



**families** commission  
kōmihana ā **whānau**

➤ Giving New Zealand families a voice *Te reo o te whānau*

APRIL 2010



# definitions of whānau

A REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

A FAMILIES COMMISSION REPORT

**The Families Commission was established under the Families Commission Act 2003 and commenced operations on 1 July 2004. Under the Crown Entities Act 2004, the Commission is designated as an autonomous Crown entity.**

**Our main role is to act as an advocate for the interests of families generally (rather than individual families).**

Our specific functions under the Families Commission Act 2003 are to:

- > encourage and facilitate informed debate about families
- > increase public awareness and promote better understanding of matters affecting families
- > encourage and facilitate the development and provision of government policies that promote and serve the interests of families
- > consider any matter relating to the interests of families referred to us by any Minister of the Crown
- > stimulate and promote research into families, for example by funding and undertaking research
- > consult with, or refer matters to, other official bodies or statutory agencies.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Families Commission and the author, Keri Lawson-Te Aho wish to acknowledge those individuals and organisations listed in the bibliography of this background document to support the Commission's Whānau Strategic Framework 2009–2012.

Our sincere gratitude is extended to Sir Mason Durie, KNZM CNZM former Commissioner of the Families Commission and Chair of the Whānau Ora Taskforce and to members of the Whānau Ora Taskforce for your vision.

We thank the first Whānau Reference Group including Druis Barrett CNZOM, Riki Paniora, Ana Sokratov, Aroha Reriti-Crofts, CBE, and Liz Hartley. A special acknowledgement to Kristen Maynard for her guidance in this report.

Thanks are also due to Tim Rochford and Dr Catherine Love, members of the current Whānau Reference Group for peer reviewing the draft document. We also thank the other members of the second Whānau Reference Group – Dame Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, MBE, CNZOM, DNZM, Moe Milne, Barbara Greer, Maxine Rennie, QSM, Wharehoka Wano, Dr Catherine Love and Tim Rochford for their commitment to whānau development and whānau ora.

Finally we thank those in whose footsteps we now stand and who have left a legacy of hope for whānau, hapū and iwi.

He mihi aroha tenei ki a koutou katoa.

Families Commission  
Public Trust Building  
Level 6, 117-125 Lambton Quay  
PO Box 2839  
Wellington 6140

Telephone: 04 917 7040  
Email: [enquiries@nzfamilies.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@nzfamilies.org.nz)  
[www.nzfamilies.org.nz](http://www.nzfamilies.org.nz)

Giving New Zealand families a voice *Te reo o te whānau*

ISSN 1179-6863 (Print)  
ISSN 1179-6871 (Online)

ISBN 978-0-478-34934-4 (Print)  
ISBN 978-0-478-34935-1 (Online)

**families** commission  
kōmihana ā **whānau**

➤ Giving New Zealand families a voice *Te reo o te whānau*

# definitions of whānau

A REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

BACKGROUND DOCUMENT FOR TE KŌMIHANA Ā WHĀNAU  
WHĀNAU STRATEGY 2009–2012

KERI LAWSON-TE AHO





# CONTENTS

## **Preface 5**

## **Executive summary 7**

### **1. Introduction 17**

- 1.1 Families Commission/Kōmihana ā Whānau 18
- 1.2 Government and whānau development priorities 19
- 1.3 Kaupapa Māori theory 20

### **2. Exploring and defining whānau 23**

- 2.1 Two pre-eminent models of whānau 24
- 2.2 Whakapapa and traditional whānau 25
- 2.3 Kaupapa whānau 26
- 2.4 Conclusions 27

### **3. Changing whānau dynamics – Historical processes and contemporary outcomes 29**

#### **4. Iwi development 33**

- 4.1 Relationship between iwi and whakapapa whānau 34
- 4.2 Role of iwi in whānau ora and whānau development 34
- 4.3 Case studies in iwi development 35
- 4.4 Ngai Tahu 2025 35
- 4.5 Whakatapuranga Waikato-Tainui 2050 36
- 4.6 Te Runanga o Ngati Porou Strategic Plan 2009–2012 37
- 4.7 Key themes 37
- 4.8 Implications for the Families Commission's Whānau Strategy 2009–2012 38

#### **5. Exploring and defining whānau ora 39**

- 5.1 Whānau ora – definitions 41

#### **6. Māori models of health and wellbeing 43**

- 6.1 Te Whare Tapa Wha 44
- 6.2 Nga Pou Mana 44
- 6.3 Te Wheke 44
- 6.4 Conceptual framework for whānau violence prevention 45

#### **7. Applications 47**

- 7.1 Social policy 48
- 7.2 Health and social services 49
- 7.3 The interchangeable use of family and whānau 52
- 7.4 Whānau is not the same as family 52
- 7.5 Whakapapa whānau are who their whakapapa says they are 53
- 7.6 Whānau ora policy focus 54



**8. The Whānau Ora Taskforce 57**

8.1 Whānau ora themes 59

**9. Conclusion 61**

9.1 Working definition of whānau ora 62

**Glossary of terms 64**

**Bibliography 65**

# PREFACE

*Karihi ake nga manu, Takirei mai te ata, Ka ao, ka ao, ka awatea! Tihei Māori Ora.  
With a new dawn comes a sense of wellbeing and optimism*

In late 2008, the Families Commission decided to increase its efforts to respond more effectively to the needs, values and beliefs of Māori as tangata whenua. There followed extensive consultation and engagement with whānau and key Māori stakeholders, followed by a project to strengthen internal Māori capacity and capability. That work led in April 2010 to the development and launch of the Families Commission Whānau Strategy 2009–2012. The Commission is now better positioned to support whānau through advocacy, engagement, social policy and research, in a way that will maintain and build whānau resilience and strength.

The Families Commission has always known that the wellbeing of individual Māori can be brought about by focusing on the collective of whānau. Through its strengthened Māori capacity and capability, the Commission is now better placed to consider and advocate for more rigorous analysis around whānau dynamics and processes in social policy development and social service provision.

As the whānau strategy took shape, it became clear that the Commission needed to develop conceptual and analytical tools for staff who did not have an in-depth grasp of Māori social structures and systems, and to ensure that the whānau strategy developed within a robust analytical framework. Of key importance was to advance understanding of two key concepts: 'whānau' and 'whānau ora'. 'Whānau ora' in particular, is emerging as a set of ideas about the position and roles of whānau in developing solutions to the issues that they confront from within, using the collective strength and resiliencies that can only reside in whānau processes and based on the central role of Māori cultural values.

This document seeks to contribute to and enhance that understanding. Selected literature has been reviewed which examines definitions of whānau and which considers applications of the construct of whānau ora. The two main bodies of literature have then been integrated and linked back to provide evidential support for the Families Commission's Whānau Strategic Framework 2009–2012.

As this work has developed, it has drawn interest from government and other agencies grappling with the same issues. The Commission has agreed to make this document available across the public sector, thus contributing to an improved collective understanding.

On behalf of the Commission, we are pleased to make this contribution to the wider discussion. In doing so, we are mindful of the whakatauki, "Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini taku toa – my strength is not of one but of many".

Dr Jan Pryor  
Chief Commissioner

Kim Workman QSO  
Families Commissioner responsible for the Whānau Strategy



Dr Jan Pryor



Kim Workman QSO








# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





The purpose of this review is to inform the Families Commission's Whānau Strategic Framework 2009–2012. Selected literature has been reviewed which examines definitions of whānau and which considers applications of the construct of whānau ora.

### **Families Commission/Kōmihana ā Whānau**

The Families Commission is legislatively tasked in the Families Commission Act 2003 with acting as an advocate for the interests of families generally (Section 7 (1)).

In performing the advocacy function, the Commission is required to identify, and have regard for, factors that help to maintain or enhance 'families' resilience and families' strengths' (Section 7 (2 & 3)).

The Families Commission Act requires that the Commission recognises the diversity of New Zealand families and, in Section 11, it requires that the Commission, in exercising and performing its powers and functions, has regard to the needs, values and beliefs of Māori as tangata whenua.

### **Government and whānau development priorities**

Whānau development priorities have been explored inside Māori cultural processes (Marsden, 1981) and outside of them, in the policy frameworks and practices of various government agencies. This literature is framed according to insider (whānau) and outsider (government) views about what constitutes whānau and whānau development priorities.

The national Whānau Wellbeing and Development Conference (2005) drew a distinction between the role of whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities in orchestrating their own development and the various roles of the state, and other external contributors, in supporting, and in some cases, resourcing, that development. Te Puni Kōkiri research to date demonstrates that a government agency can take a supportive role in facilitating and resourcing whānau development without necessarily directing or leading it. The heart of the issue is that whānau want to be able to determine how they will identify themselves and what their priorities are for their own development which do not always align with the views of government (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005).

### **Kaupapa Māori Theory**

The theoretical position underpinning this paper is Kaupapa Māori (Smith, 1992, 1995). Kaupapa Māori Theory is action oriented, accepts the validity of Māori values and processes, and is defined as 'the philosophy and practice of being Māori' (Mahuika, 2008, p. 4). In practical terms this acknowledges the importance of honouring whakapapa and tikanga, Māori ways of being in the world.

Smith (2000) states "there is more to kaupapa Māori than our own history under colonialism or our desires to restore Rangatiratanga. We have a different epistemological (the nature of knowledge) tradition that frames the way we see the world, the way we organise ourselves in it, the questions we ask and the solutions we seek" (p. 230). This is particularly relevant to understanding the differences in interpretation and application of the cultural construct of whānau.

## Exploring and defining whānau

Whānau is generally described as a collective of people connected through a common ancestor (whakapapa) or as the result of a common purpose (kaupapa) (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005). According to Williams (1985) whānau is defined as ‘offspring, family group used occasionally in tribal designations such as Te Whānau-a-Apanui” (p. 487).

Whānau as the key Māori social and cultural unit has been researched extensively to describe its component parts, roles and relationships in traditional and contemporary Māori society (Best, 1952; Buck, 1949; Firth, 1959; Hohepa, 1970; Kawharu, 1975; Metge, 1995, 2001; Durie, 1997, 2003).

The two pre-eminent models of whānau from the literature are whakapapa (kinship) and kaupapa (purpose driven) whānau. Whakapapa whānau are the more permanent and culturally authentic form of whānau. Whakapapa and kaupapa whānau are not mutually exclusive. These two whānau models construct whānau identity differently but the intent of both models is to contribute to the achievement of whānau ora by means of building and strengthening bonds of kinship and giving effect to the collective practices of whānaungatanga (whānau support).

Traditional conceptualisations of whānau were whakapapa based. Whakapapa according to Kruger et al (2004) describes the relationships between te ao kikokiko (the physical world) and te ao wairua (the spiritual world). This unseen realm is brought into the contemporary lives of whakapapa whānau through the acknowledgement and valuing of kinship ties with those who have passed on (Pere, 1991).

Kaupapa whānau are bound together in relationships to fulfill a common purpose or goal. Kaupapa whānau may or may not share the same whakapapa. This is a model that recognises both the traditional and contemporary roles that whānau perform in the lives of whānau members. It recognises that the collective of whānau is vital for the individual functioning of whānau members. However, it gives room for whānau to include those with whom individual Māori affiliate and identify without the need for kinship or genealogical relations. Kaupapa whānau usually share a common mission and act towards each other as if they were whānau (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005).

Durie (2002) also describes whānau as groups who share a common mission or kaupapa rather than a common heritage. Examples are a kindergarten whānau, church whānau, whānau support groups and team-mates. Smith (1995) states that Māori, who may share an association based on some common interests such as an urban marae, a workplace may be considered to be whānau.



## IWI DEVELOPMENT

Iwi are the political vehicle and voice for whakapapa whānau. This is consistent with a Treaty of Waitangi analysis in which article two guarantees to iwi Rangatiratanga or chieftainship over resources and matters pertaining to the iwi collective. It is also the manifestation of tikanga and culturally enshrined obligations to care for those who whakapapa to the iwi. Mana whenua status, or authority to exercise chieftainship in a tribal area, is confined to whānau who whakapapa to the iwi.

### The role of iwi in whānau ora and whānau development

Iwi have an instrumental role in whānau development. Iwi development plans and strategies focus on positive whānau development, tribal Mana Motuhake and Rangatiratanga. The areas of strategic importance across the iwi development plans reviewed for this document are: cultural development, including the restoration and further development of Te Reo Māori (iwi dialect); tribal tikanga and tribal knowledge systems; sustainable economic development; sustainable social development; and, sustainable political development. One of the political roles of iwi is to work alongside the Crown and its agents (government agencies) to maintain the whakapapa based relationships and through that, to exercise their status as mana whenua or holders of the mana, external influence, prestige and power in a given tribal area. Through partnership and collaboration, the three iwi in these case studies, agree that whānau development can be progressed. However, iwi have certain obligations to whānau as determined by whakapapa, whereas the Crown and its agencies have a different set of obligations to whānau under articles one and three of the Treaty of Waitangi.

### Ngai Tahu 2025

The Ngai Tahu Strategic Plan 'Vision 2025' has as its whakatauki or guiding statement "Tino Rangatiratanga – Mo Tatou, a, mo ka uri a muri ake nei – Tino Rangatiratanga – (self determination) for us and our children after us" ([www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz](http://www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz)). Ngai Tahu's mission statement further clarifies what is important in the future development and survival of whānau who whakapapa to Ngai Tahu as "Puritia tawhia kia ita, te Mana Tipuna. Te Mana Whenua. Te Mana Tangata – hold fast and firm to my inherited authority. To my right to this land. To my freedom and right to self determination" (p. 3). This tribal strategy speaks of inalienable rights to exercise authority as Ngai Tahu that is sourced in whakapapa.

### Whakatupuranga Waikato-Tainui 2050

Whakatupuranga Waikato-Tainui 2050 articulates the desire of the iwi to equip generations of Tainui whānau so that they have the capacity to be self determining, or to exercise Rangatiratanga at the personal and whānau levels ([www.tainui.iwi.nz](http://www.tainui.iwi.nz)). Three critical elements that underpin the equipping of Waikato Tainui are "a pride and commitment to uphold tribal identity and integrity (p. 2). This first element is further qualified as recognising 'the importance of tribal history, maatauranga, reo and tikanga. A secure sense of identity and cultural integrity is intended to produce future generations that are both proud and confident in all walks of life (p. 2).

The second critical element is "a diligence to succeed in education and beyond". The creation of a culture for success is intended to lead to the creation of opportunities and choices and to promote diligence among tribal members of all ages to pursue success in all of their endeavours" (p. 2).

The third critical element is self determination for economic independence and this relates directly to the growth of tribal assets. The third element is sourced in the vision of King Tawhiao who said “Maku ano e hanga i toku nei whare – build our own house in order to face the challenges of the future”. The mission of Whakatupuranga Waikato-Tainui 2050 is “Kia tupu, kia hua, kia puawai – to grow, prosper and sustain” (p. 2). To grow a prosperous, healthy, vibrant, innovative and culturally strong iwi. This mission is underpinned by the Tikanga and unifying principles of the Kingitanga which are “whakaiti – humility; whakapono – trust and faith; aroha – love and respect; rangimarie – peace and calm; manaakitanga – caring; kotahitanga – unity and mahitahi – collaboration.

### **Te Runanga o Ngati Porou Strategic Plan 2009-2012**

Te Runanga o Ngati Porou’s Strategic Plan for 2009-2012 has a statement of the whakapapa of the iwi on the front cover which reads “Ko Hikurangi Te Maunga. Ko Waiapu Te Awa. Ko Ngati Porou Te Iwi. Mana Motuhake, Ngati Porou Nga Uri Whakatipu – Ngati Porou self determining for the future” ([www.ngatiporou.com](http://www.ngatiporou.com)). Te Runanga o Ngati Porou is charged with administering the tribal assets for the benefit of the beneficiaries who are “Nga uri o nga hapū o Ngati Porou ma i Potikirua ki Te Toka a Taiau” (the descendents of the sub tribes of Ngati Porou occupying the region of Potikirua to Te Toka a Taiau). The vision of Ngati Porou is “Ko te whakapumau i te mana motuhake o Ngati Porou i roto i tona mana Atua, mana tangata, mana whenua”. This vision statement will be realised by affirming the knowledge base of Ngati Porou and the application of the wisdom and knowledge of Ngati Porou to all cultural, economic, social and political developments that contribute to the prosperity and survival of Ngati Porou whānau and hapū while actively enhancing the mana motuhake (political and cultural authority) of Ngati Porou (p. 6).

### **Exploring and defining whānau ora**

The term whānau ora is beginning to appear in social policies targeting whānau as an overarching goal of such policies. There are themes emerging around the application of the term and growing clarity about the dimensions of it. Whānau ora is emerging as a set of ideas about the position and roles of whānau in developing solutions to the issues that they confront from within, using the collective strength and resiliencies that can only reside in whānau processes and based on the central role of Māori cultural values. The role of government in whānau ora is described as more of a facilitative and enabling one. Whānau ora may be literally translated as the ‘health and wellbeing of whānau’. However, a literal translation is not that useful in terms of clarifying what whānau ora means and how it might be achieved by different whānau (Turia, 2003; Durie, 2005).

The non negotiables for whānau ora are articulated in most Māori health models and frameworks and include a healthy spirit, mind, body and whānau. The mental, emotional, physical and spiritual state is shaped, maintained and contained in context of whānau relationships. Therefore, when an individual is not well, a whānau is not well. Conversely when a whānau is not well, individuals are adversely impacted. Whānau ora is a state of collective wellbeing that is integrated, indivisible, interconnected and whole. This aligns with iwi thinking around the holistic and indivisible.



## Māori models of health and wellbeing

There are a number of different models of health and wellbeing that describe wellbeing or whānau ora from within a Māori cultural framework (Cherrington & Masters, 2007). Three of these are Te Whare Tapa Wha (Durie, 1985); Nga Pou Mana (Henare, 1988) and Te Wheke (Pere, 1988).

There are other models of Māori health that are derivatives of these models such as the Māori Conceptual Framework for Whānau Violence Prevention, (Kruger et al, 2004) or extensions to them (Love, 2007). However, they contain similar core cultural principles. One such model included in this analysis is the Māori Conceptual Framework for Whānau Violence Prevention (Kruger et al, 2004) which is based on Te Whare Tapa Wha but includes additional explanations related to the core cultural principle of mana. This is significant in this analysis in that the capacity of whānau to achieve whānau ora requires that they have and are able to exercise mana. All of these models have whānau wellbeing as their central purpose.

## Health and social services

According to Gifford (1999), whānau ora ideally operates from a strengths based position utilising the combined strengths of individual members of a whānau for the achievement of collective wellbeing outcomes aided and assisted by government funded services.

The Nelson Marlborough District Health Board (2009) applies the term whānau ora to refer to a cluster of whānau focused health services that are delivered to whānau in their own homes and/or community and cultural settings like marae-based health services. In this frame, whānau ora refers specifically to health service delivery to whānau and Māori individuals in community settings.

The Taranaki District Health Board uses the term whānau ora to apply to health services regardless of whether they are early intervention, public health education, treatment and disease management. The term whānau ora demarcates specific health service funding for services to a defined Māori population.

The allocation of specific funding for the purchase and provision of Māori health services to a defined Māori population underpins the term whānau ora as it is applied in the government funded health sector. The Government interpretation of whānau ora can be problematic because it is shaped and defined by discrete outcome areas in health, education, housing etc. Thus it is shaped by the funding and accountabilities arrangements within which it sits. This undermines the collective and holistic cultural values that underpin whānau ora. According to Katene (2009) measures of the state of wellbeing of whānau or whānau ora are needed in order to determine the effectiveness of policies and strategies that purport to advance whānau ora. Turia states that:

Whānau ora is about making a difference. Whānau focused services are about collective rights and responsibilities, starting to get back to our own values. Whānau ora was more about restoration and affirmation of cultural values, beliefs and practices. Whānau ora was seen as an opportunity to address the hard issues happening in whānau. (Turia cited in Gifford, 1999).

How this is achieved in practice is a significant challenge because of the extensive variation in what a whānau defines as 'making a difference'. However, the theme of change and transformation characterises whānau ora. Cultural development and the restoration of cultural practices including those of whānaungatanga, awhinatanga and

manaakitanga are considered to be important components for the achievement of whānau ora (Milne, 2005). The restoration and practice of these values creates a sense of wellbeing in the whānau system that could be understood as whānau ora. Whānau ora is also about whānau restoration and healing.

## APPLICATIONS

### Social policy

The social policy emphasis on whānau wellbeing and development is driven from the recognition and acknowledgement that whānau continues to be a key cultural institution for Māori and is therefore a key (and potentially highly effective) site of intervention and service delivery (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005; Metge, 1995). The James Henare Research Centre's report on wellbeing and disparity in Tamaki Makaurau (2003) stated that whānau remains the predominant kin group for urban Māori. The emphasis on whānau in social policies assumes that changes in the wellbeing of individual Māori can be brought about by focusing on the collective of whānau and vice versa. In this respect whānau may be considered to be a pre-eminent site of change and transformation. Te Puni Kōkiri (2005) concluded that whānau success must be defined by whānau for themselves. Whānau reaching their full potential is the central theme in Te Puni Kōkiri's Māori potential strategy. Te Puni Kōkiri's strategic vision is that Māori reach their potential while succeeding as Māori (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2009). This may be interpreted as the achievement of whānau ora and for the purposes of a working definition, supports the Families Commission's focus on whānau being all that they can be.

He Korowai Oranga, the Ministry of Health's Whānau Ora Strategy, includes key themes that create a space for whānau to have active input into strategies that reduce Māori health inequalities. These include:

- > the need to ensure Māori involvement in decision-making
- > the need to work directly with whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities
- > the need for all services (not just Māori-specific services) to be effective for Māori
- > the importance of all sectors (not just the health sector) working to address Māori health outcomes.

The Ministry of Social Development's whānau violence prevention policy recognises the central role of whānau in addressing issues of violence inside whānau. The emphasis in this policy is on whānau addressing issues of whānau violence with the support of government. Emphasis is also given to holistic approaches that respond to the needs of whānau in areas such as health, housing, education and employment. There is recognition within this approach of the need to work on many levels and across many areas of government business impacting whānau. This aligns with the focus on whānau resolving their own issues internally and the need for a holistic and integrated approach to whānau needs. This policy uses the term whānau ora in an overarching goal about the promotion of safety, strength, identity, integrity and prosperity for whānau.



## Whānau is not the same as family

Social policies impacting on whānau often use the constructs of family and whānau interchangeably. Taiapa (1995) challenged the inter-changeable use of the Pakeha construct of family and the Māori construct of whānau. She advocated for policymakers to understand the economic role of whānau as foundational and indeed critical for the maintenance and survival of Māori culture.

The interchangeable use of family/whānau in social policies is problematic when it drives policymaking on the basis of western cultural constructions and definitions of the nuclear family. In this frame, there is little opportunity for variations on the basic family unit. The nuclear family model is unlikely to work for those families who are different from the 'norm' of a nuclear family (Smith, 1995; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005). There is growing diversity in the composition of New Zealand families (Poole et al, 1991). Managing that diversity in the social policymaking process is a significant challenge. The challenge is projected to intensify as New Zealand society continues to change.

Family and whānau are not the same (Families Commission Whānau Reference Group, 2009). The use of 'family/whānau' in social policy assumes that the terms can be used in this way and that there are commonalities about these terms that justify their use without qualification or clarification of the differences. Members of the Families Commission Whānau Reference Group view family as a subset of whānau rather than the other way around.

The Second Māori Taskforce for Whānau Violence Prevention report states:

In many social policy statements on whānau violence, whānau and family are used interchangeably. Social policy does not make the distinction between whānau and family and in fact using these terms synonymously in social policy indicates that they are either not well understood or viewed as the same constructs with different languages used to describe them... While the Taskforce recognises the diversity of whānau, and that many Māori do not identify with whakapapa or kin based whānau, all Māori have whakapapa. It is the consciousness, acceptance and practice of it that differs.

The Taskforce further stated that 'social policy that adopts a narrow view of whānau and fails to recognise whakapapa as a key cultural construct that is pivotal to Māori identity survival is essentially social policy that creates and constructs whakapapa-less whānau' (2004, p. 12).

## Whānau ora policy focus

Whanungatanga or whānau working to support each other is an important contributing factor for building whānau strength, resiliency and wellbeing. Durie (2003) identified different types of contemporary whānau, according to their impacts on the health and wellbeing of whānau members and the risks that they pose. The assumption that whānau all operate to provide a positive experience of whānau is problematic. The full range of whānau processes and dynamics need to be considered in social policymaking. Whānau have been impacted on by major processes that have created discontinuity from some of the positive cultural practices whānau would once have carried out. It is important that the ideal of whānau does not render as invisible some of the realities of whānau. Durie (2003) makes this point in his description of some of the more dysfunctional roles of whānau.



Smith (1995) describes dysfunction as an outcome of processes such as colonisation, urbanisation and the aftermath of two world wars. Māori have had to adapt as environmental and circumstantial pressure forced them to change to survive (Durie, 2002). However, an examination of issues around quality of life and longevity give cause for concern (Te Roopu Rangahau Hauora a Eru Pomare, 2008). Whānau do survive but this often carries a huge cost in terms of experiences such as premature death and disability from preventable diseases, the stress of living with enduring poverty which produces its own set of outcomes such as whānau violence, criminality and other related outcomes indicative of whānau under stress (Kruger, et al 2004).

There are significant ethnicity-related differences in socio demographic data (Dharmalingham et al, 2004; Te Roopu Rangahau Hauora a Eru Pomare, 2008). Data on Māori mortality, for example, creates an imperative for health policies and interventions for Māori to be different from general population responses (Durie, 1994). Disease patterns are different and occur at higher rates for Māori for a number of preventable diseases such as heart disease (Te Roopu Rangahau Hauora a Eru Pomare, 2008), whereas diagnosed mental illnesses such as anorexia nervosa are not as prevalent amongst Māori compared to non Māori (Baxter, 2008).

Māori offending differs in some ways from non Māori offending. For example, it is not uncommon to find kin-based whānau in prison at the same time. The individualised treatment of offenders in the criminal justice system does not address the realities of collectivism and collective identity for many Māori offenders. In short, a general population approach to Māori offending is not likely to work. The Department of Corrections in formulating a Māori strategy has been engaging with iwi and hapū and trying to address offending patterns for Māori together in a given takiwa. This is an example of insider and outsider perspectives coming together.

Taiapa (1995) found that the costs whānau bear to maintain cultural practices such as tangihanga, are often invisible to policymakers. Whānau who have an active involvement with their marae, whānau, hapū and iwi fulfill a vital role in New Zealand society of keeping Māori cultural practices alive and vibrant. This is of inestimable value to the economics of the New Zealand. However, Taiapa (1995) notes that it often goes by unnoticed and unaccounted for in economic policymaking in New Zealand.

The examples of the way in which whānau is articulated in social policies are numerous. Failure to recognise the diversity of Māori is a risk factor. Yet recognition of the diversity, cultural values and demographics of Māori, at the population levels, is a very complex undertaking. There are a myriad of data issues around the under count in the ethnicity data for Māori and the mixed identity that many Māori can and do claim. There are also the complexities of asserting a multi iwi identity.

This review highlights the rationale for not taking a one-size-fits-all approach in social policy in New Zealand.

## Whānau ora themes

This review clarifies some of the key themes that the Families Commission has considered when developing a working definition of the term for the purposes of informing the Commission's work with whānau.

- > whānau ora has to be defined by whānau for themselves
- > whānau are capable of developing and leading their own solutions
- > whānau ora is an integrated approach to whānau wellbeing



- > whānau ora is founded on Māori values, worldviews and cultural practices and identity
- > whānau ora is a strengths-based approach
- > whānau ora involves the inter-generational transmission of knowledge.

## Conclusion

The Families Commission accepts that whakapapa whānau is the most culturally authentic form of whānau and prioritises this whānau type. As the Families Commission is legislatively required to pay attention to the cultural values of Māori as tangata whenua, this is appropriate. The Commission recognises that whānau are a key site for change and a critical place to focus efforts to improve social outcomes for Māori. This is reflected in the overarching vision of the Commission's Whānau Strategic Framework 2009–2012, that whānau are supported to be the best that they can be.

This analysis of literature on whānau speaks to the placement of whānau in the context of the larger cultural structures that shape and define Māori identity. Whakapapa whānau is an integral part of hapū and hapū an integral part of iwi. That creates both an imperative and an opportunity for the Commission to build relationships with iwi as the cultural collective representing whakapapa whānau.

The Commission also recognises kaupapa whānau, or Māori collectives who are united to achieve a common purpose or goal.

## The Families Commission's working definition of whānau ora

A working definition of whānau ora for the Families Commission is:

**Whānau ora is achieved when whānau are the best that they can be.**

Whānau must determine for themselves what whānau ora means and how they attain it. This is a working definition which means that will evolve over time as further understanding is gained. The role of the Commission is to inform debate, advocate for whānau development to be led by whānau for whānau and to support the excellent work of other agencies such as Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Health, who promote whānau ora.

The Families Commission can offer agencies working with the kaupapa of whānau ora research to inform further policy and programme development. It can also act as a conduit for whānau to have their voices heard in social policy and decision-making circles.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to inform the Families Commission's Whānau Strategy 2009–2012. Selected literature has been reviewed which examines definitions of whānau and which considers applications of the construct of whānau ora. The two main bodies of literature are then integrated and linked back to provide evidential support for the Commission's Whānau Ora Strategy 2009–2012.

The literature has been sourced from academic journal articles, historical narratives and oral histories; published research reports, policy statements and strategic plans; unpublished writing such as theses and reports and policies that have been provided to the Families Commission by the authors.

The majority of the literature sourced is available in the public domain. The unpublished material has been used with the permission of the authors.

## 1.1 FAMILIES COMMISSION/KŌMIHANA Ā WHĀNAU

The Families Commission is legislatively tasked in the Families Commission Act 2003 with acting as an advocate for the interests of families generally (Section 7 (1)).

In performing the advocacy function, the Commission is required to identify and have regard for factors that help to maintain or enhance 'families' resilience and families' strengths' (Section 7 (2 & 3)).

Additional functions of the Families Commission are to:

- a. encourage and facilitate informed debate, by any of the following persons, on matters relating to the interests of families:
  - > representatives of Government, academic and community sectors
  - > members of the public.
- b. increase public awareness and promote better understanding of matters relating to the interests of families, for example:
  - > the importance of stable family relationships (including those between parties to a marriage, civil union or a de facto relationship)
  - > the importance of the parenting role
  - > the rights and responsibilities of parents.
- c. encourage and facilitate the development and facilitate the development and provision by Ministers of the Crown, departments of State and other instruments of the Executive Government, of policies designed to promote or serve the interests of families.
- d. consider, and to report and make recommendations on, any matter (for example, a proposed Government policy) relating to families that is referred to it by any Minister of the Crown.

- e. stimulate and promote research into any matter relating to the interests of families, for example by:
  - > collecting and disseminating information or research about families
  - > advising on areas where further research or information about families should be undertaken or collected
  - > entering into contracts of arrangements for research or information about families to be undertaken or collected.

The Families Commission Act 2003 requires that the Commission recognise the diversity of New Zealand families, and, in Section 11 requires that the Commission, in exercising and performing its powers and functions, has regard to the needs, values and beliefs of Māori as tangata whenua. The Commission does not operate alone. It will forge strategic partnerships and alliances with key Māori stakeholders so that it can add value to the extensive and excellent work already being carried out in iwi development, Māori community development and in the various programmes and policies of government agencies. Relationships with hapū and iwi will be a priority for the Families Commission as the Whānau Strategy is progressed.

## 1.2 GOVERNMENT AND WHĀNAU DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES


Whānau development priorities have been explored inside Māori cultural processes (Marsden, 1981) and outside of them, in the policy frameworks and practices of various Government agencies. This literature is framed according to insider (whānau) and outsider (government) views about what constitutes whānau and whānau development priorities.

The national *Whānau Wellbeing and Development Conference* (2005) drew a distinction between the role of whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities in orchestrating their own development and the various roles of the state and other external contributors in supporting and in some cases, resourcing that development. Te Puni Kōkiri (2005) concluded that whānau development could only be carried out by whānau although it could be externally resourced and supported. The whānau development projects were based on recognition of the central importance of culture and identity for whānau ora. Externally driven interventions foisted on whānau were considered to be inappropriate and likely to be unsuccessful.

The insider/outsider analysis identifies differences between what whānau see as their own priorities compared with what the Government and other external stakeholders see as whānau priorities. This allows us to compare the way that whānau see their roles compared to the way that the government sees them.

There have been a number of whānau focused priorities established in the health, education, justice, labour and other sectors. The way in which these government priorities have been established means that the experiences of whānau are often reduced to a set of outcome measures. This contracting framework means that rather than delivering holistic and integrated services to whānau, discrete services are offered to individuals in a whānau grouping. Entitlement in this system is afforded on the basis of geography and identified need. This is not necessarily the way that Māori service providers prefer to operate, which is kaupapa driven and focused (Walker, 2006).





Insider perspectives, such as those evident in iwi and hapū development plans, focus on the whakapapa basis of whānau. This underpins entitlement to resources contained and managed within the iwi context, as sourced in kinship. Priorities in iwi development include cultural revitalisation and identity development, land and environment protection and management, education, economic development and growth of whānau capacity and capability. These are more strategic, integrated and holistic priorities and goals for whānau.

The *Whānau Wellbeing and Development Conference*, and regional whānau development hui, produced evidence about whānau priorities. There is consistency in what constitutes priorities for whānau development. Te Puni Kōkiri's process established an important mechanism for whānau voices to be heard and translated into its whānau-led development projects.

The Te Puni Kōkiri research to date demonstrates that a Government agency can take a supportive role in facilitating and resourcing whānau development without necessarily directing or leading it. The heart of the issue is that whānau want to be able to determine how they will identify themselves and what their priorities are for their own development which do not always align with the views of Government (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005).

### 1.3 KAUPAPA MĀORI THEORY

The theoretical position underpinning this paper is Kaupapa Māori (Smith, 1992; 1995). Kaupapa Māori theory is action oriented and accepts the validity of Māori values and processes and is defined as 'the philosophy and practice of being Māori' (Mahuika, 2008, p. 4). In practical terms, this acknowledges the importance of honouring whakapapa and tikanga, Māori ways of being in the world.

Smith (2000) states "there is more to kaupapa Māori than our own history under colonialism or our desires to restore Rangatiratanga. We have a different epistemological (the nature of knowledge) tradition that frames the way we see the world, the way we organise ourselves in it, the questions we ask and the solutions we seek" (p. 230). This is particularly relevant to understanding the differences in interpretation and application of the cultural construct of whānau.

Whakapapa whānau comes out of a divine (Māori are descendents of Atua) and long history and is both continuous and permanent. It binds whānau to a much larger context and set of complex relationships that are born of connections with the land, ancestors and history. Although whakapapa has been impacted over time and many contemporary Māori have lost a working knowledge of their whakapapa through circumstances outside their control, it is still at the heart of being Māori. Therefore, it is at the heart and core of what it means to be whānau.

Kaupapa Māori drives process from an assumption of the validity of matauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) and tikanga Māori (Māori cultural practices).







## 2. EXPLORING AND DEFINING WHĀNAU



## 2.1 TWO PRE-EMINENT MODELS OF WHĀNAU

Whānau is generally described as a collective of people connected through a common ancestor (whakapapa) or as the result of a common purpose (kaupapa) (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005). According to Williams (1985) whānau is defined as ‘off spring, family group used occasionally in tribal designations such as Te whānau-a-Apanui’ (p. 487).

Whānau as the key Māori social and cultural unit has been researched extensively to describe its component parts, roles and relationships in traditional and contemporary Māori society (Best, 1952; Buck, 1949; Firth, 1959; Hohepa, 1970; Kawharu, 1975; Metge, 1995, 2001; Durie, 1997, 2003).

The two pre-eminent models of whānau from the literature are whakapapa (kinship) and kaupapa (purpose driven) whānau. Whakapapa whānau are the more permanent and culturally authentic form of whānau. Whakapapa and kaupapa whānau are not mutually exclusive. Whakapapa whānau will regularly pursue kaupapa or goals. Whereas kaupapa whānau may or may not have whakapapa connections.

These two whānau models construct whānau identity differently but the intent of both models is to contribute to the achievement of whānau ora by means of building and strengthening bonds of kinship and giving effect to the collective practices of whānaungatanga (whānau support). Working together to achieve a common goal creates space and opportunity for whānaungatanga in action for both kaupapa and whakapapa whānau (Durie, 2003; Taiapa, 1995; Kahu & Wakefield, 2008). The motivating factor that explains why a collective would work together is drawn from different sources. For whakapapa whānau, it is the bonds of kinship that draw whānau together. For kaupapa whānau, it is the purpose or goal that a collective seeks to achieve, that draws them together. The motivating factors in both cases resides inside the collective dynamic as an internal process that can bring strength and resilience to the collective identity and group effort. In summary, when a whānau is strong from the inside out, the need for negative external (outside in) involvement is reduced (Kahu & Wakefield, 2008).

Traditional conceptualisations of whānau were whakapapa based. Whakapapa whānau are whānau on the basis of descent or kinship relationships. Whakapapa according to Kruger et al (2004) describes the relationships between te ao kikokiko (the physical world) and te ao wairua (the spiritual world). The construct of whakapapa extends beyond the physical relationships that give it expression and into the unseen realm of wairua or spirit. This unseen realm is brought into the contemporary lives of whakapapa whānau through the acknowledgement and valuing of kinship ties with those who have passed on (Pere, 1991).

Whakapapa brings those relationships between the physical and spiritual realms together as one continuous relationship that is described in the recitation and recording of whakapapa.

Kruger et al (2004) state that whakapapa is expressed as sets of relationships, conditional obligations and privileges that determine a sense of wellbeing between whānau, hapū and iwi (p. 18). Whakapapa is broadly defined as the continuum of life that includes kinship and history. The notion of reciprocal and mutual obligations means that whakapapa also becomes a potent form of accountability for individual whānau members and for the whānau collective. As Kruger et al (2004) note “whakapapa makes you accountable” (p. 10).

Kaupapa whānau are bound together in relationships to fulfill a common purpose or goal. Kaupapa whānau may or may not share whakapapa. However, whakapapa is the glue that holds whānau together. With kaupapa whānau, there is nothing to bind people together beyond the achievement of the goal or purpose unless they choose to continue to have a whānau type of relationship (Kruger et al, 2004).

## 2.2 WHAKAPAPA AND TRADITIONAL WHĀNAU

Traditional conceptualisations of whānau were whakapapa based. Kruger et al (2004) stated that without whakapapa Māori identity is non-existent. It is the cultural construct that defines Māori or the glue that holds Māori together culturally and sets them apart.

Whakapapa whānau aligns with discourse around entitlement and rights of whānau, hapū and iwi to define their own development priorities and pursue these. In this respect, it is consistent with the whānau development hui outcomes which also advocated for whānau to control their own development. Iwi development strategies have an overarching goal of Tino Rangatiratanga/self-determination. In this frame, iwi are an integral and fundamental part of the process of achieving whānau ora for whakapapa whānau (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005).

The extended whānau was identified as the smallest of the Māori social structures, usually consisting of three-to-four generations of extended family (Moeke-Pickering, 1996). The traditional whānau was integrally and inextricably linked to the larger cultural institutions of hapū, iwi and waka. Keeping within the confines of their tribal affiliations, each whānau “mixed, divided, rekindled, migrated and formed fresh relationships” (Moeke-Pickering, 1996 p. 2).

Papakura (1986) noted that it was commonplace for individuals to belong to a number of different whānau and to be able to connect with other whānau, hapū and iwi through the process of reciting whakapapa and as a result of inter-marriage.

Moreover, in traditional times, the whānau organised themselves in clusters of whānau to form hapū. The whānau environment according to Moeke-Pickering (1996) acculturated whānau into a sense of collective affiliation, obligatory roles and responsibilities and the unification of people was of primary importance. In traditional times, the whānau was the place where the initial teaching and socialisation of things Māori took place (Durie, 1994). The whānau was more than a social unit but was based on kinship ties, shared a common ancestor and provided an environment within which certain obligations and responsibilities were maintained.

Smith (1995) identifies the primary role of whānau as being to nurture and support members. Smith observed that the nurturing and supportive role of whānau has survived in a modified form despite the ‘historical pressures of assimilation and the presence of the dominant Pakeha family model in society’ (1995, p. 28).

Moeke-Pickering (1996) found that Māori identity was conceptualised as a result of tribal structure, descent (whakapapa) and cultural practices. Descent provided the basis in which tribal structures and relationships were organised and maintained. Whereas cultural practices are based on the shared understanding of practices that a group deems to be important to them (p. 2). There is a difference between the factors that contribute to a sense of identity and belonging and those that contribute to the fulfilment of a role.



Metge (1995) identified five contemporary uses of the term whānau which stem from pre European Māori uses of the term. Metge (1995) commented that the five definitions of whānau have their roots in pre European Māori culture. These are:

- > A set of siblings for brothers and sisters born to the same parents.
- > All of the descendents of a relatively recent named ancestor traced through both male and female links, regardless of where they are living, whether they know about each other or whether they interact with each other.
- > Descendents of a relatively recent ancestor who act and interact together on an ongoing basis and identify themselves as a group by symbols such as the ancestors' name. The criteria for membership are descent plus active participation in group activities. These groups exist independently of individual members who move in and out of active participation. Where in classical times members of a whānau of this kind lived and worked together as one household for much of the year, nowadays they are commonly distributed among several households.
- > A group consisting of a descent group core with the addition of members' spouses and children adopted from outside, a collection of parent-child families who act and interact together on an ongoing basis under a common name. The criteria for membership are descent or connection by marriage, adoption and active participation in group activities.
- > Descent groups of greater genealogical depth, to hapū and iwi (p. 53).

McNatty (2001) reminds us that it is necessary to understand the context of language usage in order to understand the intent and meaning of a Māori word fully. Te Rangihiroa stated that "much error already has been handed on in ethnological writings through inexact translations of Māori words" (Buck, 1925, p 101). The language used to describe cultural constructs is potentially changed in a cross-cultural interpretation. It is useful to consider the meaning and intent of Māori words when trying to arrive at a definition of whānau. Metge's categories are all based on the validation of whakapapa relationships and this would have been the primary rationale for whānau organisation in pre-colonised times.

## 2.3 KAUPAPA WHĀNAU

Kaupapa whānau are bound together in relationships to fulfill a common purpose or goal. Kaupapa whānau may or may not share whakapapa.

Kaupapa whānau is defined according to the role that the whānau performs in the lives of individual whānau members. This is a model that recognises both the traditional and contemporary roles that whānau perform in the lives of whānau members and does not exclude a traditional model in preference for a more contemporary approach. It recognises that the collective of whānau is vital for the individual functioning of whānau members. However, it gives room for whānau to include those with whom individual Māori affiliate and identify without the need for kinship or genealogical relations. Kaupapa whānau usually share a common mission and act towards each other as if they were whānau (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005).

Durie (2002) also describes whānau as groups who share a common mission or kaupapa rather than a common heritage. Examples are a kindergarten whānau, church whānau, whānau support groups and team mates. Smith (1995) states that Māori, who may share an association based on some common interests such as an urban marae or workplace, may be considered to be whānau.

According to Taiapa (1995), Māori recognise two types of family – the nuclear family (not to be confused with the definition of a nuclear family that encompasses mum, dad and the children) and whānau /or extended family. The role of the Māori nuclear family is to provide resources for the meeting of cultural obligations to the wider network of extended family or whānau. Further, Taiapa (1995), states that there is an interaction between the Māori nuclear family who may be living away from other whānau and the whānau (extended family), through the meeting of culturally prescribed commitments and obligations. Thus, according to Taiapa (1995), the two types of Māori family are intertwined and part of the same process of whānaungatanga. Taiapa (1995) also proposes that without whānau, the foundations of Māoridom would not be sustainable. Whānau is the vehicle for the transmission and active practice of a Māori identity.

Whānau participants in the whānau development national and regional conferences (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005) concluded that 'whānau is who whānau says it is' (p. 3). In other words, the boundaries around whānau are defined by whānau through their daily interactions with each other. Further, there is no singularly consistent and universal definition of whānau (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005). Whānau is shaped by context and intent. However, whakapapa whānau are who their whakapapa says that they are and so the definition developed by the participants at the whānau development hui, represent the views of a discrete group of hui participants. When viewed alongside the construct of whakapapa, whānau really do not have the freedom to define themselves. Their identity is encapsulated in who they are as whakapapa whether they are aware of it or not.

## 2.4 CONCLUSIONS

There is no universal, generic definition of whānau when dealing with Māori. Whānau development involves the entire whānau. It is not individualised activity but is best understood as a collective enterprise. Whakapapa whānau and kaupapa whānau are social constructs and as such can be located along a continuum depending on function and intent.

Te Puni Kōkiri (2005) noted that the overall characteristics and qualities that help to define whānau are:

- > Whānau is a function of who people are, what they do and how they relate to each other. Furthermore, whānau are first and foremost a product of whakapapa and history. Whānau in 2010 are the living expression of whakapapa whether they know the details of who they are or not.
- > There are definitional, sociological, cultural and spiritual dimensions to whānau.
- > There is no definitive, universal meaning of the concept of whānau.
- > Depending on context and intent, the term whānau can be used variously and interchangeably.
- > The nature of whānau has changed as society has changed.
- > The boundaries of whānau are self defining.





Te Puni Kōkiri (2005) also found that:

- > Māori regard whānau as the core of Māori society
- > whānau is generally described as a collective of people connected by common ancestry or for a common purpose
- > whakapapa whānau are connected through common ancestry and lineage from a common ancestor
- > kaupapa whānau are connected through a common purpose, mission or interest
- > whānau can be a combination of both whakapapa and kaupapa dimensions
- > whānau can be applied to whānau collectives, hapū, iwi and marae
- > whānau is differentiated as singular whānau (children and their primary caregivers/ parents) and intergenerational whānau (hapū and marae)
- > whānau are the building blocks of the wider social units of hapū and iwi
- > whānau are linked to hapū and iwi through strong marae; the term marae whānau is used to define multiple whānau affiliated to a marae
- > whānau is seen to be a self defining concept; whānau determine who whānau is in any situation
- > whānau tends to be inclusive rather than exclusive.



### **3. CHANGING WHĀNAU DYNAMICS – HISTORICAL PROCESSES AND CONTEMPORARY OUTCOMES**

Whakapapa whānau have gone through massive upheaval and change through the impact of colonisation and urbanisation, the net effect of which has been to break down Māori cultural value and knowledge systems and denigrate Māori cultural practices including those of whānau. Many government social policies have served to undermine, reinterpret and redefine whānau (Walker, 2006).

Colonisation, urbanisation and history have impacted on the ability of whānau, hapū and iwi to maintain and sustain certain key cultural practices such as whānaungatanga (supportive practices within whānau) (Hohepa, 1970; Kruger et al, 2004; McCarthy, 1996; Durie, 2003; Walker, 2006).

Urbanisation led to the massive relocation of 80 percent of rural-based Māori into the cities in search of employment and with hope of creating a better life for themselves (Smith, 1995). This was a direct consequence of colonisation and the widespread alienation of Māori land and removal of a Māori economic base. Whānau had little choice but to leave home, those places where they had lived for generations, in order to search for paid work. This contributed to a breakdown in traditional and familiar ways of whānau interaction and relationship, as distance, the demands of work and social isolation took their toll.





Smith (1995) describes the impacts of technological changes on the capacity of whānau to engage in whānaungatanga. According to Smith (1995) access to new technology such as refrigeration meant that whānau living in the city and away from the traditional rural housing groupings, had the ability to freeze food rather than distribute it to the whānau members as traditional cultural practice would determine (Smith, 1995).

Smith (1995) also discusses the role of the telephone in removing opportunities for the practice of kanohi kitea, or face-to-face interaction between whānau members. This had major implications in terms of the frequency with which whānau living in the cities reconnected with whānau living out of the cities and also with whānau located in different parts of the same city. Access to new technology shaped and changed specific cultural practices removing opportunities to retain close and active relationships with whānau.

According to McCarthy (1996), there has been a fracturing of the whānau unit as a result of the long term effects of assimilative policies and practices. Deliberate contrived social policies such as assimilation through education and various other state institutions such as the legal system served to further undermine and devalue Māori cultural practices (Bishop, 1996). Dispossession, disease and warfare in the early colonisation of New Zealand resulted in the rapid decline of the Māori population (Poole, 1991). The circumstances and events of history have taken a major toll on whānau survival and whānau capacity to retain traditional cultural practices in the face of the extensive trauma birthed in New Zealand's colonial past.

According to Te Rito (2007a) urbanisation can erode whakapapa on the basis that if Māori people living in the cities lose their whakapapa links with their traditional papakainga they can be left in a state of suspension. Moreover, the loss of whakapapa connections, by urban Māori according to Te Rito (2007b) can be seen as contributing to Māori over-representation in negative mental health and other statistics. It is important to note that whakapapa cannot be lost although knowledge of it can be misplaced for a time. Whakapapa is permanent, stable and knowledge of it is an inalienable cultural right.

Whānau is a critical cultural entity although the need to change for survival, has altered the shape and some of the roles of whānau in the contemporary context. Cultural practices such as whānaungatanga, manaakitanga and tuakana/teina mutual obligations are still evident in contemporary whānau despite the challenges to these practices. Certain cultural values have new applications but the essence of these practices remains relatively intact for many whānau (Smith, 1995). The financial cost of returning home for tangi and hui is prohibitive for many urban Māori. However, the cultural costs of not returning home for important whānau events, is more substantial.

The composition of whānau has become more liberally interpreted (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005; Moeke-Pickering, 1996; Smith, 1995; McNatty, 2001) driven by the demands of urbanisation and social changes in the post war era. The capacity to change with the context and times indicates that the whānau as a key cultural institution is highly adaptable although this has been by necessity rather than choice (Smith, 1997).



Durie (2003) concluded that common to all definitions and meanings, whānau are brought together for a specific purpose. Members of a whānau are usually, but not always, Māori and generally their relationship is beneficial although this is not always the case (p. 13). Te Puni Kōkiri (2005) found that most whānau interactions and relationships are mutually beneficial. However, it is important to understand the impacts of history and the massive changes that whānau have undergone over generations during the process of colonisation, the impacts of which are relevant to the present day. Despite extensive attempts to assimilate whānau out of being Māori, whānau have survived over generations and have continued to practice key cultural values such as whānaungatanga, manaakitanga although these have been severely challenged as a result of colonisation.



## 4. IWI DEVELOPMENT



This section examines the role of iwi in whānau development and whānau ora through three case studies in iwi development.<sup>1</sup> Two post settlement iwi have been selected, the third is in the process of negotiating final settlement, because they have the resources, obligations and desire to progress whānau development. In all of these strategies, whakapapa whānau are the key focus. This is a brief analysis of iwi development and the instrumentality of iwi in the lives of whakapapa whānau.

#### **4.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IWI AND WHAKAPAPA WHĀNAU**

Iwi are the political vehicle and voice for whakapapa whānau. This is consistent with a Treaty of Waitangi analysis in which article two guarantees to iwi Rangatiratanga or chieftainship over resources and matters pertaining to the iwi collective. It is also the manifestation of tikanga and culturally enshrined obligations to care for those who whakapapa to the iwi. Mana whenua status, or authority to exercise chieftainship in a tribal area, is confined to whānau who whakapapa to the iwi. Having whakapapa to the iwi obligates it to care for whānau. Without whakapapa there would be no iwi.

#### **4.2 ROLE OF IWI IN WHĀNAU ORA AND WHĀNAU DEVELOPMENT**

Iwi have an instrumental role in whānau development. Iwi development plans and strategies focus on positive whānau development, tribal Mana Motuhake and Rangatiratanga. The areas of strategic importance across the iwi development plans reviewed for this document are: cultural development, including the restoration and further development of Te Reo Māori (iwi dialect); tribal tikanga and tribal knowledge systems; sustainable economic development; sustainable social development; and, sustainable political development. One of the political roles of iwi is to work alongside the Crown and its agents (government agencies) to maintain the whakapapa based relationships and through that, to exercise their status as mana whenua or holders of the mana, external influence, prestige and power in a given tribal area. Through partnership and collaboration, the three iwi in these case studies, agree that whānau development can be progressed. However, iwi have certain obligations to whānau as determined by whakapapa, whereas the Crown and its agencies have a different set of obligations to whānau under articles one and three of the Treaty of Waitangi.

There are many examples of partnership relationships being forged between the Crown and iwi for the benefit of whānau development and nation building. The gifting of land for schools and hospitals historically is one such example (Waitangi Tribunal, 2010). A contemporary example is the gifting of sacred sites to the nation such as Ngai Tahu's gifting of Rakiura as a national park (Ngai Tahu Settlements Act, 1998). Nationhood is not a new concept to iwi. Many iwi view themselves as nations within a nation. This analysis of the position of iwi in relationship to the Families Commission (as an agent of the Crown) leads to only one type of relationship that honours the mana whenua status of iwi and that is a partnership relationship as described in the Treaty of Waitangi. Validation of whakapapa whānau is the rationale for the Families Commission to pursue Treaty-based partnership relationships with iwi.

---

<sup>1</sup> Iwi is made up of hapū or sub tribal groups which are collectives of whānau.

### 4.3 CASE STUDIES IN IWI DEVELOPMENT

An examination of iwi histories indicates that iwi have always worked for whānau wellbeing enhanced or constrained by the availability of resources to effect change. In pre-treaty settlement times, when iwi had limited resources, and the resources that they had were dedicated to the struggle to regain land, lobby government for justice and survive, whānau wellbeing was a high priority on grounds that without whakapapa, iwi ceased to exist.

Therefore, the preservation of whakapapa whānau was always, and continues to be, a priority for iwi development. Furthermore iwi have and continue to pursue the right to self determination. The pursuit of self determination by iwi does not invalidate the Treaty enshrined obligations of the Crown and its agents to address the various needs of whānau. Article Three of the Treaty of Waitangi recognises that whānau have the same rights and privileges as all New Zealanders. For example, in the Government-funded health system, whānau have the same entitlement to access health services as all other New Zealanders. Article One describes the Crown obligation and responsibility as Treaty partner. Article Two guarantees Tino Rangatiranga or the right of chieftainship and self determination, to iwi.

The maintenance of the whakapapa or unique tribal identity is imperative for iwi survival. This imperative drives iwi foci on the development of whakapapa whānau driven by their participation and engagement in tribal affairs.

Iwi are compelled to strategise for whānau ora as an underpinning element of whānau development and whakapapa/iwi survival. The following case studies in iwi development provide confirmation that iwi are concerned with whānau wellbeing. To achieve this, iwi strategic plans promote the implementation of iwi self-determination and the validation of whakapapa is notably the starting point for all of these strategies.

### 4.4 NGAI TAHU 2025

The Ngai Tahu Strategic Plan 'Vision 2025' has as its whakatauki or guiding statement "Tino Rangatiratanga – Mo Tatou, a, mo ka uri a muri ake nei – Tino Rangatiratanga – (self determination) for us and our children after us".<sup>2</sup>

Ngai Tahu's mission statement further clarifies what is important in the future development and survival of whānau who whakapapa to Ngai Tahu as "Puritia tawhia kia ita, te Mana Tipuna. Te Mana Whenua. Te Mana Tangata – hold fast and firm to my inherited authority. To my right to this land. To my freedom and right to self determination" (p. 3). This tribal strategy speaks of inalienable rights to exercise authority as Ngai Tahu that is sourced in whakapapa.

On the subject of whakapapa, Vision 2025 states "Whakapapa is the foundation of our identity as Ngai Tahu, Ngati Mamoe and Waitaha, embracing our origins from Tahu Potiki and his birthplace on the Tairāwhiti" and "History and traditions place us on our land and tie us together as a unique people. How we engage with land and its coasts is crucial to our identity, our culture and our Tikanga. Our taha wairua (spirit) flourishes and is emphasised by the passion and energy we have to carry our culture forward" (p. 16).

On the priority of whānau social development, Ngai Tahu 2025 states "Ngai Tahu whānau wellbeing is improved through the targeting of dedicated resources to meet

<sup>2</sup> www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz



identified whānau needs and aspirations. Whānau will be supported to engage in activities that enhance their physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health. Whakapapa identifies and unites us. Whānau is our social foundation. Hapū upholds ahi ka and maintains turangawaewae. Runanga supports our development. Whenua sustains our existence”. (p. 28).

## 4.5 WHAKATUPURANGA WAIKATO-TAINUI 2050

Whakatupuranga Waikato-Tainui 2050 articulates the desire of the iwi to equip generations of Tainui whānau so that they have the capacity to be self determining, or to exercise Rangatiratanga at the personal and whānau levels.<sup>3</sup> Three critical elements that underpin the equipping of Waikato Tainui are “a pride and commitment to uphold tribal identity and integrity”. (p. 2). This first element is further qualified as recognising “the importance of tribal history, maatauranga, reo and tikanga. A secure sense of identity and cultural integrity is intended to produce future generations that are both proud and confident in all walks of life”. (p. 2)

The second critical element is “a diligence to succeed in education and beyond”. The creation of a culture for success is intended to lead to the creation of opportunities and choices and to promote diligence among tribal members of all ages to pursue success in all of their endeavours”. (p. 2).

The third critical element is self determination for economic independence and this relates directly to the growth of tribal assets. The third element is sourced in the vision of King Tawhiao who said “Maku ano e hanga i toku nei whare – build our own house in order to face the challenges of the future”. The mission of Whakatupuranga Waikato-Tainui 2050 is “Kia tupu, kia hua, kia puawai – to grow, prosper and sustain” (p. 2). To grow a prosperous, healthy, vibrant, innovative and culturally strong iwi. This mission is underpinned by the Tikanga and unifying principles of the Kingitanga which are “whakaiti – humility; whakapono – trust and faith; aroha – love and respect; rangimarie – peace and calm; manaakitanga – caring; kotahitanga – unity and mahitahi – collaboration”.

The primary goals of Whakatupuranga Waikato-Tainui 2050 are “Kingitanga – whaia ko te mana motuhake – which relates to the preservation of the historical role of Waikato-Tainui as guardians of the Kingitanga and to ensure that the Kingitanga remains an eternal symbol of unity” (p. 4). Tribal identity and integrity relates to the preservation of the tribal heritage, reo and tikanga, growing the tribal estate and managing the natural resources of Waikato-Tainui. Tribal success, the third strategic objective, relates to succeeding in all forms of education and training, being global leaders in research excellence and growing leaders. The fourth strategic objective relates to tribal social and economic wellbeing and emphasises the development of self sufficient marae, advancing social development of those who whakapapa to Waikato-Tainui and developing and sustaining the economic capacity of the iwi.

The themes of self determination and the exercise of iwi authority to strategise for whānau development are based on the maintenance of the language, customs and identity of Waikato-Tainui.

---

<sup>3</sup> [www.tainui.iwi.nz](http://www.tainui.iwi.nz)

## 4.6 TE RUNANGA O NGATI POROU STRATEGIC PLAN 2009–2012

Te Runanga o Ngati Porou's Strategic Plan for 2009–2012 has a statement of the whakapapa of the iwi on the front cover which reads "Ko Hikurangi Te Maunga. Ko Waiapu Te Awa. Ko Ngati Porou Te Iwi. Mana Motuhake, Ngati Porou Nga Uri Whakatipu – Ngati Porou self determining for the future".<sup>4</sup> Te Runanga o Ngati Porou is charged with administering the tribal assets for the benefit of the beneficiaries who are "Nga uri o nga hapū o Ngati Porou ma ii Potikirua ki Te Toka a Taiau" (the descendents of the sub tribes of Ngati Porou occupying the region of Potikirau to Te Toka a Taiau). The vision of Ngati Porou is "Ko te whakapumau i te mana motuhake o Ngati Porou i roto i tona mana Atua, mana tangata, mana whenua". This vision statement will be realised by affirming the knowledge-base of Ngati Porou and the application of the wisdom and knowledge of Ngati Porou to all cultural, economic, social and political developments that contribute to the prosperity and survival of Ngati Porou whānau and hapū while actively enhancing the mana motuhake (political and cultural authority) of Ngati Porou (p. 6).

The key strategies in the strategic plan are:

- > *Mana Tangata* which relates to capacity and capability and building the capacity (people power) of whānau and hapū to achieve Ngati Porou governance and self reliance.
- > *Mana Tuku Iho* – Ngati Poroutanga which relates to preserving, maintaining and promoting the ancestral heritage of Ngati Porou including te reo ako o Ngati Porou me ona tikanga.
- > *Mana Kaitiaki* which relates to relationship building at home with hapū and abroad with other iwi, government and non-government agencies and represent Ngati Porou interests effectively and efficiently.
- > *Mana Whenua* which relates to protecting and nurturing the environment and ensuring the return, retention and protection of Ngati Porou taonga (whenua and takutai).
- > *Whakatipu Putea* – building a strong economic base to support whānau and hapū to achieve optimum return on their assets.

## 4.7 KEY THEMES

Iwi recognise their obligation to support and grow the capacity of whānau through proactive cultural, economic and social development strategies and create opportunities for whānau to experience whānau ora. The wellbeing of whānau is paramount in the future-focused development plans of these iwi.

Whakapapa creates an imperative that iwi continue to support whānau development, build whānau capacity and support whānau to become fully functioning, healthy members of hapū and iwi. The role of the iwi is to strategise with whānau and create opportunities for the full expression of Tino rangatiratanga, self determination at the hapū and whānau levels.

<sup>4</sup> www.ngatiporou.com



## 4.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FAMILIES COMMISSION'S WHĀNAU STRATEGY 2009–2012

Iwi, hapū and whakapapa whānau identity are all interconnected through tribal histories and genealogical tradition. Therefore, when Families Commission/Te Kōmihana ā Whānau recognises whakapapa whānau as the most culturally authentic form of whānau, it also recognises the rights of iwi as having legitimate authority to represent whānau who whakapapa to the iwi.

The mana whenua status of iwi suggests how the Commission should conduct itself when working alongside iwi. In practical terms, a governance to governance partnership relationship that recognises and affirms the preference of the iwi to exercise its right to be self determining and to establish the priorities for the development of whakapapa whānau is most culturally authentic.

The role of the Commission in iwi partnership relationships is to offer support to the strategic plans and visions of the iwi for the advancement and development of whakapapa whānau. It can approach this task by standing alongside iwi who seek a partnership relationship with the Commission and support their strategic visions and plans for whānau development through the mechanisms of policy, advocacy, engagement and research.



## 5. EXPLORING AND DEFINING WHĀNAU ORA



The term whānau ora is beginning to appear in social policies targeting whānau as an overarching goal of such policies. There are clearly some themes emerging around the application of the term and growing clarity about the dimensions of it. Whānau ora is emerging as a set of ideas about the position and roles of whānau in developing solutions to the issues that they confront from within, using the collective strength and resiliencies that can only reside in whānau processes and based on the central role of Māori cultural values. The role of Government in whānau ora is more of a facilitative and enabling one.

Whānau ora may be literally translated as the *health and wellbeing of whānau*. However, a literal translation is not that useful in terms of clarifying what whānau ora means and how it might be achieved by different whānau (Turia, 2003; Durie, 2005).

According to Walker (2006) “The concept of ora means a lot more than wellbeing because it is spiritual, emotional and profound” (p. 30). Walker (2006) found that whānau ora was described by Māori policy analysts as a vision, the responsibility of all of Government; a contracting and funding term and therefore, in the domain of providers and Māori health services using models of best practice. The term was also seen ‘as being to do with whānau responsibilities’ (p. 30).

Whānau ora has a different interpretation placed upon it in the context of social policy development and social service purchasing arrangements. There are a number of difficulties and challenges around defining and implementing whānau ora policies given that funding, contracting and monitoring are based on a western individualised framework which does not readily accommodate a collective, whānau-centered approach (Whānau Ora Taskforce, 2009).

The meaning of whānau ora varies from whānau to whānau. Whānau ora is not static. It is constantly changing as whānau priorities and capacities change. In other words, whānau ora is best shaped and given meaning by those most affected by it (Whānau Ora Taskforce, 2009). It is a holistic term encompassing all of those domains that whānau determine as contributing to their wellbeing (Cherrington & Masters, 2005). Several elements have been identified as being important indicators of whānau ora. These include cohesion, self sufficiency and the ability of whānau to support itself. The safety of children is also a key consideration (Walker, 2006).

The non negotiables for whānau ora are articulated in most Māori health models and frameworks and include a healthy spirit, mind, body and whānau. The mental, emotional, physical and spiritual state is shaped, maintained and contained in context of whānau relationships. Therefore, when an individual is not well, a whānau is not well. Conversely when a whānau is not well, individuals are adversely impacted. Whānau ora is a state of collective wellbeing that is integrated, indivisible, interconnected and whole. This aligns with iwi thinking around the holistic and indivisible.

The Families Commission recognises and values whānau diversity (Families Commission Act, 2003). Whānau do have different priorities and different pathways by which they may pursue whānau ora. Moreover, whānau attach different meanings and values to the term. One whānau may interpret whānau ora as the capacity and capability to exercise self determination over all matters impacting on them. Another may define whānau ora as having access to shelter, food, work and the necessities of life. Another may interpret it as strong, intact and safe whānau relationships and the ability to live as Māori. Another may interpret it as economic freedom.

The role of the Commission is to advocate for whānau and to be a vehicle for whānau to give meaning and voice to whānau ora. Furthermore, the Commission supports whānau

pursuing their own solutions and building onto their existing strengths and resiliencies so that through their own efforts, they can achieve a state of whānau ora.

Marsden (1981, cited in King, 1992; p. 1) observed that:

The route to Māoritanga through abstract interpretation is a dead end. The way can only lie through the passionate, subjective approach... Māoritanga is a thing of the heart rather than the head ... analysis is necessary only to make explicit what Māori understands implicitly in daily living, feeling, acting and deciding ... from within the culture. For what is Māoritanga? Briefly it is the view that Māori hold about ultimate reality and meaning.

Marsden articulates the view that Māori culture cannot be understood through abstract theories and ideas. Similarly, whānau ora cannot be understood in any other way than through the subjective experiences of those who live it. The findings from this review of selective literature inform a working definition of whānau ora for the Families Commission. The Commission's working definition of whānau ora appropriately moves beyond a literal translation of the term and considers what whānau ora is comprised of as a set of principles with the overall destination being the capacity of whānau to establish priorities and goals and pursue these for their own wellbeing and development.

To obtain a whānau lens in this analysis, iwi and whānau definitions are explored and these are compared and contrasted with the use of the term in Government policymaking.

The Commission does not presume to tell whānau how they should interpret and define whānau ora. However, in terms of its role as an advocate for whānau ora, the Commission's working definition aligns with its strategic vision that *whānau are the best that they can be*. This is purposefully broad and non-prescriptive.

The Commission is fully supportive of whānau defining whānau ora according to their own purposes as whānau. Finally, the literature confirms that whānau should not be limited to one definition of whānau ora. There is a resistance by whānau to the assertion of social policies that define their realities for them and that tell them what they should be doing to achieve whānau ora (Turia, 2003; Kruger et al, 2004). Therefore, this definition of whānau ora is a working definition for the Families Commission only. Whānau will embrace it if they agree that "being the best that they can be" is worth pursuing.

## 5.1 WHĀNAU ORA – DEFINITIONS

Whānau ora is generally defined as whānau wellbeing and/or whānau health (Katene, 2009). In a health sector application, it is defined as "Māori families supported to achieve maximum health and wellbeing" (Ministry of Health, 2007 p. 2). Whānau ora is said to comprise of a balance between physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, familial and environmental domains (Durie, 2009). It is much more than the absence of disease or having health needs met although good health is critical for whānau ora (Whānau Ora Taskforce, 2009).

The Māori Reference Group for the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families envisions whānau ora as arising from "strength, safety, identity, integrity and prosperity" (Ministry of Social Development, 2009 p. 3). The values underpinning the vision of the Māori Reference Group for whānau ora include whaunaungatanga, whakapapa, tinana, wairua, mana and mauri. The capacity of whānau to achieve whānau ora is sourced directly in their capacity to live and practice according to time honoured Māori cultural values (Kruger et al, 2004).



Māori models of health are based on the acknowledgement that whānau ora takes into account socio-economic, cultural, environmental and other conditions (Durie, 2009). Moreover, whānau ora involves a complex mix of multiple factors that interact to create opportunities for wellbeing and health at the whānau level.

The Minister of Health and Associate Minister of Health (2002a) notes that “whānau ora requires a broad approach that acknowledges the diversity of Māori, considers Māori reality as including the complexity of living in New Zealand today and shifts analysis and thinking beyond the constraints of a single Māori perspective”.

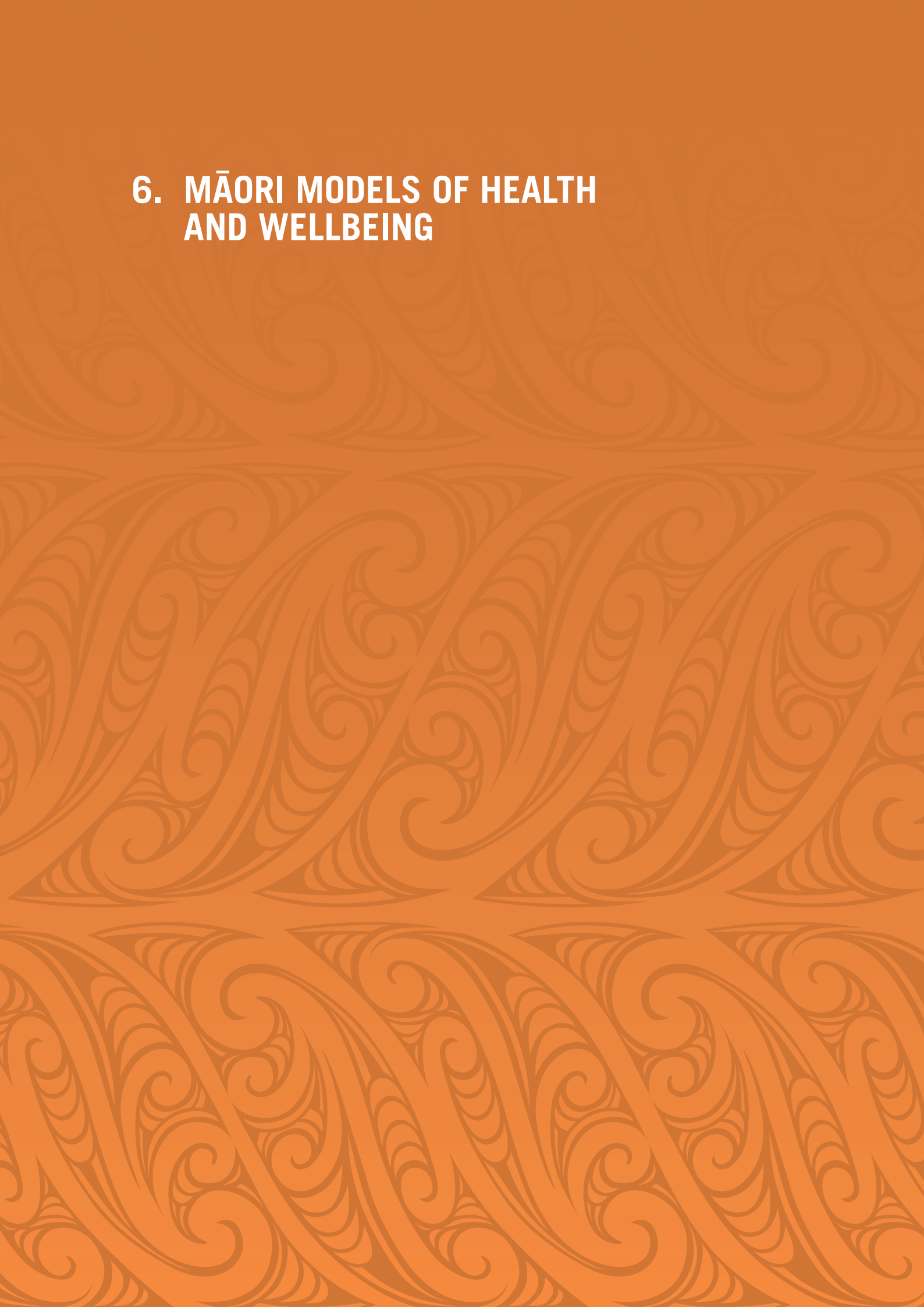
Whānau ora and the capacity to attain it is a product of genetic and hereditary factors, history, behavioural and lifestyle choices, inter-generational practices, cultural values, wealth and economic prosperity, employment, education and a host of other factors that when combined empower and enable or prohibit whānau reaching their full potential (Durie, 2009).

Whānau ora reflects the diversity of whānau and is exemplified by whānau progressing their own dreams and visions for their development (Te Rau Matatini, 2007).

Therefore, the capacity of whānau to attain a state of whānau ora is directly correlated with the ability to be self determining or to exercise Rangatiratanga (Te Rau Matatini, 2007).



## **6. MĀORI MODELS OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING**



There are a number of different models of health and wellbeing that describe wellbeing or whānau ora from within a Māori cultural framework (Cherrington & Masters, 2007). Three of these are Te Whare Tapa Wha (Durie, 1985); Nga Pou Mana (Henare, 1988) and Te Wheke (Pere, 1988).

There are other models of Māori health that are derivatives of these models such as the Māori Conceptual Framework for whānau Violence Prevention, (Kruger et al, 2004) or extensions to them (Love, 2007). However, they contain similar core cultural principles. One such model included in this analysis is the Māori Conceptual Framework for Whānau Violence Prevention (Kruger et al, 2004) which is based on Te Whare Tapa Wha but includes additional explanations related to the core cultural principle of mana. This is important to this analysis in that the capacity of whānau to achieve whānau ora requires that they have and are able to exercise mana. All of these models have whānau wellbeing as their central purpose.

## 6.1 TE WHARE TAPA WHA

Te Whare Tapa Wha is the most often cited Māori health model and has been widely applied to the development of programmes and services throughout the health sector (Cherrington & Masters, 2005). It has also been used to measure Māori health outcomes (Kingi & Durie, 2000). It was first introduced into the health sector in 1982 at the Māori Women's Welfare League hui where kaumatua advocated for wairuatanga (spirituality) to be the beginning of dialogue about Māori health. Durie (Durie, 1985) developed the model of a four sided house representing four basic traditional 'cultural tenets of life'. These are wairua (spiritual domain), hinengaro (mental/psychological and emotional domain), tinana (physical domain) and whānau (the domain of whānau and whānau relationships). The model is represented as a Tupuna Whare or ancestral house with the four tenets representing the four walls of the whare. All of the walls are mutually supporting and interdependent and if one is weak, the other three are weak. The foundation of this model is whānau (Durie, 1985). In terms of application, the model proposes that whānau ora or the health and wellbeing of whānau, needs to encompass all four domains.

## 6.2 NGA POU MANA

Nga Pou Mana represents four fundamental values that have been identified as pou or supports for the achievement of whānau ora. The supports are whānaungatanga (family relationships), taonga tuku iho (cultural identity and heritage), te ao turoa (the physical environment) and turangawaewae (land base including access to an economic base and marae). This model places emphasis on the social and economic determinants of whānau ora.

## 6.3 TE WHEKE

Te Wheke focuses on the wellbeing of whānau and uses the analogy of the octopus to describe the elements that are vital for wellbeing. Each tentacle of the octopus represents a particular aspect of whānau ora. The head and body represent whānau. The tentacles entwine to represent the inter-dependence of the elements. The eight tentacles are wairuatanga (spirituality), mana ake (uniqueness and positive identity), mauri (life principle and environment), Ha a koro ma a kui ma (the breath of life from forebears), taha tinana (physical), whānaungatanga (the extended family, group

dynamics and social interaction), whatumanawa (the emotional aspect) and hinengaro (the mind). Waiora or total wellbeing for the individual and whānau is achieved when each of the elements are intact.

## 6.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR WHĀNAU VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The Māori conceptual framework for whānau violence prevention was developed by the Second Māori Taskforce for Whānau Violence Prevention as a tool for practitioners working in a whānau, hapū and iwi violence prevention kaupapa (Kruger et al, 2004).

The framework features whānau at the centre of a collective focus on whānau transformation and change. It is a model based on the idea that education combined with collective (whānau) action are liberating and can lead to change and transformation in whānau (Kruger et al, 2004).

The tikanga based principles applied in the framework include:

- > Whakapapa (kinship that determines the relationships between whānau, hapū, iwi). This also refers to the collective consciousness or the sense that individuals are aware that they are part of a larger reality than their individual existence and that they are bound to a collective existence.
- > Tikanga refers to the practice of Māori beliefs and values.
- > Wairua refers to spirituality and manifests as a passion for life. The wairua is the heartbeat or the core of Māori wellbeing and it must be in balance with the body, mind and heart or emotions.
- > Tapu refers to the level of sanctity given to actions and words.
- > Mauri refers to internal values or power and influence and when it is intact, individuals can achieve balance in their lives.
- > Mana refers to an external expression of achievement, power and influence. Mana consists of mana atua (dependence), mana whenua (inter-dependence) and mana tangata (independence).

These models provide support for cultural responses to whānau ora and for understanding that whānau are central to the achievement of wellbeing at the individual level. They describe the various components of whānau ora and factors that need to be considered in order for whānau ora to be achieved.

All of the models identify whānau as central to wellbeing. In these models, whānau ora involves inextricable connections between whānau members linked by whakapapa. In order for whānau ora to be possible, there has to be a balance between the spirit, mind and emotions, physical body and whānau relationships.

Whānau ora can be understood through the application of these models as a process that values tikanga or Māori cultural values and practices. It can also be understood as a holistic process that requires attention to all of the component parts that make up the whole. These are general qualities or characteristics of whānau ora according to these models.







## 7. APPLICATIONS



## 7.1 SOCIAL POLICY

Whānau ora first appeared in terms of its usage in Government policy as a vision or goal for the Ministry of Health's Māori health strategy He Korowai Oranga.

The social policy emphasis on whānau wellbeing and development is driven from the recognition and acknowledgement that whānau continues to be a key cultural institution for Māori and is therefore a key (and potentially highly effective) site of intervention and service delivery (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005; Metge, 1995). The James Henare Research Centre's report on wellbeing and disparity in Tamaki-makaurau (2002) and Benton, (2002) stated that whānau remains the predominant kin group for urban Māori. The emphasis on whānau in social policies assumes that changes in the wellbeing of individual Māori can be brought about by focusing on the collective of whānau and vice versa. In this respect whānau may be considered to be a pre-eminent site of change and transformation. It is best in terms of the sustainability of change processes, for whānau to be in control.

Te Puni Kōkiri (2005) concluded that whānau success must be defined by whānau for themselves. The same would seem to apply to the attempts to apply a definitive statement about what whānau ora is. Its impact on whānau is achieved when the whānau determine that they have reached a state of whānau ora and not before. Certainly, a Government agency cannot determine when a whānau has reached a state of whānau ora. What they can do is describe boundaries around whānau ora, translate it into a set of behavioural or health and related outcomes, such as a reduction in the numbers of Māori making medically significant suicide attempts as measured by emergency department admissions.

Whānau reaching their full potential is the central theme in Te Puni Kōkiri's Māori potential strategy. Te Puni Kōkiri's strategic vision is that Māori reach their potential while succeeding as Māori (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2009). This may be interpreted as the achievement of whānau ora and for the purposes of a working definition, supports the Families Commission's focus on whānau being the best that they can be.



He Korowai Oranga, the Ministry of Health's Whānau Ora Strategy includes key themes that create a space for whānau to have active input into strategies that reduce Māori health inequalities. These include:

- > the need to ensure Māori involvement in decision-making
- > the need to work directly with whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities
- > the need for all services (not just Māori-specific services) to be effective for Māori
- > the importance of all sectors (not just the health sector) working to address Māori health outcomes.

The net effect of these strategies is intended to be a reduction in health inequalities. In this strategic approach to health policy, the intent is for the health sector to engage with whānau so that they begin to shape health service delivery through their participation. This is empowering social policy that moves beyond Māori being passive recipients of health services taking up a more instrumental role in shaping health outcomes by whānau for whānau.

The Ministry of Social Development's whānau violence prevention policy recognises the central role of whānau in addressing issues of violence inside whānau. The emphasis in this policy is on whānau addressing issues of whānau violence with the support of Government. Emphasis is also given to holistic approaches that respond to the needs of whānau in areas such as health, housing, education and employment. There is recognition within this approach of the need to work on many levels and across many areas of Government business impacting whānau. This aligns with the focus on whānau resolving their own issues internally and the need for a holistic and integrated approach to whānau needs. This policy uses the term whānau ora in an overarching goal about the promotion of safety, strength, identity, integrity and prosperity for whānau.

Whānau ora is applied in policies as a holistic construct consistent with the underpinning principles in all Māori models of health and wellbeing. It is also applied in social policies to endorse whānau control over the development of solutions to the issues that they confront. In all of this, there is clearly a desire for whānau to engage in positive development and to tackle issues and find solutions from within the whānau process. There has also been a clear linking up of whānau ora with the responsibilities of hapū and iwi to support whānau development.

## 7.2 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

According to Gifford (1999), whānau ora ideally operates from a strengths-based position utilising the combined strengths of individual members of a whānau for the achievement of collective wellbeing outcomes aided and assisted by government-funded services.

The Nelson Marlborough District Health Board (2009) applies the term whānau ora to refer to a cluster of whānau-focused health services that are delivered to whānau in their own homes and/or community and cultural settings like marae-based health services. In this frame, whānau ora refers specifically to health service delivery to whānau and Māori individuals in community settings. One example of a health service that falls under the broad rubric of whānau ora in the Nelson Marlborough region is that of the management of chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. Early intervention and public health education programmes like smoking cessation, which take more of a preventative approach, are also part of the whānau ora services.



The Taranaki District Health Board uses the term whānau ora to apply to health services regardless of whether they are early intervention, public health education, treatment and disease management. The term whānau ora demarcates specific health service funding for services to a defined Māori population. It is noteworthy that these services are delivered largely through Tui Ora, an iwi based Māori Development Organisation that takes a strategic overview of health service delivery to Māori in the Taranaki rohe or tribal area, and contracts with Māori service providers for specialised health service delivery to whānau. While the focus of whānau ora services in the Taranaki District Health Board links in to a whakapapa base, the focus is on the purchasing of services to a defined population of Māori individuals and their whānau.

This approach is replicated in other iwi based Māori Development Organisations such as Raukura Hauora o Tainui in South Auckland and Waikato, Te Oranganui in Wanganui and He Oranga Pounamu in Ngai Tahu. The driver for the Māori Development Organisation model is the aspirations of Māori health service providers to have the resources to deliver health and other social services to their own communities in a way that enables Tikanga to be applied in service delivery.

Māori health provider organisations such as Ngati Porou Hauora use the term whānau ora to refer to the delivery of health services to whānau in their own communities and under the umbrella of Ngati Porou kawa and tikanga (Kakahi & Love, 2001).

The allocation of specific funding for the purchase and provision of Māori health services to a defined Māori population underpins the term whānau ora as it is applied in the government-funded health sector. An analysis of District Health Board Māori health plans confirms this. Within the whānau ora purchasing framework, there are several assumptions that reflect an attempt to merge Māori cultural practices and values with a corporate funding and purchasing model. The focus on whānau may be founded on the assumption that individuals need to be treated in context of a cultural collective that has meaning and significance to them.



The Government interpretation of whānau ora can be problematic because it is shaped and defined by discrete outcome areas in health, education, housing etc. Thus it is shaped by the funding and accountabilities arrangements within which it sits. This undermines the collective and holistic cultural values that underpin whānau ora. Walker (2006) found that whānau ora as it is referred to in He Korowai Oranga is often discussed as a vision, a whole of government approach incorporating specific Ministry of Health paradigms. Whānau ora involves issues surrounding funding and contracting of whānau ora services, and the role of Māori health models, providers and whānau (p. 24).

According to Katene (2009) measures of the state of wellbeing of whānau or 'whānau ora' are needed in order to determine the effectiveness of policies and strategies that purport to advance whānau ora. Turia states that:

Whānau ora is about making a difference. Whānau focused services are about collective rights and responsibilities, starting to get back to our own values. Whānau ora was more about restoration and affirmation of cultural values, beliefs and practices. Whānau ora was seen as an opportunity to address the hard issues happening in whānau. (Turia cited in Gifford, 1999).

How this is achieved in practice is a significant challenge because of the extensive variation in what a whānau defines as 'making a difference'. However, the theme of change and transformation characterises whānau ora. Cultural development and the restoration of cultural practices including those of whānaungatanga, awhinatanga and manaakitanga are considered to be important components for the achievement of whānau ora (Milne, 2005). The restoration and practice of these values creates a sense of wellbeing in the whānau system that could be understood as whānau ora. Whānau ora is also about whānau restoration and healing.

There have been a number of ongoing challenges over the use of whānau ora because as a construct, it cannot be measured very easily. Whānau ora is a complex construct because it is based on an holistic model in which all of the issues that confront a whānau are accepted as being intrinsically connected and interdependent (Love, 2007; Walker, 2006). Furthermore, Walker (2006) found that the concept of 'ora' is not easily translated as meaning wellbeing. It is a complex construct. Some uses of the term whānau ora to describe health and social service models link the importance of cultural development and identity as integral to the achievement of whānau ora (Kakahi & Love, 2001).

The ability to align the intent of a whānau ora model or frame of reference with implementation is a complex undertaking because it is very difficult to operationalise. This is precisely because it is intended to be defined by whānau for whānau. (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005).

Attempts have been made to define what constitutes a healthy whānau (Durie, 2002; Pere, 2003; Walker, 2006). There is a wide variation in the way that a whānau defines being healthy. "We want to see whānau-centered policy that facilitates positive and adaptive relationships with whānau" (Katene, 2009). Therefore, whānau ora has both a strengths-based and relational or collective focus.



One research participant in Walker's (2006) research stated that "whānau ora is about the health of the whānau but you need to have healthy individuals because the whānau is made up of individuals". (p. 30) This positions individual *ora* or *tangata ora* as intrinsic to the achievement of 'whānau ora'. This is consistent with the application of the conceptualisation of *tapu* as being applicable to individuals in the use of the term 'te *tapu o te tangata*' in the field of whānau violence prevention (Kruger et al, 2004).

Ngati Porou Hauora was cited as a whānau ora model because it links back to the hapū and iwi. Thus the interconnections between whānau, hapū and iwi are considered to be a feature of whānau ora. This confirms the importance of the context within which whānau ora is experienced by individuals in a whānau. The link between whānau ora becomes apparent when considering the values underpinning whānau relationships. For some whānau relationships are enshrined in whakapapa or kinship ties and every effort is made to actively visit with whānau to maintain these relationships.

### 7.3 THE INTERCHANGEABLE USE OF FAMILY AND WHĀNAU

Social policies impacting on whānau often use the constructs of family and whānau interchangeably. Taiapa (1995) challenged the interchangeable use of the Pakeha construct of family and the Māori construct of whānau. She advocated for policymakers to understand the economic role of whānau as foundational and indeed critical for the maintenance and survival of Māori culture.

### 7.4 WHĀNAU IS NOT THE SAME AS FAMILY

The interchangeable use of family/whānau in social policies is problematic when it drives policymaking on the basis of western cultural constructions and definitions of the nuclear family. In this frame, there is little opportunity for variations on the basic family unit. The nuclear family model is unlikely to work for those families who are different from the 'norm' of a nuclear family (Smith, 1995; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005). There is growing diversity in the composition of New Zealand families (Poole et al, 1991). Managing that diversity in the social policymaking process is a significant challenge. The challenge is projected to intensify as New Zealand society continues to change.

Further, family and whānau are not the same (Families Commission Māori Reference Group, 2009). The use of *family/whānau* in social policy assumes that the terms can be used in this way and that there are commonalities about these terms that justify their use without qualification or clarification of the differences. Members of the Families Commission's Whānau Reference Group view family as a subset of whānau rather than the other way around.

The Second Māori Taskforce for Whānau Violence Prevention (Kruger et al, 2004) report states:

In many social policy statements on whānau violence, whānau and family are used interchangeably. Social policy does not make the distinction between whānau and family and in fact using these terms synonymously in social policy indicates that they are either not well understood or viewed as the same constructs with different languages used to describe them... While the Taskforce recognises the diversity of whānau, and that many Māori do not identify with whakapapa or kin based whānau, all Māori have whakapapa. It is the consciousness, acceptance and practice of it that differs. p. 12

The Taskforce further stated that “social policy that adopts a narrow view of whānau and fails to recognise whakapapa as a key cultural construct that is pivotal to Māori identity survival is essentially social policy that creates and constructs whakapapa-less whānau” (2004, p. 12).

Government agencies recognise both kaupapa and whakapapa whānau. However, whakapapa and kaupapa whānau are different in terms of who they include and what drives them. They are not the same and to assume that they are is to reframe and redefine Māori cultural tradition and values.

## 7.5 WHAKAPAPA WHĀNAU ARE WHO THEIR WHAKAPAPA SAYS THEY ARE

Te Puni Kōkiri concluded that whānau is who whānau says it is (2005) as a result of engagement with a sample of whānau in the whānau development hui process. Similarly, Walker (2006) in her research with Māori social policy analysts employed in the government sector concluded that whānau is whānau. Walker (2006) states that attempts to apply a limited definition of whānau should be avoided. Turia (2003) expressed reservations about the application of general population social policies to Māori without consideration of Māori values and processes.

There has been resistance by Māori towards Government efforts to define Māori realities through policy and legislation. This has been seen as undermining tikanga (Walker, 2006). The various definitions of whānau need to be considered so that social policy impacting on whānau can be understood in its proper context. The social policy process is part of the problem when it does not adequately differentiate between the Treaty enshrined rights of whakapapa whānau and special status of whakapapa whānau as part of hapū and iwi.

Lawson-Te Aho (1997) identified the reconnection of young Māori with their whakapapa, as a resiliency factor for the prevention of Māori youth suicide. There is substantial evidence of the value of a strong and intact cultural identity for indigenous youth and a sense of connectedness to the collective identity (Westerman, 2004; Durie, 2003; Duran & Duran, 1995; Kirmeyer, 2007). The challenges to the restoration and maintenance of an intact cultural identity based on whakapapa are substantial.



The iwi plans reviewed in this paper all have objectives for health, education and social service provision. In one iwi strategic plan, the term *oranga* is used to refer to the original kaupapa of pursuing health and wellbeing for the iwi. The first strategic priority is *whakamana/matauranga* or capacity and capability which are said to be impacted by good health, adequate housing and steady employment (page 22). The strategic priority of the Runanga is to support hapū development so that hapū can take on government contracts that provide 'positive social services to hapū and whānau' (page 22).

There is no reference to *whānau ora* per se in the iwi development plans reviewed. However, all of the iwi development plans express holistic and culturally determined models of health and wellbeing with the role of the iwi being to lead and orchestrate opportunities for whānau to have access to health and social services. This is based on the acknowledgement that the health and wellbeing of whānau who whakapapa to the iwi is integral to iwi survival and development. This could be interpreted as *whānau ora*.

Rangihau et al (1981) used a whakapapa whānau analysis to advocate for whakapapa whānau to influence care and protection arrangements for Māori children. This made a way for social policies impacting on Māori to incorporate Tikanga Māori and represent whānau voices on issues of concern to them. Whānau cannot be separated from the larger social and cultural structures of hapū and iwi in a whakapapa based analysis. The three cultural institutions are interconnected and inseparable.

## 7.6 WHĀNAU ORA POLICY FOCUS

The policy emphasis on whānau wellbeing or whānau ora is driven from the recognition and acknowledgement that whānau continues to be a key cultural institution for Māori and is therefore a key (and potentially highly effective) site of intervention and/or development (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005; Metge, 1995; Collins & Hickey, 2006). The value of a whānau emphasis is that it recognises how influential every day functional relationships with whānau impact on whānau ora.





Whanungatanga or whānau working to support each other is an important contributing factor for building whānau strength, resiliency and wellbeing. Durie (2003) identified different types of contemporary whānau, according to their impacts on the health and wellbeing of whānau members and the risks that they pose:

- > unsafe families or *whānau tukino* who demonstrate a lack of respect for others and may resort to violence to have their demands met
- > laissez-faire families or *whānau wewete* who are disorganised and lack direction and the ability to provide guidance to whānau members
- > restricted families or *whānau pohara* who are well intentioned but often lack the resources to take action to realise their aspirations and hopes
- > isolated families or *whānau tu-mokemoke* who are alienated from Māori networks (p. 23).


The assumption that whānau all operate to provide a positive experience of whānaungatanga is problematic. It is important that the range of whānau processes and dynamics are considered in social policymaking. Whānau have been impacted by major processes that have created a discontinuity in some of the positive cultural practices whānau would once have carried out.

It is important that the ideal of whānau does not render as invisible some of the realities of whānau. Durie (2003) makes this point in his description of some of the more dysfunctional roles of whānau. Whānau continue to be the primary site of intergenerational knowledge transfer. The changes that whānau have made to survive demanded adaptation and the building of cultural responses in new and extremely challenging contexts.

Smith (1995) describes dysfunction as an outcome of processes such as colonisation, urbanisation and the aftermath of two world wars. Māori have had to adapt as environmental and circumstantial pressure forced them to change to survive (Durie, 2002). Whānau continue to adapt and evolve according to environmental demands (Kahu & Wakefield, 2008). Whānau have survived because they have been able to adapt. However, an examination of issues around quality of life and longevity give cause for concern (Te Roopu Rangahau Hauora a Eru Pomare, 2008). Whānau do survive but this often carries a huge cost in terms of experiences such as premature death and disability from preventable diseases, the stress of living with enduring poverty which produces its own set of outcomes such as whānau violence, criminality and other related outcomes indicative of whānau under stress (Kruger, et al 2004).

Negative whānau outcomes are shaped by environmental and contextual opportunity and circumstantial pressures (Kruger et al, 2004). Behaviours such as child abuse are learned over time, acquiring a state of normality when they go unchallenged and negative behaviours may be passed down through the generations. An understanding of the importance of whakapapa and the individual connection of the abuser(s) to the abused/victim reframes the 'normality' of child abuse as a breach of Te Tapu o Te Tangata which brings consequences not only for the individual perpetuating the abuse but for the entire whānau (Kruger et al, 2004). The important point is that whānau need to determine their responses to the issues that confront them. There is a role within that for outside agencies to support and resource the development of genuine whānau centred solutions.





There are significant ethnicity-related differences in socio demographic data (Dharmalingham et al, 2004; Te Roopu Rangahau Hauora a Eru Pomare, 2008). Data on Māori mortality for example creates an imperative that health policies and interventions for Māori, must be different from general population responses (Durie, 1994). Disease patterns are different and occur at higher rates for Māori for a number of preventable diseases such as heart disease (Te Roopu Rangahau Hauora a Eru Pomare, 2008). Whereas diagnosed mental illnesses such as anorexia nervosa are not as prevalent amongst Māori compared to non Māori (Baxter, 2008).

Māori offending differs in some ways from non Māori offending. For example, it is not uncommon to find kin based whānau in prison at the same time. The individualised treatment of offenders in the criminal justice system does not address the realities of collectivism and collective identity for many Māori offenders. In short, a general population approach to Māori offending is not likely to work. The Department of Corrections in formulating a Māori strategy has been engaging with iwi and hapū and trying to address offending patterns for Māori together in a given takiwa. This is an example of insider and outsider perspectives coming together.

Taiapa (1995) found that the costs whānau bear to maintain cultural practices such as tangihanga, are often invisible to policymakers. Whānau who have an active involvement with their marae, whānau, hapū and iwi fulfill a vital role in New Zealand society of keeping Māori cultural practices alive and vibrant. This is of inestimable value to the economics of the New Zealand. However, Taiapa (1995) notes that it often goes by unnoticed and unaccounted for in economic policymaking in New Zealand.


The examples of the way in which whānau is construed and placed in social policies are numerous. This confirms that Māori are different demographically and culturally. Failure to recognise the diversity of Māori is a risk factor. Yet recognition of the diversity, cultural values and demographics of Māori at the population levels is a very complex undertaking. There are a myriad of data issues around the under count in the ethnicity data for Māori and the mixed identity that many Māori can and do claim. There are also the complexities of asserting a multi iwi identity. However, the idea of tailoring social policies to align with Māori values as a population has been shown to produce more effective outcomes in certain government social policies – for example, the whānau ora strategy developed by the Ministry of Health.

The frame of the nuclear family assumes that whānau behave as nuclear families. This is also erroneous and is unlikely to produce policies that enable or empower whānau to develop and respond to the various challenges and pressures that they face. Whānau have been saying that they want opportunities to develop themselves and lead whānau development from within, and in a culturally valid way (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2005). The issues around the impacts of the collective on individual wellbeing cannot be underestimated.

This literature review highlights the rationale for not taking a one-size-fits-all approach in social policy in New Zealand by clarifying definitions of whānau provided primarily by Māori.

## 8. THE WHĀNAU ORA TASKFORCE





The Whānau Ora Taskforce is charged with delivering advice to Minister Tāriana Turia on preferred approaches to interventions with whānau that are whānau-centred and contribute to the best outcomes for whānau. The Taskforce developed a framework for whānau-centred approaches to service delivery with whānau that includes five elements:

1. *Whānau action and engagement* in which whānau strengths are endorsed, whānau ownership of solutions and actions is encouraged and partnerships between whānau and service providers are normal.
2. *Whānau-centred design and delivery of services* building onto whānau strengths and capabilities in whānau.
3. *Iwi leadership* – recognising that whānau, hapū and iwi have critical contributions to make in facilitating whānau ora. The Taskforce notes that ‘roles, relationships and responsibilities are based on whakapapa connections and lie largely outside of government interventions’ (p. 3).
4. *Active and responsive government* so that agencies are flexible enough to align with and support whānau, hapū and iwi aspirations.
5. *Funding* – funding arrangements that support a whānau-centred approach to service delivery.

The Whānau Ora Taskforce has not defined whānau ora, it has instead developed a set of principles which are aligned with whānau self-defining whānau ora and exercising control over the way they work out solutions and actions for the achievement of wellbeing.

The Whānau Ora Taskforce’s principles align with Māori health frameworks and the need for effective resourcing and innovation in service design if services are to be repositioned from being agency-centred to whānau-centred. The seven principles for whānau centred services are:

1. nga kaupapa tuku iho
2. whānau opportunity
3. vest whānau outcomes
4. coherent service delivery
5. whānau integrity
6. effective resourcing
7. competent and innovative provision.

## 8.1 WHĀNAU ORA THEMES

This review of selective literature on whānau ora and its application in social policies, social service provision, iwi development and the Whānau Ora Taskforce clarifies some of the key themes that the Families Commission has considered when developing a working definition of the term for the purposes of informing the Commission's work with whānau.

- > *Whānau ora has to be defined by whānau for themselves* and should not be limited by government definition or circumscribed by any group other than those most affected by it, that is, whānau.
- > *Whānau are capable of developing and leading their own solutions.* Sometimes whānau need support and that support can come from a number of different sources including government-funded services, whānau, hapū and iwi. The boundaries concerning who they seek support from are shaped by whakapapa from a whānau, hapū, iwi perspective and need from a government agency perspective. Ultimately, whānau are the ones who must decide when, how and from whom they will seek support if and when they need to.
- > *Whānau ora is an integrated approach to whānau wellbeing* complicated only by the diversity of whānau and attempts to lock whānau into a position of having their realities defined on their behalf.
- > *Whānau Ora is founded on Māori values, worldviews and cultural practices and identity*
- > *Whānau Ora is a strengths based approach* building on the strengths that whānau already have. It is affirming, empowering, enabling and completely supportive of whānau
- > *Whānau ora involves the inter-generational transmission of knowledge* and whānau are viewed as repositories of knowledge.





## 9. CONCLUSION



The Families Commission accepts that whakapapa whānau is the most culturally authentic form of whānau and prioritises this whānau type. As the Commission is legislatively required to pay attention to the cultural values of Māori as tangata whenua, this is appropriate.

The Commission recognises that whānau are a key site for change and a critical place to focus efforts to improve social outcomes for Māori. This is reflected in the overarching vision of the Commission's Whānau Strategy 2009–2012, that whānau are supported to be the best that they can be.

This analysis of the literature on whānau definitions and whānau ora speaks to the placement of whānau in the context of the larger cultural structures that shape and define Māori identity. Whakapapa whānau is an integral part of hapū and hapū an integral part of iwi. That creates both an imperative and an opportunity for the Commission to build relationships with iwi as the cultural collective representing whakapapa whānau.

The Commission also recognises kaupapa whānau, or Māori collectives who are united to achieve a common purpose or goal.

The strategic responses to the two types of whānau may differ and lead the Commission down different pathways for the advancement of whānau ora. The differences between whakapapa and kaupapa whānau do legitimate different relationships and present different opportunities for the Commission to work for whānau ora.

Whānau ora can also be understood as a right that all whānau are entitled to and this is how the construct tends to be represented in iwi strategies. That is, whānau have a fundamental right to be well and enjoy a state of wellbeing. The composition of whānau wellbeing varies depending on the resources that whānau have at their disposal and the functionality of relationships within whānau.

## 9.1 WORKING DEFINITION OF WHĀNAU ORA

A working definition of whānau ora for the Families Commission is:

*Whānau ora is achieved when whānau are the best that they can be*

Whānau must determine for themselves what whānau ora means and how they attain it. This is a working definition which means that will evolve over time as further understanding is gained.

The role of the Commission is to inform debate, advocate for whānau development to be led by whānau for whānau and to support the excellent work of other agencies such as Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Health who promote whānau ora.

The Commission can offer agencies working in the kaupapa of whānau ora research to inform further policy and programme development (the whānau ora research partnership projects which describe the constituents of whānau resiliency and whānau processes such as value of the intergenerational transfer of knowledge). It can also offer the skills and wisdom of whānau who use the Commission as a conduit to have their voices heard in social policy and decision-making.

The Commission is intent on keeping the issues that would hinder the achievement of whānau ora in the public consciousness. It is important to emphasise whānau strengths



and to promote the possibility of a brighter future for whānau. It is also important not to idealise whānau ora so that it masks the reality of the struggles that whānau go through to try and create better opportunities for their children and mokopuna. Many whānau do not have the capacity currently to see beyond the immediate struggles of life. These are not just whānau on a low income or without education or those who live on the margins of New Zealand society, the offenders, the poorly educated, unemployed, illiterate, sick and disabled. Some of these are whānau who are well educated but for whom life continues to challenge and overwhelm.

There is a need for a cautionary end to this paper.

Durie (2009) states that there is no doubt that whānau ora is highly desirable. He also discerns between Māori future takers and Māori future makers. Future takers are those who take whatever the future will bring, abdicating control over their futures. This leads to a sense of enduring powerlessness. Future makers are those who actively engage with the future. They lead change and navigate challenges always looking for opportunities to realise their hopes and dreams. Durie (2009) cautions that Māori future making is constrained by two frameworks – crisis management and sectoral division, both of which impede whānau sustainability and futures focus.

The whānau who risk becoming future takers are the vulnerable whānau who live in a state of perpetual and overwhelming crisis. These are the whānau who have lost the ability to live beyond the immediate crisis. Sectoral divisions have a deterring impact “unbalancing whānau priorities and hierarchies by focusing on one aspect of whānau life” (p.10). According to Durie “future making in respect of whānau, requires both a long term plan and a holistic approach” (p. 10).

Whānau ora is the ability to see a brighter future and to plan for that, taking into consideration all of the dynamics of whānau wellbeing in one holistic picture. It is a continuous desire to dream and achieve positive forward movement towards the realisation of those dreams.



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Whakapapa	<i>genealogy, family tree</i>
Kaupapa	<i>purpose/theme</i>
Rangatiratanga	<i>leadership</i>
Tikanga	<i>custom, expected behaviour</i>
Hapū	<i>sub-tribe, be pregnant</i>
Iwi	<i>tribe, people</i>
Papa kainga	<i>the home you were brought up in</i>
Whānaungatanga	<i>relationship</i>
Manaakitanga	<i>showing respect for, looking after</i>
Tuakana	<i>older brother (of a male), older sister (of a female)</i>
Teina	<i>younger brother of a male, younger sister of a female</i>
Te Ao Kikokiko	<i>the physical world</i>
Te Ao Wairua	<i>the spiritual world</i>
Whānau ora	<i>the health and wellbeing of whānau</i>
Takiwa	<i>district, area</i>
Tangata Whenua	<i>hosts, home people, people of the place</i>

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baxter, J. (2008). Mental Health, Psychiatric Disorder and Suicide. In *Te Roopu Rangahau Hauora A Eru Pomare. Hauora: Māori Standards of Health IV. A Study of the Years 2000–2005*. Otago University, Wellington.
- Benton, R. (2002). *Wellbeing and Disparity in Tamaki-makaurau*. A Report Prepared for Te Puni Kōkiri. James Henare Research Centre, University of Auckland, Auckland.
- Best, E. (1952). *The Māori as He Was*. R.E.Owen. Government Printer, Wellington.
- Bishop, R. (1996). *Collaborative Research Stories – Whakawhānaungatanga*. Dunmore Press, Palmerston North.
- Buck, P. (1925). *The coming of the Maori*, R.W. Stiles, Nelson, New Zealand.
- Buck, P. (1949). *The Coming of the Māori*. The Māori Purposes Fund Board. Wellington.
- Cherrington, L. & Masters, B. (2005). *Literature review of Māori models of health and indigenous injury prevention and health promotion interventions*. Unpublished Report to the Accident Compensation Corporation.
- Collins, A. & Hickey, H. (2006). *The role of whānau in the lives of Māori with physical disabilities*. Blue Skies Report No 12/06. Families Commission, Wellington.
- Dharmalingham, A., Pool, I., Sceats, J., & McKay, R. (2004). *Patterns of Family Formation and Change in New Zealand*. Centre for Social Research and Evaluation, Ministry of Social Development, Wellington.
- Duran, B. & Duran, E. (1995). *Post colonial Psychology*. Sage Publications, United States.
- Durie, M. Fitzgerald, E, Kingi, Te K., McKinley, S., Stevenson, B. (2002). *Māori Specific Outcomes and Indicators*. A Report Prepared for Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry of Māori Development. School of Māori Studies, Massey University, Palmerston North.
- Durie, M. (1994). Whānau Development and Māori Survival: The Challenge of Time. In *Proceedings of Te Hua o Te whānau: whānau Health and Development Conference*, Ministry of Health, Wellington/School of Māori Studies, Massey University, Palmerston North.
- Durie, M.H. (1985). A Māori perspective of health. *Social Science Medicine*, 20, 5 pp. 483–486.
- Durie, M.H. (1994). *Whaiora: Maori Health Development*. Oxford University Press. Auckland.
- Durie, M.H. (1997). “Whānau, whānaungatanga and Healthy Māori Development”. In P. Te Whaiti, M. McCarthy & A. Durie (Eds.). *Mai i Rangiatea*. Auckland University Press. Auckland.
- Durie, M.H. (2001). *E Tauranga Tonu te Hau: the Winds of Change Forever Blow: a Māori Development Trilogy*. Unpublished D Lit. Thesis. Massey University. Palmerston North.
- Durie, M.H. (2002). *Nga Kahui Pou: Launching Maori Futures*. Huia Publications, Wellington.
- Durie, M.H. (2003). *Nga Kahui Pou: Launching Māori Futures*. Huia Publishers, Wellington.
- Durie, M.H. (2003). *Proceedings of Whakapumau whānau*. Whānau Development National Hui, Otaki, Te Puni Kōkiri.
- Durie, M.H. (2005). *Māori Development Trends and Indicators*. IAOS Satellite meeting: Small and Indigenous Populations. Wellington, April, 2005.
- Durie, M.H. (2009). *Pae Ora. Māori Health Horizons*. Te Mata o Te Tau Lecture Series, Massey University. Palmerston North.
- Eketone, A. (2008). “Theoretical Underpinnings of Kaupapa Māori Directed Practice”. *MAI Review*, 2008 (1) pp. 1–11.
- Families Commission Act (2003).
- Families Commission (2009) Minutes of the meeting of the whānau Reference Group, April, 2009.
- Firth, R. (1959). *Economics of the New Zealand Māori*. R.E. Owen. Government Printer.
- Gifford, H. & Pirikahu, G. (2008). *Engaging Māori whānau: Evaluation of a targeted parenting programme*. Innovative Practice Report No 3/08. Families Commission.



- Gifford, H. (1999). *A case study of whānau ora; A Māori health promotion model*. Department of Public Health Thesis, University of Otago, Dunedin.
- Henare, M. (1988). “Nga Tikanga me nga ritenga o Te Ao Māori; Standards and Foundation of Māori Society”. *The April Report, III, part I, Royal Commission on Social Policy*. Wellington, pp. 224–232.
- Hohepa, P. (1970). *A Māori Community in Northland*. A.H. & A.W. Reed Ltd, Auckland.
- James Henare Māori Research Center. (2002). *Wellbeing and disparity in Tamaki-Makaurau. Report of the Urban Māori Disparities Research Programme, Part Five. He Kohikohinga Whakaaro*. Auckland. James Henare Māori Research Centre.
- Kahu, M. & Wakefield, B. (2008). *Haumanu Taiao O Ihumanea: A Collaborative Study with Te Tai o Marokura Kaitiaki Group*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Lincoln University.
- Kahungunu 2026 Vision Plan. Retrieved from [www.kahungunu.iwi.nz](http://www.kahungunu.iwi.nz)
- Kakahi, R. & Love, C. (2001). *Ngati Porou Hauora Hinengaro. The first years*. Unpublished monograph. The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand.
- Katene, R. (2009). Speech retrieved from <http://theyworkforyou.co.nz/debates>
- Kawharu, I.H. (1975). *Orakei*: New Zealand Council for Educational Research, Wellington.
- King, M. (1992). *Te Ao Hurihuri: Aspects of Maoritanga*. Longman Paul, Auckland.
- Kingi, T. & Durie, M.H. (2000). *Hua Oranga: A Māori Measure of Mental Health Outcome*. Te Pumana Hauora. School of Māori Studies, Massey University, Palmerston North.
- Kirmeyer, L. (2007). *Understanding Trauma. Integrating Biological, Clinical and Cultural Perspectives*. Cambridge University Press, United States.
- Kruger, T., Pitman, M., Grennell, D., McDonald, T., Mariu, D., Pomare, A., Mita, T., Maihi, M. & Lawson-Te Aho, K. (2004). *Transforming whānau Violence – a Conceptual Framework*. An Updated Version of the Report from the Former Second Māori Taskforce on whānau Violence. Te Puni Kōkiri, Wellington.
- Lawson-Te Aho, K. (1997). *Kia Piki Te Ora O Te Taitamariki: A Review of the Evidence*. Te Puni Kōkiri, Wellington.
- Lawson-Te Aho, K. (2008). *Hapū Development as Suicide Prevention: Theorising the Links Between Hapū Development and Suicide Prevention in Ngati Kuri*. Various PhD draft thesis chapters. Unpublished PhD thesis. Victoria University of Wellington.
- Love, C. (2001) *Extensions on Te Wheke*. Monograph. Lower Hutt. The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand.
- Love, C. (2007) *A toolkit for Psychological practice in the 21st Century*. Presentation to the New Zealand Psychological Society Conference, Waikato University.
- Mahuika, R. (2008). “Kaupapa Māori Theory is Critical and Anti-Colonial”. *MAI Review*, 2008, 3, pp 1–16.
- Marsden, M (1981). God, Man and Universe: A Māori worldview. In M. King (Ed.) *Te Ao Hurihuri*. Longman Paul Ltd, Auckland.
- McCarthy, M. (1996). “Raising a Māori Child Under the New Right State”. In Pania Te Whaiti, Marie McCarthy & Arohia Durie (eds). *Mai I Rangiatea: Māori Wellbeing and Development*. Auckland University Press, Auckland.
- McNatty, W. (2001). *Whānaungatanga*. Unpublished Research Report. School of Psychology. Waikato University, Hamilton.
- Metge, J. (1995). *New Growth from Old: The whānau in the Modern World*. Victoria University Press, Wellington.
- Metge, J. (2001). “Family and whānau in a Changing World”. Social Policy Forum 2001, Centre for Public Policy Evaluation, Palmerston North.
- Milne, M. (2005). *Māori perspectives on Kaupapa Māori and Psychology*. A discussion document. Unpublished report to the New Zealand Psychologists Registration Board.
- Minister of Health & Associate Minister of Health (2002a). *He Korowai Oranga: Maori Health Strategy*. Ministry of Health, Wellington.
- Ministry of Health (2008) November. *Briefing to the Incoming Minister*.
- Ministry of Health. (2004). *Whakatataka Tuarua: Māori Health Action Plan 2006–2011*. Ministry of Health, Wellington.

- Ministry of Health. (2007). *Whānau Ora Health Audit Tool*. Ministry of Health, Wellington.
- Ministry of Māori Development (2005). *Whānau Development Project: Final Evaluation Report*. Te Puni Kōkiri, Wellington.
- Ministry of Social Development (2009). *E Tu whānau-ora: Programme of Action for Addressing Whānau Violence 2008–2013*. Ministry of Social Development, Wellington.
- Moeke-Pickering, T. (1996). *Māori Identity within whānau: A review of the Literature*. Unpublished research report. School of Psychology, Waikato University.
- Nelson Marlborough District Health Board. (2009). *Kimi Hauora Wairau: Māori Health Plan*.
- Ngai Tahu 2025. Retrieved from [www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz](http://www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz)
- Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act, 1998. Public Act No. 97. Retrieved from [www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1998/0097](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1998/0097)
- Ngati Porou 2009 – 2025. Retrieved from [www.ngatiporou.com](http://www.ngatiporou.com)
- Palmer, S. (2004). *Homai Te Waiora Ki Ahau*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Massey University. Palmerston North.
- Papakura, M. (1986). *Life of the Old Time Māori*. New Women's Press, Auckland.
- Pere, R. (1988). "Te Wheke: Whaia me te Aroha". In S. Middleton (Ed.). *Women in Education in Aotearoa*. Allen Unwin, Wellington.
- Pere, R. (1991). *Te Wheke. A Celebration of Infinite Wisdom*. Ao Ako. Global Learning. Gisborne, New Zealand.
- Pere, R. (2003). *Te Wheke*. Ao Ako Global Learning New Zealand Ltd.
- Poole, I., Dharmalingham, A., & Sceats, J. (1991) *The New Zealand Family from 1840: A Demographic History*. Auckland University Press, Auckland.
- Rangihau, J. (1981). "Being Māori". In M. King (Ed.), *Te Ao Hurihuri*. Longman Paul Ltd. Auckland.
- Smith, G. (1992). "Education, biculturalism or separatism". In Novitz, D., & Willmott, B. (eds). *New Zealand in Crisis*. GP Publishers, Wellington.
- Smith, G. H. (1995). "Whakaoho whānau: New Formations of whānau an an Innovative Intervention into Māori Cultural and Educational Crises". In *He Pukenga Korero, Spring, 1995*, pp 18–36.
- Smith, G.H. (1997). *The Development of Kaupapa Māori: Theory and Praxis*. IRI PhD Thesis Series Number 3, University of Auckland, Auckland.
- Smith, L.T. (2000). Kaupapa Maori Research. In Marie Battiste (Ed.). *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*, pp. 225–247. UBC Press, Canada.
- Taiapa, J. (1995). "Ta Te whānau Ohanga: The Economics of whānau: Cultural Survival at Fiscal Expense". In *He Pukenga Korero, Spring, 1995*, pp 10–17.
- Tainui Iwi Development Plan. *Whakatupuranga Waikato-Tainui 2050*. Retrieved from [www.tainui.iwi.nz](http://www.tainui.iwi.nz)
- Taranaki District Health Board (2009). Te Kawau Maro Taranaki Māori Health Strategy. Press Release dated 8 December 2009. Retrieved from [www.tdhub.org.nz](http://www.tdhub.org.nz)
- Te Puni Kōkiri (2001). *A Framework for Monitoring Māori Development*. Working Paper One. Ministry of Māori Development, Wellington.
- Te Puni Kōkiri (2005). *Whānau Development Action and Research*. Te Puni Kōkiri Internal Policy Document.
- Te Puni Kōkiri (2009). Statement of Intent 2009–2012. Te Puni Kōkiri. Wellington.
- Te Rau Matatini (2007). *Whakapakari Ake te Tipu. Māori Child and Adolescent Mental Health Workforce Strategy. Te Rau Matatini*, Wellington.
- Te Rito, J.S. (2007a). Whakapapa and Whenua: An Insider's View. *MAI Review, 2007, (3)*, pp. 1–8.
- Te Rito, J.S. (2007b). Whakapapa: A Framework for Understanding Identity. *MAI Review, 2007, (3)*. pp 1–10.
- Te Roopu Rangahau Hauora A Eru Pomare (2008). *Hauora: Māori Standards of Health IV. A Study of the Years 2000–2005*. Otago University, Wellington.
- Te Runanga o Ngati Porou. Strategic Plan 2009–2012. Retrieved from [www.ngatiporou.iwi.nz](http://www.ngatiporou.iwi.nz)
- Turia, Hon Tariana. (2003). *Strong whānau the Key to Tangata Whenua Development*. Beehive Press Release.



Turia, Hon. Tariana. (2003). *Te Whakapumau whānau ki Heretaunga*. New Zealand Government. Wellington.

Waitangi Tribunal. (2010). *Interim Report on the Auckland Hospital Endowments Claim. Wai 261*. Wellington. Waitangi Tribunal.

Walker, T (2006). *Whānau is whānau*. Blue Skies Report No 8/06. Families Commission, Wellington.

Westerman, T (2004). "Enagement of Indigenous Clients in Mental Health Services. What Role Do Cultural Differences Play?" *Australia e journal for the Advancement of Mental Health*, 3 (3).

Whānau Ora Taskforce. (2009). *A whānau Centred Approach to Services. Discussion document*. Ministry of Social Development, Wellington.

Williams, H. (1985). *A Dictionary of the Māori Language*. Government Printer, Wellington.

Reports are available on the Commission's website or contact the Commission to request copies:

Families Commission

PO Box 2839

Wellington 6140

New Zealand

Telephone: 04 917 7040

Email: [enquiries@nzfamilies.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@nzfamilies.org.nz)

[www.nzfamilies.org.nz](http://www.nzfamilies.org.nz)

**Wellington office**

Public Trust Building, Level 6  
117–125 Lambton Quay  
PO Box 2839, Wellington 6140  
Phone 04 917 7040  
Fax 04 917 7059

**Email**

[enquiries@nzfamilies.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@nzfamilies.org.nz)

**Commission website**

[www.nzfamilies.org.nz](http://www.nzfamilies.org.nz)

**The Couch website**

[www.thecouch.org.nz](http://www.thecouch.org.nz)

**Auckland office**

AMI House, Level 5  
63 Albert Street, Auckland 1010  
Phone 09 985 4106  
Fax 09 985 4109