms of contextualising, comparing and validating their current research within the broader international scene:

“It’s enormous for us because it’s around the validation of indigenous methodology and we need to work with indigenous groups” LR

“Very important in keeping us up to date with research ideas, arguments and perspectives in that particular area” LR

“Team members went to a workshop and being exposed to people who are doing related work in a different context is always useful, comparison is always good for stimulating thought about your context. Becoming aware of theoretical contexts they are using is good for us to think about. Familiarity with another research project and the way they frame research questions and the ways in which what they are doing differs from what we are doing and it is comparable and what kinds of questions they are coming up and what are they addressing that we are not and vice versa. The content and the way of framing issues has been helpful” LR

Lifting performance and achieving excellence was also seen as an aspect of building capability; and one that requires some form of benchmarking against which quality standards can be assessed. Maintaining international connections and publishing in international journals were considered crucial in this regard. Examples were given of international relationships providing opportunities for postgraduate students to visit overseas institutions and work alongside other research teams and receive a degree of mentoring:

“Post doc has spent some time in Melbourne and worked with their professor – good in terms of mentoring” LR

“Emerging researcher opportunities, we are getting one of theirs as a post doc and one of ours will enrol in a Master’s in Canada” LR

By broadening relationships internationally, one leader felt that this would also open up employment opportunities for post-graduate students:

“Essential in our group, there are a dozen PhD students and not a dozen academic positions or even in government. If you are not viable on the international scene you may as well get out now. For us, our students are very internationally orientated and will be looking to go anywhere in the world when they graduate to get work as NZ has a tiny market from seven universities. Many students are academically focussed so need to do this. The international relationships and conferences are absolutely essential for these people” LR

Exposure to international research was considered beneficial in that it generally widened the horizons of emerging researchers. It had also provided access to data and increased technical capability for some groups.

New and Emerging Researchers

A number of NERs had made links with international academics and university departments through their involvement in the BRCSS portfolio research programme. Mechanisms that had facilitated this process had been participating in meetings with visiting academics and interns, attending conferences and formal collaborations set up by team leaders with overseas teams working in a similar field.

Much of the interaction described was informal such as sharing information, techniques and working papers electronically. Co authoring a paper was mentioned by one NER and several others had visited or had been an intern at an overseas research institution that had links with the programme.

From the NERs perspective the main benefits of international relationships were the opportunity to situate their research within an international context, to develop more extensive research networks in the field, the stimulation of exposure to new ideas and the chance to discuss and validate methodological approaches.

“Wider networks, it’s broadened my horizon in terms of putting an international perspective on things, but it’s mainly network and support really” NER

“You learn from them. You cast your net wider, learn about different ways of handling things, I think also validation of methodologies that you’re using or how you’re project is going” NER

The potential for international exposure to contribute to capacity building at the individual level is aptly described in the following excerpt

“It gives you confidence – confidence building – to go overseas to meet other people and be treated as genuine researcher or something interesting to say it does really help to know those sorts of people and contact and have those conversations because it’s all part of building confidence in terms of giving

papers handling the response and then going on and talking about it on another level later so I think it's been incredibly useful" NER

Examples of specific skills learnt and insights gained from interaction with foreign scholars were also noted.

4.2.8 Inter and trans disciplinary research practice

Lead Researchers

Lead researchers described most of the BRCSS portfolio programmes as either inter, multi or trans disciplinary. The complex nature of the social issues being addressed by research programmes and increasing engagement with the policy sector were seen to have precipitated a shift from single disciplinary research to inter, multi or trans disciplinary research practice.

"More researchers are exploring the policy implications as what they do so yes, becoming more inter-disciplinary. People are realising that you have to look at things in a holistic way – you get a much more rounded view about what can be done about it" LR

"In general yes, for sometime now people who work in these areas have realised that public policy changes, state changes, welfare changes are difficult if you are not reading into the fields that link in to it. This is usually where the most interesting ideas are being stimulated, the juxtaposition of the ideas that flow from these strains often stimulates the creative thinking" LR

The merging of disciplinary knowledges to create new ways of conceptualising and understanding social issues was depicted by some respondents as the site of more innovative and productive social science research. A single disciplinary classification was seen as no longer adequate to describe the trans disciplinary practices of some respondents.

"I have a series of research fields that are developing at different rates and different ways. In terms of my own broader position in SS research we are part of a period of great change in which the disciplinary categories are being re-thought and we are producing a different kind of knowledge. This is a moment where the trans-disciplinary is productive and politically useful" LR

Over the duration of the research programmes, the majority tended not to change their disciplinary orientation/s. Where a change in research focus had occurred it was more likely to be a consequence of acquiring new knowledge and approaches rather than a shift in discipline/s.

"Yes, we have core questions which stay in the centre but in every phase we bring in new ideas so with that comes new disciplinary ideas and practices" LR

Varying strategies were employed to instigate inter and trans disciplinary research programmes. Some programmes had evolved through discussion between individuals

from different disciplinary backgrounds and these individuals intended to complete the work themselves. Others were designed by a core group of investigators with the intention of recruiting team members with specific disciplinary expertise. These distinct approaches are described below.

“Started with the selection of the research team from multiple disciplines then came together to present our research to each other and discuss the implications for our research project” LR

“The design and the recruitment of the project, it was envisaged as a trans-disciplinary mosaic and then it was a matter of recruiting researchers that could turn the pieces of the mosaic into something that could communicate with each other” LR

Providing an environment in which generating new or alternative ways of thinking about the research questions at hand was a common rationale for inter and trans disciplinary practice. The capability building potential of encouraging an understanding of the different ways research on a topic could be conceptualised was also noted.

“In terms of the team, sharing readings and quite different research paradigms and seeing synergies and how our methods can be used in someone else’s conceptualisation of the problem” LR

Adopting inter and trans-disciplinary research approaches was also seen as increasing the opportunities for publication and other forms of dissemination.

“Strategy to target trans and inter-disciplinary journals to sustain your position within a discipline whilst performing trans disciplinary research” LR

Developing a wider research repertoire in terms of knowledge, methods and methodologies through inter and trans-disciplinary approaches was also perceived as a confidence and capability building exercise for those involved:

“Most important is to encourage staff to have confidence in working with people in other disciplines. Key strategy is to reassure them that their discipline matters and their knowledge is really important and that they are no way subsidiary to others otherwise you can’t have effective inter-disciplinary research. People have got to be confident of the skills they bring into the inter-disciplinary framework and not be dominated into thinking they are inferior” LR

An increasing inter and trans-disciplinary research orientation was also seen as a positive move to better position a group to take advantage of future research funding opportunities. The contrary view that it is difficult to secure funding for trans disciplinary research was also noted. It was also depicted as being ‘more fashionable’ or more ‘acceptable’ within the academy.

Not all accounts of inter and trans disciplinary research experiences were unproblematic as indicated by the quote below.

“It’s lead to its problems at times, there’s been a bit of misunderstanding. I must say you get hard positivistic researchers, let’s say from economics, not quite understanding or being able to communicate to softer qualitative researchers” LR

However, it was generally valued as a way to stimulate innovative and diverse approaches to research questions and for providing a good learning environment for new and emerging researchers.

New and Emerging Researchers

The interviews explored whether working on inter and trans disciplinary research programmes and research environments had changed the disciplinary focus of NERs. Various viewpoints were expressed. A relatively common response was for NERs to report that their disciplinary orientation had not changed but had expanded to encompass perspectives and or methods from different disciplines. This tended to be associated with increasing research confidence as the NERs accumulated experience through conducting research and being part of a team.

“Yes it has because being exposed to anthropologists and geographers and people from political studies have made me think more broadly about my own topic as an historian I’ve looked more and taken on board some of the things they’re looking at and drawing out and trying to use that in my area and I am looking more broadly – I suppose drawing in social scientists’ theory ... It’s likely perhaps that I wouldn’t have other wise or perhaps not so much. I’ve certainly enjoyed looking at it more broadly, better from my point of view as a historian. So being in a multi disciplinary team has really been useful” NER

As they became more confident and understood the contingencies of the programme they would begin looking to other disciplines for alternative approaches and methods.

“No – what has changed is my understanding of what I’m doing. It’s still very planning related but moved to evaluation a bit more. Involved in evaluation literature and applying it to the planning field. I exhausted the planning literature and came up with nothing so I needed to look at evaluation to come up with methodology” NER

A number of NERs employed on BRCSS programmes were members of research centres and were involved in a range of research projects and programmes. The generic research skills and interests they had when employed were honed through participation in multiple projects. Some NERs noted that finding their area of personal research interest had emerged through this broad project experience. For others it had been a matter of chance; being in the right place at the right time when a tender was awarded. Not all projects followed the trajectory initially planned and as evident in the following quote a researcher was valued for their methodological flexibility.

“Yes it has. I started off thinking that this is a qualitative research project and it ended up being a quantitative research project. So that definitely changed. I think part of the problem was the research project has had several people come through it and kind of quit unexpectedly unfortunately so that the

process of creating the methodology that we were using is very very jumbled unfortunately and lots of messages got lost and I got brought in at the last minute. Basically adjusted the sort of data gathering phase and so that methodology itself changed anyway” NER

Maori and Pacific NERs were aware that their cultural skills made them valuable contributors to social science projects on diverse topics and projects that could be framed from a number of disciplinary perspectives. They became adept at applying core skills in a range of projects.

“Yeah. It’s just that you know you work within the team that has a number of different projects running at a time and you get asked to be involved particularly in Maori research and Pacific research, you’re pretty much asked to be involved in everything and whether that’s your area of expertise or not you have to learn I mean if you’re there because you are able to assist in accessing Maori communities and understanding Maori ways then that’s going to fit into everything... SO you’re slotted in because you have that Maori health research expertise but it doesn’t necessarily mean you have the other major area of knowledge that you need on the topic” NER

As a consequence of working on multiple research projects in inter and trans disciplinary environments some NER found assigning themselves to a specific discipline was not meaningful.

“I don’t think so, I would struggle to think what discipline – if I had to say something I would have to say something like community development, that was the focus of the project from beginning to end” NER

4.2.9 Funding the development of new research ideas

Lead Researchers

Strategies to resource the development of new research ideas largely involved utilising internal university funds and ‘leveraging’ from current programme resources. The ideas themselves generally emerged from the skills and knowledge base of the research team and from new questions that arose through the analysis of data from earlier research projects.

“Sometimes we have to make a little bit of saving from one project to move on to a new one, you have to think about having money to get something new started. Funding is not normally available until you sell your idea so you need to make use of your existing project savings” LR

“We are fortunate to have a couple of programmes we have to resource those kinds of activities within the existing resources, it’s kind of homework that we have to do from our own resources” LR

Another common practice was undertaking smaller projects within which new ideas can be explored and expertise gained that helps position the group to seek further, larger scale funding:

“We have tried to look at seeding grants and things like feasibility grants from HRC, internal funds for small grants to push things further. Try to do small qualitative work to dig a bit more deeply to see where to go” LR

Identifying synergies and common interests within the research team and brainstorming new ideas as a group were techniques used for stimulating the development of new research questions.

Maintaining the inspiration and energy within a research team was also identified as a necessary part of resourcing the development of new ideas. The important role played by graduate students in this process was mentioned.

“That’s principally done through graduate researchers...The most innovative stuff is done by graduate students, we will fund them to do that activity even if it doesn’t really directly fit our contract of activity” LR

“I have become a specialist in PhD supervision and workshop processes both of which have enormous potential for liberating intellectual development and engagement around issues” LR

Engaging with external stakeholders and drawing on new and existing academic relationships and networks were also noted as potential opportunities for developing new ideas. However a number of respondents noted that without securing some external funding new ideas often languish. The importance of the Marsden fund was noted in this regard. NER were not asked about the funding new ideas.

4.2.10 Continuity/discontinuities in research employment

Lead Researchers

Maintaining continuity of employment for highly valued social science researchers was identified as a major frustration and challenge for programme leaders. The problem was considered an inevitable consequence of a low level of social science funding and the short term nature of contract funding. University employment policies were seen to exacerbate the problem.

“Chronic, I can’t run more than a one year contract for anybody. Its university practice, instability of money and the tight fiscal environment we live in. money disappears, you spend it in a particular year, none of those are conducive to long term planning” LR

“Yes because we typically employ people on a casual basis so there comes a point where their own career and own interests require more permanent employment so a lot of what we do is on a temporary basis” LR

A number of programme leaders felt that building research capacity on a funding base of multiple short-term funded projects was a difficult if not impossible task. Short term contracts created an unstable working environment for researchers as their employment remained casual and often part time. The stability of university-based research teams was seen as vulnerable in light of the higher financial rewards and employment stability offered by government departments and private firms. The university sector could not match salaries or offer permanency of employment:

“Yes, definitely. It’s the biggest issue we face. In our case we are not a teaching department so not much turnover of students. It’s more to do with the environment, funding on a competitive basis, 2 or 3 year projects and people get fed up with it because you can’t offer continuity and can’t offer the same conditions of employment as government departments do. We have trouble there recruiting and maintaining people” LR

The scarcity of funding and skilled research staff were seen to have promoted a competitive rather than a collaboration environment between social scientists.

“You are always running on the smell of an oily rag and hoping to get hold of someone useful before someone else gets them... you can make them useful but can’t keep them. Lots of better paid jobs outside tertiary education research centre” LR

“Yes because of the demand for Pacific researchers and offers from other groups” LR

The less secure the funding environment the more flexible researchers need to be to maintain their position. Lead researchers observed that it can be particularly difficult to retain individuals who have specialist rather than generic skills.

“Other people we have had working here, we couldn’t guarantee them that they can continue working 100% on evaluation so they have had to be flexible and work on other projects. We do expect quite a bit of flexibility from our research staff, if someone is not so flexible but are valuable it becomes a mission to get continuity of employment for them” LR

Not all research leaders attempted to provide continuity of employment for researchers. For those leaders who adhered to the ‘recycle’ approach to staffing programmes there was no expectation that continuity of employment was an option for research staff.

“We never expected there to be continuity of employment, we see ourselves as providing transitional employment. We take people in because of their expertise but not with any expectation of continuity of employment. Just to draw on that expertise to spread around...more into developing capacity and moving on to the next stage. We hope to recruit more post grads and develop their capacity and see them move on elsewhere rather than keep them here” LR

The leaders who valued continuity of employment in their team members felt they were continually pursuing longer term funding options and contracts to gap fill funding shortfalls. In addition strategies were adopted to counter attrition to higher paying sectors such as offering incentives like travel, flexible working hours and higher qualifications:

“Tried to give them incentives for conferences etc and reasonable teaching loads so they can get their research done” LR

“Our salaries are really low compared to the private sector so I encourage them to go on overseas trips, allow flexible working hours and try to get them registered on a post graduate degree. Try to find other benefits that seem attractive” LR

Along with incentives, respondents also felt it was important to place value on the individual and to nurture their career aspirations. This approach is illustrated in the follow comment.

“Making them feel that there is a career for them and that their input is valid. Ensuring that there is something challenging and that they are not the dogs’ body who does the photocopying or makes the tea. Also making sure they are involved in workshops and contributing to publications and gradually building their own independence as researchers” LR

Juggling people and funds between projects to maintain continuity of employment was a common practice for programme leaders.

“Try and save some on one project to bridge the gap. It’s managing funds in order to retain good staff even if you might have some gaps” LR

One research centre was pursuing a strategy not unlike the ‘recycle’ strategy more characteristic of academic departments. Continuity within the research team was improved by staffing programmes with scholarship funded students and post doctoral fellows.

“The way I get around this is that probably the most reliable staff are those that are studying a higher degree because you’ve got them for the tenure of that degree, that tends to be the way I do it. So in our research unit we’ve got doctorals, post docs. I have very few stand alone research staff, it’s almost impossible to pay them enough or get the continuity of funding and security so it’s difficult unless there’s something for them like doctoral qualifications... That’s our strategy and for recruitment and retention because you’ve kind of got them for that period of the degree. It certainly has been effective in comparison with trying to just recruit for people just on salary, that’s very hard” LR

A postgraduate qualification was found to be a useful incentive for retaining staff albeit for the limited two three year training period of a higher degree. This does not however contribute to capability building in the longer term if strategies that enable individuals to establish a research career are unavailable.

New and Emerging Researchers

For non Maori/non Pacific NERs each step towards building a social science research career was portrayed as precarious by a number of the respondents: acquiring the first research job, maintaining a series of short term roll over contracts, and securing funding for a longer term position. Issues of job security and career uncertainty featured less in the interviews with Maori and Pacific NERs who were aware of the limited supply and high demand for their skills.

NERs commented that the career path into social science research is often not transparent. It was depicted as something you could be lucky to stumble upon by being in the right place at the right time, by having interpersonal networks, and by being able to take on casual or part time work until something more secure came along.

“I did my masters and then got a job at [university] and worked there for 2 ½ years and now I am doing my PhD... I think I was lucky to get my first job because sometimes it is difficult - basically I got it because I knew somebody and that is a shame because if I didn’t know anybody, I have some good skills but I may not have been able to utilise them. It is not a great system how it works getting into your first job...Once you are in it is fine it is just that when you are on the outside it seems hard to get in” NER

“Probably at the beginning it has been quite hard, the way that I have gained employment has been through my own network so it’s been through to my family.” NER

Researchers described being fortunate when they worked on projects that kept rolling.

“Not so far, gone on a lot longer than I thought I would. It’s short term contracts but kept rolling on. When a project finishes always something around the corner. It’s always there that you don’t know what will happen next year – can’t take it for granted” NER

As the NER below notes positions can appear stable if new contracts are secured enabling employment to continue. Despite this apparent stability, anxiety and frustration over contracts coming to an end without any certainty of renewal were of concern.

“Yeah it’s been a big issue. I guess from the outside you’d say, gosh it doesn’t look like an issue. I mean it looks like I’ve been sitting here at the same desk for years from the outside, but in a legal sense I’ve had a renewal of my contracts every so often and change the nature of the contracts and so on” NER

“Yes. Very much so, in that the contracts, I think would be the factor if I ever stopped researching that would be why because I am sick of living on contracts” NER

Moving from scholarship funding to a research position was also identified as a career transition point where shortfalls of funding could be problematic.

“Absolutely. While I am fortunate enough to have the funding it is limited term, my thesis funding which is 3 years very very few people finish within 3 years. Not really sure what to do next and trying to balance the need to survive with wanting to complete and need to get employment of some sort to put food on the table so yeah it’s a real issue and I think it detracts from what you’re trying to do having to spread yourself out and cover a whole lot of different basis” NER

NER talked about the strategies they had adopted to try to keep working in social science research such as networking within academia so that they were aware of forthcoming project opportunities, developing a broad skill base and being flexible and willing to take on any task.

“At the end of the day it comes down to who you know so it’s just networking and shoulder tapping you know asking around” NER

“I think the chief strategy I used in the beginning was being a generalist with skills that could be used in lots of projects.... I guess if there has been a strategy it has been that as opposed to a strategy for building up my own particular research area” NER

Adopting a flexible approach to the research tasks undertaken may enable an individual to remain in the social science research workforce but it may not be the most desirable strategy from a sector perspective.

“I’ve been willing to do whatever work comes on so flexibility on my part has also allowed me to continue to work because I am willing to turn my hand to anything. I’ve been here few years now and I’ve seen some people come through who are focused on one particular topic or one particular technique and when that is no longer interesting there’s no job for them” NER

NER discussed the importance of developing a track record for undertaking good work and consolidating their position by adding research related outputs to their curriculum vitae as a strategy for securing a future in research.

“Just being good at what you do... if you’re good at what you do you’ll always have work and people will always speak well of your work and if they speak well of your work, you get jobs” NER

“Research consultancy outside the academy that’s one thing, looking at other employers. Also, trying to maximise the time on the project to do as much as you can on that project such as get as much benefit from the project so when you move on, you move on with better skills...[you] build up your CV” NER

While establishing a research reputation for themselves was clearly important to many of the NER, some observed hurdles or vulnerabilities that may exist because of what they perceived to be attributes of the way funding systems operate.

“Some of the funding bodies that are set up, they set up in such way that they want the well-known names to lead it and so what happens is that the younger academics, their ideas get put under someone else’s name just to get the money in the first place. So then it’s kind of like then you are at the mercy that they’re going to be doing the right thing by you to actually.. you know..... the next question is does it suit the purposes of the older ones to let other people know how good their younger ones are and to actually use that for their own purposes” NER

Other NERs had contingency plans for when they needed to supplement their sometimes part-time and casual research salary with alternative sources of income.

“I am employed part time and it has been on a casual basis and I’ve worked for [employer] through this and previously FRST funded projects, it’s not enough to keep me going full time so I seek funding else where for other work and locally in the community and also for like I’ve picked up work at our local college and research administrator for our historical projects so it’s going on and so I am always looking for work that can financially sustain me” NER

One NER noted that BRCSS funding had enabled them to continue in a research role.

“The BRCSS funding that we got late last year is just an absolute gem to have that, and while moving outside my comfort zone in several different ways, just the knowledge that for the next 5 months we have funding for me to work 30hours/week is quite awesome” NER

Maintaining continuity of employment was not noted as a particular concern for Pacific and Maori researchers. A number of career development and project based opportunities were seen to be open to them.

4.2.11 Career Choice Issues

New and Emerging Researchers

The expectations placed on research staff to fulfil a range of roles and produce a range of outputs were considered unrealistic by some NERs. The excerpts below expressed concern about the level of expectation placed on individuals in research positions.

“The number of tasks that they’re expecting people to do. I mean I don’t even have the worst of it, I’ve got it easy compared to a number of people, I am full time researcher what about those people that are expected to formulate fantastic research also get government bids for research ... and so on and it’s punishing, because it’s just like these extra things getting thrown on all the time. There’s no real incentive for academics to actually do that because it’s like well in the end you’ve only got one life and you’ve got to live it and you’ve got to make sure you spend enough time with your children” NER

“I think there are unrealistic expectations on people in research units as well about output and publication and stuff like that.” NER

The importance of weighing up and balancing work with other aspects of life was another recurring theme in NERs talk. Funding and salary levels were important considerations in the decision on whether research was seen as a manageable and desirable career in the longer term.

“Funding for researchers is difficult... I don’t think my situation necessarily fits other peoples but when you are parents and juggling kids and all the costs that come with and you’re trying to do study to further your own career and work that’s quite difficult and I don’t think this funding offered for research is adequate often. Like for example funding available to do PhD it might allow somebody who has no kids to survive but it doesn’t work when you trying to manage a family” NER

“I know that I can take my skills out to the market place and probably earn twice as much in it. I do have to think what are the benefits of staying in research especially academic research as opposed to taking off outside into the private sector” NER

For the NER quoted below the non-monetary attractions of research work were weighed up against the comparatively low salaries.

“Funding again – I’m not so worried about lower salaries though, I could get a consultancy job but I hate it. I don’t mind earning a lower salary in research because I find it engaging and stimulating. I like to be at the front end rather than the arse end. In the field I’m working in there are few people doing research so the opportunity is massive but trying to make it a reality is hard” NER

The location of social science research, seen to be primarily either in universities or in the Wellington-based government sector, was considered a possible impediment to research as a career choice. Several NERs noted that to pursue a career in a particular social science field there may be only one location in which this could be realised given the relatively small size and the specialised nature of the New Zealand research scene.

4.2.12 BRCSS awareness and participation

Lead Researchers

Research leaders awareness of BRCSS related activities ranged from individuals being “vaguely aware” of BRCSS activities and initiatives to “yes, all of them”, Not surprisingly, those who expressed greater awareness of BRCSS activities often noted that they were on the management committee. All programme leaders are members of the BRCSS College.

New and Emerging Researchers

Awareness of BRCSS related activities among the NERs was somewhat varied. Some respondents like the individual quoted below had not heard of BRCSS.

I didn't know [of BRCSS] until you sent me this [invitation to be interviewed]. I went on the web page to see what was there and I hadn't really been aware of any of the other stuff and haven't attended any of the seminars" NER

Others were well informed and had participated in BRCSS events and /or received BRCSS funding.

There was no systematic mode through which those who knew of BRCSS had heard about it or any consistency in what they knew. BRCSS awareness often happened serendipitously as described by the NER below.

"I only heard about this at a Christmas Party from other people who were talking about some sort of I don't know what you call them interactive or you know like um.. seminars where you're setting in one room giving a presentation and other people from CHCH or where ever listening to you.... that's the first I'd heard of it There was discussion about how weird it is that you're talking to fresh air you know but people can see you... so until then I didn't know that even happened" NER

BRCSS had been introduced to a number of NER by individual members of the Network who had strongly promoted its activities and funding opportunities.

"It was probably through [colleague] I guess if I was involved in an organisation that didn't have someone so directly involved I probably wouldn't have known much about it at all, he was the main source of information" NER

"I knew you could apply for research funding, which I am very fuzzy on how you do that and where you get that information from...I was at a ministry meeting in Wellington where Tim McCreanor spoke on BRCSS and said there's funding available and I made a mental note, yes must look at that, and then put it aside, so I am not really clear on what exactly it is. I do know about the communication side bit but not so much about the funding" NER

Getting on the BRCSS email list was a significant step for a number of NERs who had been unaware of activities prior to this. Conferences, grid seminars and workshops and research awards were the BRCSS related activities most frequently known to NER. Grid seminars and workshops were the most common form of participation. Two respondents had applied for and had been granted a BRCSS research award.

5. Discussion

The BRCSS Portfolio survey aimed to describe the staffing structure of the BRCSS research programme and the capability building activities occurring within the programme from the perspectives of the lead researchers and members of the emerging research workforce. It provides a view into current practices associated with the production of social science research and social science researchers. Through the experiences and perspectives of lead researchers and NERs it also reflects on whether current practices are contributing to or impeding the development of social science research capacity and expertise in New Zealand.

The research programmes in the BRCSS portfolio make up a substantial slice of recent social science research activity in New Zealand. In terms of capability building only 11% of the programme staff were post graduate students and research assistants and a further 3% are post doctoral fellows, but these members of the workforce contribute the most time per person to the research programmes. The average FTE for post doctoral fellows was 71% FTE followed by research assistants (55%) and post graduate students (48%). In comparison senior programme staff (including professors, associate professors, research directors and associate directors) contributed an average FTE of 20% to the programmes on which they were named. Senior staff secured funding and provided direction to the research while the more junior staff undertook much of the hands-on research activity. Women made up 58% of the BRCSS portfolio workforce, higher than their 50% composition of the national social science workforce. Maori (19%) and Samoan (8%) researchers make up over a quarter of the programme staff.

The scale and duration of funding was widely identified by lead researchers and NERs as a key determinant of whether it was possible or not to build capability in social science research at the personal and sector level. Lead researchers reported difficulty recruiting and retaining skilled research staff and good post-graduate students - an essential first stage of effective capability building. This was attributed in part to the uncertainty of future funding and the relatively low levels of remuneration in the university sector compared to the policy and private sectors. Seen from the NER perspective securing and maintaining a career in social science research could be a precarious process. The fickle funding environment and the often temporary, casual and /or part-time nature of their employment reduced the attractiveness of research as a career choice. For some NERs these factors, combined with observations of the sometimes unrealistic expectations placed on researchers to generate and deliver on multiple outcomes, contributed to a sense of uncertainty as to whether social science research offered a viable career path.

On-the-job apprentice style research training and mentoring was the main form of capability building activity occurring within the research programmes at the individual level. This approach to training applied to the development of research expertise in a range of areas including conceptual understanding, methodological skill building, engaging with communities of interest and research end users and dissemination practices. Where access to supervisors and mentors was adequate this approach to research training was seen as effective and was highly valued. On-the-job exposure to all aspects of the research process was valued; situations where the NER

was learning as an observer as well as learning as an active participant. Difficulties arose for NERs when access to supervision and advice was limited, particularly in the early stages of their involvement on a programme and where they felt their need for guidance exceeded what was available to them. It was not uncommon for NERs to report feeling under prepared for and overwhelmed by what was asked of them when first engaged in research.

Some lead researchers also noted the discrepancy between the research training needs of NERs and the time they, or other programme staff, had to support NER training. Like NERs the lead researchers valued the learning by doing approach to building research capability but felt stretched to meet the expectations of NERs. A perceived shortage of senior research staff exacerbated the situation. Although the BRCSS portfolio programmes are likely to be among the larger social science programmes funded in New Zealand they are still relatively small in scale. Three quarters of the programmes had less than six team members. Remembering that 25% of the sample spent less than 10% of their time on a programme and 65% spend less than 30% FTE on a programme many programmes have limited capacity.

A research environment characterised by short term funding and fixed term contracts led to a situation where researcher flexibility was highly prized. A NER with generic skills who was willing to turn their hand to diverse tasks could be moved between contracts more easily than a researcher with specialist skills and interests. Both lead researchers and NERs commented that to survive in the current funding environment, researchers need the intellectual agility to move between subject areas and research paradigms, a process Allen-Collinson (2003) refers to as 'structurally adapting'. It was also acknowledged that adopting such a strategy could delay the completion of post graduate degrees and slow the process of NERs developing their own areas of research interest. From a sector perspective building a generically skilled workforce may have costs as individuals with specialist research skills are also needed if social science capability is to be strengthened.

Awareness of the need to strengthen the Maori and Pacific research workforce was generally acknowledged across the sector, as was the essential role played by Maori and Pacific researchers linking the research programmes to communities of interests. Consulting, liaising and undertaking the data collection and dissemination with the communities of interest was largely delegated to Maori and Pacific researchers and these were often NERs. The Maori and Pacific researchers interviewed were aware of their value to the research programmes and their communities and were alert to factors that assisted and /or impeded them in achieving their objectives. Capability development in the New Settlers research community was infrequently mentioned but recognised to be an emerging issue.

Inter and trans disciplinary research practices were widespread within the portfolio programmes. They were considered necessary for engaging in complex real world issues and when working in association with the policy and community sectors. Working across disciplinary boundaries was seen as useful for generating new and innovative ways of thinking about research questions. From lead researcher and NER viewpoints it was also thought to provide a more stimulating training environment.

Relationships formed with research end users were generally seen to have contributed to capability building and to have greatly enhanced the policy significance of the social science research enterprise. Specific capability building pathways included increasing the relevancy of the research teams' knowledge base and their understanding of local issues, providing channels for dissemination to different audiences, and increasing the visibility and potential implementation of research findings.

In conclusion, the production of social science research and the maintenance and development of a workforce were described, in varying ways by lead researchers and NERs, as struggling parts of a system under pressure. To build additional capability all players within the social science research system - funders, end users and senior members of the research workforce - were seen to have a role to play.

6. References

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7. Appendix

BRCSS Portfolio Research Programmes Survey 2007: Participating Programmes

Multiple Job Holding. FRST, 2001-5, **Dr Nick Taylor**, Taylor Baines Associates/Canterbury University.

The New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project. FRST, 2004-6, **Dr Charles Waldegrave**, Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit and **Associate Professor Robert Stephens** Victoria University of Wellington.

Industry Constitution: Sectorial Governance, Industrial Order and Post-welfare Social Settlement in NZ. FRST Post doctoral fellowship, 2002-4, **Dr Nick Lewis**, University of Auckland

Political Ecology of Tuberculosis in New Zealand. HRC, 2003-6. **Professor Julie Park**, University of Auckland

Maori – Chinese Encounters: The Indigenous and the Immigrant. Marsden, 2003-6, **Associate Professor Manying Ip**, University of Auckland

Pathways to Sustainable Development for Cities and Regions, 2003-8. FRST, **Professor M. Patterson**, Massey University and **Professor Richard LeHeron**, University of Auckland.

Strengthening Local Partnerships. FRST, 2001-4, **Dr Wendy Lerner**, Bristol University (formerly University of Auckland).

Pacific Islands Families (PIF): First Two Years of Life Study, FRST, 2000-2006, **Associate Professor Janis Paterson**, Auckland University of Technology.

Utilisation of Official Statistics in the Auckland Region, Statistics New Zealand, 2005-6, Professor Charles Crothers, Auckland University of Technology.

Socially and Culturally Sustainable Biotechnology in New Zealand. FRST, 2002-8, **Professor Judith Motion**, Waikato University/University of Auckland

Impacts of ICTs on Work and Community. FRST, 2003-8, **Professor Ted Zorn**, University of Waikato and **Professor Les Oxley**, University of Canterbury.

Strangers in Town Programme. FRST, 2003-8 **Professor Richard Bedford**, University of Waikato.

Laws and Institutions for Aotearoa/New Zealand. FRST, 2003-6, **Professor Alex Frame**, University of Waikato.

Circulation and Settlement of New Zealanders Living in Australia. Marsden 2005-2007, **Dr Elsie Ho** and Professor J. Poot, University of Waikato.

Planning Under Co-Operative Mandates, FRST, 2003-9, **Professor Neil Ericksen**, University of Waikato.

Enhancing Wellbeing in an Ageing Society. FRST, 2004-9, **Professor Jacques Poot**, Waikato University, **Dr Charles Waldegrave**, Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit.

Pathways to Sustainable Employment in the Uncertain World of Work. FRST, 1996-2008, **Professor Paul Spoonley**, Massey University.

Evaluation of National Community Action on Youth and Drugs. MoH, 2004-7, **Professor Sally Casswell**, Massey University.

Te Pumanawa Hauora. HRC, 1999-2010, **Professor Chrsi Cunningham**, Massey University.

Te Mauri o te U-Kai-Po: intergenerational experiences of environments and wellbeing, HRC, 2005-2007, **Ms Helen Moewaka Barnes**, Whariki Research Group, SHORE, Massey University.

NZ Values Study 2004. FRST, 2004-7, **Professor Sally Casswell**, Massey University.

Whaia te Hauora o Nga Rangatahi: Pursue the Health and Wellbeing of Our Rangatahi. HRC/FRST, 2003-6, **Professor Robyn Munford**, Massey University and W. Walsh Tapiata, Te Runanga o Raukawa.

Te Hoe Nuku Roa. FRST, 1993-2009, **Professor Chris Cunningham**, Massey University.

Evaluation of Community Renewal Projects. Housing New Zealand Corporation, 2003-4, **Professor Sally Casswell**, Massey University.

Intersectoral Initiatives for Health. MoH, 2001-4, **Professor Sally Casswell**, Massey University.

Reduced Transport CO2 Emission, FRST, 2005-2009, **Darren Walton** (OPUS) and **Associate Professor K. Witten** (SHORE, Massey University).

Evaluation of the Pacific Capacity Building Strategy, MPIA, 2000-04, **Professor Jackie Cumming**, Victoria University of Wellington.

Evaluation of the Implementation and Intermediate Health Outcomes of the Primary Health Care Strategy. HRC/MoH/ACC, 2003-7, **Professor Jackie Cumming**, Victoria University of Wellington.

Formative Evaluation of the Health Reforms 2001. HRC/MRST, 2001-5, **Professor Jackie Cumming**, Victoria University of Wellington.

Acculturation, Adaptation and Intercultural Relations, James Cook Fellowship, 2005-2007, **Professor Colleen Ward**, Victoria University of Wellington.

Older People and Transport, MSD/ LTSA/MoT, 2003-4, **Associate Professor Judith Davey**, Victoria University of Wellington.

Realistic Conflict and Chinese Identity Politics. Chiang Ching Kuo Foundation (CCKF), 2005-2007, **Dr James Liu**, Victoria University of Wellington

Connectedness in Young New Zealanders: Social Connectedness, Transitions, and Well-being. FRST, 2004-9, **Associate Professor Jan Pryor**, Victoria University of Wellington.

Constructive Conversations; Biotechnologies, Dialogue and Informed Decision Making. FRST, 2003-2008, **Joanna Govern, Rosemary du Plessis**, University of Canterbury.

Winners and Losers in the Knowledge Society, Marsden, 2005-2008, **Professor Les Oxley, Professor David Thorns, Dr Ken Carlaw**, University of Canterbury.

Bringing Together Museum and Indigenous Knowledge and Practices: Joint Management of Cultural Treasures. Marsden, 2001-4, **Professor Karen Nero**, University of Canterbury

Measuring the Stock of Human Capital. Marsden, 2002-2005, **Professor Les Oxley**, University of Canterbury.

Anzac Neighbours: 100 Years of Multiple Ties Between New Zealand and Australia. Marsden, 2003-5, **Dr Philippa Mein-Smith**, University of Canterbury.

Reframing the Debates: Analysis of Welfare States in an Age of Globalisation. University of Canterbury Post Doctoral Programme, 2003-5, **Professor David Thorns** and **Dr Jane Higgins**, University of Canterbury.

The Fate of Biotechnology. FRST, 2001-6, **Professor Caroline Saunders**, Lincoln University.

Pathways to Sustainability. FRST, 2003-8, **Professor Caroline Saunders**, Lincoln University.

“In Transition”: How Children of the Economic Reforms Articulate Identities at the Child/Adult Border. Marsden, 2004-7, **Dr Karen Nairn**, Otago University) **Dr.Jane Higgins** University of Canterbury, and **Professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith** University of Auckland.