Te Whakaruruhau Transition and Wellbeing Programme

An Implementation Evaluation

Report prepared for: Te Whakaruruhau and Te Puni Kōkiri

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Summary

Based on the recognition that many women who come into refuge have few options but to return to the sort of environment in which they have been abused, the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme aims to provide medium to long term housing for families as they re-establish themselves in the community.

Data for the evaluation of the programme was collected from two main sources; the women on the programme and key informants at Te Whakaruruhau. Five women, two of whom are housed in transitional accommodation were interviewed individually, while focus groups were conducted with middle and senior management teams.

The completion of the interviews enabled the development of a programme logic, which describes the 'theory' of the programme. The model details the activities or what the programme *does*. These activities include linking women to programmes and resources, providing practical support, addressing specific cultural needs and the availability of quality advocates. These activities are built on foundational values, such as, whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and wairuatanga. The programme is only made possible with internal and external inputs. Of the external inputs, funding contributions are considered vital to the functioning of the programme.

The women's perspectives identified varying outcomes from their participation in the programme. The logic model details the intended outcomes in the short, medium and long-term, reflecting personal, relational and community wellbeing. Short term outcomes include improved communication, improved self-esteem, improved confidence and personal growth. Medium outcomes saw (re)engagement in training, education and for some, (re)entry into the workforce. Long term outcomes related to the establishment of a sustainable life style free from violence.

The participants did not see a need to modify the programme in any significant way. Some did think that it could be usefully extended by adding to the existing activities a hands on, artistic approach. Programme developers may consider more creative ways in which to assess and measure the impact of the programme. Finally, it is suggested that the programme could benefit from a more systemic assessment process to determine whether women are "ready" to enter it.

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Introduction

Whanau violence

Māori women and children experience relatively high rates of violence (Fanslow & Robinson, 2004; Koziol-McLain, Rameka, Giddings, Fyfe, & Gardiner, 2007) (Morris, 1997)). In fact, the Second Māori Taskforce on Whānau Violence called whanau violence an "epidemic" (Kruger et al., 2004, p. 9). The Taskforce went on to say

> [Whānau violence] affects Māori and their culture in the most pervasive and profound ways because it violates us. Violence is the language of the powerless. The presence or absence of violence is indicative of the state of wellbeing or dis-ease of whānau, hapū and iwi (p.9).

The problem of present-day whanau violence needs to be seen in the context of colonisation. As Ranginui Walker (1994) has observed, in traditional Māori communities, "there were checks and balances against capricious and violent behaviour towards women. If men beat their wives, they were answerable to their brothers-in-law who could plunder a husband's property in compensation" (p.135). Violence against a woman was seen as an affront against her and her whānau (Ritchie & Ritchie, 1990). Colonisation disrupted the mechanisms of social control which had served to restrain perpetrators of violence, as well as introducing values and practices which undermined the status of women. (Balzer, Haimona, Henare, & Matchitt, 1997; Glover, 1993; Wainohu, 1991).

While disrupted, values and practices protective of victims of violence have never been entirely lost. For example, Milroy (1996) recalls an incident in her whanau's history in which a woman who had been beaten by her husband returned to her whanau who, in turn, went to the husband's whanau and asked that he be given over to them to deal with. The husband's whanau felt that they could not do that but reached an agreement in which they paid £5,000 compensation and handed over the children of the relationship. More recently, an Auckland study of women's attempts to be *Free from abuse* (Hand et al., 2002) showed that many Māori women continue to look first to their whanau for help. Other contemporary examples of protective whanau practices come from University of Waikato research (Robertson et al., 2007) in which mothers confronted their daughter's abuser and whanau members provided practical support and protection. In some cases, it was the abuser's whanau who helped to provide protection by challenging his behaviour and/or by taking the woman and her children into their care.

Not only has colonisation severely damaged traditional protective practices, the imposition of Crown authority has tended to place Māori women affected by violence in an invidious position. Particularly important here has been the role of the statutory child protection service. As John Rangihau and his colleagues showed over 20 years ago (Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1986), personal, cultural and institutional racism within the then Department of Social Welfare meant that Māori children were often removed from their whanau with predictable results in terms of loss of identity and adjustment problems. While the enactment of the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act (1989) and the development of iwi-based social services have gone some way to improve the situation, the fear of losing the care of one's children still looms large for Māori women contemplating seeking help from state agencies in relation to domestic violence. The most significant example relates to policing. In many districts,

inter-agency agreements mean that police routinely make a referral to Child Youth and Family (CYF) whenever children are present at a family violence call out. The fear of CYF involvement is a significant disincentive to women calling the police in respect of family violence (Robertson et al., 2007). This is a serious breach of the state's responsibility to protect victims of domestic violence.

The articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi provide a relevant and useful framework through which to view these problems. In short, the issues outlined above can be viewed as the consequence of the largely un-restrained exercise of kawanatanga (Article I). The result is that Māori women and children are receiving neither the full protection, rights or privileges promised under Article III. Arguably, to rectify this will require the strengthening of tino rangatiratanga (Article II).

A conceptual framework for ending whanau violence

The Second Māori Taskforce on Whānau Violence (Kruger et al., 2004) describes a Maori conceptual framework. The overarching objective of the framework is the "wellbeing (mauri ora) of whanau, hapu and iwi and within that, individual Maori" (p.8). Based on the premise that violence disrupts the balance between the four elements of wellbeing, wairua, hinengaro, ngakau and tinana, the framework aims to restore this balance and maintain mauri ora through experiences of ihi (being enraptured with life), wehi (being in awe of life) and wana (being enamoured with life).

The three fundamental tasks of the framework in approaching violence issues are to dispel the illusion that whanau violence is acceptable and/or normal, remove opportunities for whanau violence to be practiced and to teach transformative practices based on Maori cultural practice.

In bringing about a transformation from violence, the framework includes three elements. The first, te ao Maori, is made up of six cultural constructs to be applied as practice tools. These are whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri and mana. The second element, te ao hurihuri, refers to contemporary issues which have influenced the practice of cultural constructs, namely colonisation. The final component is a transformative element. This element describes the application of cultural constructs from te ao Maori, taking into account the influences of te ao hurihuri.

Te Whakaruruhau and the Transition and Wellbeing programme

Te Whakaruruhau was the first Māori women's refuge to be established in Aotearoa. Its role in keeping women and children safe has been reflected in a whakatauki given by Tainui elders, "rapuhia he huarahi pai mo nga wahine me nga tamariki ki tenei ao," which, when considered alongside Te Whakaruruhau's stated vision ("he tapu to te wahine, he iraatua to te tamaiti") encapsulates a vision of empowering women and children, supporting them to seek well-being. For over two decades, it has pursued this vision by providing emergency safe housing and advocacy for women and children. That is, women and children in crisis have been accommodated in a safe house and helped to access relevant services. In recent years, Te Whakaruruhau has also provided facilitated group educational and empowerment programmes such as *Whanau Ora Wahine Ora*. Such programmes have played an important role in providing information and support to women as they face the challenges of keeping themselves and their children safe from violence.

The *Transition and Wellbeing* programme is one of several initiatives being developed and implemented by Te Whakaruruhau with the support of Te Puni Kokiri. Based on a recognition that many women who come into the safe house have few options but to return to the sort of environment in which they have been abused, the new initiatives have in common a wish to move beyond crisis intervention (Te Whakaruruhau Incorporated, 2007). The *Transition and Wellbeing* programme goes beyond the provision of emergency accommodation in a safe house to provide medium to long-term housing for families as they re-establish themselves in the community. It goes beyond the provision of a prescribed programme to provide personalised support for women, addressing their specific, individual needs as they make the transition from the crisis which brought them into the safe house to a healthy, sustainable lifestyle in the community. It has been described to us as a "wrap around" service in which advocates "walk alongside" women, "stepping out" with them as they and their children recover from the trauma of violence, (re)establish healthy family relationships and pursue long-term goals. It is a flexible programme designed to break the cycle of women returning to the refuge because the lack of suitable housing or other unaddressed vulnerabilities have lead to their further exposure to violence. In short, it is a programme which ensures that women and children have genuine options to returning to environments in which they are likely to be further abused.

The *Transition and Wellbeing* programme is still in its infancy. Te Puni Kokiri has requested the present evaluation to assist the development of the programme. Such evaluations are often referred to as implementation evaluations. An implementation evaluation is appropriate where the programme is changing rapidly. Such evaluations "focus on information that would assist decision makers in documenting the project's evolution, and continually assessing whether modifications and changes are connected to goals, relevant contextual factors, and the needs of the target population" (WK Kellogg Foundation, 1998, p. 25)

It is hoped that our evaluation will assist the development of the programme by helping to identify promising practices and activities which may be extended and other aspects which may need to be modified if the programme is to maximise its effectiveness. In particular, we have worked with programme staff to develop a programme logic model. Although there are various types of programme logic model, all attempt to identify programme processes and the links between such processes and the desired outcomes (Ministry of Health, 2006). That is, a programme logic model is really a description of the "theory" of the programme. It makes explicit the needs or issues the programme is attempting to address. It identifies the resources being utilised by the programme. It describes the strategies and activities being implemented to address the needs or issues. It outlines the expected outputs and outcomes. Crucially, a programme logic model examines the linkages between these elements. It allows programme staff and developers to critically evaluate the assumptions made in designing the programme. It invites them to ask questions such as "What are we doing?" "Why are we doing this?" "What are we trying to achieve?" "How will we know that we have achieved it?" and "What evidence is there that doing what we do will make the difference we desire?" (Gale, Loux, & Coburn, 2006). Addressing such questions should help staff refine and improve the programme and provide a foundation for later evaluation efforts.

Evaluation objectives

Our evaluations address the following questions.

1. What are the intended outcomes and how is the programme designed to achieve them?

2. What specific elements of the programme are designed to achieve better outcomes for Māori women?

3. Is the delivery of the programme working, according to programme plans? Why?/Why not?

4. What is the implicit logic underlying the programme?

5. What elements of the programme may need to be modified in order to maximise programme potential to achieve the intended outcomes?

6. What aspects of the programme are amenable to subsequent monitoring or impact assessment? (i.e. What elements could be monitored or assessed to measure their impact?)

Method

Ethical statement

Our research has been approved by the Department of Psychology Research and Ethics Committee acting under the delegated authority of the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee.

Data collection

We collected information from three main sources;

1. **Archival material**. We reviewed programme documentation and records. These provided us with a preliminary understanding of the programme and the context in which it operates.

2. **Focus group with staff and managers**. We conducted a focus group discussion with the team leaders responsible for the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme and/or referring women to the programme. The discussion focused on the evaluation questions listed above. The discussion was audio taped and summary notes prepared from the recording. These notes also included verbatim quotes illustrative of important points. We had a similar discussion with the Tumuaki and Kaiwhakarite.

3. **Interviews with women in the programme**. The first author conducted interviews with five women in the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme. Two of these had been in transitional housing for several months: the three others were yet to move to transitional housing. These interviews covered issues such as

    a. The women's views on the challenges they have faced in ending the violence in their – and their children's – lives and re-establishing themselves in the community.

     b. The support they have received from the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme, from Te Whakaruruhau in general and from other agencies, including services they have received and programmes they have attended.

     c. Aspects of the support and services which have been particularly helpful.

     d. Aspects of the support and services which have been less helpful and ideas for improving such support and services.

The interviews were quite informal. That is, the aim was to allow each woman to tell her story in her way. However, we did prepare an interview guide (Appendix B) and used this primarily as a check that all the relevant issues were covered.

In each case, contact with the woman was made via an advocate from Te Whakaruruhau. Each woman was given an information sheet (Appendix A), an explanation of the research and the opportunity to ask questions about it, before giving her consent to participate.

Collation and analysis

After collating and reviewing the information, we developed a programme logic model which attempted to lay out (i) the needs or issues the programme was attempting to address, (ii) the resources, strategies and activities of the programme and (iii) the expected outputs and outcomes. We discussed this draft model with staff and managers of Te Whakaruruhau. As a result, the model was modified slightly.

In the followings sections, we address each of the evaluation objectives in turn. However, because it helps set the context for addressing the other objectives, we begin with objective 4, the implicit programme logic.

Programme logic model

Evaluation objective 4: What is the implicit logic underlying the programme?

Appendix 1 sets out our attempt to portray the underlying logic of the programme. It is important to acknowledge this is a partial model: the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme is multi-faceted and, as we explain below, central to it are the advocates and the relationships they form with clients. Our model cannot "capture" all of the unique qualities of the individuals involved. However it does depict the major themes to emerge from our conversations with clients, advocates and managers. Moreover, the feedback we have received gives us some confidence that the model does reflect important processes and structures of the programme.

It should also be acknowledged that this is not the only way to portray the programme: undoubtedly, it could be represented pictorially in a number of different ways. In Appendix 1, we have set out the main components in a linear fashion: (1) the problem or challenge of domestic violence; (2) processes of assessment and entry; (3) the activities of the programme (sustained by fundamental values and relationships); and finally (4) short, medium and long-term outcomes. This is an over-simplification. To some extent, these are overlapping stages. For example, some women in the programme have been in the refuge several times before so that their relationship with some advocates predates the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme by months or years.

Similarly, there is some overlap between short, medium and long-term changes. However, the basic idea of a linear process stood out strongly in our interviews. For example, team leaders spoke of women being on "a journey" and women clients often made contrasts between what life was like "then", what it was like "now" and what their hopes were for the future. They also described processes of personal change over time. For example, one said,

> It took me a little while to adjust and get to want to be with people, cos I was so head strong, my barriers were up... Eventually I came to the understanding that my defences were up because of my pride. Once I started to let go of that I started to see how this place could help me and help me achieve my goals.

In the following sections, we describe some of the key features of our model.

Domestic violence and associated issues

Although it was not the focus of our interviews, the women talked about the violence and related issues which had brought them to refuge. That is, it is not only the violence per se which needs to be addressed, but also related issues such as drug and alcohol dependency, poverty, debts and homelessness. Issues related to children loomed large. Four of the five women interviewed had had their children removed from them. One women recalled 12 attempts to get away from her partner by relocating, each involving (among other things) disruptions to the children's schooling.

Entry, assessment and readiness

As noted by the team leaders, "The reality of the work is that lots of women go back." That is, once the crisis which brought them into refuge is over, women often return to essentially the same situation in which they had been abused, whether they leave refuge directly to live with their abuser or the relationship resumes at some later stage, in some cases, after he has tracked her down. Resumption of the relationship is particularly likely when the abuser makes promises to change and/or enters a stopping violence programme.

The *Transition and Wellbeing* programme should reduce the need for repeat admissions to refuge by supporting women to make sustainable changes. According to the team leaders, this requires a long-term commitment from clients. That is, crucial to success is the notion of readiness. The team leaders spoke of a "window of opportunity:" a time when women were ready, willing and motivated to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme. As one of the clients observed, "You have to be in the right frame of mind."

While our conversations confirmed the importance of readiness, how to assess it was much less clear. We return to this topic later.

Activities

Activities are what a programme *does*. Logically, it is through the activities that the desired changes are achieved. In the case of the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme, listing activities is reasonably difficult because the programme is customised to meet the specific needs of individual women. However, under *Activities: What we do* are listed some of the common activities reported by both clients and staff.

A common theme in this regard was linking women with specific programmes and resources. Te Whakaruruhau has an extensive network of relevant Crown and community agencies from which it draws to access help for women. Naturally, WINZ was often mentioned: being financially independent of the abuser is a key part of living free of his violence. Housing New Zealand, CYF and the Police were other Crown agencies mentioned. In some cases, women were helped to access legal services. Community agencies such as the Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project and Parentline were also mentioned. The women interviewed had participated in a range of programmes provided by such organisations, addressing issues such as domestic violence, parenting, budgeting and anger. Four of the five women were also able to access counselling. As one woman noted, "Doors started opening for me."

The five clients spoke highly of the practical support they received. This included moving house, recovering furniture left behind, arranging schooling for children, providing transport, respite care and the like. For example, one woman told us about the practical help she received.

> Help with giving information about programmes, getting us there. They helped a lot, took me shopping, made sure we were alright, even picked the kids up from day care, drop them off - most of the time we'd walk – but on rainy days. And financially, they helped us out there, got that all sorted. I was rich there. I saved about $1000 before we moved out. That's what they said to do, pay your rent and the rest try and save for the whare. They helped with WINZ to sort out our benefits with any monies owing.

Some of the activities mentioned addressed specific cultural needs. We were told that advocates sometimes helped women re-connect with their hapu and whenua. This needed to done in a way which matched where the individual was "at." For example, for some women, spending time by their awa and maunga was a good first step: meeting with kaumatua and kuia would come later. Refuge itself was spoken of as having a whanau orientation, a place where "We all pitch in with housework." Women in the refuge are able to observe and help each other in keeping the rules and routines of the whare. The two women housed in the transitional properties transferred these routines from the refuge to their homes, making the move a purely physical change.

Many of the programme activities occur in the context of the relationships advocates have with clients. Repeatedly, our conversations returned to the importance of the advocates and what they did with clients. On the one hand, advocates supported women.

> (The advocate) is always there to listen to us when I come home, before I leave. She drops us off and picks us up, always there to listen. It's about making me feel good, sending me off on a good note. If I have any questions, or if something bothers me, she's a text away. And I've used those texts a few times. Even after 5, she makes herself available: she's got that time and offers it to me. She's really devoted to us women.

On the other hand, advocates also challenged women. While accepting women and being non judgemental were seen as fundamental to advocacy, the team leaders also spoke of the importance of challenging women, setting out the options they had in front of them and giving them realistic choices. This was appreciated by at least some of the women we spoke to. As one noted, she needed "just a little motivation to kick my butt."

Foundational values

Although the activities we have described are undoubtedly helpful to women, their impact can only really be understood by seeing them as the expression of the foundational values and concepts which underpin them. Three occurred repeatedly in our conversations: whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and wairuatanga. In an attempt to represent their importance, these appear in the programme logic model in front of the activities.

Whanaungatanga

In our conversations, both the team leaders and clients often reflected on the importance of relationships to the success of Te Whakaruruhau's *Transitional and Wellbeing* programme. Team leaders and advocates are guided by a kaupapa that holds acceptance of women as paramount. The workers acknowledge a women's physical, emotional and spiritual situation and this is always respected. Throughout the programme Te Whakaruruhau awhi, manaaki and tautoko women and their decisions. Reliability, consistency and continuity were reported to be the "building blocks" of strong relationships.

The importance of relationships to the success of the programme is not difficult to understand: among other things, domestic violence is a major breach of trust. Living in a violent and unpredictable world makes trusting other problematic and quite possibly dangerous. For some women, the dangers of trusting anyone can be reinforced by their negative experiences with certain agencies, particularly the Police and CYF. The women we spoke to were explicit about this. For example, one woman reflected on her earlier experiences of refuge;

> When I first came to refuge, I didn't trust anybody, I thought everybody was trying to hurt me and my kids. I always tried to stay two steps ahead.

Similarly, another commented:

> Honestly I didn't trust anybody. Even when I was first in refuge, I use to lie through my teeth. It was only because I was really scared, I didn't trust any (government) departments.

CYF was the "department" most likely to be mentioned in discussion about (mis)trust. But learning to trust emerged as a key point in personal change. This was evident in the following account.

> I've got five (children). My oldest stays with my mum. Until I get them in my custody, I'll still be wary. But it's not as bad – at least now I say to myself, they've (CYF) got no grounds to uplift, yet before, I wouldn't think like that. It was any little thing, they're going to take them. Te Whakaruruhau helped me see that if you don't try and help yourself, nobody else will help. It was more like if you walk this way, things will happen. It might not happen tomorrow, but it will happen. If you trust me, we can do it. That's what I've seen. If you don't trust anybody you're not going to say a hell of a lot, so how are they going to help you, but they can't read your mind.

In this context, building a relationship of trust with the advocates was seen as crucial. Realistically, developing trust takes time.

> In this first 6 months this time, you watch them, observe them, get to know them better. I got to trust the advocates.

Reliability was important in developing trust. Consistently, advocates were seen as keeping their word, being prompt, keeping to time, following up on issues that needed addressing and communicating on progress.

The personal qualities of staff were also important in women's decisions to trust their advocate(s). For example, an advocate was valued because she was "direct and straight forward." Another staff member was described as

> Primo, massive. She shows real passion for her job, got a lot of love. She cares, like I'm one of hers. I haven't had that for a while. I've been in refuge before, and it's totally different down here. They make things happen. I think it's because they're Maori. All the others are run by Pakehas.

Not that being Māori was sufficient in itself. A woman who had had experiences with a number of advocates over the years commented;

> Judgement is a big one. Giving women a chance. I've been judged before, by Maori too. There are some advocates over here that are judgemental – they can be really sad to the women, but the women don't need it. While I was at the whare, there was one advocate, ay, she used to look at us like we were nothing, like we were stupid for getting there in the first place. I mean fair enough. I don't think she works there anymore. I think she got a few complaints. It wasn't me, I just didn't take any notice. I only took notice of the good stuff.

Along with a non-judgemental attitude, reciprocity in the relationship was seen as important;

> It was fifty-fifty. I was doing fifty and they were doing fifty.

Reciprocity was evident too in this account;

> They (advocates) support us, especially emotional support. They'd have dinner with us and stuff. That makes it feel real. Sharing themselves, like after work hours, it just shows that they really want to help and that they're there.

Manaakitanga

Although the term was used rarely in our conversations, it seemed to us that manaakitanga is an appropriate concept to include in the model as it was evident in much of what was discussed, including some of the examples discussed above. Even before she came to Te Whakaruruhau, one of our interviewees knew that it was the sort of place where people would take care of her.

> It was highly recommended, this place was highly recommended, simply because they said that the staff there really care, that they are whanau-orientated. Whether they were Maori based or not wasn't the point, it's just that they were helpful and supportive of you. They knew of your needs and they were very understanding, so you didn't have to go through that whole entire thing of explaining where you were coming from because they already knew. So I went into this place with an attitude, I really did because I had my defences up. They took me through the paper work. I was very lucky, one of the ladies there, I knew. She explained what the refuge was all about and explained that they were taking me to Te Whakaruruhau because I was Maori, Māori-orientated, rather than the other one. So I went there, it was a beautiful home. The whanau that were there were just like me, in the same predicament. I still had my defences up, so it took me a little while to get into the role of things, get me to want to be with people again, get used to the environment. I was so headstrong, thinking that I could do it all on my own... Eventually I came to the understanding that my defences were up because of my pride. Once I started to let go of that I started to see things for what they really were and how this place could help me and all the things I needed to achieve. I started to work with the system, doors started opening for me. It's just been a big snow ball effect.

Similarly, women reported that advocates were "always there to listen" and asking "what we can do for you?" As one said,

> There wasn't anything that they didn't do for me... I was really comfortable at refuge.

Wairuatanga

Similarly, wairuatanga is included in the model even though it was not often explicit in our conversations. This is perhaps not surprising. As the Second Māori Taskforce on Whanau noted, wairua is difficult to define. It is not seen in a tangible way but its outcomes "may be evidenced in physical ways such as an act of kindness and compassion" (Kruger et al., 2004, p. 22). Thus, in our view, wairuatanga is evidenced in the sort of practical help and support described above. One woman, however, was quite explicit about the role of wairua. She recalled arriving at refuge and finding

> Peace of mind when I landed at Te Whakaruruhau. I could feel the wairua when I walked in to the house. I thought, "Yeah, this is us kids."

Outcomes

The model distinguishes three sorts of outcomes: short-term, medium-term and long-term. The short-term outcomes are those personal changes which reflect the healing needed to embark on longer-term changes. They are primarily about individual wellness. The medium-term outcomes are those related to building skills and establishing a stable environment for one's children. These are largely about relational well-being, as women begin to engage with social service programmes, training and educational institutions and, for some, workplaces. The long-term outcomes are those related to the establishment of a sustainable life style free from violence. These are largely about community well-being. There is certainly a social dimension here as women become advocates for social change, joining refuge to become advocates themselves, "giving back" to the movement which helped them.

We do not suggest that women necessarily move through these stages in sequence. These outcomes often overlap. However, we believe that the distinction made between short, medium and long-term outcomes is useful in helping to understand some of the complexity of the outcomes for women.

Neither do we suggest that the outcomes shown in the model are relevant for every woman. The specific outcomes of the programme vary, depending on individual needs and goals. The outcomes shown in the model are those which came up in our conversations.

Short-term outcomes

All of the women reported **improved communication**. This outcome had a significant impact on dialogue with advocates, school teachers, social workers, case managers, children and researchers!

> She (the support worker) helped me to trust, her communication skills are awesome. She tells me about herself. We are (the women in refuge) open to talk to her, even if we have been doing something wrong, it is easy to approach her. But we never have a bad feeling, we are safe.

Quality, reciprocal relationships resulted in **improved self confidence and self-esteem**. One participant described her relationship with a support worker;

> She (the support worker) makes us feel good about ourselves. We won't see this in us, but she will and we think about it. She's helped build that self-confidence and self-esteem.

Another commented:

> I found the programmes that I participated in with outside agencies to be awesome.
> I found the contact with different people, especially the one-on-one contact, opened
> up a different side of me, which I've never been able do, even approaching
> organisations. I've always been shy. I kind of broke out of my shell pretty fast.

Improved communication, self-esteem and self-confidence have broader implications. Through Te Whakaruruhau's relationships with other agencies, women on the transition programme reported **improved access to services**. This outcome contributed to the sense of balance and stability that the transitional programme is reported to provide.

All of the women talked of **personal growth** and what this meant for them. One participant said;

> It's time for me and my babies to move on. I've set myself up. I've done courses
> that I'd never thought I'd do. I'm a better parent. I manage my time better and I'm in
> a routine...now I feel I am able to do it.

Other participants described themselves as feeling "complete", "light" and "new."

Medium-term outcomes

Having women in **employment or training** are intended outcomes of the transitional programme. Two women had either re-entered the workforce in their time on the programme or were applying for jobs. Other women told us that they hope to do further training and education programmes once their children were older.

These sorts of medium-term outcomes were described by one woman in the following terms.

> I've set myself up, to do courses that I'd never thought I'd do. I'm a better parent. I manage
> my time better. (I'm) in a routine… I hope to one day go back to school or training. At the
> moment, my babies are too small to set myself goals.

Four of the women interviewed had lost their children to the care of CYF. For all four, **regaining the care of their children** was a priority. In some cases, it was made clear to them that they would not get their children back unless they went into refuge. Unsurprisingly, this invoked feelings of anger and resentment in the women, compounding the feelings which often result from a history of domestic violence. On the other hand, the prospect of regaining the care of children sometimes seemed to be a motivation for entering the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme.

An outcome frequently mentioned in our conversations was **improved knowledge**. This included knowledge about domestic violence, the effects of violence on children, and parenting. Women also learnt about the working of the Crown agencies they were dealing with. One women noted

> Now I know they (CYFS) don't have the grounds to uplift them (her children), whereas before
> I wouldn't think like that.

Long-term outcomes

The long-term outcomes of the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme are the culmination of short-term and medium-term outcomes. Ultimately the women have armed themselves with useful tools, knowledge and practices that will aid them in living violence free lifestyles.

One of our interviewees talked about the outcomes of the programme for her.

> I feel complete. I feel my confidence and self-esteem has been boosted… I needed some knowledge, parenting knowledge, some DV knowledge, anger knowledge. I needed that, it's a handy tool. My daughters read the hand out books. I don't hide them or my learning away. If anything, I encourage them to read them to make them realise that there are people out there that feel this way, give them an insight, so when we get new mums into the home they can understand. I like them to welcome everybody. Now we're fine, established, safe. We all have our own opinions, we're established, settled. Without Te Whakaruruhau I'd probably be running around trying to cover my hurts with alcohol. But in here, I don't do that. I've been telling myself you don't need that. You've got everything that you wanted which is my children.

This account of the impact of the programme encompasses the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. Our interviewee feels "complete." This contrasts with the situation in the past when she coped with the violence and other "hurts" in her life only with the help of alcohol. Now, by her own analysis, she is feeling more confident and positive about herself. She is more knowledgeable as a result of the programmes she has attended and the reading she has done. Significantly, she is sharing her knowledge and the resources she has with her children and other women she meets through refuge. So, although she talks about being "complete" this is not in the sense of being independent. Instead, she often uses the plural "we", talking about herself in relation to her children and in relation to the other women in refuge. In her words, it is "we" who are "fine, established, safe."

Reflecting this sort of analysis, the programme logic model gives **interdependence** as one of the long-term outcomes. We think this is a more appropriate term than "independence." This was quite explicit in another of our interviews. In discussing goals, one woman referred to "'independence" but immediately corrected herself. What she wanted to convey was the ability **to do things for herself**, not in isolation but through reciprocal relationships with others. This requires good communication skills, awareness and knowledge of the issues. It requires access to networks and the confidence to seek out the necessary resources and support. For some women at least, interdependence will include **giving back to Te Whakaruruhau**, whether that be simply by "welcom(ing) everybody" to refuge, as described in the quote above, by "pitching in" with work around the whare or, in the longer term, by taking on more formal volunteer roles within the organisation.

In the context of abusive relationships, **autonomy** is an important outcome. This was evident in a our conversation with one of our interviewees who spoke of

> …the realisation that I don't need my children's father. He doesn't do nothing, but I can still use him. I knew I didn't need him, the only reason I needed him was because he had the children. He'd use them as a power trip. I let him get away with it, but at that time I really was the drugee/alcoholic mum. He still looked like the goody too shoes, innocent. When I got them back, I felt I'd won, but I didn't bother rubbing it into his face, I felt sorry for him. In the back of my head, I felt he'd dug himself a hole.

Autonomy from the controlling tactics of an abusive partner is one of keys to ending the cycle of violence and repeated admissions to refuge. As this woman has found, she does not "need" her ex partner. Autonomy does not preclude a continuing relationship of some sort: as this women indicates, her ex-partner is the father of her children and necessarily, there will be a continuing relationship.

Inputs

The programme logic model identifies two sorts of inputs, internal and external.

The internal inputs are reasonably self evident, especially the **staff** and the **time** they put into the programme. As was noted in our discussion of whanaungatanga, it is the advocates and the relationships they build with clients which are at the heart of the programme.

Overwhelmingly, the staff were described in glowing terms as being "devoted", "massive" and "awesome." Their ability to listen and to be constantly available were frequently mentioned. Consistency was very important. One woman compared the advocates in the programme with others she had dealt with on other occasions: "The advocates before were not so good – they didn't follow up". As mentioned earlier, it was important to the women that the advocates were not judgemental, although this did not preclude them being "firm" and "straightforward".

The programme can only function because of external inputs. Crucial here is funding, including that of Te Puni Kokiri. Other important inputs are the various agencies which work with Te Whakaruruhau and their clients. Access to these agencies was often facilitated by advocates, something which seemed to make a difference to the level of service women received. For example, one woman described how "(WINZ workers) awhi you because you've come through refuge."

One influential external agency was usually discussed in less positive terms, CYF. We discuss the role of the statutory child protection service later.

Assumptions and rationale

Finally, the model identifies some of the underlying assumptions and rationale for the programme. Three things stood out in our conversations.

The first is that transition takes **time**. This is hardly surprising and is the corollary of transition being seen as a journey. Women often spoke of being in refuge "a long time." Several talked about the "time" it took to learn to trust the advocates and other workers. From a different perspective, the team leaders talked about the time taken to build solid relationships with clients, and of the importance of clients being ready to make a "time commitment" to the programme.

The second underlying assumption is that the client needs to be **ready and committed** to long-term change. Certainly, the women recognised this. One woman who had had contact with Te Whakaruruhau at various times over the years looked back with some regret.

> If I had've reached out then – but I was just not in the frame of mind to do that at the time.

Similar terms were used by another woman who noted

> You have to be in the right frame of mind to be able to want to do a programme.

Sometimes, commitment to change followed the intervention of others. One woman recalled a crucial discussion she had with her sister-in-law.

> She sat me down and said, "Well this is it. This is the end of the road. You have to decide what you're going to do with your life, for your kids and you. Don't think about your other half."

This is consistent with what team leaders told us. They spoke of a "window of opportunity" in which women were ready to commit to the sort of long-term change process the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme involves. We return to the issue of readiness in our discussion of assessment later in this report.

The third underlying assumption is that transition requires a **stable and predictable environment**. This is inherent in the earlier discussion of the importance of trusting relationships, following through with clients and in the emphasis placed on structure and routine.

Finally, at the bottom of Appendix 1 we have represented four values and principles which seem to underpin the entire progamme and the organisational context in which it is embedded: kotahitanga, awhi, aroha and tautoko. Just as advocates attempt to build a common purpose with clients, Te Whakaruruhau is working with funders and other agencies in the common cause of ending whanau violence. Just as advocates support clients, Te Whakaruruhau is working to create a climate in which women support each other and in which agencies collaborate in mutually supportive relationships.

Other evaluation findings

The programme logic model described in the previous section addresses objective 4 of our evaluation: What is the implicit logic underlying the programme? Having done this in some detail, it is now a relatively straight forward task to address the remaining evaluation objectives.

Achieving intended outcomes

Evaluation objective 1: What are the intended outcomes and how are these programmes designed to achieve them?

The programme logic model sets out short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. To some extent, these reflect personal, relational and community wellbeing. Achieving these outcomes takes time, commitment and the provision of a stable, predictable environment. Above all, it takes establishing reciprocal relationships of trust in which advocates walk alongside women in a "wrap-around" service.

Of necessity, the "programmes" are described in somewhat general terms as the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme provides an individualised approach to supporting women. However, while the specific activities may vary depending on the particular needs of individual women, they have in common whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and wairuatanga.

Achieving outcomes for Māori women

Evaluation objective 2: What specific elements of the programme are designed to achieve better outcomes for Maori women?

Our interviewees were very clear. The *Transition and Wellbeing* programme is, as one woman described it, "Māori-orientated". Another, who had experience of other refuges noted

> It's totally different down here. They make things happen. I think it's because they're Maori. All the others are run by Pakehas.

And a third woman commented

> They're Maori for a start… I can relate easier to Maori. I think it's the wairua, the connection. The kids, the way they feel says a lot. They feel so welcome.

While having Māori staff is "a start" it is not sufficient to ensure positive outcomes. As noted above, some women reported less than positive interactions with Māori staff on earlier occasions. As we have indicated in the programme logic model, key features which help ensure effectiveness are the values and practices of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and wairuatanga.

Although not explicit in our programme logic model, two other concepts to emerge from our discussions should be mentioned.

The first is the importance of whakapapa. As one of the team leaders noted, fundamental to wellbeing is addressing the question "Ko wai au?" Recognising the importance of whakapapa was reflected in the way advocates helped women re-connect with their hapu and whenua. Whakapapa also plays a vital role in supporting a women's decision to re-engage with their former partner. Te Whakaruruhau is able to respond by educating women and their whanau about the responsibilities of whakapapa, enabling whole whanau to move forward. Distinctly different from programmes run by non-Maori service providers, whakapapa de-individualises and de-isolates Maori victims of violence, viewing and treating women as part of a collective.

A second construct which is readily identifiable is the concept of tikanga. As noted by the Second Māori Taskforce on Whanau Violence, "Tikanga establishes health behavioural boundaries" (Kruger et al., 2004, p.20). In discussing the draft programme logic model, our attention was drawn to a comparison between the logic of the programme and tikanga o te marae. That is, each of the women we interviewed acknowledged being welcomed. This was not just an initial process, but one that the women interviewed felt had been evident throughout their time with Te Whakaruruhau. The sense of whanau expressed by the women interviewed extended to the treatment of the safe house as a wharenui. The rules of the wharenui include non-smoking and no alcohol. Household maintenance was a shared task with everybody pitching in. Kai was eaten together and grocery shopping was done together. These shared responsibilities aid in shared learning and hands on experiences. Throughout the programme, activities and day-to-day living are carried out with awhi, aroha, tautoko and manaaki.

While such elements are undoubtedly helpful in achieving positive outcomes for Māori women, there is good reason to expect them to be helpful to non-Māori women as well. The practice of respectful engagement, caring, relationship building, exploring connections, strengthening identity, acknowledging spirituality and following good processes may well be universal cultural values, even if the specific expression of them varies. Certainly, the team leaders and clients we spoke to viewed the *Transitional and Wellbeing Programme* as appropriate for all women, Maori and non-Maori.

Delivery of the programme

> *Evaluation objective 3:* Is the delivery of the programmes working – according to programme plans/manuals? Why? Why not?

Throughout our discussions with clients and staff, we have been particularly struck by the consistency with which the programme is described. There is, for example, a remarkable match between staff aspirations for the programme and the women's experiences of the programme. This match relates not only to the outcomes of the programme, but extends also to the delivery of the programme. This is remarkable partly because implementation evaluations often conclude that programmes have been implemented in ways which are at variance with the intention of programme designers (Patton, 1997). It is also remarkable because much of the specific detail of programme practice is not recorded in manuals. Indeed, given the individualised approach of the programme, it may not be possible to write highly prescriptive, detailed manuals. There is a risk that attempts to write detailed manuals may be counter-productive as such manuals may fail to adequately convey the essence of the programme which lies in the relationships created and the values and principles underlying those relationships.

This is not to suggest that it is pointless to document the programme more fully. Instead, what we are suggesting is that manuals should focus on documenting the guiding philosophy, underlying values and standards of good practice, rather than of specific procedures. It may be that further development of the programme logic model could provide a framework for such a document.

Needed modifications

> *Evaluation objective 5*: What elements of the programme may need to be modified in order to maximise programme potential to achieve intended outcomes?

Our participants certainly had ideas about how the programme could be improved but these were exclusively ideas for additions to the programme rather than modifications to what is already there.

One participant suggested that all the services she received be under Te Whakaruruhau. This would include counselling, anger programmes, parenting programmes and the like. This would reduce the possibility of negative experiences with external agencies and increase accessibility to programmes. The woman's suggestion would also see the inclusion of the *Transitional and Wellbeing* programmes cultural components, such as whakapapa, tikanga and wairua, across all programme delivery.

Another woman identified space and the size of the transitional housing to be a barrier for those women with big families. This issue was raised in regards to meeting requirements in having children returned to the custody of the mother.

Staffing was another issue identified in an interviewee;

> We need more staff, more advocates. There's a lot to run.

One woman addressed her need for more structure. This woman identified several additions to the programme, especially for those still awaiting transitional housing.

> There should be workshops in the house to keep your mind occupied and your hands busy...instead of twiddling your thumbs, you could play with some paint, you know, craft stuff. Then at the end of your time in refuge, you could look at when you started (at refuge) and now look at this. It could be knitting, sewing...

A similar point was made by another of our interviewees

> When you first come in, your mind is so shambled, you want to focus it. Once you focus it then you're going to see, you'll be amazed at what you come out with. When your mind has settled down and you do a similar activity, it's not going to be the same.

Another aspect for need of improvement was the physical environment;

> When you go into the refuge, it looks so glum and dull, you need a homely feel in there, then it wouldn't feel like 'I'm in the refuge'.

One of the women interviewed suggested introducing art and crafts to the refuge and to the *Transition and Wellbeing* programme in particular. Examples mentioned included weaving, journal writing, art therapy, sewing or gardening. According to our interviewee, such activities would be therapeutic in themselves, as well as providing structure to the day. Moreover, the products of such activities could provide women with a record, both for themselves and others.

> A collection showing your journey. You can see from your work, whatever you enjoy doing. Sewing, knitting, women need to keep busy…. A snap shot of the beginning and then the end. My picture would have slowly brightened and then blossomed. A visual to depict the change. We're talking the deep stuff. Imagine having art work up to inspire and motivate other women coming into the refuge.

Journal writing and other various forms of art therapy are noted for their healing benefits, allowing a reflection of individual development. Benefits include empowerment, relaxation, stress relief, mindfulness and self-awareness.

Finally, it seemed to us that one part of the programme that might be usefully developed relates to assessment. As we have noted, both staff and clients were very clear that women were unlikely to benefit from the programme unless they were in the "right frame of mind" and committed to it. But while readiness and commitment emerged as important themes, how to assess these was much less clear.

Undoubtedly, some or all of these ideas have merit but we wish to emphasise that the overwhelming view to emerge from the interviews with clients is that the "shape" of the programme is sound and that it is doing an excellent job.

Further evaluation

Evaluation objective 6: What aspects of the programme are amenable to a subsequent monitoring or impact assessment? (i.e., what elements could be monitored or assessed to measure their impact?)

One of the values of a programme logic model is that it should assist the development of further monitoring and outcome evaluations. The model in Appendix 1 has the potential to make a modest contribution to this.

What is readily apparent is that specific outcomes vary depending on the circumstances and needs of the individual. For example, while "access to services" features as a short-term outcome, the specific services will vary depending on

individual need. Similarly, while "employment" features as a medium-term outcome, this will be relevant for only some women: for others, their family responsibilities will mean that getting a job is not a realistic option. The implication is that there is likely to be limited value in trying to develop a standardised approach to assessing outcomes.

Instead, a more useful approach to evaluation may relate to developing a more formalised and better-documented assessment process. What we have in mind here is a process in which needs and issues are recorded, along with goals. A simple system of case notes could record progress towards goals, including the reassessment of goals as needs change. The resulting information would not be easily reduced to a quantitative analysis of outcomes but might, if stored in an easily retrievable form, provide the basis of qualitative analyses.

There may be more creative ways in which outcomes could be monitored. For example, if art and crafts were to become parts of the programme, the "products" of such activities could become part of evaluation efforts. Similarly, material products (such as paintings, kete or korowai) could be photographed or "performance" art such as waiata subject to audio or audiovisual recordings. Such approaches to evaluating outcomes might be more appropriate than standardised questionnaires and other quantitative measures which often dominate the assessment of programme outcomes.

Appendix 1:Te Whakaruruhau's Transition and Wellbeing
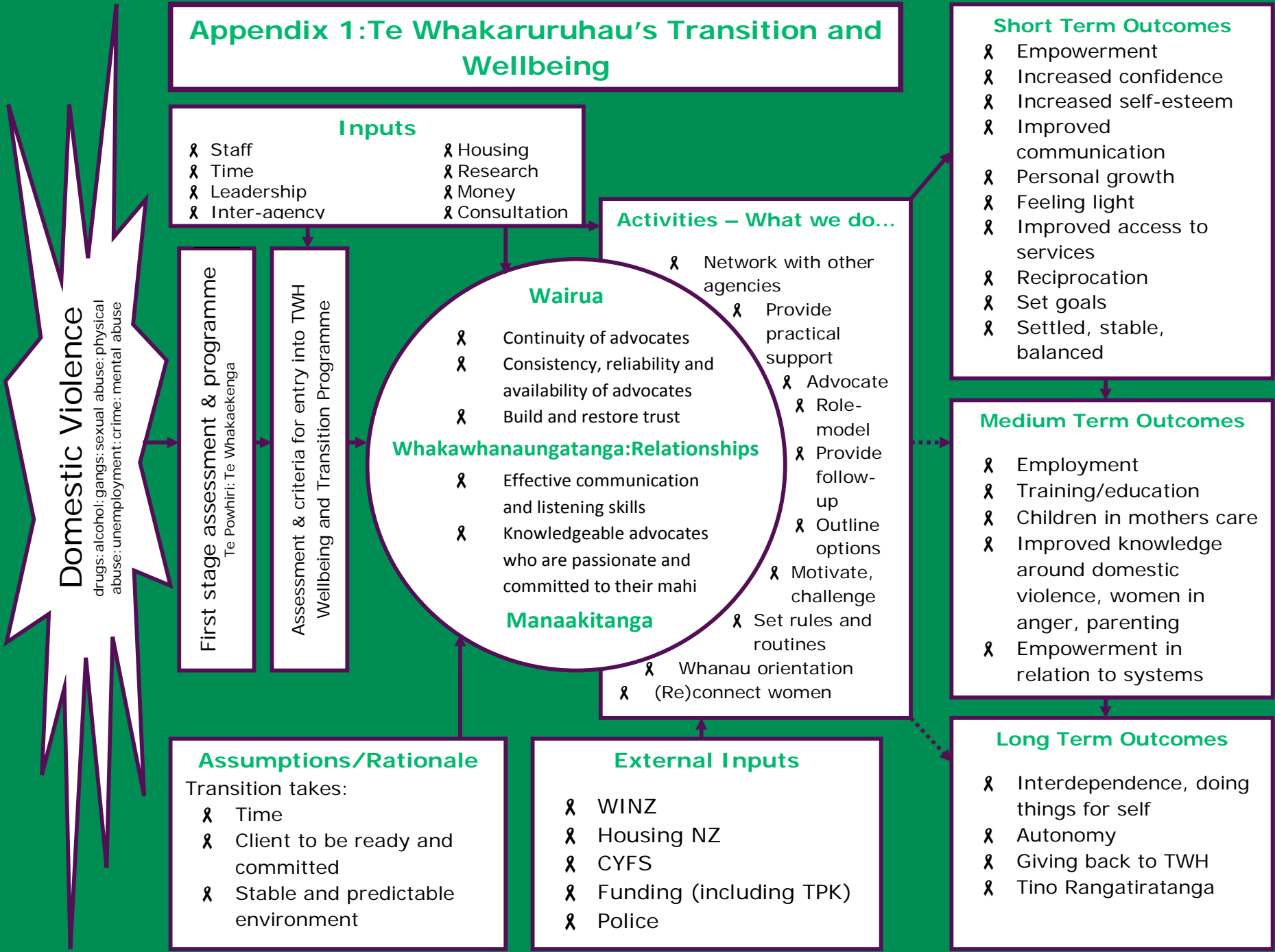
Domestic Violence
drugs:alcohol:gangs: sexual abuse:physical abuse: unemployment:crime: mental abuse

Inputs
- Staff
- Time
- Leadership
- Inter-agency
- Housing
- Research
- Money
- Consultation

First stage assessment & programme
Te Powhiri : Te Whakaekenga

Assessment & criteria for entry into TWH Wellbeing and Transition Programme

Wairua
- Continuity of advocates
- Consistency, reliability and availability of advocates
- Build and restore trust

Whakawhanaungatanga:Relationships
- Effective communication and listening skills
- Knowledgeable advocates who are passionate and committed to their mahi

Manaakitanga

Activities – What we do...
- Network with other agencies
- Provide practical support
- Advocate
- Role-model
- Provide follow-up
- Outline options
- Motivate, challenge
- Set rules and routines
- Whanau orientation
- (Re)connect women

Short Term Outcomes
- Empowerment
- Increased confidence
- Increased self-esteem
- Improved communication
- Personal growth
- Feeling light
- Improved access to services
- Reciprocation
- Set goals
- Settled, stable, balanced

Medium Term Outcomes
- Employment
- Training/education
- Children in mothers care
- Improved knowledge around domestic violence, women in anger, parenting
- Empowerment in relation to systems

Long Term Outcomes
- Interdependence, doing things for self
- Autonomy
- Giving back to TWH
- Tino Rangatiratanga

Assumptions/Rationale
Transition takes:
- Time
- Client to be ready and committed
- Stable and predictable environment

External Inputs
- WINZ
- Housing NZ
- CYFS
- Funding (including TPK)
- Police

KOTAHITANGA : AWHI : AROHA : TAUTOKO

Appendix 2: Information Sheet

Purpose of the research

The purpose of this interview is to gather information with regard to experience of Te Whakaruruhau's Transition and Wellbeing programme. The findings will be used to identify areas where the outcomes could be improved for users of the programme.

What will happen to my information?

Your information will contribute to findings and recommendations in an evaluation of Te Whakaruruhau's Transition and Wellbeing programme. After the evaluation is produced, the findings may be used to publish articles in journals for practitioners and researchers.

Voluntary participation

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You are able to withdraw from the research at any time and are free to answer only those questions that you are comfortable with answering. The interview will take approximately an hour to complete.

Confidentiality

The privacy of all personal information collected will be protected. Clients will never be referred to by name and other participants will be referred to by their position. It should be noted that anonymity may be limited for team leaders, who given their numbers may be identifiable to readers familiar with operation of the Transition and Wellbeing programme.

Ethical approval sought

The research team is committed to upholding high ethical standards by following the New Zealand Psychological Society Code of Ethics (New Zealand Psychological Society, 2002). The research team is also very familiar with the Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations published by the Australasian Evaluation Society (1998). The Psychologists' Code and the Guidelines of Ethical Conduct compliment each other and combined will provide a good frame for conducting sound evaluation research. The proposed research will be reviewed by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Waikato. The University ethical review includes consideration of the implications of the Treaty of Waitangi.

The research team and contact information

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Appendix 3: Client Interview Schedule

(questions indicative only – our aim is to make this as relaxed a conversation as possible)

1. What goals do you hope to achieve in the Transition and Wellbeing programme?

2. Describe the challenges you have faced in;

   a. Ending the violence in your life,

   b. Ending the violence in your children's lives,

   c. Re-establishing you and your children in the transition house and community

      And tell us how Te Whakaruruhau have helped you meet these challenges

3. Describe the experience moving from refuge to the transition house.

4. What support have you received from the Transition and Wellbeing programme?

   a. From Te Whakaruruhau?

   b. From other agencies?

   c. Other services you and your family have received?

   d. Programmes you and/or your children have attended?

5. What aspects of the support and services have been particularly helpful?

6. Are there any aspects of the support and services that have been less helpful?

   a. How could these be improved?

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