

Assessing the impacts on families:

DOES SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT DO THE JOB?

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NA!
But it should

SIA: definition

The international experts (through the IAIA “international principles” and associated guidance documents) say

- ▶ Social Impact Assessment includes the processes of analysing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended **social** consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programs, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions. (International Principles)

The “Social” in SIA

Oxford English Dictionary: SOCIAL = of or pertaining to the mutual relationships of human beings or of classes of human beings.

What are SIA practitioners actually looking at (from my scanning of SIA reports, papers, guidelines, and text books?)

- ▶ Humans, people, publics, groups, children and women, elderly, disabled, communities.

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What are SIA practitioners actually looking at (from my scanning of SIA reports, papers, guidelines, and text books?)

- ▶ Humans, people, publics, groups, children and women, elderly, disabled, communities.
- ▶ How about other social units? : individuals, persons, families, extended families, whanau, households, neighbourhoods, organisations, institutions, clans/hapu, tribes/iwi, teams, communities, marae, villages, towns, corporations, communities of interest.
 - ▶ Others?

Some examples



International Association for Impact Assessment

A photograph of a woman wearing a vibrant, multi-colored headscarf, sitting in a snowy, mountainous landscape. She is surrounded by numerous reindeer antlers, suggesting a hunting or processing scene. The background shows a vast, hazy mountain range under a bright sky.

Social Impact Assessment:

Guidance for assessing
and managing the social
impacts of projects

Principal author:

Frank Vanclay, *University of Groningen*

Contributing authors:

Ana Maria Esteves, *Community Insights Group*

Ilse Aucamp, *Equispectives Research & Consulting Services*

Daniel M. Franks, *University of Queensland*

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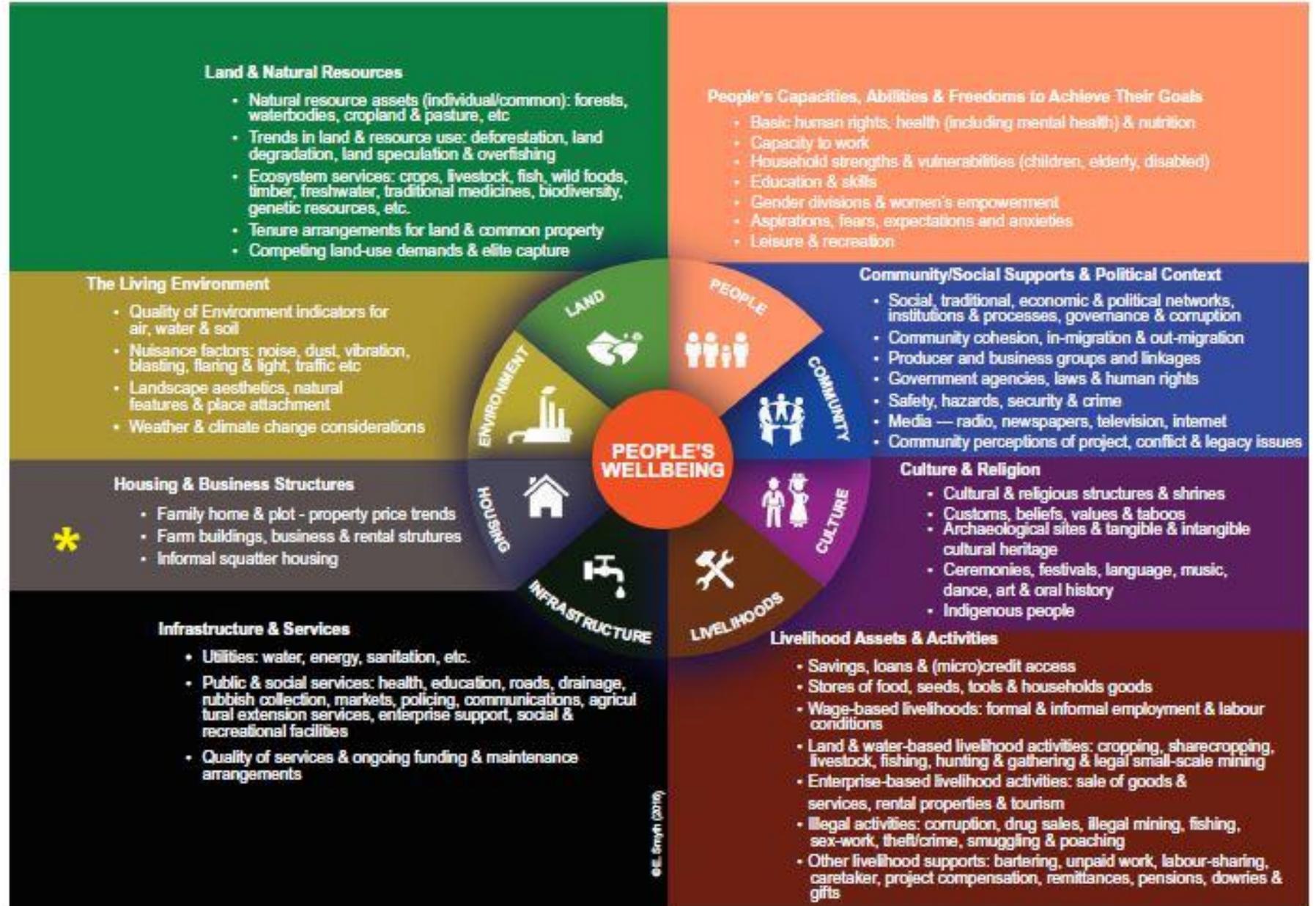
107 pages of guidance

2 mentions of “families”

- 1 when explaining the front cover picture,
- 1 when talking about construction workers

Social Wellbeing Approach to Assessment of Project Impacts (Smyth & Vanclay, 2017)

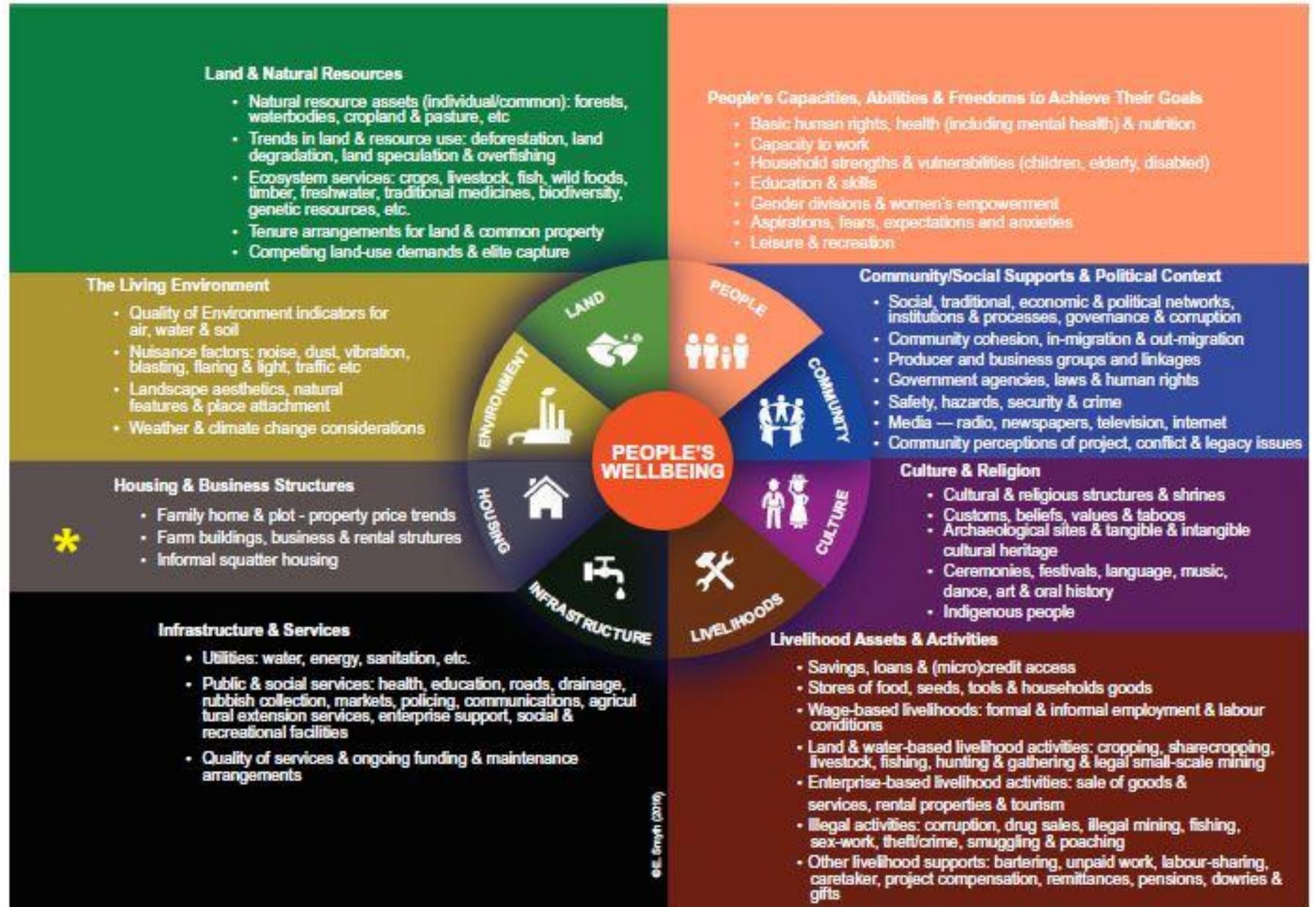
“represents a simple conceptual model for highlighting the social issues that contribute to people’s well-being and that are impacted by large projects.”

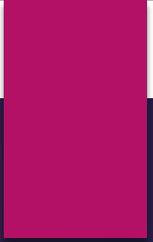


Social Wellbeing Approach to Assessment of Project Impacts (Smyth & Vanclay, 2017)

“ represents a simple conceptual model for highlighting the social issues that contribute to people’s well-being and that are impacted by large projects.”

“Individuals are used as the primary unit of analysis in recognition of the fact that there is considerable inequality within households and communities, and that it is important to understand how some people are more vulnerable to project impacts than others.”





Van Schooten et al. (2003) provide a useful list of 58 social impacts, organised into the following categories:

- health and social wellbeing,
- quality of the living environment,
- economic impacts and material wellbeing,
- cultural impacts,
- family and community impacts, *
- gender relations, and
- institutional, legal, political and equity impacts.

The World Bank (2003) observed that social (impact) assessment uses multiple units of analysis, e.g., households, individuals within the household, groups, and supra-household units like communities. But while social impact assessments can and do address multiple 'units of analysis, in practise, most assessments are focused on groups and communities, and are silent on the impacts on families.



Family:

- ▶ *“a group of people related by marriage, civil union, blood, or adoption; an extended family; two or more persons living together as a family; or a whānau or other culturally recognised family group” (2004 Families Commission legislation).*



Family Forms today

- nuclear family (mother, father, and the children)
- extended families - with multiple generations including children, parents, grandparents (close “relatives” and perhaps others .
- Māori whānau - an extended family of kin /relatives made up of several generations who are related by descent or marriage (whakapapa Whānau), or a extended group of people who may or may not live together but feel strongly connected and bound by mutual caring and commitment (Kaupapa whānau)
- sole parent families - a single adult with children
- gay or lesbian families - same-sex couples with children
- blended families - adults and children who have been part of other families that have broken up come together to join to form a new family.

Family function

- ▶ Procreation of children, continuation of kinship, provision of identity and connection to place and resources, nurturance and protection of children, provision of wellbeing & healthcare, provision of human attachment and psychological anchorage, socialisation and enculturation, provision /distribution of material needs to children and kin, and transfer of assets (inheritance) (MSD, 2004; Jary & Jary, 2000).
- ▶ “families are intrinsically or instrumentally good and thus should be promoted “ [by government, society etc]. “In other words, strong, resilient families are thought to be an important ingredient of, if not a necessary condition for, the building of a good society” (MSD, 2004:77).

SIA does not seem to be addressing the impacts of projects etc on family form, family functioning, and or family condition/circumstances.

Why isn't SIA doing the job for families?

- ▶ Family is a tricky concept.... Its subjective (eg Kaupapa whānau), contentious, variable, dynamic
- ▶ Family is not well supported in population social data
- ▶ Most SIA is locational, so “household” is more relevant and stable, even if the membership is not.
- ▶ Practitioners prefer social units of place, such as households, communities of place (neighbourhood, suburb, etc), rather than social units of interest.
- ▶ Habit?

Doing the job....

As practitioners, if we are truly focused on human social wellbeing, we should be paying more attention to families, as the basic social unit of society.

POTENTIAL EFFECTS ON:

- ▶ Family/whānau form: membership, relations between members,
- ▶ Family formation and stability
- ▶ Family/whānau functioning and functions
- ▶ Family/whānau condition: wellbeing, living standard, vulnerability & resilience



Ziona Chana is head of the world's largest family (in India): It has 181 members – him, 39 wives, 94 children, 14 daughters-in-law and 33 grandchildren.

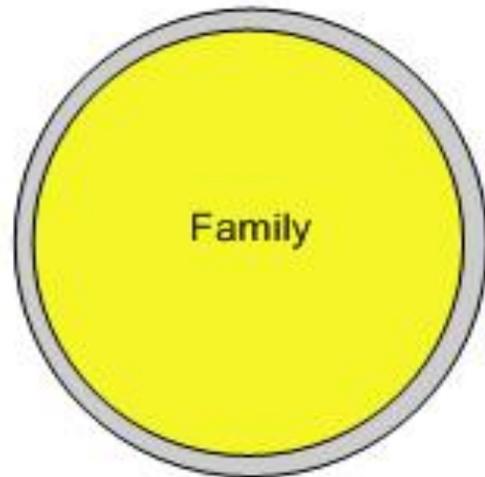
Review of approaches and methods for assessing impacts on families

Ex ante methods & tools	Ex post methods and tools	Both ex ante and ex post
Family Impact Assessment (FIA)	social experiments & quasi experiments, including RFTs and RCTs	demographic analysis
Social impact assessment (SIA)	ex post & summative evaluation	economic analysis methods*
Health Impact Assessment (HIA)	longitudinal surveys and studies	evidence- based policy approaches
Human Impact Assessment (HUIA)	survey methods/cross sections	indicators analysis
Social Capital Impact Assessment (SCIA)	data matching	mixed methods approach
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	statistical analysis methods	systematic reviews
Technology Assessment (TA)	ethnographic methods	general guidelines for policy assessment & evaluation
simulations & scenarios	case studies	general guides to methods
thought experiments	general ex post methods	ecological systems perspective
general ex ante methods		

“Assessing the impacts of proposals, policies etc on ‘families’, as opposed to impacts on individuals, households, or communities, requires some careful thought about the unit of analysis” (Fitzgerald & Davidson, 2005)

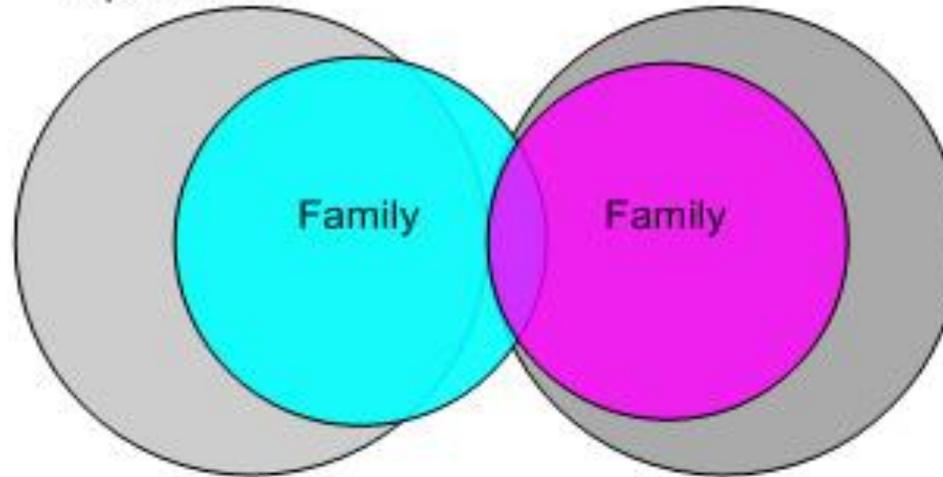
Is the household functionally different from the family? Are they different in form?

Nuclear family household



Household

More complex forms: eg family split between different households, one parent repartnered



Household

Household