

**State of Israel**  
Ministry of Social Affairs and Services  
Division for Research, Planning and Training

# **Uniformity vs Flexibility**

## **in the Operation of Social Services**

**Brno, December, 2014**



# Dilemmas in the formulation of an unified classification of social problems

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# The main challenge:

How to continuously ensure the quality and effectiveness of state–founded social services provided by a variety of organizations and social workers?

The “usual” answers:

- **Rules and Procedures**
- **Evidence-Based Practice**

“Flexiformity”:

Uniformity and standardization whenever possible and justifiable,

Learning-Based Practice whenever necessary:  
Turning experience into expertise

## LBP efforts led by the Israeli Ministry of Social Affairs

- Promoting dialogue: Intra-organizational Learning Teams and Inter-organizational Virtual Communities of Practice
- “Practice Wisdom” reification: Externalization of knowledge and practice based expertise
- OOMPH - The Outcomes Initiative
- **Unified Classification of Social Problems**
- Licensing and tutoring: Regulation of the SW profession and OJT

# Unified Classification of Social Problems

Much more than the standardization of administrative data

- Area of action
- Reliable data for policy-makers and managers
- “Lingua franca” across organizations and hierarchy
- Reliable assessment of clients needs



# The Construction of a new Classification of Social Problems

Antecedents, Dilemmas and Principles



מאירס - ג'דיס - מכון ברודקדייל  
MYERS - JDC - BROOKDALE INSTITUTE  
مایرس - جوینت - معهد بروکدیل





## WHAT IS A SOCIAL PROBLEM?

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HORNELL HART

Iowa Child Welfare Research Station

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### ABSTRACT

An inductive study of the topics covered in leading books and articles discussing social problems suggests their classification under the four heads: economic, health, political, and educational problems. Further analysis leads to a definition covering all the problems listed. None of them can be solved without the aid of highly specialized technique, but none of them, on the other hand, can be satisfactorily isolated from the others and solved by itself. The investigation of any of the problems, moreover, can be greatly facilitated by the use of statistical technique. Out of the need for better informed public sentiment, out of the necessity for correlating the various problems, and out of the use of the common technique, arises the necessity of recognizing social problems as a definite subject for teaching and for research, distinct from any of the specialties associated with it. Its general objective is to discover how to minimize undesirable social conditions and how to maximize desirable social conditions. Sociology, as distinguished from the study of social problems, is concerned with the investigation of social origins, social structure and social processes. Social case work, as distinguished from social problems, is concerned with the treatment of the individual case rather than the solution of group problems.

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The subject of "social problems" has covered a somewhat vague and amorphous field. Believing that the best approach toward the conscious promotion of human progress is through research in this field, the writer has undertaken a preliminary inductive study with

# ICD-10

The International  
Statistical  
Classification  
of Diseases and  
Health Related  
Problems

Tenth Revision

Volumen 1

PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
Pan-American Sanitary Office, Regional Office of  
THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

# ICF

International  
Classification of  
Functioning,  
Disability  
and  
Health



World Health Organization  
Geneva

DIAGNOSTIC AND STATISTICAL  
MANUAL OF  
MENTAL DISORDERS

FIFTH EDITION



DSM - 5

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

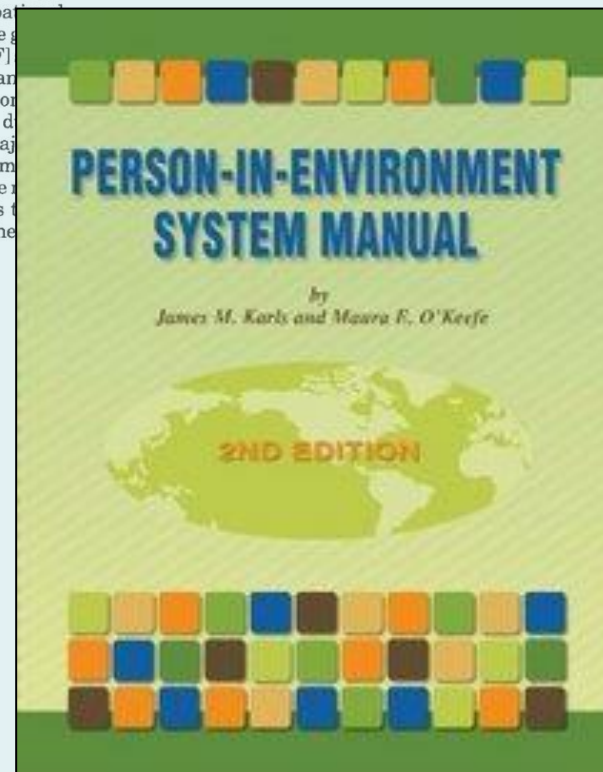
## PIE: A New Language for Social Work

**James M. Karls**  
**Karin E. Wandrei**

**T**HE SOCIAL WORK profession has long been struggling to establish its identity and, in particular, to assert its independence and uniqueness among the human services professions. An important step in this struggle is the development of a new method unique to social work that describes, classifies, and codes the problems of clients. Developed under a grant from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the system, called "PIE" (for person-in-environment), provides social work practitioners in all settings with a common language for describing the problems

*Developed under a grant from the National Association of Social Workers, a new system for describing, classifying, and coding the problems of adult clients of social workers is presented. Using the organizing concept of "person-in-environment," the new system succinctly notes social role; environmental, psychiatric, and health problems; and client strengths. Concepts and theories incorporated into the system are discussed, as are reliability*

tion of their severity and whether they are acute or enduring. Axis V in DSM-III-R helps professionals estimate the client's global functioning (a person's psychological, social, and occupational functioning as measured by the global assessment of functioning [GAF]) at the time of the assessment and the client's highest functioning on the GAF scale for a few months during the past year. However, the major focus of DSM-III-R is still on medical disease, and in keeping with the medical model, this system stresses the onset of the disease first and the



# Principles: Content

- Simple and reliable
- Exhaustive and mutually exclusive
- Generic and locally specific
- Broad and precise
- For practitioners and managers and senior officials
- To be used by professionals and to allow self-definition
- Needs and Strengths
- Individual and environment (family and community) needs
- Clients needs and clients characteristics

# Principles: **Process**

- Relying on a variety of knowledge sources
- Iterative dialogue and incessant process
- Pre-tests

# Principles: Use

- Glossary
- Clustering
- Training through implementation
- Computerized collection of data as an integral part of case management

# The Israeli Example

## Needs

Individual	Family	Characteristics
3 violence, abuse and neglect clusters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being abused/ neglected <u>within</u> the family</li> <li>• Being abused/ neglected <u>outside</u> the family</li> <li>• <u>Offending</u> a <u>family</u> member</li> </ul>	Poverty and exclusion	Diagnosed physical, sensory, cognitive or mental disability
Functional, personal & social barriers	Relation difficulties within the family	Special life conditions (such as holocaust survivor; primary care giver, Migrant worker)
Risk behaviors, social marginality and delinquency		