

The Real Wealth of America

Public Policy Project



In collaboration with
Kimberly Otis, Senior Advisor

The mission of the Center for Partnership Studies is to advance human development by accelerating movement to the partnership system of relations through research, education, grassroots empowerment, and policy initiatives. CPS is dedicated to building a culture of nonviolence, gender and racial equity, human rights, economic justice, and a sustainable environment.

The Real Wealth of America (RWA) public policy project is designed to advance the real wealth of our nation: the health, well-being, and full development of our nation's women, men, and children. A major aim of the project is to change the present economic perspective to one that not only recognizes the enormous "back-end" financial costs of failing to invest in people, but also recognizes the direct economic benefits of investing in human capacity building – and that our nation must immediately catch up to other nations in this vital enterprise. Our goal is to engage policy makers in Washington, DC and grassroots communities around the country. Based on Riane Eisler's groundbreaking book, *The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics*, this policy and advocacy initiative will support the move to a more caring and healthy economy through the development and use of new empirical measures of economic health.

As Eisler states: "Rather than trying to just patch up a system that is not sustainable, let's use our economic crisis to move to an economic system that really meets human needs. As Einstein said, we can't solve problems with the same thinking that created them. In our time of rapidly changing technological and social conditions, we must go deeper, to matters that conventional economic analyses and theories have ignored. We need a caring economics that no longer devalues the most important work: the work of caring for people, starting in early childhood, and the work of caring for our Mother Earth."

The indicators for the currently used Gross National Product were developed and adopted during the depths of the Great Depression. They were only meant by their authors to be a beginning for measurements, not the be all and end all.

We urgently need new economic indicators. The RWA public policy project is a strategic step toward achieving this goal. At present, only economic and environmental impact statements are required by Congress. This project will help lay foundations for impact statements measuring the effect of any new program or legislation on our real wealth: our international standing in health, education, equality, democracy, human capacity development, and other quality of life indicators. In developing the RWIS indicators,

CPS is working with the Urban Institute in Washington DC, drawing on its expertise in providing innovative social and economic metrics.

The RWA public policy project is essential not only for human and environmental reasons but for purely economic ones. Especially in the post-industrial knowledge-information era, our most important asset is what economists call “high quality human capital.” Neuroscience shows that the development of this “high quality human capital” largely depends on good physical, mental, and emotional care starting at birth. Human capacity-building is essential not only for personal well-being but also for national economic success. Therefore, caring for children must be a top national priority. High quality early childhood education has been shown to be the best financial investment a nation can make. In addition, good childcare in families must be socially supported. Economic inventions such as caregiver tax-credits, stipends to families, paid parental leave, and social security credit for the first seven years of caring for a child – whether the caregiver is a woman or a man – are already being used or developed in other nations.

But it is not only investment in children. We must invest in the health and well-being of our people: women and men of all ages. Our leaders have an historic opportunity to focus our national priorities on what really matters. Imagine an America where, as material, emotional, and spiritual needs are increasingly met, crime, terrorism, and warfare decrease, where gaps between haves and have-nots shrink and people are no longer driven to amass enormous wealth as a substitute for meeting our yearnings for caring connection, fairness, and meaning. This vision of Riane Eisler’s is not only inspirational - it is timely, necessary, and achievable.

A first step toward realizing this vision is developing and mainstreaming new economic indicators and metrics to evaluate all proposed legislation and funding allocations. This is the purpose of the Real Wealth of America public policy initiative.

*"The Real Wealth of Nations gives us a template
for the better world we have been so urgently seeking."
~ Nobel Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu*

Please go to www.rianeeisler.com to download the draft on **RWIS Indicators and Fact Sheet on Sample Metrics**, as well as **A Full-Spectrum Job Creation Proposal: Roadmap to a New Caring Economy**, which was sent to members of the U.S. Congress to promote investment in human infrastructure.

For more information on the RWA policy project, please contact Riane Eisler at center@partnershipway.org or Kimberly Otis at Kimberly Otis kotisdc@verizon.net .