

Te Ahunga atu ki ngā Ōhanga Oranga Māori: Towards Māori Economies of Wellbeing

Ngā whānau i te pokapū o te oranga

Chellie Spiller, Matthew Rout, Jarrod Haar, Jason Mika,
John Reid, Tāne Karamaina, Xiaoliang Niu



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***Ngā whānau i te pokapū o te oranga: Families at
the centre***

Chellie Spiller, Matthew Rout, Jarrod Haar, Jason
Mika, John Reid, Tāne Karamaina, Xiaoliang Niu

Cover illustration by Te Ata-a-rua Hansen-Cribb:
Nurturing Māori Prosperity

He mihi Greeting

Nau mai ki tēnei kohinga o ngā whakaaro me ngā tikanga e pā ana ki te oranga ohaoha Māori. Ko tō mātou kaupapa matua ko te whānau; e hiahia ana mātou ki te whakaatu i ngā huarahi ki te ora pai mō te whānau i roto i ngā horopaki ohaoha. Ko te ao Māori tō mātou tūāpapa. E whakakao ana tēnei pukapuka i te huhua o ngā reo me ngā tirohanga nō te ao Māori, me ētahi atu wheako e hāngai ana. Kua kotahi mātou ki raro i te taumarumaru o te kaupapa tūturu kotahi: arā, te oranga pai mō ngā whānau. Ko te tūmanako ka tautoko, ka whakaohoho anō hoki tēnei pukapuka i ngā tāngata kia hōhonu atu tā rātou hono ki tēnei kaupapa whaitake, kia whai māramatanga whaihua hoki rātou.

Welcome to this collection of thoughts and practices related to Māori economic life. Our primary focus is the whānau; we want to show ways to live well for the whānau in economic contexts. Our foundation is te ao Māori. This book brings together many voices and perspectives from the Māori world and other relevant experiences. We are united in one true purpose: the good livelihood of whānau. We hope this book will support and inspire people to connect more deeply with this critical topic and gain valuable insights.

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Ngā haurongo

Bios

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and whanaungatanga – can shape and be integrated into all design aspects. She embraces creative opportunities that develop and contribute to te ao Māori and develops a strong visual language that portrays a positive perspective on Māori culture and people. She has a special interest in Māori economies of wellbeing, which has been fundamental to her role in this research project.

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Andre is a lecturer at the Auckland School of Business where he teaches a course in financial management for Māori business. He recently completed a PhD in Finance at the University of Otago. His thesis used survey data of Māori asset holding entities to examine the alignment of iwi investments with Māori values. Andre is a co-author with John Reid in Chapter 4 'The dynamics of the wealth gap between Māori and Pākehā in Aotearoa New Zealand'.

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Ngā ihirangi

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He kupu takamua

Foreword

– Shaun Awatere

E noho ana ngā wero o te whai pūtea hei taumaha nui ki runga i te oranga o te Māori me te taiao anō. Mā te aro ki te hua tahua anake ka whakaiti, ka whakakino rānei i ngā uara me ngā mahinga a te iwi Māori e ū ana ki te kaitiekitanga, te manaakitanga, me te whanaungatanga ki te taiao. Ko ngā rautaki pērā i te whakatautika i ēnei uara, ka ārai pea i te whai wāhi atu a te Māori ki te whakahaere tika i ō rātou whenua, wai, me ō rātou taonga tuku iho. Heoi anō, kei te mātauranga a ia iwi, ngā mātāpono e taea ai te whakatere i a tātou i te moana hūkerikeri o te ao hurihuri. He taonga tuku iho te mātauranga Māori, he taura here ki ngā tīpuna me ngā uri whakatipu e heke mai nei, e whakakotahi ana i te tangata me te taiao hei oranga mō te katoa. Ki Te Kore tātau e tieki i tō tātau nei taiao, ka kore tātau te tangata, e whai oranga.

The challenges of having an income remain a significant burden on Māori wellbeing and on the environment. A focus solely on financial outcomes can diminish or undermine Māori values and practices rooted in guardianship, care for others, and relationships with the natural world. Strategies that disregard these values may limit Māori participation in the proper stewardship of their lands, waters, and cultural heritage. However, within each iwi's knowledge lie the principles that can help guide us through the turbulent waters of a changing world. Mātauranga Māori is a treasured inheritance, a binding thread between ancestors and future generations, uniting people and the environment for the wellbeing of all. If we do not care for our environment, we as people will not thrive.

Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga is leading groundbreaking work on thoroughly analysing potential economies reimaged through a te ao Māori lens. A te ao Māori approach to the economy emphasises the interconnection between kin groups and ecosystems, prioritising sustainable outcomes that benefit all. Guided by principles such as mana, tapu, and mauri, and founded on kaitiakitanga, this approach advocates for resource extraction only when it leads to intergenerational benefits. The Māori economy is viewed holistically, integrating social, spiritual, and ecological dimensions, while decision making reflects a framework that considers human, non-human, and spiritual elements. Despite historical challenges from colonisation, Māori have adapted their governance to focus on sustainability and wellbeing for future

generations, enabling them to thrive in the global economy through their environmentally grounded practices.

This book is essential within the current context of critical global challenges, including climate change and environmental degradation, political polarisation, income inequality, social inequality, pandemics, and technological disruption. Prevailing neoliberal economic approaches have shown limitations in addressing these persistent global challenges; therefore, we look to our own knowledge systems for innovative solutions to support our communities. Our work assists Indigenous people in reconnecting with timeless traditions and ethics to navigate the complex challenges of modern society effectively. The book offers an in-depth analysis of Māori economies of wellbeing. It develops guiding principles for establishing Māori economies of wellbeing and outlines the steps necessary for transitioning to this model. This includes identifying potential governance structures, strategies, policies, and practices required for a successful transition. This book is a compilation of live case studies showcasing Māori economies of wellbeing in practice today rather than a collection of meaningless thoughts and prayers.

This book provides a thorough examination of Māori wellbeing over time. It defines Māori economies of wellbeing by outlining key attributes across four main domains: economic, physical, mental/emotional, and social. Māori wellbeing is assessed across different historical periods, including pre-contact, post-contact, and the integration into settler society, as well as the more recent shift into a neoliberal paradigm. The book also offers insights from various alternative economic models, such as wellbeing economies, doughnut economics, and the circular economy. Additionally, it incorporates theories of economic networking, including regional development, localised collectives, and regional clusters. These concepts are explored through a te ao Māori perspective and compiled into a comprehensive guidance document. The book examines how Māori wellbeing intersects with neoliberalism and explores pathways for Māori communities to be inspired and motivated to transition towards a cognitive framework of wellbeing based on Māori ethics. Significantly, a te reo Māori dictionary of economic terms, the first of its kind, has been consolidated. The dictionary of economic terms intends to serve whānau keen on utilising te reo Māori terms and phrases as symbols or markers of Māori economies of wellbeing. This book will be an invaluable resource for whānau as they embark on their journey towards establishing a thriving Māori wellbeing economy.

Ngā manaakitanga

Dr Shaun Awatere

Pou Pātai Lead, Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga

He kupu whakataki

Introduction

– Chellie Spiller

This book is a significant part of a multi-stranded Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga research project called 'He oranga whānau: mahi ngātahi – Whānau livelihoods within the context of work and Māori economies of wellbeing'.¹ The research addresses present circumstances and future possibilities and is a crucial step towards supporting whānau in maintaining and achieving positive outcomes on their terms. In doing so, we contribute to efforts that call for strengthening grassroots, whānau-centred livelihoods as the basis for flourishing Indigenous futures.

Indigenous peoples steward vast areas of the world's remaining biodiversity — a remarkable feat achieved by over 470 million individuals across 5,000 distinct societies, representing just 6% of the global population. Paradoxically, they comprise 15% of the world's 'poorest' people by Western measures of 'wealth'. This discrepancy is evident in their 'lagging' behind nearly all social, economic, and political indicators outlined by the United Nations in its Sustainable Development Goals. The irony is that those who are among the world's most skilled and insightful sustainability experts are labelled 'extremely poor' based on Western-defined standards of development. They embody the understanding needed to live sustainably in the modern world.

Distinctive Indigenous worldviews are expressed in Indigenous language in ways that often defy a single-word translation into English. In te reo Māori, for example, ōhanga is a kupu for economy, but it also refers to a kōhanga or nest. What is the nature of the nest in which whānau seek to create, nurture, and grow? From this standpoint, the 'economy' is not the dominant overriding concern, with long arms that reach into every nook and cranny of society. The Māori ōhanga nest is circular and holistic, interwoven with the right resources to provide safety, nurturance, and the conditions for wellbeing.

Exploring Māori economies that place whānau at their centre is part of a collective, intergenerational endeavour to reclaim, reassert, and revitalise holistic livelihoods

¹ English translations of te reo Māori words and phrases in this section are provided in the glossary on page 382.

from within a te ao Māori perspective. We acknowledge the incredible constellation of effort by many Māori researchers. Over the past decades, much work has gone into expressing te ao Māori to help transform institutions and policy in government agencies such as the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), Ministry of Social Development (MSD), Treasury, and the Reserve Bank. Tribal institutions have been pursuing change as they grow tribal assets, with many developing governance and decision-making protocols based on te ao Māori precepts. This interconnectedness of effort reaches into all sorts of places and spaces at all levels of society, inspiring a new way of thinking about economies.

One key insight from this body of prior work is the importance of a spiritual outlook in Māori economies. These economies start from within and embrace unseen dimensions such as wairua, mauri, hau, tapu, and mana. Again, Indigenous words are not easily translated into English. For example, how wairua is understood, felt and experienced is deeply personal, and even writing about it can solidify something incredibly precious and beyond words, especially pinning it to the written. We draw upon the elegance of Māori elder Rose Pere (1982), who encourages us to look at its two aspects of wai (water) and rua (two). The meaning, she says, refers to spiritual and material forces that complement each other. Every action influences both the spiritual and physical dimensions. This sense of balance, boundlessness, and relationality between the seen and the unseen, the known and the unknown, lies at the heart of our inquiry into Māori economies of wellbeing, recognising that we each have diverse encounters and understandings and an inherent wish to honour with deep humility all voices who have gravitated to this work as authors, researchers, participants, commentators, and readers. Whakapapa interweaves everything – the fabric and relational glue that holds humans together and binds us in kinship ties as whānau, hapū, iwi, and hāpori. This spiritual perspective makes Māori economies distinctive; no other culture on Earth has this particular highly sophisticated ordering system that holds a relational, interconnected placing of every aspect of life that connects in the spiritual abode, a coalescence of connectedness many call Io. A whakapapa view of the world calls for humans to be kaitiaki, not as interventionists but as mindful, conscious, centred stewards.

Both tikanga and kawa, protocols developed through millennia to guide humans to live in the right relationship with each other and the world, are vital to Māori economies. For example, as kaitiaki, there are protocols, such as rāhui, under certain circumstances that keep people safe and ensure that regeneration can occur. There are protocols around hosting and being kind and generous, such as manaakitanga and tikanga on marae, to ensure the mana of all is enhanced and lifted. There are many ways of describing different forms of wellbeing, such as mauri ora, hauora, waiora, and oranga. Again, they are united in a shared belief that Māori economies provide multiple wellbeings. We use the term plurally because there are

many economies, not just one monolithic economy. Finally, in this brief overview of Māori economies, many models that have emerged to describe Māori approaches to economies are circular. We do not see the straight trajectories of a growing economy measured by money, whereby success is an ultimately upward arrow expressing that the economy is growing and that gross domestic product (GDP) is growing accordingly. The concept of infinite growth based on extractive industry is not a Māori ideal.

Māori approaches align with global efforts to redefine economic priorities beyond profit and growth. Alternative frameworks, such as circular, solidarity, doughnut, degrowth, and regenerative economies, share aspirations for sustainability, equity, and justice.

A kaumātua once asked theologian, scholar, and tohunga Māori Marsden how the atom bomb worked. When Marsden told him, the kaumātua exclaimed: “Do you mean to tell me that the Pākehā scientists (tohunga Pākehā) have managed to rend the fabric (kahu) of the universe?” Māori Marsden responded, “Yes”. The kaumātua then asked: “But do they know how to sew (tuitui) it back together again?” And Māori responded, “No!” (Marsden, 2003, p. xiii).

The impacts of colonisation, industrialisation, and neoliberal capitalism have torn apart Indigenous ways of living. This book builds on intergenerational efforts to tuitui te ao Māori back together – as we have done with our language, arts, education, and health.

However, it is important to remember that, notwithstanding the efforts of Māori and others to build sustainable economies that generate wellbeing, we remain tangled within a dominant neoliberal paradigm. Māori economies and others are grappling with ways to work effectively within this prevailing system. Some have chosen to reject it altogether – quite understandably, and perhaps rightly – believing that it is impossible to operate meaningfully within a framework so fundamentally flawed. From this perspective, the waters will always be muddied by an economic approach that prioritises extraction and individualism, and must therefore be redefined entirely.

These sovereign economic movements are crucial because they show us the highest order of possibilities. For example, at the 2024 Te Pūnuiotoka summit on Māori economies hosted by Ngāi Tahu, some Māori leaders called for iwi to break free from Crown institutions and create separate sovereign estates with constitutions that culturally align with te ao Māori. These sovereign movements accord with other Indigenous peoples’ actions in other nations, especially where they can achieve constitutional sovereignty. Māori leaders are seeking to reclaim the institutional space with Māori institutions modelled on te ao Māori structures and processes that

support Māori to exercise greater autonomy in economic participation. The vision is that these efforts, combined with other efforts worldwide, will amplify and ultimately shape a new norm: regenerative, sustainable economies that care for people and the planet.

This book explores the interface between existing economic systems and sovereign Māori models, aiming to contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable economic narrative. While we straddle these worlds, our aspiration is to shift the needle more firmly towards te ao Māori. The work reflects three years of sustained research by leading scholars into how we can re-centre whānau livelihoods.

Kia horaina, kia kaua e māturu-iho Emanate out, not trickle down

The limitations of trickle-down economics are well documented. In practice, it can lead to concentrations of wealth rather than broad-based prosperity. The trickle-down theory states that tax breaks and benefits for corporations and those in high-income tax brackets will trickle down to everyone else (Kenton, 2024). The assumption is that the accumulation of resources higher-up will flow down to those who are poor in the form of jobs and other benefits. Even in the context of tribal economies, we urge a profound rethink that an accumulation of assets will trickle down to whānau. Too many Māori continue to face poverty and inadequate housing for the idea of trickle-down wealth to remain credible.

For Māori, reflecting the research contained in this book, wealth emanates from within. It is the legacy of a rich spiritual heritage of unseen powers that manifest in an abundant life. By life, we mean people, rivers, mountains, oceans, and ecosystems teeming with life and thriving in their ways. It is not an approach seeking external resources as the first step – it is an approach that taps into the wairua dimensions as expressed by the eminent Māori economist Mānuka Hēnare (2014, 2015) in his work on an economy of mana oriented to a koru of ethics such as whakapapa, tapu, mana, hau and mauri.

Ko tā te tai pari he tautoko i te tuhene, ā, kāore ngā kaipuke katoa e whakarewangia ake

A rising tide supports excess and does not lift all boats

‘A rising tide lifts all boats’ is an aphorism coined by John F. Kennedy, implying that an improved economy will lift everyone’s livelihoods. In this stance, economic policy should focus on broad economic efforts in the belief that everyone will have the same opportunity if there is a level playing field. However, not all boats are equal. Consider the realities: some boats, such as superyachts, are built on excesses of wealth gained on the backs of others or extractive enterprises. Some boats are crammed full of refugees escaping brutal conditions. Some boats have holes in them

and do not rise at all. Māori economic models focus on lifting all, not just a privileged few.

Te ōhanga o te mana Economy of mana

Mānuka Hēnare's (2014, 2015) 'economy of mana' model is an influential framework that has guided conceptualisations and practical endeavours to build economies of wellbeing. His criteria for an economy of mana are as follows:

1. It emanates from a Māori worldview and is informed by traditional Māori economics.
2. A holistic view of wellbeing inspires it.
3. It is embedded in the ecological system that sustains it.
4. It is a system capable of reorganising itself to create new futures.
5. It manifests as reciprocity and gift exchange.
6. It requires a multidisciplinary approach to its research (Dell et al., 2018).

Much well-established commentary builds on Hēnare's seminal ideas about an economy of mana, such as those offered by Spiller et al. (2011), Dell et al. (2018), and Mika et al. (2022). Similarly, in this work, we want not only to revitalise, affirm, and use an economy of mana as our orientation, but we also want to add eight touchstones that nurture and grow whānau livelihoods in an economy of mana that has whānau at the centre. These eight touchstones have been drawn from the research generated by the team and reflected in the book. The touchstones are not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive; they are ways we believe will help grow an economy of mana.

- **Mana touchstone 1:** *Whakapapa* is the gift from our ancestors, our taonga tuku iho. True wealth is in relationships within and between whānau, between all tāngata, and between all aspects of creation. Whakapapa honoured is a life well lived.
- **Mana touchstone 2:** The life principle of *ira tangata* is the gift of being born into this world in an embodied Māori context. Whether we are a wahine, a tāne, or identify differently, *ira tangata* endows us with the responsibilities, accountabilities, and joys of being human. *Ira tangata* is an intrinsic part of whānau livelihoods where we express whakapapa in multifaceted ways. We have the life throb of the ages pulsating in our genes, and cultivating what it means to be Māori is that pulsation.
- **Mana touchstone 3:** *Tipu* refers to our pito mata and releasing our unique life potential in this world. It speaks to the right to grow as Māori and receive the nurturance and sustenance to live a truly abundant and satisfying life in

the unfolding of the potential of whānau and each of those who identify as belonging to that whānau.

- **Mana touchstone 4:** *Mana whenua* and *mana moana*. As kaitiaki, Māori always consider the wellbeing of the land and waterways. Māori stand proud when the places they have loved for centuries are thriving. Even in urban settings, Māori can find expressions and practices of kaitiakitanga.
- **Mana touchstone 5:** *Mana motuhake* refers to freedom and agency. Whānau are autonomous entities who can make their choices, do things their way, and are respected for their whakapapa. For those struggling and entirely off track, it is still part of mana motuhake that they can turn to others for support during crises. We do not know what the future holds, and maybe a whānau will pay it forward to our own someday. The point is that we all deserve hope, respect, and commitment to the welfare of all.
- **Mana touchstone 6:** *Mana hau* is about reciprocity in all things. For example, it might be expressed as giving gratitude when collecting pipi. It may be expressed as generosity in relationships as a guiding ethic, not transnationalism, which expects something in return. Mana hau brings responsibility, leadership, accountability, and duties to balance this world for now and for the future.
- **Mana touchstone 7:** *Mana atua* are the spiritual sources that endow life on Earth with dignity, respect, and sovereign authority vested in the whānau. The interrelated sources of tapu, mauri, wairua, hau, and mana are key to an economy of mana and, thereby, whānau livelihoods. The abundances we receive that provide our economic wellbeing is a gift. Mana atua also refers to the different domains that call us to be respectful, such as the domains of Tangaroa, Tāne Mahuta, and Tāwhirimātea, and our ultimate lived reality in the world of te ao mārama between Papatūānuku and Ranginui.
- **Mana touchstone 8:** *Mana mahi* refers to the meaningful work that we do to support our deepest aspirations. It is to see whānau flourish and have financial independence, certainly enough to live well on, and perhaps more if they want.

In Chapter 12 'Recommendations and Conclusion', we combine these eight dimensions with practical steps people can take to develop an economy of mana that centres whānau.

Mana Touchstones

01

Whakapapa is the gift from our ancestors, our taonga tuku iho. True wealth is in relationships within and between whānau, between all tāngata, and between all aspects of creation.

04

Mana whenua and **mana moana**. As kaitiaki, Māori always consider the wellbeing of the land and waterways.

05

Mana motuhake refers to freedom and agency. Whānau are autonomous entities who can make their own choices, do things their way, and are respected for their whakapapa.

03

Tipu refers to our pito mata and releasing our unique life potential in this world.

08

Mana mahi refers to the meaningful work that we do to support our deepest aspirations.

07

Mana atua are the spiritual sources that endow life on Earth with dignity, respect, and sovereign authority vested in the whānau.

06

Mana hau is about reciprocity in all things. It manifests through exchanges that strengthen enduring relationships of mutuality and respect.

02

The life principle of **ira tangata** is the gift of being born into this world in an embodied Māori context.

Te whakaraupapatanga o te pukapuka

How the book is organised

We have organised the book into three parts:

- Part One: Lived Experiences
- Part Two: Pathways
- Part Three: Transitions

Part One focuses on lived experiences within a storytelling form. We wanted this opening section to greet readers with warmth and relatability. The first chapter, by Jarrod Haar, takes us into a typical workplace and provides a contextualised account of an employee's experience. The second chapter, by Chellie Spiller, tells the stories of four intergenerational whānau who underwent a map-making exercise to show what a good life looks like. We hear of aspirations to live sustainably, with many already wanting to live on papa kāinga. Living well is often depicted by a nest, reflecting Māori notions of 'economy' that consider future generations. The spiritual dimension is frequently central in the maps, along with treasure boxes reflecting taonga tuku iho and the wisdom of whānau ancestors. In the third chapter, Jason Mika and Xiaoliang Niu tell the story of a whānau business doing incredible things in their workplace community, such as financial literacy programmes and helping whānau employees buy homes. In the fourth chapter, John Reid and Andre Poyser present their findings and thoughts on class, an overlooked lens that they reprise with good reason. Class is not just an artefact associated with past ideologies; it is a prism that shows how unjust and rotten our current system is, not only for Māori but for many. Through hard data and historical narrative, the data tells a deeper story of structural inequality; it shows how intergenerational wealth deprivation has shaped the socio-economic status of Māori whānau today.

Part Two supports a substantive framework about an 'economy of mana' and economies of wellbeing more generally. In this book, we prefer to speak of pathways rather than theories to honour the living nature of Māori knowledge. Pathways are not fixed or final; they are living currents shaped by te ao Māori, offering guidance rather than rigid prescriptions. These pathways invite us to walk alongside ancestral wisdom while forging new directions for economies of mana and wellbeing. We open Part Two with an Interlude by Chellie Spiller, Tāne Karamaina, and Te Ata-a-rua Hansen-Cribb. The Interlude is a multi-modal experience that weaves together poetry, visual art, te reo Māori, and intentional emptiness to invite readers into a sensory encounter with te ao Māori. It unfolds through layered thresholds – Te Kore, Te Pō, Te Ao Mārama – guided by the presence of a young Māori girl and culminating in a visual whāriki that maps core ideas of living, relational Māori economies of wellbeing. Rather than summarising, it opens a space

for creative dwelling, mystery, and a decolonial reimagining of time, memory, and history.

Matthew Rout then presents a series of chapters that draw on the exceptional research and intellectual endeavours of some of the greatest minds when it comes to conceptualising economies that serve wellbeing, not just money, as essential. Our tīpuna developed their philosophies and wisdom for living well over many centuries and refined their systems of trade, reciprocity, and community wellbeing in intimacy with place – not just any place, but this place, Aotearoa. Their sophisticated systems offer a brilliance that has been a guiding light for every generation. Every generation is responsible for making discernments in the context in which we live, navigating challenges and harnessing opportunities.

Matthew's five chapters cover Māori economies of wellbeing, the history of Māori wellbeing, the evolution of wellbeing internationally, alternative economic models, and theories of economic networking. Matt has purposefully oriented these chapters to scholars, economic experts and policymakers; hence, the language is academic in style and laden with references.

Part Three turns to the lived journeys of transition – the dynamic processes of movement, change, and adaptation as individuals, communities, and institutions walk these pathways. Transitions are rarely linear; they are shaped by context and the interplay of old and emerging realities. This section opens with a chapter by Tāne Karamaina. He discusses his journey and insights in bringing forth *He Rauhi Kupu*, a papakupu dictionary of Māori business terms designed into this project from the outset as an important contribution. Tāne's chapter is crucial in envisioning transitions, where Māori economies of wellbeing are shaped by the wondrousness and intelligence found only in te reo Māori. Chapter 11 offers thoughts by Chellie Spiller and Matthew Rout on transitions to Māori economies of wellbeing that put whānau at the centre, based on the framework of Chellie's Wayfinding Leadership approach (Spiller et al., 2015). The final chapter sets out a summary of recommendations that weaves together the abundant insights within this book. The book is wrapped by a special dip into the world of creative imagining by Te Ata-arua Hansen-Cribb, who gave forth the artwork in this book.

Te reo

As Wade Davis (2009, p. 3) writes, "Every language is an old-growth forest of the mind, a watershed of thought, an ecosystem of social, spiritual, and ecological possibility." When a language vanishes, Davis reminds us we lose not only words but also entire ways of seeing, relating, and being in the world. Robin Wall Kimmerer (2013) similarly speaks to the sacred role of Indigenous languages as vessels of

kinship and gratitude – languages that teach us to see the Earth as a family to care for, not as resources to exploit.

Indigenous languages get ‘disappeared’ in the writing process when the medium of communication exchange is in a dominant language, such as English (this very text is an example).

We invited each author to decide how they would translate te reo Māori in their chapters. Some chose to translate terms within the text, while others referred readers to the glossary at the back of the book. While scholars may work with care and good intention to translate Māori concepts into English, no single phrase can capture the full resonance, depth, and layered wisdom carried by words grown in the soils of te ao Māori across centuries.

To truly walk alongside Indigenous knowledges – and to imagine futures of planetary wellbeing – requires more than translation into dominant tongues. It asks us to listen and dwell inside the languages themselves, where wisdom is not merely spoken but lived. Through the life force of te reo Māori, shaped by the aeons, philosophies of wellbeing, value, and leadership are remembered and continue to grow new shoots, offering pathways towards a flourishing future for all. We hope that this book will be translated into te reo someday. Te reo Māori will be essential for those leading the transformation towards Māori economies of wellbeing.

Recognising the living, growing nature of this knowledge, alongside this publication sits a companion resource: *He Rauhi Kupu*, a dictionary of te reo Māori terminologies related to livelihood and wellbeing meticulously researched and written by Tāne Karamaina. We encourage all readers to download a free copy of the dictionary from www.maorieconomy.co.nz. Wherever translations appear in this book – whether within the text or in the glossary – they defer to Tāne’s authoritative work. He discusses his journey in Chapter 10.

Ngā tohutoro

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The background of the cover is a solid light blue color. Overlaid on this background is a repeating pattern of darker blue, stylized wave or scroll motifs. These motifs are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with each motif consisting of a central diamond shape with flowing, curved lines extending from its sides and top/bottom, resembling traditional Māori whānau (family) symbols or decorative patterns.

**TE WĀHANGA 1: NGĀ
WHEAKO KUA PĀ MAI
PART 1 LIVED
EXPERIENCES**

Upoko 1: Ngā whānau i te māketē mahi o te wā nei: He tirohanga wāhine Māori

Chapter 1: Whānau in the current job market: A wāhine Māori perspective

– Jarrod Haar

The following story is a fictional account of the employment challenges of a wāhine Māori (Māori woman) employee and her whānau (extended family) over a period of 1.5 years. It details real, lived experiences and is based on extensive academic evidence from Aotearoa New Zealand and international studies. Wherever possible, accurate data and information are provided, although a specific example has been created.

8 Āperira 2023

8 April 2023

It is early 2023, and the COVID-19 lockdowns are now a distant memory. Moana is a mid-thirties wāhine Māori employee, mother, wife, and proud Tainui tribal member. The start of the 2023 year had begun with much promise. After retraining as a full-time student (the joys of online study, thought Moana) and working part-time since just before the COVID-19 lockdowns, Moana finally landed a good job late in 2022, with a start date of early January 2023. The job market was still firing strongly in late 2022 and Moana literally had the choice of three roles – one each in the public sector, private sector, and not-for-profit sector. In the end, while the Māori community organisation job in the not-for-profit sector was very tempting, she selected the private sector job because it was paying 30% more than the job in the not-for-profit sector. “Oh, to be a new graduate,” Moana told her husband while celebrating. Beyond this great joy of gaining full-time work, Moana also thought that 2023 would be an interesting time. 2023 was an election year, and Moana thought it was likely the Government would change, and the opposition parties were clearly railing against the public sector – but Moana was okay, because she’d chosen a job in the private sector. She did worry about her husband, who worked as a Māori

cultural advisor in the public sector, but his role was very important to the kaupapa (Māori ideology, philosophy) of the government department, and they had discussed it, and thought it was safe.

Moana especially liked that she even got to work from home two days a week, which enabled her to look after whānau, including their baby girl (who was now five years old) and other relatives living nearby, when needed. Working from home also meant less commuting into the Wellington central business district, which was great, given issues with buses and trains, and rising costs. It was the rising costs that were the killer for her family. She and her husband earned good money combined, which was important after a few years as a struggling part-time worker and full-time student. But the good days were here. Her company even provided for te reo Māori (Māori language) classes (in work hours), making Moana especially happy.

So, the year of 2023 was off to a great start.

Background detail

By the end of 2022, the unemployment rate of New Zealand was only 3.4%, off record lows of 3.2% in December 2021, March 2022, and September 2022 (Stats NZ, 2024c). Jobs were plentiful. By the time Moana had started working for a few months the unemployment rate (March 2023) remained relatively low and stable at 3.4%. Working from home had also skyrocketed in popularity since the COVID-19 lockdowns, with Stats NZ (2024d) reporting rates of around one third of the New Zealand workforce either working hybrid (part-time office or home) or all at home. However, it has not all been positive. Since the COVID-19 lockdowns, most global economies, including New Zealand’s, have faced a barrage of challenges. This included not just supply chain issues that led to rising raw material costs, but also more human resource focused issues, including staff shortages that in turn led to rising demands for higher salaries – which were granted, ultimately leading to record high incomes in New Zealand while there were also record staff shortages (Trade Me, 2023). That said, firm profits accounted for greater inflationary effects than the cost of labour (RNZ, 2023). While these factors did benefit the workforce – including Moana – all these factors created significant inflationary pressures. Indeed, inflation has been at high levels since 2021 (Béland et al., 2024), peaking at 7.2% in December 2022 and remaining high at 6.2% in New Zealand in March 2023 (Stats NZ, 2023), when Moana had just started work.

12 Āperira 2023

12 April 2023

By the middle of 2023 Moana was tired of the politics – the television and radio were covering it very strong – and it seemed even TikTok and YouTube were getting in on the act. If it wasn't politics, it was inflation, which was still tracking high. But Moana was happy – the job was great, plenty of challenges and opportunities, and the pay was very nice and much needed. According to all the polls, it was likely that there was going to be a change of government. For the first time Moana noticed her husband was starting to look anxious, and suspiciously, he took a much stronger interest in their finances and bills. He assured her when she asked that he was fine and just wanted "to stay on top of everything", but she could tell something was up. But she didn't want to push the topic. She was sure it would work out.

9 Oketopa 2023

9 October 2023

The week before election day (on Saturday 14 October 2023), Moana's whānau were hit with some bad news. Her auntie Hine worked for a government department in translation and other policy work and was suddenly made redundant. Hine and her whānau had just spent the weekend at Moana's talking about what had happened and what it might mean for the public sector as a whole. Moana noticed her husband's face clouded over a few times at the painful thought of job loss. Auntie Hine said that their Chief Executive had "seen the writing on the wall" around a change of government and their desire to reduce the overall public sector. As such, they were instigating changes around reducing the workforce immediately. Hine was only hired on a temporary contract – albeit two and a half years ago – saying that "work always seemed to appear". But now that work was over. Hine's husband was really upset because while they had bought a house a few years ago (early in 2021), they had just refinanced their mortgage, fixing it at a much higher interest rate. This meant they were going to be financially struggling. Of course, Moana and her husband offered to help as much as they could – what with them being whānau and all, and both employed. They were happy to send some money their whānau's way to support them.

Background detail

By late 2023, the average 2-year mortgage rate was 7.42% (August 2023) up from 3.87% (September 2021) (Reserve Bank of New Zealand, 2022). A house bought in August 2021 in Wellington had a median value of \$860,000 (McKnight, 2024). With a 20% deposit, that leaves a mortgage of \$688,000. Assuming this had been reduced to \$650,000 by August 2023, it was now \$2,083 a fortnight compared to around \$1,410 a fortnight originally on the same sized mortgage (ASB, n.d.). This reflects over \$600 extra a fortnight. While the upcoming election had opposition parties promising workforce cuts to the public sector, government departments were already downsizing (Whyte & Boucher, 2024).

After the weekend was over Moana and her whānau did their best to return to 'normal'. The election was gaining so much attention that it was a welcome relief to be happening this weekend. Moana's job was ticking along, and despite the challenges for Hine's whānau, she was happy that her whānau was largely unaffected. Unbeknownst to Moana, her husband was getting up in the middle of the night. In fact, he hadn't been sleeping much at all. He was worried about his job. Sure, the recent redundancy of Auntie Hine had surprised the whānau and Moana, but not her husband. He had heard the talk at work. Indeed, the talk about restructuring was all over the public sector – every water-cooler conversation was about the immediate future.

Moana's husband was in the same boat as Hine. His job was under threat, and while they didn't have a mortgage like Hine, they had just received notice of a 10% rent increase. They loved where they lived – being close to Auntie Hine and other whānau – and didn't want to move. But that rent increase might prove to be costly – it was another \$56 per week.² He started getting his CV updated and started looking at jobs just to be safe. But there were few roles going at present. It was like every employer in Aotearoa New Zealand was holding their breath and waiting on the election result. In effect, it felt like the job market was waiting for the change of government. Overall, he knew Moana was upset at the situation Auntie Hine was in, and he was determined to not bring such financial stressors to their whānau.

² Average Wellington rent in 2023 was \$563.00 (see <https://rep.infometrics.co.nz/wellington-region/income-and-housing/average-rent/>).

Background detail

Job insecurity reflects workers “concern about the future permanence of the job” (van Vuuren & Klandermans, 1990, p. 133) and “employee perceptions of a potential threat to continuity in his or her current job” (Heaney et al., 1994, p. 1431). There is strong evidence that employees with higher job insecurity are more likely to be stressed and worried, experiencing higher anxiety and depression (Jiang & Lavaysse, 2018). There are links between rumination and job insecurity (Jiang et al., 2020), with typical expectations being that workers relax after work, which aids recovery. However, employees who ruminate a lot around work and work-related issues such as job insecurity become preoccupied with such thoughts, wondering what they might do differently to be targeted, or perhaps regretting past actions (‘maybe I should have done that additional work?’) that they now wish they had done. While it is natural to ruminate in such stressful situations, it doesn’t aid recovering from work, and indeed, can feel like the workday is never ending.

10 Tihema 2023

10 December 2023

The election was done, and after much negotiating, the coalition government between the National Party, New Zealand First, and the ACT Party was formed. The National Party was announcing its ‘first 100 days in office’ plan. Moana’s husband was uncertain that he was going to lose his job – although unsure whether he would keep it. He knew his job was potentially in trouble. He had been told his position, along with many others, was on a potential ‘downsizing list’ that his manager announced at the end of last week. This week there were supposed to be numerous meetings and discussions with his manager and her boss. While last week it was initially the talk of the section he worked in, after a while it almost seemed that all employees in the department had become separated into two groups: the ‘likely gone’ versus ‘likely staying’. He had begun to feel less supported by his manager, his co-workers, and his team. Interestingly, he was doing some amazing work – literally completing more work than he was typically capable of. Despite his overall lack of sleep and the stress of trying to keep this work drama from his wife, he was frankly the most productive he had ever been. He was sure his boss would see the great work he was doing and recognise that he was too valuable to lose. His rumination then became fixated on the potential for survival from what some were calling ‘the Hunger Games’ in the public sector.

Background detail

There is evidence that when faced with heightened job insecurity, employees increase their work rate and outcomes. In effect, they become more productive and helpful compared to their 'typical' output (Jiang et al., 2022). When workers feel their job is under threat, they work even harder to produce the best or most work they can in order to be seen in the best light by those making decisions around their job's future. This absolutely doesn't guarantee such potential job losses will be avoided, but it highlights the potentially perverse nature of high job insecurity on workers. It also doesn't mean they do not become more physically affected by this extra work.

25 Māehe 2024

25 March 2024

Moana's husband was exhausted. It was now early in 2024, and the new Government had just completed their 100-day plan. He had been working so hard to show his boss he was too valuable to lose. In fact, even he was surprised how much he was managing to accomplish at work given his sleep remained largely disrupted with thoughts about his job. He estimated he was only getting four to five hours of sleep a night – and they were hardly 'quality hours' of sleep. Moana appeared to have gotten into a routine, enjoying her job – despite some challenges from the new Government – as well as supporting Auntie Hine and her whānau. He was hopeful things might turn out alright. Indeed, today was the day when the final announcements around the current restructure were going to be presented. He had purposefully only had a short break through the Christmas period to ensure he had as much leave saved as possible in case that became important (i.e. if he lost his job). Moana thought he was simply being "especially diligent", as she put it.

He knew better, and while Moana knew he was worried about job losses – and the growing tally that never seemed to stop (RNZ, 2024) – he was doing his best to prepare in case the news was bad. He went into work this morning expecting something 'different', but everyone was polite and short, with few people making eye contact. A close work colleague turned down his invitation of a coffee – everyone was too anxious to relax. It looked like all his co-workers knew the announcement would come this morning and were on edge. No one was doing any actual work that morning. He could see that most of the staff on the short-list (like him) were weary looking, and a few staff had red eyes – clearly, they had been crying in the toilets or somewhere. He thought the whole thing was "depressing as hell" and when he shared that comment, his colleague simply nodded – too

distracted in his own job threat thoughts. He had tried to stay optimistic, but things weren't looking good.

An hour later Moana's husband was still waiting. "Why is it taking so long?" was asked by himself and a few others he knew were on the list. "This is crazy," he thought to himself. He had told Moana that the announcement was this morning, and she was texting him every 10 minutes with words of encouragement. By 10 am the first emails began arriving. Emails with letters attached telling the result. His close friend Terry was made redundant. He walked out from his desk – shaking his head to say, 'not good news', and then hurried off to the toilet. Likely to cry. Terry's wife had been made redundant at a construction company the month before. "Sheez, that's tough," thought Moana's husband. Next, another of his friends at work – who worked in the same department and in a similar role but with a different division – also lost his job. "Fudge! This is not looking good," he thought. But by 10:30 am the emails stopped. There was a short flurry of email activity from 10:02 am to 10:30 am and then nothing. By 11:15 am many others on the list were confused. The water-cooler discussion began questioning if it was over. Everyone wanted it to be – indeed, wished it to be – but Moana's husband didn't think so because there were not enough people being let go compared to what management said were the targets. Sure enough, it was just a lull before more announcements came. The next wave of emails came through at 11:52 am – just before lunch. And by 3:30 pm the Chief Executive and the Human Resources Director emailed all staff to say that notifications of all redundancies were made. Moana happened to text her husband just a minute after he'd finished reading the email and was sitting there staring blankly at the screen. His two-word response told her all she wanted to hear: "I'm safe."

Moana knew her husband had been massively worried about his job. He wasn't sleeping well and had an almost manic energy in the morning when he left for work. On his return he was always very tired and barely made it through the evening awake. But she often felt or heard him getting up after a few hours. She didn't want to say anything in case it was more harmful than helpful. She was confident her husband knew she supported him 100%. And this was the most challenging time around work – at least since before she started retraining. Beyond her auntie Hine, another cousin had lost his role, and another relative working in a government department – different from her husband but in a similar Māori-focused role – had recently lost his job. It felt like the whānau couldn't catch a break. But at last, her husband had made the cut, and his job was safe. That was such a massive relief. She went out with a colleague for a late coffee break to celebrate the whānau win and realised she had been figuratively 'holding her breath' for what seemed like the whole day. Moana felt secure again – the first time in months – and felt like they might make it through 2024 safely after all. When she returned to her office her

manager and her boss were in the meeting room having a heated discussion. Moana wondered what was going on there. Thirty minutes later an email announced an emergency meeting at 5 pm. Just 10 minutes away. Even though Moana was still relatively new, she felt this was unusual.

Moana's husband returned home from work a bit later than usual but acting like a new man. He'd bought the whānau's favourite takeaways on his way home and even a bottle of wine. He wanted to celebrate. Their girl bounced on Daddy's knee like a three-year-old. His energy was infectious. He had been worrying about this job for so long, and thus Moana didn't have the heart to share her news. She didn't want to break his joy. He got tipsy after one glass of wine and went to bed early, sleeping well for the first time in months. Fortunately for Moana, this meant she could stay up late and look at their finances. She could also have a wee cry with no one around. She noted that the whānau would have to make some changes. Moana found it incredible that only 16 months after starting her job she had been made redundant. Not only her. All her team. Their manager. His manager – a partner even. And the administration staff. Everybody to do with the consulting business. They had only just finished their latest contract – yes, with the Government, but they were an experienced brand and were confident that they would find work. But it appeared that during the last few months – as the existing work was coming to an end – their senior manager and partner had not been able to find any work. Further, there was no work on the horizon. The other partners had voted to shut down that arm of the business. "This is the nature of the private sector," her boss had said to them after delivering the news. While there was a redundancy payment for Moana, her little time at the workplace meant she'd only be getting about one month's pay. She'd have to make it last until she could find something else. It looked like 2024 was going to be a challenge after all. Telling her husband in the morning had almost broken Moana's spirit. The look of disbelief was stuck on his face for most of the morning. Once she started crying so did he. There was so much emotion – especially shock and disbelief. For them both. He promised he had her back (and Moana knew it) but it was a rough way to start what was supposed to be a 'good news week'.

Background detail

The coalition government had promised to rein in government spending on consultants (Willis, 2024). Indeed, the Government was rapidly succeeding, with forecasted savings of over \$800 million from the year before (Pennington, 2024). Because of these cuts, consulting firms have begun to make positions redundant, and some organisations have closed operations entirely (Sachdeva, 2024). Further, organisations of all sizes and reputations have been affected. For example, PwC in Wellington closed its government advisory business arm, with around 40 positions lost (McNicol, 2024).

1 Tihema 2024
1 December 2024

It was now nearing the end of 2024 and unfortunately for Moana it had been a terrible rest of the year in the job market. The unemployment rate had risen markedly – she was not alone in being made redundant. Indeed, large numbers of New Zealanders were in effect made redundant in 2024. Moana felt like everyone she knew – especially Māori – who were previously employed were now job hunting like her. These whānau connections were especially depressing. Lots of good people doing important mahi – typically in the public sector and community sector – were being let go. This was especially so as the Government cut funding to numerous health and sector initiatives (Ang, 2024).

Given the size of the unemployment pool in Wellington, Moana experienced some massive changes to her job-hunting experiences compared to the last time. Now, she was competing potentially with hundreds of workers, all with similar or better work experience than her – and for the first time ever, she started to experience what is termed ‘precarious work’. She also knew more whānau members who had lost their job – highlighted by a social media page set up by Wellington whānau to capture their experiences around job hunting. Moana wasn’t sure if this was helpful or if it led to more pressure. It certainly raised the anxiety around job hunting. Moana had been offered part-time work on basically minimum wage but with no guarantee of work beyond a short time frame – often a few weeks only. Moana initially thought such roles were beneath her because they did not consider or utilise any of her qualifications and newly earned job skills.

Background detail

Precarious workers are those individuals who transition between having secure work and then not, making them unable to afford to live well, and potentially causing issues with welfare – such as the unemployment benefit (Standing, 2011). Some define ‘precariat’ individuals as being characterised by “uncertainty, dependence, powerlessness, perilousness and insecurity” (Rua et al., 2019, p. 2). Overall, being a precarious worker captures the change from stable employment to unemployment. Indeed, this has fuelled growing attention to precarious work due to growing inequality (Rashbrooke, 2013), which has been blamed on the declining value of wages, especially for workers paid the lowest wage. Importantly, precarious work is an issue not only in Aotearoa New Zealand but also across most Western economies, including the United States (Bivens et al., 2014).

While Moana initially rejected the first job offer of such work, she was told by whānau that such offers of work can suddenly dry up. After a few hours of looking, she became tempted to take such a job as the year was closing and Christmas was near, just so the whānau could have some ‘cheer’. Ultimately, she took the next retail job that was only part-time and would last only until Christmas Eve. Initial thoughts around the job not recognising her skills were replaced with a sense of purpose to get out of the house and engage with co-workers and customers, and to earn some much-needed money. This gave Moana some purpose and focus. The pay was depressing compared to her role as a consultant, but it beat staying at home looking endlessly online trying to find full-time, high-paying work that didn’t appear to exist – at least for her skills. It was nice that whānau connected on social media and posted job offers they had seen, but it almost seemed there were more of Moana’s whānau looking for work than jobs available – and there would be extra thousands job hunting in Wellington as well.

16 Tihema 2024
16 December 2024

By the middle of December 2024, Moana got some mixed news. Her auntie Hine had recently sold their house and then suddenly announced a move to Brisbane – leaving at the end of the week. Her whānau were joining an exodus of Kiwis seeking out employment and a better future. Recently, whānau of Auntie Hine’s husband had moved there, and there appeared to be plenty of work for them both. Moana was glad that Auntie Hine and her whānau were searching for a brighter future, and they both even had job interviews lined up for the following week through some

whānau connection. In addition, it was amazing that Auntie Hine had provided her with some ‘Christmas cheer’ (money) to ensure Moana’s whānau could have a rewarding Christmas: “Gosh knows we deserve it,” she thought. It was a bit of money from her house sale, but thankfully they had come out of the transaction ahead – even after paying the mortgage break money. That was one good outcome of that. “It feels like the system isn’t very fair,” Moana said to her husband that evening. He smiled and gave her a supportive touch. He knew she was struggling – and missing both her skilled job and her auntie Hine – but he was also working hard to keep his own job. Looks like the Government was not finished with the redundancies...

Background detail

There are some inequities in the New Zealand economy around employment. For example, by the end of 2024, the unemployment rate was 4.8%, but this was higher for women (4.9%) compared to that for men (4.7%) (Stats NZ, 2024b). This suggests that unemployment disadvantages women somewhat. But these figures are much more apparent for Māori. For example, for Pākehā (New Zealand Europeans), the unemployment rate is 4.0%, but it is 8.9% for Māori (Stats NZ, 2024a) – which is 2.225 times as high. It has been suggested that the higher social connections for Māori (whanaungatanga) in conjunction with this higher unemployment rate mean Māori are more likely to be exposed to unemployment across their whānau – which might be detrimental to their overall mental health (Haar, 2022). Further, these unemployment challenges are likely exacerbated in Wellington, which is the region with the highest rate of reduction (at 1.9%) in the number of filled jobs in November 2024 compared to November 2023 (Stats NZ, 2025). This likely means Wellington is especially challenging for job hunters currently. Finally, the challenges for Wellington and the broader public sector appear not to be over, with the Government suggesting that further cuts to the public sector budget are needed, which will likely mean more redundancies (Witton, 2024). This might explain why there have been large numbers of Kiwis flocking to Australia since 2023 (Pandey & Thomson, 2024).

15 Hānuere 2025
15 January 2025

It was now the middle of January 2025 and Moana’s husband had just gone back to work. She had heard about the announcements of further job cuts and again was

worried for him and her whānau. Her employment in the retail job had ended – and while it wasn't her 'dream job' or a potential career, she did appreciate the money. She thought it was busy and fast paced, but she'd heard her supervisor at the retail store saying how their sales had barely reached the levels of last Christmas. The economic impacts of high unemployment appeared to have everyone 'spooked'. Her baby girl was really starting to grow and would be seven years old soon. She wished she had more time to dedicate to her daughter given she wasn't working most of the January school break for once. But Moana seemed to be spending every minute of her time job hunting or on social media with whānau (looking for work), or simply thinking and daydreaming about work.

Despite the break from Christmas onwards, Moana wasn't doing particularly well. Maybe because the work had finished. Unbeknownst to Moana's husband, Auntie Hine had been sending Moana a few hundred dollars a fortnight from her new Australian pay to help her and her whānau out. And frankly, they needed the help. She was so grateful to her whānau, but Auntie Hine reminded her she was simply 'paying her back' for all the love and support (including financial support) they received when things got challenging for them last year. Moana found herself struggling to sleep, and often getting up to read social media posts – mainly from whānau in Australia, especially Brisbane. Moana found an interesting article on Māori living and working in Australia – called 'Mozzies' (Henderson, 2021) – which reminded her that being in Australia doesn't mean they have to surrender the importance of their Māori identity.

It was at this point, when she was wondering about the school start date in Wellington, that Auntie Hine sent her a message through social media. Hine loved to send messages through in her evening – and while it was almost midnight in Aotearoa New Zealand, Moana perked up when the message arrived. It contained links to jobs in Brisbane, accommodation, and even schools. Moana wondered if this was a 'sign' that it was time to move to Brisbane – to reconnect with Auntie Hine and her whānau over there and make a fresh start in a new job and country. Moana clicked on a few job links. The jobs looked very interesting, and the pay was great (Edmunds, 2024). Further, she even found some Indigenous-specific jobs that her husband would be perfect for. She thought that they likely needed to be proactive, and she decided to talk to her husband the next morning. She went to bed and had the best sleep in what seemed like ages.

Ngā tohutoro

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Upoko 2: Ngā oranga o ngā whānau

Chapter 2: Whānau livelihoods – Chellie Spiller

In a Māori worldview, whānau³ are the building blocks of a just and healthy society, economy, culture, and environment. We stand at a threshold where, in essential ways, Māori can envision a more hopeful future than has been possible in the past 200 years. However, the current political blitzkrieg of cultural, environmental, and constitutional incursions is foreboding for many Māori, amplifying 'ka whawhai tonu mātou' – the struggle without end. Furthermore, the future, cast against stark forecasts such as climate change, resource scarcity, economic precarity, and political polarisation, is particularly concerning if trends stack together and create a 'perfect storm' for Māori from the combination of critical events.

This chapter presents stories by four intergenerational whānau who shared their stories about what a good life looks like for them. This is a grassroots, lived-experience approach that centres whānau. While significant touchstones of mutuality exist between the four stories, it is crucial not to mush whānau together into a set of 'themes'. What is seen in these stories is the 'ira whānau' – each whānau has its own whakapapa system. Perhaps it shows that there is not a singular Māori economy but a dynamic interplay of whānau economies that connect and form different nodes of creative expression. The whānau is the autonomous sovereign unit where genuinely transformative economics lie.

As you read their stories, you may receive other insights and sit with the sense of new knowledge, bringing in perception, awareness, and intuition. For the task of sense-making, te ao Māori teaches us to use all our senses – mā te rongo. I invite you to enjoin with your mā te rongo, all of your senses, as you read the stories in this chapter. The voices of the tamariki are treasures at the centre of this research. Their visions of a good life are profoundly touching. For example, our research team presented some findings to adults working in the Māori innovation and whānau business space. They had been together for a 3-day strategic retreat. The day

³ English translations of te reo Māori words and phrases in this chapter are provided in the glossary on page 382.

before we presented, the group drew maps as part of their envisioning process. As I shared the images and stories of the whānau, especially highlighting some of the tamariki maps, tears started to well up in the group. They shared that what they saw in the tamariki maps reflected their hopes and aspirations. As one group member said, the maps they had done the day prior were similar to those of the tamariki. Seeing what the tamariki had done was a deeply touching process of connecting to the inner child. A 13-year-old kōtiro had laid out her whare, kai, taonga tuku iho, some money to live on, a heart, and a gravestone which is hers and represents what she has left for her whānau. Two young tama (aged 8 and 11) showed their marae and hapū, their tīpuna and kaitiaki (spiritual guides who protect and look after them) in the form of angels, and their cultural treasures and resources to live on. Another young tama gathered the whānau around their poutokomanawa, their Nan, who is a wahine toa and has the strength to beat the obstacles in their way, which are shown as maunga and two taniwha, to ensure the future generation is safe, represented by a kōhanga with a baby in it. The rangatahi and young pakeke follow their passions while staying connected, self-sufficient, safe and strong, and culturally grounded, and wanting to generate income that does not cost the wellbeing of the whenua and wai.

In the 'I ōku nei whakaaro' section of this chapter, I set out some of my thoughts from my mā te rongo sense-making process using all of my senses to dwell in the knowledge shared by the whānau.

Collectively, the maps show that wairua is an internal wellspring from which a good life emerges. Whakapapa is the connective tissue of relationships that forms a lattice of belonging and reciprocity within whānau and between hapū, iwi, and other vital relationships, including the land and waterways. Love, responsibility, and reciprocity sew the fabric of whakapapa together. At the centre of whānau considerations of livelihoods are how tamariki, rangatahi, and future generations can live a good life, too. The gifts of the ancestors and the wisdom transmitted through the generations are deeply precious taonga.

Relationships within and between whānau, iwi, hapū, hapori, and hoa are vital lifeblood of how whānau view a good life and include being able to manaaki others and host them well and being able to contribute to the broader whole. The whānau either were, or dreamed of, living in papa kāinga and collective housing estates. This vision of living in close proximity to each other included having self-sufficiency and healthy co-existence with a thriving whenua, awa, and moana. It was ideal to have a whare where everyone had their own place but were still connected. Forms of income included aspirations for financial freedom and generating revenue to support a good life that meant whānau, whenua, and wai were healthy and thriving. Being well at all levels of being constitutes a good life. Healing is vital to healthy

processes. Capacities such as te reo, culture, and accessing education on how systems work meant whānau could have a stronger base for working, living, growing, and dealing with challenges.

I recommend that institutions such as government agencies and policymaking arms, councils, and rūnanga come alongside whānau, listen to them, and support them in creating meaningful, sustainable livelihoods according to their 'ira whānau' – their unique whānau DNA, outlook, context, and aspirations. Blueprints (models, frameworks, policies) should never become institutional boilerplates that oppress and eradicate.

Te whakamahere ataata me te tukanga o te tuku kōrero Visual mapping and storytelling process

In the four whānau stories, I have included some of the images from their maps. I was inspired to use a visual mapping process by Drysdale et al. (2020), who developed a relational mapping approach for working with families. Their mapping process helped families express ideas like proximity and type of relationships by charting the different connections and dynamics. This process acknowledged the relationally embodied lifeworlds in which people are entwined (or enmeshed). I also liked their encouragement of storytelling, which infused the process with personality and lived experience and helped facilitate discovery. King et al. (2017) also used a visual methodology, asking Māori participants to map experiences engaging with different public agencies.

I saw how I could use a more interactive, kinaesthetic, and flexible approach through 'sand play', which involves sets of figurines and elements such as houses, utensils, and symbols. It meant that instead of making static drawings, whānau could move objects around spatially and temporally and tell stories as a potent way to facilitate insight.

Whānau were selected on the basis that there was a relationship and that there was trust, friendship, and connection. They live in Kaikohe, Whangārei, Tāmaki Makaurau and Heretaunga. Monica Stockdale (my mother, hereafter called Kuia) attended all whānau wānanga to help guide and culturally ground the process, which started with a karakia and mihi. The wānanga took place in each whānau home. Each whānau could decide whether they wanted to work together or independently on creating their sand play map. The overall instruction was to make a picture of what a good life looks like. Kuia and I took observer roles but engaged if required; the main objective during the map making was to accompany the map makers and not interfere in their process.

When ready, the map makers came together to tell their stories – this could be a collective whānau story or an individual story. This part was audio recorded, and photos of the map were taken. After each whānau workshop, Kuia and I discussed the process and shared what we observed with our tairongo. This process was beneficial in deepening our insights and staying connected to the values of tika, pono, and aroha throughout the process. I also needed to review the sand play. The sand play boxes were from the USA, and it became clear after the first wānanga that the human figurines needed adjustment, so I painted the hair black or brown on most of them. I also needed to add healthier food options, so I brought boxes of toy fruit, vegetables, and drinks to supplement the sand play. I also added books as education proved to be a vital feature. After the second wānanga, I made more people to represent the community and manuhiri, so I purchased some spoons and put faces on them and some wooden waka to represent the community, iwi, and hapū. After these adjustments, the sets were largely fit for purpose, although reflecting on the process, it would be ideal to develop more cultural artefacts to complete each set.

Each wānanga was transcribed, and then a case story was developed, drawing as much on verbatim voices as possible so the stories were in each participant's voice. I created a gallery of the visual map artefacts. Each whānau was sent the story and gallery for their review and approval. Two whānau were happy to have their real names and photos (Wainohu and Tau) and two whānau preferred to use made up names (Moana and Manawa).

It is with pleasure and honour that I present these stories for you to read.

Te kōrero mō ngā oranga o te whānau Wainohu **Wainohu whānau livelihoods story**

Sitting on the couch opposite Kuia and me, five tamariki from 5 to 12 years old were lined up on the sofa with their parent carers. After dad Warena welcomed us with a mihi, I spoke and explained the research project. Five perplexed young faces gazed back. Mum Fleur quickly explained in te reo for them, and a collective 'aha' glided across the couch. I went over to the cleared kitchen table, laid down the sheets of AstroTurf, and put the boxes of figurines and symbols at the centre. I was curious to see how the whānau would organise themselves. Each one spread around the table to work on their oranga maps. Somehow, it all flowed, each concentrating on building their picture without any competition by the children for the limited items – especially the figurines of people.

Once everyone had finished, we started our dialogue with Marley, the youngest, who is five years old. In front of her, she has stacked up five people on a bridge, with a

baby on top. They are very close to each other. Marley doesn't speak much, but she is very expressive and has mastery of meaningful looks. She was a whāngai baby adopted in the Wainohu whānau. Next to the family group is a toy mobile phone. She points out that in the whānau stack are "mummy, daddy, and a sister".

We move to Philippa next; she is 12 and is the namesake of her aunt, who lives next door. What is striking about her picture is how well laid out everything is. Fleur, her mother, later comments on this. Philippa has fences lined up in a rectangle around a whare. Trees dot the landscape. She has laid out a series of symbols representing an oranga life to her: kai, wai, and a treasure chest and gems representing financial resources. She has also placed a headstone at the end of the row of symbols, which Philippa explains represents her when she has died and speaks to her succession goals by ensuring that everything's looked after for her descendants: "It's my whare, my house. There is everything I need. Shelter. Food. Money and what would happen if I died. And my whānau is with my home. I notice a heart propping up the fence at one end." Philippa explains it is "a heart to keep me alive".

Kahira is next. He is nine years old, and Warena is his uncle. The central feature of his map is his marae, which lies on the lower reaches of one of the North Island's few braided rivers. Starting in the Kaimanawa Ranges, the Ngaruroro River flows pristine through rocky alpine valleys and forests until it reaches farmlands and industrial estates, where it becomes waste-stricken and sluggish, carrying toxic run-off and plastics to the ocean. Kahira tells us confidently about his oranga map. He points to elements in his map – the building, graveyard, cars, and two people outside: "That's my uncle Warena. This is my uncle and me going to our marae together. These are the people that died. These are the cars." We learn there are three people inside, which is why there are three cars. I ask him which is his car, and he enthusiastically says, "The golden one!"

Kahira's cousin Arana then shares his story. He is 12, and like Kahira, he came to live with the whānau. He says calmly, assuredly: "This is outside, which has a wishing well. Lots of good luck. This is a statue of an angel; it's doing a karakia to look after everybody. That's a cop to keep everything safe." He also has included a phone, people, food, an anchor, a shiny golden heart box, and handcuffs to represent the cop. Inside the wishing well are gold coins. There are two peg people on his map – an adult and a child. Warena says, "Kei waho [outside] – that's your favourite place, outside aye, Arana," to which Arana lights up and nods. I ask him what's in front of the bridge. "It's a crystal," he says.

Another cousin, Kaya, is seven. She has been arranging dinosaurs. I come alongside her and ask, “Do you have a favourite?” She points to a little dinosaur at the front.

Figure. 2.1 Wainohu whānau oranga maps



Above: Philippa with her map.

Kaya and her map

Marley working on her map



Above: The whānau doing their maps

"Yeah, I wondered about that." I say, "I thought it might be your favourite. It's different from all the others." However, Kaya isn't ready to tell her story yet, so we move to Fleur and Warena.

Warena has laid out a church, house, two elders, two boys, a girl, a baby, and a family of five peg people. He also has a well on his map. He explains:

This cross is whakaponono and our whare. We are backed by the last generation who have passed away but represent and tautoko everything that we do. Like with the aquifer here at Whakatū, it's all about those taonga they've given us and how they positively affect us today. Wai is an integral part of hauora, having wai and waioara, wai māori – it flows through life and happiness and flows from the last generation to the next generation.

Surrounding the village of Whakatū, which sits on the Heretaunga Plains, is a highly permeable aquifer system, a source of fresh, clean water. Healthy drinking water in the region has been under scrutiny, notably since a waterborne disease outbreak occurred in the nearby town of Havelock North in August 2016, when 5,500 of the town's residents became ill with campylobacteriosis. Forty-five people were hospitalised, and there was a possible contribution to four deaths. As Warena highlighted in his story, having a healthy aquifer is testimony to the wisdom of Māori ancestors who settled the area and the significance of the well in his story map.

I turn to Fleur. Out of the corner of my eye, I see Kuia sitting with Kaya, helping her complete her dinosaur story map. Before her, Fleur has a nest with feathers and eggs, a mother and a baby, water, a transparent heart box with a gem inside it, and a tree:

In essence, these things are really about the kōhanga reo. Because it's about the next generation and the protection of the next generation, looking after our future and ensuring a future is left for others. And the kōhanga is a safe place.

Fleur is tumuaki, head of a kura kaupapa Māori that provides an education for students from Years 1 to 8. The kura grows students in the philosophies, principles, and practices of Te Aho Matua, the philosophical base for Kura Kaupapa Māori education, along with Wharetaperetanga, practising the performing arts. Each morning, the van parked outside the whare takes everyone to school. A guiding philosophy is that each student is encouraged to reach their full potential, socially, intellectually, physically, and emotionally, within an environment that affirms and grows their identity as Māori. Students become competent speakers, thinkers, and readers of te reo Māori. The school can cater to 300 to 600 students, including the kōhanga, primary, secondary, and tertiary arms. The kura focuses on developing

leadership in each student, and this is where Fleur and Warena take their kōrero next. Warena says:

We're fortunate that our life is built around tamariki, through kura. We work at the same kura, and all our kids are going through our kura. Many life decisions, such as where we're all going, are made through kura, which is pretty much everything, including sports and after-school activities. We focus on our family goals and are blessed by kura because we're together all day. We have adapted our whole life to be with tamariki.

Kaya is now ready to share her story. "What have we got here?" I ask. "Dinosaurs," she says. I observe she also has some other things, which we are told include a red guardian going to get the gold, along with a pterodactyl with superpowers, who she explains is "really good at protecting and looking after things. It's invisible but is still taking care of everybody." The pterodactyl has a mōkai. There are also cars and an alien. Kuia points to a little beige armadillo-looking dinosaur, "You really wanted this to be part of the captain – they all follow that captain." "Is there anything else you want to say about it?" I ask her, and I get a simple "Diamonds." Warena and Fleur explain that Kaya is "the life of the party; she has a lot of things going on, but she's in control, and she's the captain."

At the end of the session, I tell each tamariki they can take something from the table they like. Kahira chooses the gold car. Arana picks the natural blue crystal. Marley collects the diamond in the transparent heart. Kaya chooses the protector, the red dinosaur, and the little beige armadillo that was the captain. After the others have disappeared to get kai, Philippa quietly picks up a green dinosaur.

After lunch, we travelled in a convoy to Moteo Marae to open the renovated kitchen. We drove through mountains of silt that were still left many months after Cyclone Gabrielle hit the region and this Moteo area behind Puketapu. During the church service, I noticed Arana plucking the blue crystal out of his pocket a few times and gazing at it. Marley has attached herself to me and clasps the diamond in the transparent heart. At the end of the ceremonial walking through the new kitchen that had been rebuilt after the cyclone, the Wainohu whānau pile into the people mover and head off to take one of the boys to his sports event.

Te kōrero mō ngā orange o te whānau Moana Moana whānau livelihoods story

We are in West Auckland; urban density has given way to sprawl and bush. We head upstairs – Teariki, the father, and Aroha, the mother, are there with big, welcoming hugs, and young people begin to materialise. There are six siblings from the punarua: four tamāhine – Keira (age 25), Rerehua (age 16), Tūi (age 24), and Maia (age 19), who is on her way from work – and one tamatāne, Whetū (age 21).

After the mihi and explanation of the process, the whānau get straight into it. The AstroTurf is laid down, and the whānau spread around the circumference. There is light laughter and chatter as they each work on parts, leaning over, sharing, and moving around as the picture unfolds. When they are ready, I draw closer. In the spur of the moment, Tūi throws the fake money over the map and she smiles as paper notes float down from above.

Keira, who works at a kōhanga reo and is a speaker of te reo, begins at the top of the map:

We've got Mum and Dad on the waka relaxing and animals on our boats also relaxing – kei konei ki te Moana [here on the ocean]. Haere ki te konei māra kai [let's go to the food gardens]. We are all vegetarians or pescatarians kai moana, so this is a meat-free papa kāinga. These are our chips, doughnuts, and chocolates because we are a snacking whānau. Anei ko Rerehua, te pēpē o te whānau [here is Rerehua, the baby of the family], who will be our brains on the technology and a baker. In the middle, we have our pirihimana Pita. He's our policeman, so everything stays friendly and safe for our papa kāinga. Next to him is our next tungāne, Whetū. He's the band player. He's a drummer, our performer 'out there' on the atamira right in the middle of the entertainment space.

There is a slight pause, with an unspoken knowing steeped in how whānau communicate at more profound levels. Keira folds her dad, Teariki, into the stage:

Pāpā is also our kaiwaiata and performer and entertains on our atamira. And then, if we move next to our māra kai, we have ngā heihei, ngā hēki hoki, so we'll have our free-range chickens and eggs.

Pointing to a figurine by the chickens, she explains:

This is our beautiful whaea kēkē Aunty Anika looking after our heihei and her kaiāwhina.

Over here is my favourite place – it's our kōhanga reo and our kura. And we have got our pēpē here in our kōhanga reo. All our kids will learn in this kōhanga reo space and learn from the whenua at our home. And we will all be their kaiako. And then next, we have our whare pukapuka, our library, and it will be the very first bookstore that sells all te reo Māori second-hand books.

We are about halfway through the map. It is clear to me that this is a self-sufficient papa kāinga where every need is taken care of at various stages of life and which draws on the strengths and interests of each whānau member. Aroha takes over the map narration. The other family members are watching and listening closely, now

including Maia, who arrived home from work midway through Keira’s talk and is lying to one side. Aroha explains:

This space will be where the ngahere, forest is – we want it to be all native rākau trees here. Over here is the sewing room, and second-hand clothes and upcycling clothes are what we want to call it, and it will be the community wardrobe. We already have one in our home where we all put clothes together, and everybody can go ahead and get whatever they like out of it. Whetū and Tūi all have cool clothes, and they all share, so it’s been really lovely. So that would be the community wardrobe, too.

Here is the driveway into the whare, into the papa kāinga. You can stop at the shop if you need some kākahu. Here is where we’ll be parking our waka over this side. This area is the heart of our living space. We’d have a wharenuī here as well. All our pou are along here. This is our ngeru Pono; he’ll be with us.

Teariki chips in:

There is an awa running this way. There is a nice little bridge here. And it separates the urupā from the living, so the living [are on] this side of the awa and those who have moved on are on the other side of the awa.

Aroha adds that the papa kāinga will have a spring.

Figure 2.2. The Moana whānau orange map of papa kāinga.



Keira asks, “Where is our hāhi then?” A cross has been set high up on the hill. Aroha reflects on the map the whānau have laid out:

I guess what we say through this picture is we would love to be self-sufficient in everything, and that income comes from within and goes out. That would be a really lovely way to live. In this society, you go out to work nine to five, and then you come back. We would love to live a life of sustainability, which means being able to do what we’d all love to do: live off the land, play music, and create clothes. Have our kai moana. This would be our form of livelihood.

Keira builds on this vision:

Whānau piri Kotahi [we are a close family]. I like the idea of us all living together in the same space. As Mum said, it’s about not having to go anywhere else. But if we want to travel and to go out, that’s cool. We can do those things out in the world. But always know we’ve got a hub or a base to return to where everything’s looked after and all our needs are met. I think it’s pretty cool. We are living together as whānau.

Teariki checks the scene and realises that they are missing manuhiri. A line of spoon people are then placed at the entrance. I ask him what he wants the manuhiri to experience when they come. He responds:

I’d like them to experience the whole process of whānau, tikanga, manaakitanga and all those taonga tuku iho o ngā mātua [the wisdom of our parents]. There’s nothing quite like hosting. I think that’s a space here to host and live. Also, I think it’s like role modelling and living an example that people can perhaps consider, “Wow, if you fellas can do it, maybe we can do it too.” I know when we travel around, we look at other whānau and think, gosh, look at them; maybe we can be inspired by what they do. I’m thinking of those whānau in Tai Rāwhiti and what they are doing with their papa kāinga; the essence is the source of everything, instead of these individual places.

Teariki asks Rerehua what she thinks and if it is the place she wants to grow up in. She says, “I like it. Papa kāinga has always been our whānau’s dream. It’s got a little bit of everybody’s personality, which is cool.” Tūi agrees, “It’s cool how everyone’s personalities and hobbies are there.”

We all sit back and gaze at the papa kāinga. The whānau start reflecting on the realities of growing older, moving away, living their lives, and starting their own families. Teariki says:

Suppose the vision is lost as a result of these ones wandering off, getting married, heading off in that direction, and not having the vision consistently in front to live

into? In that case, that's a challenge before any other money. If we can agree on the vision and the commitment to the vision, then money and other things will begin to flow, and Tūi just tossed all the money at it as if a tsunami of dollars came rolling in. Yeah, it could happen like that as long as everyone is focused and wants the same thing. Are we all still up for this? And if not, that's cool. But I think we've just got to be real about asking ourselves, is this a vision we can all say we are up for?

Keira responds:

Well, because we all contributed to it and created it, it shows in our own ways what we want and that we're up for what we think is essential and should be there. This map is what we all want, caught in one big picture. What is stopping us from getting what we want? Why aren't we living like this? Why can't we create these things? I like what you said, Pāpā, about the vision idea. There is a vision. We can all agree we'd like the idea, but then it's just not losing sight of it and ensuring we can keep it alive.

This is a whānau in transition. The older children are getting their first jobs and thinking about the future as adults. Keira speaks to this backdrop:

One of the biggest wero is because we are all in our own worlds like here, here, here, and here [pointing to parts of the map]. And we will only keep growing and becoming our own individuals, meeting other whānau, and creating our own little whānau. For you and Mum at this stage of life, this will probably be the ideal for sure. But then for us all being in our early 20s and moving out into, you know, the world is like, would we be sticking around?

Teariki reflects:

What that brings up is, yeah, is this home? Because no matter where you go in life, you'll always want to come home. What is home? Really? Yes, this is the physicalness, but what is the essence of home, which you can always return to? It's a bit like a marae. Even though I can be away from my marae, when I go there I know I'm home because this is where my whakapapa is, so I have that connectedness.

Keira agrees:

With lots of marae, they are getting dusty and going downhill and are losing the ahi kā. When I look at this, something that comes up for me is it is a lot of work, the māra kai, chickens, school, and whare. It's gonna be a lot of mahi. Though people can go out and live their lives, you've got to commit and be those ahi kā for home and have that solid crew to look after the place. That's a big

responsibility put on the few while some are out in the world and just come back from a holiday while others are working hard to keep the land good for you to enjoy for a few days or a weekend.

Teariki believes “we are at a time across the motu where papa kāinga are flourishing” and that “people are talking about papa kāinga more so than marae”. Rerehua remembers a vision board that the whānau had for a papa kāinga. Maia has even earlier memories of a blueprint next to a computer:

If I remember correctly, it was your vision of a papa kāinga at that time of our lives, kind of like the first seed of thought of a whānau papa kāinga. It’s interesting because we keep talking about it, and it changes because obviously, we’re all becoming our own people.

Seeing the visual map of the papa kāinga laid out, Maia offered her perspective:

It was cool to see everyone’s visions and dreams. It’s a timing of our current hobbies and things that we like doing, things that we’re good at into the vision and things that we hoped for as well.

Aroha says:

It has been a dream of ours forever. Ten to fifteen years ago, we thought of doing a bit of a papa kāinga with our older children, and we looked at whenua in Waitakere, but it didn’t happen. Then we got to this place, and we built little rooms everywhere. It’s kind of like a little papa kāinga. I’m just trusting; I want to live the papa kāinga today with what we’ve got, and all my kids are around; right now, we’re in our papa kāinga. This is my ideal too because, you know, this is what the resources I have in front of me. I do believe in an abundant God. All that money was falling off the hill! I know that that can happen, too, but I also know there are probably lots of journeys, healings, and processes that we all have to do individually.

Te kōrero mō ngā oranga o te whānau Manawa Manawa whānau livelihoods story

We are in Whangārei. The whānau is spread across the lounge room – each working on their map. Sitting back and listening to the laughter spill out around the room and ongoing commentary and interpretations of the unfolding maps has been enjoyable. There are six whānau members at the wānanga. Matiu is the father, and Aria is the mother. Hēmi (age 39) is the eldest tamatāne. His three siblings from the punarua are brothers Tāne (age 36) and Kauri (age 29) and sister Kiara (age 32).

Kauri is the first to share. He has drawn his picture rather than work with the figurines. His illustration is of a cycle starting with Ranginui, the sky father, who

brings rain that activates the tipu kākano (the seedling that grows) from Papatūānuku, which, as Kauri explains:

slowly turns into a tāne tree, but with no feathers, and is like birds, because you know, they dig in and they help the earth grow the tree. And then after a while, you learn tools and slowly gather those feathers, or rau, the branches.

I ask him what the picture means, and he says:

I've talked with my brother about this whakataukī that he had. He told me in English and Māori, but it talks about Tāne Mahuta. And sometimes, this tree never gets to the blossoming stage. Sometimes, we need to look after the environment that the tree is in, and sometimes, we try to fix the tree or the person rather than the environment that person is in – taking care of the environment around even ourselves. The wai is about coming from the water because the water brought our ancestor Kupe to New Zealand. So that's the same thing that nourishes us and the plant. If a person doesn't have water, they will fade away, and those feathers will fall off – so it's about nourishing ourselves.

We move to Matiu, the father, who has set his map out on the table, which he describes as his "little bit of the world" and what living in an oranga, wellbeing sense looks like. He says he is at a time in his life "where I don't need as much, just a little bit of everything". Matiu starts with a figurine at the centre:

The key is this little man here; this is my dad. I would have thought he would have been one of my teachers, but when I came home in my 30s and hadn't seen him for a while, I hugged him, and he was solid as a rock. He didn't know what to do. So, I whispered in his ear to tell him, "I love you. It's okay. It's okay" because he was straight and rigid, and I was wide and embracing, and he did not know what to do. I took that experience and wanted my children to know "I love you".

Matiu looks around the room at everyone and says, "The first and last thing you'll hear is I love you." He looks back at the map before him and reflects that:

The focus of a good life, what it means in my wairua, my whakapono, our faith and in there is the heart because good living is to come to that place and plant as many seeds of love when you ever build a kāinga, tōku whare.

Matiu explains the meaning of the treasure box at the centre:

The treasure is not the treasure of having a lot of everything – it's hearing my son and hearing what it's like for him. That's the treasure. And our daughter, our mokopuna, Auntie P and all those people are the centre of my world, so it's not out there – it's in here.

Figure 2.3. Top left to right: Aria's map, Matiu's map, Hēmi's map. Bottom left to right: Kauri's map, Kiara's map, Tāne's map.



Matiu wants enough kai for a good life: “I came from no kai, so I know what that tastes like; it doesn’t have a taste.” The whānau finally have their first home after 30 years, and this is a source of contentment. One of the kids calls him out on the flash car he has put on his map, and laughter erupts in the room. Matiu gives a shy smile. “Yeah, we bought the other car and the Suzuki – well, Mum’s putting it in my name!” He continues:

We’re going to Raro on a little holiday next week. And this is my world. We can work. We’re gonna save for the next project. To my children, I want to show them that we have done it and you can do it. I think that’s what every little increment in our life is modelling in some way. The leadership around it’s not easy, but you can do it because we have done that.

Daughter Kiara is sitting nearby on the couch, and she leans forward and asks her dad who the group of figurines are. He says, “All of this world is quite irrelevant without whānau, and these are all of us.”

Mother Aria takes up the kōrero next. Studies have been important for Aria; she has done tertiary studies and got a diploma and her bachelor's, pointing to some books on her map. "Then I've got all my mokopuna here, which includes my children and all the mokopuna to come." She then moves around other parts of her map:

This is a treasure box about all the good memories, all the good things to come, and all the knowledge and wisdom to pass over to my children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. I keep it within, and I pass that on. The angels are our loved ones who have passed away and are part of our lives. They make me who I am. This is the house that we have now. I knew that we were always going to have a home. This is my other house on my whenua that I will work for next. Everybody knows. It could be a bach where we go back in the summertime. There'll be trees there, and we'll bury the whenua of our mokopuna to come. All I want is for everyone, my whānau, to be happy. To do what I've done, well, only some things that I've done, but to get to a place where their vision of where they want to be, and then Matiu and I can sit back and enjoy ourselves.

A commotion is taking place on the other side of the room. "That cat has made a mess! It's destroyed my vision!" says Tāne. As it turns out – this was symbolic of his narrative:

Each object here represents part of my vision. I am at a stage in my life where my vision or my aspirations are pretty big. It's different from Mum and Dad's as I'm not yet at that stage. So when I think of my whare, I think of Papatūānuku as the ground, Ranginui as the ceiling, and the pou of Ngā Puhi as the pillars of my whare. In that regard, there's an immense amount of responsibility. I think of that as my whare. In the middle, I have my house, my whānau, and the feather representing a whānau of leadership that has come from leadership. When I think of where we have come from, I think of our ancestors, he kākano I ruia mai i Rangīātea e kore au e ngaro [I will not be lost, I am a seed descended from Rangīātea]. My perspective is that we don't come from nothing, we come from greatness, and if we hold fast to that, we will always aspire to be great within our people. So that's what inspired my path here.

Here, I have a lot of vegetables, fruit, and orchards. I have animals and a place to provide sustenance and sustainability for my whānau. Outside, there are the other whānau or hapū we connect to. So what leadership and a lifestyle for me is creating all these things – fruit, māra kai, things that we need to sustain ourselves to provide that oranga for our people. In these waka, you will see coins, and it's not a lot, but it's the purpose behind it is whakawhanaungatanga, so the purpose is to be able to provide these things and share them. That's what these waka represent. Over time, because of colonisation and various other things, we

have allowed systems to take this away from us as a people. The cat coming in here is an excellent example of that. So, it's trying to build this back up again.

On the outside, I have got our defences; when we think of pā, it's not always about an offensive. It is also about defence. Learn from past experiences, and do not allow it to happen again. So, having our protective fences up to protect what is most treasured – over here, I have a couple of eggs in a nest representing the future. If we protect this, we can ensure it is there for future generations. What I am most passionate about and looking into is how our people have become disconnected from their ūkaipō, which is why many of our Māori are in the situations they are in now because they don't know who they are or where they have come from. But knowing who you are and where you've come from, you can realise what we have, and there is no reason why we can't have that again. I've also got pukapuka in there for education. I think faith and spirituality are important as well. As Māori, I believe we already have that within us; it is not something we must search for. When we talk about Rangiātea – we were guided here by the heavens, so we must come from the heavens. It is very important to me to have spirituality; whatever that looks like, I know it's different for everyone.

Hēmi, the eldest tamatāne, has been observing; he has a gentle, quiet presence. His map is simple, although there is a page of words pinned by the bridge. He points to a duck on one side of a bridge:

This duck is just me, and this is a bridge. On one side of the bridge, there is nothing but just me; on the other side, there are things like money. In my life, I have to cross a bridge to get somewhere, to get over a problem and not be stuck on any issue but get over it.

Forgiveness is a big thing in life; you'll be stuck if you don't forgive.

Hēmi has put a blue sheet under the bridge and explains, "The ocean represents water, health, and fish. I like fishing and the sea." He describes the sheet of paper, which has 'Family 1st' written at the top with words radiating out:

I like to think I put my family first. You have to work to get anywhere. I like to have no judgement on anyone. I want money in my life. Being understanding of everything in life, just everything. Being loyal to family and friends is a big thing for me. Love and care for your whānau, the ones you settle down with and love. To live life in harmony and be positive.

Try to live every day positively and not let the negative vibes get in. Notice it and be aware of what it is so that you don't get sucked into negativity. And rest – getting plenty of rest is essential. Mum and Dad are going on holiday for rest,

which they need and have worked towards. And manifestation. You can manifest good things and bad things, and you can concentrate on manifesting good things. I believe in that – that it is up to us. Life is a big adventure, isn't it – you learn. It's like the ngahere you have never been into, where you see all these different things.

We have all gone through struggles in life, and that makes us who we are. And there is always a bridge; for me, it's not just these things on the other side, but the whānau on the other side, too. They are there in the end to help. It completes you because, without whānau, you don't know what life would be like. We have all had to cross that bridge. We've all lost loved ones, and we have all had to carry on and move on. For me, life almost feels like a dream because of the emotion and love you have had for these people who have gone on, but it's hard. We get together and keep everyone strong – and sometimes we don't. We keep them out.

Matiu says, "Love has been the jewel. You mix it in the bowl and make the cake." Hēmi agrees, "That's pretty much what Dad made us eat. Love. What have we got to eat tonight? Love." Everybody laughs out loud.

Kiara is the last to share. She is also a quiet observer. "This is our whare. I have just applied to do Te Aupikitanga ki te Reo Kairangi Advanced Full Immersion, a programme with Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. Level 6." Her map she says speaks of "aroaha, happiness, family. Te reo, mātauranga and learning."

Te kōrero mō ngā oranga o te whānau Tau Tau whānau livelihoods story

It's a windy day, and Kuia and I are sitting outside at a large round wooden table with the five whānau members spread evenly around the circumference. We have Rahipere Tau, called 'Nan', who is 64 and the mother of seven children; Anne, her eldest daughter; and three of Anne's eight children: Harata Tau-Kata, the eldest (age 27); Osaiasi Tau-Kata (age 25); and then the youngest, Patuone Hohaia Tau (age 16). The whānau live on their papa kāinga, a homeland which they consider to be a marae. After receiving the draft case story for review, Anne wrote the following introduction to the area in which the papa kāinga is located:

We live in the fertile Kōtuku Valley, dominated by maunga Paripari, Pukekiwi, Maunga Oriwa, Horahora Kākahu, Tautoro, Tauaiti and Tauanui. Formed by ancient volcanic activity and subsequent lava flows, our valley is nutrient-rich but has rock strewn throughout the valley and into Tautoro – a challenge for crop cultivation and arable farming.

The Waiariki ancient healing springs are close by at Ngawhā, which is situated below the Moī maunga where my tūpuna coined the whakataukī, Ko Moī te Maunga, ko Ngawhā te tangata, he aroaro wahine, he ara mahana (Moī is the mountain, Ngawhā is the chief, the pathway through a woman's orifice, is one of warmth).

The Kōtuku Valley is fed by the Manawairihia spring waters from deep within our whenua, feeding flora and fauna, farm animals and humans alike, then spreads out into the Punakitere River, where it bends back on itself and is further fed by the entry of the Wairoro stream. This activity gives life to all within their pathways. They all join in a meandering journey west into the Moehau River and finally out into the Hokianga Whakapaukarakia harbour.

In addition to its abundant natural features, the valley is impacted by a plethora of historical and present-day compulsory acquisition projects that have confiscated land within the valley and into the broader Kaikohe region: Kaikohe Aerodrome, TOP Geothermal Power Station, Ngawhā Power Station, and Ngawhā Prison. Land Corporation land amalgamations are also a major issue for the valley and are currently being addressed through the Waitangi Tribunal process.

Nan has been nominated to go first as "she is the heart of this place", says Anne. Nan begins, pointing to a baby at one end of her map: "This was me when I was a baby. I was a good girl. Then, I grew up into a teenager and did what teenagers do." She is interrupted by her grandson, Osaiasi, who asks, "Explain! What do they do, Nan?" She replies:

I was on the drink, and I had fun partying. And then I met this fella and had my babies. And then he fell off and went and married somebody else. I was left to read my books and play my games. That's it.

I look more closely at Nan's arrangement. She has a baby in a nest at one end, and a cluster at the centre comprising a young woman, two aliens, some drink bottles, and a bar of chocolate. At the other end are two older figurines – a man and a woman – and a book. I ask who or what the aliens represent. "They're my friends!" she laughs. I turn to the whānau and ask them if there is anything they would like to say to their Nan about her leadership, what she's created on the map and the journey that she's been on. Osaiasi says, "Our home wouldn't be a home without Nan." Anne agrees and speaks:

That's right, it wouldn't be a home without her. And that's why it's important that she started it off. In the middle [of the table] is the heart – the heartbeat of the papa kāinga and the whenua. I have a tattoo of my nanny across my left bosom and heart. Our mum, though she is not blood of this whenua, she is the heartbeat

of this place. If my father hadn't met her, this place would not be as prestigious as it is today. And to this day, even though she's divorced from our father, she holds herself strong. I would not have graduated from university without her. She had my babies while I did everything in life, into my 40s when I wanted to get into the police. Ko te mea nui ko te aroha [the most important thing is love], that's Nan.

As Anne turns to tell her story, Harata teases her mum, "You gotta lot of soldiers there, lady!" Anne dives in:

So here is the cemetery on a hill, looking down at us. That's our loved ones. I've got them facing the right way, right? All of these soldiers are our tūpuna and wairua that protect us through our lives, and they're protecting our circle. So, the table represents us as a whole. Yeah, so look at the wairua; our tūpuna are around the edge – they are practically on our shoulders, behind our tuarā, and by our side. They've got our back and our family – we're all spiritual.

Our wairuatanga has helped us through hardships, and our mental health has been pretty healthy because we know that our tūpuna are there to protect us and guide us at the same time. So, if I'm having a hard day or week, I go up here and sit with my brothers. I've got two brothers who passed away [tears well up]. Our two brothers are up there at our cemetery with my grandparents, but my nanny too, who I tattooed, I always speak with her. She's up there too. They live on through all of us. So, one of my brothers died of cancer, and Patuone is named after him. And we have Hēmi; my sister called her son after Hēmi; those are my two brothers. So, when I'm down, I go, and I cry to them sometimes, and I feel like they answer me.

It feels like the world is coming to some spiritual war for some reason. I don't know if you feel it. It's getting heavier these days spiritually. My mum and my kids keep me grounded, knowing that the heart, in the middle, is still there. And you know the support system is great, and our family have immense support from our loved ones, including my dad. We're blessed there. All of those on the outside are our spiritual warriors that we're blessed to have, like Patuone Hohaia, who I feel at times, and my mum's dad, who was in the 28th Māori Battalion and World War Two, James Broughton/Paratene. I know that when I'm down, he's a part of my strength, and I know he's with me. My nanny lived when a woman couldn't even have a say; she would stand up on marae and have her say. She was a staunch wahine Māori. And I'm blessed with all of these tūpuna. I know they are probably at the table with us today, enjoying this presentation.

I’m lucky; these are the two oldest of my eight kids. They always had my back even when they were little kids, and they’re much more mature than I was at their age.

Figure .4. Tau whānau oranga maps



The whānau working on their maps

I ask Anne to tell us more about the heart and the treasures in the middle.

The heart in the middle is the whenua heartbeat and the wairua within us. Those treasure boxes represent our taonga, our whakapapa and our taonga tuku iho, and that's us. In that treasure box is our whakapapa, and without our whakapapa, what are we? We know our identity. We know where we come from. And that itself gives me strength to stand up before people. I love my children, whose dad is Tongan mixed with Ngāpuhi and Scottish toto. I come from Robert the Bruce, who is Scottish, and other tūpuna of other nationalities like Chilean and Native American. I was raised around a family that takes pride in whakapapa, and I can hold those and stand up and defend myself when challenged. Those are our taonga tuku iho and the heartbeat of the whenua, our wairua, our whakapapa, and our teachings.

We all have duties within our family and community – people only learn about that once they get to know us. We have many pōtae that we wear. And when we have got a whānau hui, you see another part of our duties come to fruition. Whereas, you know, Osaiasi is called to do the meat. He kills the animals and gathers the wood with the close watch eye of my dad – Harata assists me in the marae as a kaiwaiata tautoko or in the kitchen, and Patuone's with his brothers. I'm the lead kaikaranga, so we all have those roles. I started where my son is, alongside my dad, as the food gatherer, butcher, and dishwasher.

Nan notes, "I like how you have the north, south, west, and east. The four winds. It's pretty cool. We are very well protected." We turn to Harata, who is a storyteller.

Okay, this is how I'd like to live. It's like the ultimate dream of living. This is all of our whānau in one waka rowing together. Right now, there's a lot of work to do with relationships and this disconnection. These are our tūpuna as well. Another thing this represents is our living. At the moment, we've got a whare with seven siblings and heaps of kids. And they've only got one whare now, but I'd like us to have our papa kāinga and use our whenua. Pāpā is on his way – he is close to the finish line.

These represent study books; we need more people who know things to do with this world. We are so closed off in our own world that we forget to go to the bank to sign a paper. We have to get a loan for this or consent for that. This place is our papa kāinga, but we have to get consent from the council to do certain things. We are so used to going ahead and doing it ourselves. Just having a bit more knowledge about things. I'd like us to be more self-sufficient for our time to sustain ourselves. This symbol represents money because we do need money to repair our whare. These figures represent what Mum was talking about: our

kaumātua and kuia, and a new generation and their whakapapa in the knowledge in how to say this all comes down to everybody having a piece. And this is our awa and the need to revitalise our awa. It is a bit sick; that would also be a dream for us here on the whenua.

The angels are our tūpuna who guide us and the new generation.

I acknowledge that it's a full picture with many layers of symbols and stories. I ask Harata how it feels when she looks at it. She replies she feels sad because she is not there yet. "I mean, yeah, it's a dream. I'm living a dream right now."

Osaiasi says, "It's awesome you made a story out of that! It's quite the masterpiece." I agree, "You are a storyteller, right?" Nan says, "Yes. She's a storyteller." Anne chips in, "Yeah, she's always been. She's clever. They are more mature than me when I was their age." Nan builds on that and says, "I go to her for advice."

Anne shares some insights into a critical experience in Harata's life.

She loves to study, too. But, you know, she went away to study. She was about two months away from graduating, and she got tangitangi and mokemoke for her nanny, so she came home. That's why some of us are unable to finish study. Studies mean you have gotta go away and live on noodles and in a car or something, you know, can't afford the rent. The thing with the kids is it's not because they miss Mum [Anne]. It's because they miss Nana.

She is the family, whakapapa, and the land. Harata wants to study law.

Osaiasi is next, and Anne explained that she named him after her late father-in-law, who was a good man to her. Osaiasi begins:

Well, this is the dream and what a papa kāinga should look like. It's got the kai, it's got the land, it's got the whare. Houses for everyone, a papa kāinga where anybody comes home anytime. Kai at home, everything. And that's the lifestyle I've tried to paint. Everything is there: kai, house, water, trees. That's all you need for self-sufficiency. That's pretty much how we live here at the moment, but it's not enough, we can do a lot more, like with gardens. We haven't done the gardens for a while because everybody's busy.

I ask him how his fencing and spraying business feeds into this vision and the business's challenges. He dreams of employing his siblings and eventually having his tamariki run the business:

It is an intergenerational business where we use old-school, traditional fencing styles, which are taught to me by my mum's dad, my pāpā, who was taught by

his father, grandfather, and so on. My ancestors' teachings are passed on to me, which I'll pass on to my children, just like whakapapa.

Osaiasi says "I've never been the one to leave home. I just can't. I go to Auckland for two days and want to come home." Laughter erupts at the table. I ask him why he doesn't like to go away; he says:

I don't know. I think it's the love you get from home that you don't get anywhere else and the freedom you feel at home. You can walk out and be yourself. Just the feeling of being at home, is unbeatable. It would be wonderful to have a lot more people home, but you just can't.

I ask if that is because they have to go off and earn a living. He responds:

That's part of it, but it's not cheap to live here. It costs \$20 to get to town to get butter. It's very hard. Even to sell your stock now, you can't go and sell it for cash and make a good living like that. You gotta get a name tag, buy a whole lot of stuff to make money, maintaining paddocks to feed the stock, milk, and get a bigger farm just to put lime on the grass.

Anne explains more about their situation:

We wanted to get an extension at the top there. Getting Wi-Fi will cost approximately \$800 a month, so it's expensive. It's different here than in Auckland. And we have to do our own rubbish dumping even though we pay rates. Council is a money-making machine charging us for services we don't get.

We turn back to Osaiasi's picture. Anne wants to know what the bridges represent. Osaiasi explains, "I put the bridges there to show you we have our awa, fresh, clean water." I comment, "Got to have a ngeru in the picture, right?" He says, "Well, there are a lot of rats around; he's not a pet!" Laughter bursts out around the table again. All the animals have a function; "Every animal we have, the cow, the duck, the dog, the cat, the sheep – they've got a job." Anne says, "Our dog, he's a guard dog."

I ask if there are any questions from the others. Osaiasi jokes, "especially any questions about rent." I seize that line of inquiry and clarify if the papa kāinga would gather rent from each whare that goes into a more extensive communal self-sustaining system. Anne explains that "part of it is wanting to feed whānau and look after them when they come in each time. So, part of the system would be they pay rent. It goes into the papa kāinga." She adds of her son:

That picture is him to a T, ever since he was little. He's always been my father's right-hand man to the point where my dad wanted him to be the successor of this whenua. That's how hard they work to this day. He drove a tractor before he

drove a car. We went to a family event in Auckland where all his Tongan family were gathering to farewell his younger brother who travelled to Tonga as a baby with family, but Osaiasi wanted to stay back with my dad to scrub cut paddocks. We have got a video of him. We asked him, "You want to come?" He said no – he stayed back with Pāpā. He worked in those paddocks.

I observe that the picture he has laid out is very tidy. Osaiasi responds, pointing at the AstroTurf I've brought for people to lay their maps on, "That's me! You see, I mowed my lawns, too." Everyone laughs. Harata says, "Funny you picked that up about tidy." Anne explains, "He's the tidy one, even as a little kid. So my kids, when they were younger, they'll throw their clothes on the floor. Him, he'll have t-shirts and shorts folded up neatly and in order."

Osaiasi's map is structural and shows a keen sense of planned space. He explains he wanted a sense of separation between the whānau and their whare. The conversation makes Harata reflect on her map, which is less structural in composition. She says, "I didn't know where to put my things, so I just put them all around." I reply that hers strikes me more like a whāriki that she has put things out on. "You can go anywhere into that one. It's not like it starts here and finishes there. It's more holistic."

I turn to Patuone – the last and youngest. He has kept his figurines in place in the strong wind. Taking his cue from Nan, he announces, "Okay, mine is nice and short. So, here's the whānau with Nan. And here's our goal. Whatever obstacles are in front of us. We try our best to get to our goal. That's it."

"Okay, can we ask you questions? What's the baseball bat? And is this baby you? You have got two kaitiaki or taniwha? Are they protectors?" I inquire of him. Patuone explains, "They're like, guarding our goal so that we can get to it; it speaks to the particular obstacles we have to get through." I point to a figurine holding a baseball bat closely flanked by more miniature figurines and ask:

And that is the strength that Nan brings? I like the reality of your picture. It shows, "We all are together. But we've got this future here. And we're gonna get through some obstacles." It's like when you're watching those movies, and they must battle their way through the things.

Nan says, "I feel like you'll make it." Anne reflects:

His strength is his Nana. My mum got him from birth. Mum was going through a hard time losing my brother Patuone. He was the second brother to pass away, too. So, we named him after him. Mum's been his mummy/Nan since he came out of me, you know? So it's nice that he has acknowledged that. Your loved ones around here. And that says mummy nanny. And the cool thing about our family is

that I'm also Mum, but I don't overrule what she's saying. But he knows to listen to me. But yeah, she's the number one.

Harata says, "He recognises the struggle we go through in our whānau but also knows we are strong enough to get through it," and Osaiasi observes, "and even how you have those things over there protecting your goal. That's what it feels like sometimes, that something is guarding that goal – it's a taniwha." I see a clear pathway in Patuone's map and say, "It feels like there's quite a direct line of sight to the goal. There are obstacles, but you have a clear path to get there." Anne wants to know about the baby in the nest that Patuone has placed at the top – with taniwha guarding it. She asks, "What are you fighting for? What's the goal?" He replies, "That's the whole goal. The baby's the goal. We're trying to get the baby."

I ōku nei whakaaro

My thoughts

The whānau maps revealed a holistic view of what a good livelihood looks like and enfolded many dimensions of wellbeing grounded in Māori culture and spirituality. Some of the key ideas are described below. I also connect results from a quantitative survey (see Appendix 1).

Whakapapa permeates everything and is expressed as loving interrelationships guided by responsibility and reciprocity.

Whakapapa is the central ontological and epistemological construct of te ao Māori, offering an explanatory way of ordering the world and providing genealogical details on how all of creation belongs to a 'cosmological family'. The stories highlighted how whānau see themselves as relating physically and spiritually to the natural world in a 'cosmic family' and deeply connected to ancestors, ensuring future generations can sustain themselves. Whakapapa has important implications for how whānau envision good livelihoods in their unique way relating to the trajectories of history, the legacies of ancestors, and their particular ecological contexts. Whakapapa and intergenerational thinking by the whānau included considerations of the future by putting rangatahi, tamariki, and future generations at the centre of what constitutes livelihoods.

Wairua is the centre of the good life described by whānau.

Instead of external 'things' such as material goods, or external forces such as government and economic systems, a number of storytellers talked of starting 'within', and how abundance flows from a spiritual base. In the stories we heard about hearts being opened to wairua, the centrality of the highest heavenly abode, Rangiātea, the sacred realms of Papatūānuku and Ranginui, and various individual expressions of faith. The gifts of the ancestors are a strong part of the wairua dimension and are a precious knowledge and wisdom transmitted through whānau.

The importance of protecting and passing this wisdom on is interwoven with whakapapa. Many of the storytellers had symbols such as angels, urupā, kaitiaki, crosses, churches, and tūpuna signifying the wairua aspects.

The stories illuminated being able to manaaki others and host them well, to share and contribute. In the survey, respondents also underscored the importance of having family and friends nearby, spending quality time together, enjoying life, laughing, listening to music, and pursuing personal interests.

Self-sufficiency is a healthy and thriving whenua, awa, and moana flourishing to full mauri, wherein humans and ecologies co-exist in reciprocity.

Two of the whānau in particular were concerned about generating income and how to do that meaningfully. Three of the four whānau interviewed lived or wanted to live on papa kāinga. The fourth whānau live very close to their marae and whenua and live in a hapū neighbourhood. Closely allied to the ideal of papa kāinga living was house ownership. We heard how some whānau had reached a key goal of owning their own home, or setting out a vision whereby whānau could live together on the land, in close proximity to each other, in their own dwellings.

Whānau is the primary source of help in times of need.

This chapter spotlights whānau approaches to resilience. From a te ao Māori perspective, resilience is a group quality, not an individual improvement project. Resilience is often framed from a Western perspective, emphasising the ability of individuals and families to absorb and bounce back from the 'blows' heaped upon them by external actors (such as governments and organisations). However, as we have heard in the stories, whānau tap into a wealth of cultural resources such as whakapapa, wairua, taonga tuku iho, and relationships to navigate life's challenges. Rather than resilience being viewed as an individual improvement project that places the emphasis on a person building capacities, such as psychological coping mechanisms, what we see in the stories is that te ao Māori provides a kind of 'operating intelligence' built into the edifice of Māori ways of being, knowing, and living to support the thriving of whānau. In this, resilience is built into the order of things and is vested in whānau.

Wellbeing is multi-faceted and inseparable from a healthy land and waterways.

The dimensions of wellbeing include mental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational vibrancy and health. The whānau did not just focus on their own condition but expanded the good life to include their environmental 'kin'. Thus, being a good kaitiaki is a key part of a good life. Economic viability to support each whānau's ideas of a good life was a part of the bigger picture, but did not dominate. Some of

the whānau had salaried jobs, some owned their own business, and others were exploring ways of generating a livelihood that did not rely on money alone as the medium of exchange. Wellbeing included having and sustaining deep connections and supportive relationships with family, friends, and community.

Education is important.

All of the whānau were interested in education, from formal studies to deepening their te reo and cultural knowledge through connecting to kura and marae. Some whānau wanted to get specifically educated to better understand how systems work so they can be more informed and effectively challenge the systems. Education requires resources such as books and living away from home in good conditions (accommodation, food, basics, etc.).

Whānau and kaupapa Māori businesses have credence.

Meaningful jobs, respecting culture, caring for the land, and spiritual wellbeing came through the stories. We heard about working in kotahitanga and unity – for example, at kura, on papa kāinga with upcycling entrepreneurship, and in intergenerational businesses.

He kupu whakatepe Conclusion

The whānau-based economy was the foundational economy of Aotearoa New Zealand. Despite colonisation, industrialisation, and neo-liberalism, Māori economic approaches continue to this day – making the economy of Aotearoa New Zealand globally distinct. Where whānau were once the economic hubs and worked laterally and vertically through hapū and iwi when circumstances necessitated collaborations, for the most part they were meeting their livelihood needs directly. Tā Joe Williams (2021, p. 540) advocates that whanaungatanga is a paramount value that holds Māori society together. He believes that “the whānau was, and still is, the essential glue that holds Māori culture together. In practical terms, being Māori counts most at the intimacy of the whānau. Without whānau, being Māori is a mere abstraction” (p. 564).

As we face political, cultural, constitutional, and environmental headwinds, we argue that it is time to be very focused and committed to supporting the inherent ‘operating intelligence’ in te ao Māori ways of doing, being, and living that help whānau achieve their ideas of a good life. The insights from the whānau wānanga and survey show some straightforward ways in which whānau envision a good life and livelihood. By putting whānau livelihoods at the centre of a broader discussion of economies, it is important to focus efforts to uplift, support, and ensure each whānau can live authentically in their own ways, achieve financial independence, have quality time to enjoy what brings meaning, and have freedom of choice.

Institutions have an opportunity to come alongside, listen, and support whānau at a practical, grassroots level, ensuring a healthy, vibrant Māori society.

Ngā tohutoro

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Upoko 3: Te oranga whānau mā te pakihi: Ngā whakaaro o ngā kaiwhakaū

Chapter 3: Whānau wellbeing through enterprise: Founder perspectives

– Jason Mika and Xiaoliang Niu

In this chapter, we set out to understand the meaning of whānau wellbeing and how this might be achieved through enterprise. The purpose is to provide an example of one pathway towards Māori economies of wellbeing at the whānau scale using a combination of two common institutions – the family and the business. When sharing with our coauthors the story of the whānau enterprise we had encountered, it became clear that many of the theoretical arguments of Māori economies of wellbeing were evident in why and how the business had been formed and was operating. The team decided that the book should begin with the story we had just shared to set the scene for the empirical, theoretical, and analytical chapters that would follow. We know there are other whānau enterprises like the one in this chapter because we have met some; their stories remain to be written.

The business was a whānau enterprise to begin with, but passed from one generation to another. As the new business owners took hold, they imbued the enterprise with a vision for intergenerational wealth and wellbeing, economic self-sufficiency, and the distinctive capabilities of whānau knowing, being, and doing from a rural background. In this chapter, we share the candid account of North Drill from the perspective of the second-generation founders – husband and wife team Bronson and Ida-Jean Murray. We are grateful for their generosity in allowing us to share some of what they shared with us, that it might inspire the next generation, challenge assumptions, and change perceptions about the nature and potential of enterprise to achieve whānau wellbeing. We start the chapter with a little bit of theory to provide context and understanding, before presenting the North Drill story.

We conclude with comments about how and why the story relates to Māori economies of wellbeing.

Te ariā pakihi whānau Whānau enterprise theory

Enterprise is a ubiquitous family endeavour, with firms constituting what is known as family business comprising between 60% and 90% of all businesses in Europe and 95% of firms in the United States (International Family Enterprise Research Academy, 2003). While we may intuitively recognise famed names of certain entrepreneurs and the dynastic, family-controlled conglomerates they established – Sam Walton, who started Walmart; BMW founder Günther Quandt; Henry Ford and Ford Motors; and Samsung founder Lee Byung-Chull (Birch, 2023; Johnson, 2020) – explaining the difference between family and non-family business using theory is still relatively undeveloped (Payne, 2018). In Aotearoa New Zealand, we have the Mowbray brothers, who founded Zuru (Edmunds, 2024), but earlier family names like the Todds and Talleys are recalled with quiet fascination, among other emotions, about who they are and how they managed to amass their wealth (Anthony & Nadkarni, 2020).

Family business, it seems, is big business. It is not hard to see why, considering enterprise offers families meaningful ways to sustain themselves through income-generating work, producing goods and services crafted from local and distant inputs, fashioned from collective endeavour, and founded upon an enterprising spouse or couple. Family business is also an enduring institution; one of the oldest examples is Nishiyama Onsen Keiunkan, a Japanese spa hotel founded in 705 (Hodgkinson, 2023). A sense of responsibility, respect for tradition, staying focused on core business, and strong family values are some of the attributes for their longevity. Caspar et al. (2010) identify five further reasons why family businesses endure: harmonious family relations; an ownership structure that retains family control while enabling capital raising; strong governance; professional wealth management; and charities to sustain family values. What's noticeably absent are culture and context as factors that might explain differences in the formation, development, growth, and performance of family business.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, there is an Indigenous view and experience of what it means to be a family business found within te ao Māori (Māori society), which we call pakihi whānau. Pakihi is the Māori word for business, while whānau is Māori for family, or extended family. Thus, pakihi whānau means family business, but we prefer to use whānau enterprise. Whānau are grounded in the cosmology of the Māori world view and the principle of the interrelatedness of all things, human and non-human, animate and inanimate (Rout et al., 2021). Whānau members rely on their collective capabilities to fulfil their needs and aspirations according to Māori

values, particularly mana, mauri, tapu, hau, and wairua, which Hēnare (2001) regards as cosmic forces compelling ethical, responsible, and reciprocal action. While Māori are increasingly adopting the nuclear family, measured by a household unit comprising parents and children (McKenzie & Carter, 2010) as a consequence of urbanisation and the wage economy (Haami, 2018; Parker, 2000), the whānau has been the primary social unit of Māori society comprising multigenerational families, living in close proximity, working cooperatively and reciprocally to fulfil each other's social and economic needs (Cross et al., 1991; Walker, 1970). Yet, inequities persist, which manifest in disparate social and economic outcomes between Māori and non-Māori at the whānau scale (Wiremu et al., 2021). Such outcomes are a consequence of the loss of Māori economic sovereignty and the subjugation of the Māori people by the Crown through processes of colonisation (Belgrave, 2014; Love & Waa, 1997). Reversing these outcomes requires change, including an equitable allocation of resources (Cross et al., 1991), elimination of institutional racism (Cairns & Fulcher, 2022), and reviving the legitimacy of Māori economic principles (Jefferies, 2024).

A Māori perspective of wellbeing may be characterised as multidimensional (spiritual and material), intertemporal (connecting past, present, and future generations), fulfilling human potential, and achieving relational balance between human and non-human entities through the functioning of reciprocity (Mika, Dell, et al., 2022; Reid et al., 2021). Whānau wellbeing depends on the balance of taha whānau (family dimension) with other dimensions of Māori wellbeing, including spiritual, mental, physical, and the environment, enabling Māori to live as Māori in the Māori world and wider society (Durie, 2001; Mika, 2021; Reid & Evans, 2022). The galvanising force behind whānau is whakapapa (Te Rito, 2007), that is to say, the genealogical connection of common ancestry, which solidifies in the sense of togetherness known as whanaungatanga, generally defined as family relationships (Hirini, 1997). These social formations are called whakapapa-based whānau (Metge, 1995). Kaupapa-based whānau (non-biological, interest-based families) are also present.

Whanaungatanga arises from kinship bonds, which create reciprocal obligations for the care, protection, and wellbeing of the whānau, achieved through collaborative effort, a culture of sharing, and socialisation of the members (Gillies et al., 2007). Nicholson et al. (2012) identify whanaungatanga as a distinctive capability because whānau are central in all relationships and valuing the intrinsic worth of others (Spiller et al., 2011) as something that Trosper (2022) calls relational goods.

Whānau ora (holistic family wellbeing) is a recent manifestation of the power of whanaungatanga to enable whānau to be self-determining in overcoming challenges and realising their potential (Durie et al., 2010; McMeeking, 2019). This policy initiative bears similar underlying principles of whānau-centredness with earlier examples such as tamaiti whāngai (customary adoption) (Herewini, 2018; Kara,

2022; Keane, 2017). Whanaungatanga has since been recognised as an ethic for favourable Māori outcomes in the classroom (Bishop, 2008), in Māori entrepreneurship (Haar & Delaney, 2009; Manganda et al., 2022), in Māori enterprise collaboration (Mika et al., 2021), and in Māori entrepreneurial ecosystems (Mika, Felzensztein, et al., 2022). We argue that whānau ought to be at the heart of Māori economies of wellbeing (Rout et al., 2025) because they represent the means and ends of the Māori economy and the aggregations of whānau enterprise that fall within its ambit (Schulze et al., 2024).

For the purposes of this chapter, we characterise whānau as “a self-identifying, self-sustaining, self-mobilising entity that draws upon and contributes support to other whānau, who act together in reciprocal ways, reinforcing their common origin, existential interdependencies, and advance their shared aspirations, including enterprise” (Rout et al., 2022, p. 120). Whānau are thus, “an entity upon which a person can depend for the satisfaction of their social, cultural, economic, spiritual, and physical needs” because members of the whānau are responsible for the collective wellbeing of the group (Rout et al., 2022, p.121). Moreover, we define whānau enterprise as whānau-owned Māori enterprises that operate according to Māori values, explicitly or implicitly for the collective wellbeing of whānau (Mika et al., 2019).

In a study of Māori entrepreneurship, meeting the needs of whānau was an important reason for the formation and growth aspirations of Māori enterprise (Tinirau & Gillies, 2010). Māori entrepreneurs tended to prioritise whānau needs ahead of financial outcomes, which Manganda et al. (2022) call the ‘culturally engaged Māori entrepreneur’. Most entrepreneurs in the study were raised in sole-parent households, came from difficult socioeconomic circumstances but felt loved and happy, developed a strong work ethic surrounded by hard-working providers, and had to look after younger siblings and find creative ways to make ends meet (Tinirau & Gillies, 2010). A further characteristic is the ethic of whānau self-sufficiency, which stemmed from growing up learning how to hunt, fish, and gather seafood, which were regarded as invaluable skills.

Te whakatūranga o North Drill Formation of North Drill

Whangapē, ahikā, and urban drift

Bronson Murray was raised in the small coastal Northland settlement of Whangapē on his marae (village meeting ground), surrounded by and under the guidance of his parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles, and cousins – his whānau. Bronson’s pāpā, Glass Murray, was the principal kaumātua (elder) of the village. “The Murrys are a big whānau known throughout the North,” Bronson reflects. Many whānau left the village of Whangapē to find work in the cities, becoming part of what became known

as the 'urban drift'. Bronson's whānau stayed as ahikā (home people), looking after whānau who would return home. Ahikā still needed to work, and of course, they did have paying jobs. When a tangi (funeral) happened, Bronson's whānau stopped to look after the grieving whānau by feeding and housing visitors at the marae. Sometimes, there could be three or four tangi in succession, significantly impacting the voluntary resources of the ahikā.

Everyone in the village had a role, and Bronson's whānau was good at providing kai (food), relying on skills like fishing, diving, and hunting. Knowing how to look after people and being able to do so from nature is something Bronson found immensely rewarding. It was reassuring for Bronson to know that he could always feed his whānau no matter the circumstances.

Tragedy of the urban drift

As a teenager, Bronson witnessed the impact of urban drift on children who were sent back to Whangapē to live with his nana, pāpā, and other whānau after being haututū (mischievous) in urban environments. Bronson's nana and pāpā often took in these 'urban drift kids', raising them alongside their own.

Raising large families in the village was common. Bronson remembers his granddad having 19 or 20 siblings, which was normal then, whereas Bronson's dad only had seven, which was considered a small family. The families worked in the quarry and the gardens to feed everyone. Bronson's mother, Katie Murray, started a social services organisation that looks after at-risk kids called Waitomo Papakāinga, which has been running for over 30 years. As a result, Bronson and his cousins grew up with these younger kids, who became like whānau. It was not until his late teens that Bronson realised that these kids had come from other places and families.

Ida, Bronson, and whānau enterprise

Ida-Jean (Ida) was born and raised in Whangārei, with whakapapa (genealogy) links to the Far North. Ida and Bronson have four daughters under 10. Growing up in the construction industry, helping with her father's drilling business instilled a strong work ethic in Ida. At 16, unlike her friends, she was not allowed to go for conventional jobs like McDonald's. Instead, her first job was driving a loader at the quarry and washing her dad's trucks with her sister on weekends. Bronson, similarly, came from a hard-working whānau. Bronson's mum ran a social service enterprise for 30 years, and his dad worked with machinery. Together, they looked after naughty kids who were regarded as cousins. For his part, Bronson was driving trucks at a young age for his family quarry and later played rugby for Northland and professionally for several super rugby franchises.

Ida always worked in her dad's business, doing the accounts even while she and Bronson lived away from Whangārei. When they were back home, Bronson would either go drilling or be in the workshop.

Hanging up the boots

In 2015, while living in Dunedin and playing for the Highlanders, Bronson signed a contract to play in France. The couple, however, found out they were expecting their first child. Bronson's mother insisted they stay in New Zealand, and she promptly called to say, "There's no way in hell you're leaving this country with my first moko[puna] [grandchild]. You guys need to get your ass back home." The decision was made to 'hang the boots up' and retire from playing professional rugby.

Bronson and Ida had been watching whānau migrating to Australia for work in large numbers. To stem the flow, Ida and Bronson wanted to create a 'mean' (awesome) workplace where they could hire all their whānau, and the team could live a good life, have Fridays off to go fishing, and stay in the north.

In 2015, they bought Ida's dad's drilling business, which included the drills, two trucks, and a contract with North Power, enabling them to avoid seeking new contracts immediately. North Drill started operating from their garage at home with five people: Ida and Bronson, Ida's sister and her husband Anthony, and Ida's Uncle, an older worker who had been drilling with Ida's dad since he started the business around 30 years earlier. The founders had big dreams. Bronson could foresee that "one day we're going to be the biggest drillers in Whangārei, and we're all going to be driving Land Cruisers ... and we were like, hell yeah!"

Te whakatupu i a North Drill Growing North Drill

Drilling is a "non-intrusive way" of installing utilities underground, says Ida. It involves digging holes at two ends and drilling a horizontal bore between them, often under existing structures like houses, for installing power, fibre, gas or three waters. Initially, drilling made up 100% of North Drill's work. As the company grew, it started connecting homes to the fibre optic network already installed in Whangārei. While drilling remains about 70% of its work, North Drill's services now include infrastructure services, drainage, water boring, solar farm building and more.

North Drill now employs about 47 people. The company was 100% Māori owned and operated until the end of 2023 as the team welcomed a Fijian Indian mechanic and a Pākehā (New Zealander of European descent) finance manager. In terms of company structure, Bronson and Ida are the sole directors of North Drill, while there are five shareholders: Bronson, Ida, Ida's sister and brother-in-law, and her uncle.

The founders are presently going through the process of creating a more secure structure by separating its assets from the company. Surprisingly, they turned to a highly experienced liquidator for advice who, by chance, was liquidating a neighbouring business whose yard North Drill purchased. They found that he knew all about how to avoid being liquidated, so they hired him to collaborate with their accountant and lawyer to design a new business structure.

UFB tender

North Drill became aware that in about 24 months, North Power would be tendering UltraFast Broadband (UFB) line installation for 12 towns between Hikurangi and Wellsford in the Northland Region. They decided to “give that a crack,” Ida says. The UFB rollout was eventually tendered. The contract involved laying 22,000 kilometres of fibre optic cable for 12 towns from Hikurangi to Wellsford. North Power’s UFB rollout presented North Drill with its first major job. The founders set to work preparing for the UFB tender by building their team, establishing a reputation with North Power for excellence, and strengthening relationships.

On relationships, Ida has this to say:

We thought relationships [are] the key to everything. We started building those. Bronson applied this formula to success that he learned in rugby ... application times attitude times ability. If we weighed ourselves up against competitors ... [on] ability we’re a new business ... so we would score lower. Attitude we thought ... that’s around culture ... We would always beat everyone on that because ... that’s kind of what we worked hard at. And then the application is your processes ... making sure our process is defined and everyone knows what they’re doing.

Processes had to be top-notch to be competitive. North Drill engaged an experienced representative (Warren Yi) from its training service provider (Connexis), who had worked with a leading telecommunications company in New Zealand (Chorus). The founders asked the representative about what Auckland was doing because Auckland was ahead of the game. He told the team about a qualification all drillers would need if they wanted contracts. The founders decided that the whole team needed to start those qualifications. In talking with Bronson and Ida, the representative mentioned Te Puni Kōkiri cadetship funding for young Māori. These cadetships allowed all nine people of North Drill to do the drilling certificate within 12 months when the UFB tender became available. The team was also supported in securing every licence available so North Drill could compete on ‘paper’, if not on experience.

Bronson’s methodology for the tender suggested that North Drill would need to double its workers to 22 people to do the job. In Bronson’s view, that number was a rugby team – easily doable.

The founders hired a procurement specialist who used to work for a major construction company. He helped put the tender documents together for North Drill as the “sole contractor,” said Ida. “Long story short,” says Ida, “we won it.” In the lead-up to the bid, the founders received a visit from the boss of a well-established rival company. Ida describes the encounter thus:

You can see how he walked into ... [the] little shed [we built as an office] ... at the back of our house ... And he goes, “Look here, I just, I wanted to meet with you guys. We heard you know; you know this UFB2 tender’s coming up.” And we go, “yep, yep.” And he goes, “Look, I just wanted to come and see, you know, we already heard that, you know, we’re gonna win it.” “Oh, yeah. Far, have you heard that?” “Yeah, so we just wanted to know if you wanted to be our subcontractor?” And anyway, I was sitting there with Bronson, and obviously, he’s a smartass, too. So, he goes, “Oh, man. Far, that’s really funny you just come to see me because I was gonna ring you.” And he was like, “Oh, were you?” He [Bronson] goes, “Yeah, I was gonna ring you to see if you wanted to be our subcontractor.”

Just cheeky as, and then the guy was like, “Aye?” Then he [Bronson] goes, “Oh mate, well ... we’re putting our best team forward too, and we’re tendering for it.” “Oh, well. Good luck.”

No contractor was thought to be able to do the contract alone because it was a massive 5-year job, but North Drill “smashed that job”, delivering it a year ahead of schedule, and was the first to achieve a 100% Crown Health and Safety audit.

Te kaupapa pakihi o North Drill

North Drill’s business philosophy

Kaupapa-driven company

“We are kaupapa-driven,” says Ida. The founders acknowledge that they are not business school trained but have invested in upskilling themselves through their advisors, mentors, accountants, lawyers, and institutional programmes like the Icehouse. The company’s kaupapa, or overarching purpose, is “to improve the wealth and wellbeing of our people”. To align with this purpose, Ida and Bronson gathered their advisors, accountants, and lawyers together – describing them as their “power team” – to ensure their advice always supports the company’s kaupapa.

When breaking down their kaupapa. The founders explain that wealth can mean different things to different people, including whatever an individual values, such as time, money, or other resources. Wellbeing is a person’s hauora (health), which includes spiritual wellbeing, mental and emotional wellbeing, physical wellbeing, and whānau and social wellbeing. Ida describes it as “everything that comes with you,

everything that's come before you and after you. So, it's your tūpuna [ancestors], your mokopuna [grandchildren] ... It's bigger than just yourself." Given Bronson's rugby background, physical health is a priority. There is a gym on-site and a boxing coach who runs sessions for workers, their partners, and their children. Social wellbeing is another priority for North Drill, with teams gathering for breakfast and a yarn at six o'clock in the morning. The wellbeing of workers' whānau, however, remains the central focus.

Career pathways go hand-in-hand with whānau pathways at North Drill. For example, one young man joined the company as an 18-year-old, "fresh off the basketball court". Now, he is one of the field captains with a drilling certificate, a classified licence, a managed fund, and on track to own his first home. The founder's aim is for "everyone to do well", which goes beyond the wellbeing of the workers themselves to include their whānau. Work goals are integrated with whānau goals, with homeownership a major priority. Ida sets ambitious targets, saying, "I have a 90% target – everyone must be doing a formal qualification, and everyone must be working towards a home ... whether it's in 10 years or whatever."

Key drivers in business

Two pivotal moments in Bronson's life shaped his perspective on business and its role in supporting whānau wellbeing. Between the ages of 15 and 18, Bronson grew up in a household that cared for children who needed help in the care system, known as 'placements'. Bronson's mother and uncles took in three or four children at a time, treating them like family. Bronson recalls, "They just grew up with us like they were our cousins, they were treated exactly the same." Two of the boys lived with Bronson, but when the programme ended, they had nowhere to go. At the same time, Bronson was hōhā (annoyed) with school and preferred other activities like hunting and diving. He and the boys started working for a local farmer, doing fencing and other small jobs.

As Bronson recounts:

The fencing was on the steepest part of the property, but it didn't bother us, it was just what had to be done. We got good at it, the work was going well, but then a new law came in that said foster carers needed a qualification. But mum and the whānau could not gain the qualification in time, and the agencies pulled all the kids off the families; around 30 kids were taken away and placed in state care. One of the groups had five brothers; they were getting dragged, bawling their eyes out. The two boys who were with me ... were the same as me, if not better. They were both excellent at sports, rugby, bullrush, boxing; we'd smash everyone at everything, both were talented, especially the younger one. All the cousins were generally physically strong. Kids from outside would come with a

gangster attitude, wanting to be tough. To straighten them out, we'd play rugby and bullrush and flatten them. And if that wasn't enough and they wanted to fight, no problem, happy to fight. Eventually, they realised that we were not here for that, but if they wanted to play up, we'd oblige them. Looking back 20 years on the paths the two mates took who were taken away, both of them were sentenced to life in prison. They were well-known in prison as tough guys. I actually caught up with them. We were the same in ability and potential, but I went one way and they went another, and I think about why did that happen? I could see that I had the better support. The support had nothing to do with money, we had no money but always had kai. One of the goals is to change the life path of those young people.

Coming back to the world

Years later, Bronson reconnected with one of the boys who had lived with him and had been released from prison. This experience made Bronson realise that once someone is in prison, it is impossible to escape that life without help. "He was a tough kid, but inside, he got tougher," says Bronson. After conditions were lifted, and with Bronson's support, the friend could eventually work for North Drill for a period of time.

Changing lives

Bronson was grateful for his life but felt a deep responsibility to help others, to share what they have, not to please others, but to fulfil a desire to represent who he is and where he comes from authentically. For North Drill, the business is not about financial gain but a "vehicle to ... improve the wealth and wellbeing of our people," says Ida. It is about creating a safe environment. Once people feel safe, they can focus on their aspirations. Providing a job, however, is not enough, and people also need safe living environments and support to thrive. Ida explains that giving someone a job does not help if they live with violence and the family takes their money. Providing a safe place to stay, food, and income is just part of the outcome.

The founders believe in changing mindsets and creating opportunities, especially for younger generations. "Colonisation has impacted people, but the past cannot be changed, only the future," says Bronson. Young people are more receptive to change, so they are the company's focus. An example is that with the support of North Drill, a young girl from a family with generations of unemployment earned a diploma in accounting and became an inspiration to her whānau. She has since left for Australia to explore the world and pursue other opportunities. Her success sparked interest in investments among her relatives, demonstrating how positive change can ripple through families. Older people can also benefit, though the impact is often less pronounced. The key to lasting change is helping people see what is possible through relatable examples of seeing people you know achieve worthwhile

change, not distant success stories of someone who has made a billion dollars. The impetus for whānau wellbeing is thus relational. Change starts with belief, but because employees spend most of their time at work, the workplace is where changes in beliefs and habits can be most effectively instilled. Older workers mentor the younger workers as tuākana-tēina (older siblings guiding younger siblings or persons in like roles).

Collectivism and growth

Māori perform well in group settings, whether in the army, gangs, or businesses. Bronson reflects, “The power of the group is that it develops size and strength, it forms its own body, environment, and culture, which, if shaped for good, becomes like a flywheel pulling everyone along.” North Drill wants business growth, but not for reasons you might think. “As the business grows, people grow,” says Ida. The founders want growth so they can help more people, as Māori strength is in the people. “We’re a people people,” says Bronson. Understanding business is essential, but people are its strength. The success of businesses relies on their buy-in, upskilling, and alignment of employees with the company’s kaupapa.

Doing business our way

For North Drill, good business combines profitability, effective management, and respect for people. While conventional business systems have value, North Drill’s approach prioritises cultural authenticity. Ida explains, “We make sure that we’ve got people with good values ... they might come from struggling backgrounds, but you can tell ... if they want to change.” Further, employees are encouraged to treat customers as they would treat their own nana, ensuring respect and care in all interactions. As Ida says, the basis for their distinctive approach to business is “just be Māori ... stay true to what we’ve been brought up with.” The team doesn’t need “a script [on] what to say to people on the phone. ... When our ... young boys go out ... just imagine that’s your Nana’s house.” Bronson adds:

We’re not here to help everyone ... So, I can teach you to drive anything ... [but] if by ... 18, you have a need to be respectful, I can’t teach you that ... Capability, that’s the easiest part to learn, but behaviours and what beliefs they got ... that’s the hard one to change.

Another challenge is that expectations for Māori are set low by people of influence, who themselves are not constrained by the bar they set for others, the founders argue. “They [institutions and social norms] want Māori to have careers and own homes,” but Bronson and Ida see that as just the start. At North Drill’s monthly team meetings, for example, instead of thinking about owning a house, Bronson encourages employees to aim higher and believe they can own a whole street of houses, farms, and their own businesses.

Ida adds:

You're making a commitment to yourself, to your whānau, that ... all this opportunity is going to come, you're going to take it. If you come here today and you're on a shovel, and then 12 months later, you're on a shovel ... man, you're wasting your time, and you are taking the opportunities away from others.

To help their confidence and belief in their potential, Murray and Ida asked the employees to write out their goals when starting work at North Drill. An initial goal might be simply renting a home, which the founders see as a consequence of their living situation. Bronson and Ida found that sometimes, being guided by what young people say they want could limit their progress because their expectations are low. For example, one young person said she wanted to rent a house, and now she is talking about owning rental properties and "the only thing that changed ... was that they believe they could do it, and they can see it happening around them," Bronson says.

The founders view North Drill as "a stepping stone, not a barrier" for workers to achieve greater things, whether that's working overseas, starting their own business, or pursuing further education. Bronson and Ida actively supported employees' entrepreneurial goals by sharing advice, mentorship, and resources, even if that could create potential competition for North Drill. While a "scarcity mindset" might say protect your intellectual property, Ida believes that if people leave for a better opportunity, holding them back is the opposite of their kaupapa. Ida also believes that "the more you give, it just comes back. Absolutely. I 100% agree with that."

Pushing the boundaries

Another constraint on whānau wellbeing is rules and laws, which Bronson disdains. He recalls how a law change prevented his parents from fostering children in need due to a lack of formal qualifications, leading to traumatic separations. All the foster kids in the village were "ripped away", says Bronson, and placed in state care. They were among those who were subjected to abuse in care and imprisoned. Bronson cares about being ethical, moral, authentically representing his beliefs, and focusing on outcomes rather than being constrained by rules. This approach means pushing the boundaries of what is possible.

Te ara kōkiri whakahaere o North Drill

North Drill management approach

Leaders whose duty is to support others

North Drill's founders describe their leadership style as "servant leadership", where the company's leaders have a duty to support others to be successful. For example,

as general manager, Bronson sits at the bottom of the company's structure, leading by supporting others. Everyone not in the field is part of the support team, whose primary role is to ensure that the frontline kaimahi (workers) have everything they need operationally to succeed. This suite of support includes straightforward processes, tools and equipment, know-how, technical skills, training, and field oversight. When issues arise, the support team is the first to be questioned about their role in causing or resolving the problems. Behavioural issues are rare, but when they occur, they are addressed through a kōrero (conversation) with the kaimahi. These issues, however, are often highlighting room for improvement in the support system.

The company does not have supervisors. Instead, they have "two field captains" aged 25 and 23, who have been with North Drill since they were 18, oversee the culture and morale of the frontline kaimahi. Whenever problems are identified, these young field captains report directly to Bronson and Ida, ensuring communication flows effectively between the field and management. Sometimes, hard kōrero is needed with employees, but the presence of good role models among the team is sufficient to maintain standards. On the rare occasion that disciplinary action is required, it's more akin to time out in the "hōhā [nuisance] corner", where the employees get to sit in the office, have a kōrero with Ida and allow the individual to reset without escalating further conflicts.

Bronson runs a "tight ship", ensuring everyone understands the company's standards and boundaries. North Drill, thus, does not have a problem with behaviour like lateness. With 80% of the team under age 35, the workplace is full of "little gems". These talented young workers, many of whom are the kaimahi from marae of the north, thrive under accountability and clear expectations.

How the founders approach business

When asked how they run their business, Bronson and Ida highlight that "no, it's the other way round. It's how do we approach supporting our whānau." Only then does business become a consideration. The founders did not decide that they wanted to be in business. Instead, they asked themselves, "How are we going to grow our people?" Business was how they could do that.

For Bronson and Ida, the focus is on the outcome, which is to grow their people. They have a broad definition of 'their people', including whānau, hapū (sub-tribe), community, region, the nation – in other words, everyone. On reflection, the founders realised that the business had evolved in a way that reflected what they were brought up to do: look after people. Mentors once suggested they needed a mission statement, but Ida says, "We call it our purpose. Our purpose is to improve

the wealth and wellbeing of our people, and business is the means by which to achieve that goal.”

From North Drill to North Build

After 10 years in business, Bronson and Ida continue to adapt their approach, engaging with mentors and implementing strategies aligned with their values. For instance, North Drill provides employees with financial literacy training, encouraging them to access banking services and commit to savings.

Homeownership for team members is a major goal, but housing market pressure and rising costs demanded changes in their approach. Bronson’s younger brother and his best friend were not enjoying school, and with their parents’ consent, both were given jobs at North Drill and came to stay with Bronson and Ida. “They were keen, good workers and could be trained to drive anything,” says Bronson. But finding a place to rent for enthusiastic 16-year-olds against the 30 or so mums and dads queuing to view property was difficult. Bronson and Ida, therefore, converted their family section into accommodation using modular building. Over time, this evolved into North Build, a construction company focused on creating a safe working environment for rangatahi and housing solutions for employees and the communities.

North Build initially built two homes and has since expanded its operations, acquiring a commercial yard next door to North Drill, where they build prefabricated cabins and houses. Ida’s sister looks after North Build.

For the founders, the goal is to buy whenua (land) on general title, do the development work, build the roads, build the houses, and help their team to own the houses. This ‘closed-loop’ approach benefits everyone: employees gain homeownership, the company creates employment, and the profits are reinvested into future development. As Ida explains, it is a “circular economy ... it’s creating work ... giving back to our team.” If done right, a portion of the proceeds can be reinvested into the next development.

The founders realised, however, that they needed to approach the problem with all the efficiency and guile of an experienced property developer of whole suburbs. They attended property seminars, invested significantly in training and mentoring to understand the property development process, and were awed by the thinking and methods they encountered.

Building a whānau culture at work

What sets North Drill apart, Ida suggests, is that “we operate as whānau.” The company hosts annual camps where employees are joined by their partners and children so that everyone gets to know each other. In 2023, the Houhora camp had

95 attendees. Work–life balance is a misnomer because work is life, life is work, so North Drill is inclusive of workers’ whānau. For instance, monthly non-operational training days allow workers to participate in financial literacy sessions, ensuring everyone is aligned on budgeting, saving, and KiwiSaver goals.

On risk and rest

When asked about risk, Bronson says, “As long as you’re confident you can feed your family no matter what, there is no real risk. The worst that can happen is you can lose your family.” Bronson has little patience for young people who prefer rest over work because they lack gratitude for the gift of youth, a time of vitality and potential that should be used productively. Overt laziness and drug use were not only offensive to the ancestors “who fought their way to get here, but the ones [younger generations] that are gonna come after you,” says Bronson. Succession planning for Bronson and Ida looks like the employees becoming owners and managers. They also aspire to growth so that whānau wellbeing through enterprise can continue to be supported.

Whānau recruitment

North Drill operates a “whānau recruitment policy”, prioritising hiring through whakapapa (genealogy) connections. Ida explains that “everyone is whānau”, with aunties, nieces, and brothers working at North Drill. This means that whenever a job comes up, the team is asked first to recruit people they know via whakapapa recruitment (recruiting relatives) because “they’re the ones out there that have to work with everyone they know,” says Ida. “Everyone knows how we operate; everyone knows our culture; everyone is connected. It’s awesome. We’re whānau,” says Ida.

Ida is very protective of who she brings into work at North Drill. When Ida is sitting with prospective employees, she looks beyond their skills, focusing on their values, character, and whānau because recruiting is not just the person but “everything and anything that comes with” them, which is “kei te pai” (fine). Workers “don’t need to prove anything to me or Bronson or anyone in [the office], but the person outside next to you. That’s who will decide whether you stay or not,” says Ida.

Whānau ethic drives health and safety

In 2023, North Drill won the Northland Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) Health and Safety Workplace Award. Ida attributes this success to the company’s genuine care for its people. She dislikes tick-box compliance systems, preferring to focus on critical risks. The health and safety auditor asked, “What makes your health and safety different?” Ida explains:

We have 47 people here. I said, "Man, I know every single person here, I know every single partner. I know all of their partners and I know every single one of the kids by name." I said, "I've met them, man, we go on camp together. I know them. I said my kids know every single one of these people, they're all called auntie and uncle to them ... and those kids are their North Drill cousins. That's what it looks like." So, I said, "For health and safety when our team goes out, man, they actually genuinely care about each other and their whānau, and because ... when everyone's connected ... everyone has each other's back. So, I said that's what makes us different. It's a genuine, it's not just a fucking piece of paper.

For the founders, North Drill represents a "controlled environment", says Bronson, where health and safety compliance can be closely monitored and good habits formed with the guidance of an experienced staff.

Role of mentoring

A key factor in North Drill's success to date has been the role of mentors and programmes like the Icehouse's owner-manager programme, which Bronson and Ida completed in 2013. Initially, a mortgage advisor was engaged who offered advice on housing finance. While well-meaning, the advice was not what North Drill was after. The founders wanted first-hand knowledge from practitioners who had built substantial personal wealth and had helped others do the same. It was a ruthless approach, but the founders were clear about what they wanted to achieve and were determined to find people with the right capabilities to help them succeed in their vision. The founders determined that a mentor was needed. Someone who could guide them in realising their property ambitions for themselves and others. They found the person and approached Te Puni Kōkiri to see if the cost could be shared. Impressed with the person and their credentials, co-funding support was rendered to allow the mentor to work with the company. Over a two-year period in which the mentor was involved, North Drill succeeded in growing the business, developing wealth, and building a property portfolio. The wealth mentor works with people who do "good things" because she is at the philanthropic stage of her wealth journey. She is also holistic and understands cultural matters.

Bronson highlights their approach to accessing external expertise:

If I want to learn how to drive a digger, I just go for the best digger operator. If I'm gonna learn something ... I want to learn the best and be the best. [A mortgage advisor from the bank] had this cool presentation. I said, "Cool." I said, "Man, how much properties do you own?" And she goes, "Oh, I've got two." I said, "Man, I own more than you. I know more about it than you. See you later." ... [I said] to the bank ... send someone ... that's going to teach us something. [A wealth advisor] was our mentor, and we paid a lot of money to be part of that ...

Our idea was, man, we're gonna learn this and then we're gonna bring it back to our team.

Focus on outcomes

North Drill is focused on outcomes that will impact the wellbeing of their whānau. For example, the founders see little return in counting participation in courses. What matters more is action that changes lives. When asked about what had been the most challenging thing about business, Bronson replied, "Actually, none of it's been hard ... what's been hard ... is if I've lost someone. [Otherwise], it's been awesome. Got a beautiful family ... our home is safe ... I can go get kai whenever I want ... I don't need money to get kai," which was a blessing during the COVID-19 disruptions.

Te oranga pakihi whānau Whānau enterprise wellbeing

Whānau enterprise

North Drill's service may seem straightforward – drilling holes into the ground using a combination of machinery and people – but its mission is decidedly intangible and some distance from the nature of its underlying commercial activity. The company's purpose is intergenerational wellbeing. Nowhere in its purpose is drilling to be found. The business itself is almost immaterial; what matters more is their people's long-term wellbeing. By 'people', they mean their employees, whom they regard as whānau, or family members, as well as those who have left but played their part or others who have yet to come into the employ of the enterprise.

Rather than 'mission', the founders deliberately use 'purpose' to distinguish their intent in business. Their intent is not just to provide people with a regular income but also to provide the basis for their success in all its forms over a lifetime. What makes a provincial enterprise care so deeply about other people is something we wanted to know more about.

The founders see the potential in young Māori from the northern part of the North Island – individuals who may underappreciate their capabilities for success. North Drill offers these young, talented people meaningful work where they can demonstrate good values, such as respect and a positive attitude. Experienced workers, acting as tuākana (mentors), guide and train new employees, mentoring and training workers to function well and mitigate against frontline safety failures, which often have managerial roots (e.g. insufficient support and boundary setting).

When joining North Drill, the founders encourage employees to work on investing in their long-term prospects by taking advantage of support for on-the-job (informal)

training, off-the-job (formal) education, and support for their financial independence, including support for savings and homeownership.

North Drill's founders want more for themselves, their extended whānau (siblings, cousins, aunties, uncles), and their employees. They want to provide a workplace culture that resembles the whānau environment in which they had been raised, under the love and guidance of kaumātua on the marae, working, serving, and learning. Establishing a whānau-like culture meant operating the business as a whānau, hiring on the recommendation of employees, acknowledging employees as whānau, setting expectations based on whānau needs (health and safety, performance, and personal development), and reinforcing the culture of whānau enterprise through, for example, annual hunting trips. Hunting, diving, and feeding whānau during these company retreats replicates the satisfaction of knowing how to survive in nature, how to look after whānau and manuhiri (visitors), and how to do this as a whānau to a high-quality standard, using the incentive of a little organised rivalry – with prizes for the largest catch and the best kai.

Theory of wellbeing

The North Drill theory of wellbeing centres on showing people that they belong, are valued, and have a responsibility to contribute to the collective good of the whānau (at home and work). The company reciprocates by providing access to opportunities and support needed for success at work, at home, and in the community, not just now but in the future.

Business owners might be forgiven for thinking that providing young people with paying jobs is enough. Getting paid does not mean much if it is taken from them when they get home. While a supportive whānau-like environment could be maintained at work, ensuring this was the case at home was a tougher prospect. The founders responded by engaging more of the whānau at home in North Drill as employees, in the annual whānau day, and with other events and opportunities offered by the company. Regarding the pay problem, the firm set up a bank structure for their team with spending budgets and managed funds.

Forgiveness is a redeeming feature of the North Drill theory of wellbeing. Despite past transgressions, people are afforded the opportunity for a good life within the firm. Technical skills can be taught, but respect comes naturally from one's upbringing. The company has little time for people who lack basic manners because it means another person who already possesses those values misses out. Employees are aware of the expectations and consequences for breaches in the enterprise's norms and values.

Māori should be good at business because business is about people. People are essential in North Drill's business. Businesses must have a kaupapa that is larger

than simply providing a wage. North Drill works with the whenua, where reusing waste and not leaving debris by waterways are priorities, but how the business incorporates the principles of kaitiakitanga (stewardship) into its practices is still developing. Another distinctive feature is understanding that work life is life, and work–life balance is about ensuring that workers are not wasting their time away from their whānau. Whānau are thus included in the workplace as much as possible so they feel part of the business.

Creating a workplace culture that helps staff see that being Māori is their superpower is an important element of a Māori business. A related question that the company asks its team to consider is what the ultimate Māori look like. Invariably, reflections turn to tūpuna who protected women and looked after their children. Ida says, “We want our people to be the ultimate version of the Māori, not this colonised version.”

One of North Drill’s goals is to internationalise solutions to Indigenous wellbeing. Achieving such a goal requires exceptional people to assemble teams and establish a business culture that inspires action and results. The North Power solar power project could also catalyse North Drill’s national expansion. North Drill is partnering with North Power on the mechanical building work for a solar farm. Brother-in-law Anthony and Bronson went with North Power to Australia around 2022 to look at solar farms.

Ngā mātāpono o te orange pakihi whānau **Principles of whānau enterprise wellbeing**

North Drill provides a compelling example of how a whānau enterprise can approach employee wellbeing in a holistic, values-driven way that challenges conventional business norms. Key principles emerge from the founders’ philosophy and practices that offer valuable insights for reimagining the role of business in fostering individual, whānau, and community wellbeing.

Circular economy with cultural values

Prioritising wellbeing is the primary purpose of North Drill, with business success serving as a means to that end rather than an end in itself. The relationship between wellbeing and business is not seen as linear and unidirectional but as an integrated, mutually reinforcing dynamic. Growing the business enables North Drill to provide more support for employees’ wellbeing, which in turn strengthens the culture and performance of the business. Wealth creation and wellbeing are thus both important means and ends and interconnected.

Even wellbeing itself is conceptualised and nurtured in a holistic and circular way. Through providing employment, on-the-job training, formal education, and a values-

based work environment, North Drill catalyses personal change that flows between work life and home life. As employees develop new skills, earn steady incomes, and internalise an empowering whānau-centred culture, they are supported to create home environments that are safe. Expanding its operations to the construction business, North Drill further reinforces this virtuous cycle. Wellbeing is, therefore, not compartmentalised but enhanced through multiple, mutually reinforcing pathways.

Reciprocity and redemption

Reciprocity is another principle that North Drill upholds in its business philosophy and practice. The principle manifests in the founders' initiative-taking efforts to create for others transformative opportunities from which they have benefited. Continuous learning and skills development have helped the founders to develop social and material resources, which they now eagerly share with employees to overcome barriers and realise their full potential. This 'pay-it-forward' approach is not contingent on being 'model citizens'. Instead, the founders emphasise forgiveness and redemption, reaching out to those who have been poorly served by existing systems and institutions.

Their own lived experience has made Bronson and Ida aware of how rules, laws, and entrenched power imbalances, often rooted in colonisation, continue to undermine whānau wellbeing. Rather than accepting such conditions, they have reimagined future possibilities, which present pathways for change. When facing a hostile housing market for their young employees, for instance, the founders innovated solutions of their own, even as they equipped staff to succeed within the existing system. This commitment to systemic change and individual empowerment is a critical way that North Drill challenges and transcends the status quo.

Expectations and humility

Bronson and Ida don't believe in the lower expectations often imposed on Māori. Instead, they hold themselves and their employees to high standards, providing the resources and support needed to achieve ambitious goals and celebrate success. They are not afraid to dream big, but they also acknowledge the gaps in their knowledge and find the right people and expertise to help. This humility, combined with a strategic, entrepreneurial mindset, has enabled them to assemble a strong team of professional advisors and partners who share their vision and values.

Aroha

Aroha – a deep love and care for people – is the most essential principle that drives North Drill's business philosophy and practice. Aroha is evident not only in Bronson and Ida's engagement with employees and their whānau but also extends more broadly to members of the wider community who have experienced hardship and

exclusion. It's a love that dreams big for others and stands firm in what it believes, even when facing doubt or resistance from those in positions of power. Importantly, the love and care that North Drill shows empowers and raises expectations of those who receive it. Employees are loved holistically when they are challenged to acquire new skills and knowledge, engage in long-term financial planning, assume leadership opportunities, and strive for opportunities beyond the firm itself.

Redefining purpose and success

With aroha and innovative ways of integrating wealth generation and wellbeing, Bronson and Ida are redefining what it means to be a successful business for Māori. Their purpose in doing business does not see financial profit as the end goal, but to the extent that it serves a larger kaupapa. This approach shows that a business can be innovative, strategic, and profitable while still holding a relational world view, putting people and purpose above all else. This process opens up new spaces of possibility for whānau enterprise and embodies an approach to wellbeing that is desperately needed in these challenging times.

Te whakaaro whakatepe

Conclusion

In this chapter, we set out to share the story of a whānau enterprise and its approach to wellbeing for itself and others. The goal was to provide an example of an enterprise that embodies principles of Māori economies of wellbeing, which are discussed in later chapters. While representing just one Māori owned and operated whānau enterprise, North Drill provides a unique insight into a kaupapa-driven approach. As Ida described, "Our purpose is to improve the wealth and wellbeing of our people, and business is the means by which to achieve that goal." This unusual relationship between means and ends in business is something we have observed in other Māori enterprises, which suggests that a new modality of enterprise in Aotearoa New Zealand may be present and emerging. We recommend further research on whānau enterprises, their propensity to create and sustain wealth and wellbeing, and the potential for their principles and methods to provide examples for others to follow. While it was not our intention, we found that aroha is at the heart of the whānau enterprise. By this reckoning, this makes North Drill a love story. The love of a husband and wife for each other and their whānau, the love of a village for its own and others' children, and the love for others as whānau. Aroha forms the basis for a relational, reciprocal economy, where collective wellbeing is achieved through sharing knowledge, capability, potential, and opportunity. While easily dismissed by the cynic as idyllic, North Drill's success is born of struggle, embracing adversity with courage and strength, and all the tools that the village provides – what it means to love, to be loved, to be humble, to share, to serve, to work hard for the good of others, to survive in nature, and to thrive in social settings.

Ngā tohutoro

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Upoko 4: Ngā āhuatanga o te āputa whairawa i waenga i a ngāi Māori me ngāi Pākehā i Aotearoa

Chapter 4: The dynamics of the wealth gap between Māori and Pākehā in Aotearoa New Zealand – John Reid and Andre Poyser

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A little-told but increasingly acknowledged truth about Aotearoa New Zealand's early colonial history is the story of Māori prosperity during the initial period of European contact. Many hapū experienced rapid economic growth in the decades prior to and immediately after the Treaty of Waitangi (Petrie, 2006). Māori were dynamic traders, quick to adopt technologies that enhanced productivity, and they established robust commercial relationships both domestically and internationally (Petrie, 2006). Māori enterprise thrived, particularly in the agriculture and shipping in important geographic pockets across Aotearoa – laying the foundation for intergenerational prosperity (Petrie, 2006).

But this trajectory was violently disrupted. As settler colonialism deepened, the Crown systematically dismantled the economic systems underpinning Māori growth. Through a combination of warfare, confiscation, legislative sleight-of-hand, and judicial manipulation, Māori were alienated from their most fertile and strategically located lands (Banner, 2000; Belich, 1986; Ward, 1999). The result was not simply the loss of land, but the loss of the very means by which Māori could accumulate, retain, and transmit wealth across generations (Belich, 1986; Boast, 2008; Dalziel,

2002; Walker, 2004). The economic base of hapū and iwi was dismantled, and Māori were pushed to the margins of the emergent colonial economy.

Fast forward to today, and Aotearoa is often presented as a nation of progress – one where the ‘Māori economy’ is thriving. The rise of iwi corporations, the strength of Treaty settlement entities, and the emergence of Māori entrepreneurial success stories have contributed to what some have referred to as the ‘taniwha economy’ (Reid & Rout, 2016). Yet, this celebration of Māori economic resurgence risks masking a more sobering truth: the wealth gap between Māori and Pākehā remains wide, and is for the most part worsening.

The data presented in this chapter challenges the popular narrative of Māori economic privilege currently promulgated by right-wing politicians and sections of media. While it is true that some iwi entities have accumulated substantial collective assets, this prosperity is extremely modest when considered on a tribal per capita basis. Although iwi asset growth is an important success story, it has not translated into widespread individual wealth or materially closed the economic gap between Māori and Pākehā. In fact, many Māori households remain structurally excluded from the primary vehicles of wealth accumulation in contemporary Aotearoa – particularly land and housing. The story told here is one of persistent inequality rooted in colonisation and reproduced through asset-based capitalism.

This chapter sets out to explore this inequality through the lens of net worth, drawing on the latest available data from Stats NZ’s Household Economic Survey (HES) for 2015, 2018, and 2021. It combines empirical data with critical analysis, positioning wealth not merely as an economic metric but as a mechanism of intergenerational stratification, a defining feature of contemporary class formation, and a key site of political contestation.

The chapter is structured as follows:

- **Why Wealth Matters** frames the issue conceptually, exploring why wealth – not just income – is central to understanding inequality in contemporary New Zealand. It draws on class theory, international research, and Māori experiences to explain the social, political, and intergenerational significance of wealth accumulation and exclusion.
- **The Uneven Inheritance** presents the distribution of Māori and European New Zealanders’ median net worth across wealth quintiles, using total response ethnicity categories defined by Stats NZ. The analysis includes four groups: Māori-only, Māori-European, Māori-other, and European-only. This section provides a longitudinal snapshot of wealth across 2015, 2018, and 2021.

- **Wealth Growth Across Quintiles** interprets these results, examining both the relative and absolute changes in wealth between groups. It discusses the persistence of inequality, the compounding nature of wealth, and the volatility experienced by Māori, particularly in lower quintiles.
- **Policy Implications and Pathways Towards Wealth Equity** turns towards solutions, identifying key areas for intervention. It evaluates policy options, including housing schemes, savings incentives, basic income, asset transfers, and multi-faceted programmes.
- **Recommendations** that foreground structural change, Māori leadership, and intergenerational equity
- **Conclusion**

Taken together, the chapter makes the case that wealth inequality in Aotearoa is not accidental or incidental. It is a consequence of deliberate historical processes and ongoing systemic failures. While Māori entrepreneurialism and iwi economic development are real and important, they have not yet reversed the deep legacies of dispossession. Addressing this reality requires confronting the structures that continue to privilege some while excluding others – and building an economic future grounded not in nostalgia or denial, but in equity and truth.

He aha e kīia nei he mea nui te whairawa Why wealth matters

Wealth is more than income. It provides individuals and families with security, opportunity, and a foundation for future generations to flourish. Societies marked by high levels of wealth inequality tend to suffer deeply in both social and economic terms (Piketty, 2014; Stiglitz, 2012). As numerous studies have shown, excessive inequality reduces social cohesion, undermines trust in institutions, fuels populist discontent, and weakens the foundations of democratic governance and economic stability (Reich, 2015; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). It constrains society's capacity to thrive, as individuals facing persistent disadvantage are unable to realise their full potential – depriving the nation of the contributions they might otherwise offer (Atkinson, 2015).

Those with limited or no wealth are significantly less likely to access quality education, healthcare, nutritious food, influential social networks, and opportunities for recreation and rest (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). They are more exposed to environments that generate psychological stress – unaffordable housing, debt, job insecurity, and unsafe neighbourhoods – which in turn increase the prevalence of poor mental health and social isolation (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009; Stiglitz, 2012).

Wealth inequality as class stratification

In recent decades, theorists have increasingly emphasised the role of wealth – rather than income alone – as the primary axis along which modern class divisions are structured. This shift is particularly salient in post-industrial societies like Aotearoa New Zealand, where the economy has become increasingly financialised and asset driven. As scholars like Thomas Piketty (2014) and Guy Standing (2011) argue, contemporary capitalism is defined by its reliance on capital income: income derived not from labour, but from ownership of assets – property, shares, savings, and business equity. A condition often referred to as rentier capitalism (Standing, 2011).

In this context, class position is increasingly tied to whether one owns capital or relies exclusively on wage labour. Those who own assets can grow their wealth through capital appreciation, rents, dividends, and compounding returns. Those who do not – particularly those renting or living paycheck-to-paycheck – are structurally excluded from wealth generation and more vulnerable to economic shocks.

This structural division has given rise to what Standing (2011) calls the precariat: a class-in-the-making composed of individuals and households who face chronic insecurity in employment, housing, and income. The precariat lacks stable access to wealth and has minimal buffers to withstand financial volatility. In New Zealand, many Māori – particularly those in lower wealth quintiles – can be understood through this lens. They experience persistent marginalisation not because of individual failure but because they are structurally positioned outside the systems of wealth accumulation that benefit others.

Relatedly, scholars such as Keister and Moller (2000) and Shapiro (2004) describe wealth inequality as a form of structural stratification – an intergenerational mechanism by which advantage or disadvantage is passed down not just through income, but through access to housing, inheritance, educational capital, and financial literacy. In this model, wealth is not just a personal resource but a social institution that reproduces inequality. Its distribution reflects longstanding exclusions – especially along racial and colonial lines – and its consequences are compounded over time.

The rise of asset-based capitalism

The emergence of asset-based capitalism in the late 20th century marked a transformation in how wealth is built and distributed. As Orenstein (2011) and Ansell (2014) argue, states across the Global North – including New Zealand – began to shift responsibility for economic security away from public systems and towards individual investment in privately held assets. This shift has been accompanied by the growth of financialised housing markets, the expansion of stock ownership and

retirement funds, and tax regimes that favour property speculation over income from labour.

In such a system, wealth is no longer accumulated through work alone. It is accumulated through access to appreciating assets – particularly property. Those who entered the housing market early, or who inherited capital, have seen their net worth multiply over time. Those locked out – due to low income, racism, colonial dispossession, or policy neglect – have been left behind. This transformation has deepened the divide between those with capital and those without, and it has fundamentally restructured class in Aotearoa. As will be outlined in this paper, for many Māori, especially those who identify solely as Māori and lack generational assets, this system reproduces colonial exclusion in new economic terms.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, recent research by Ching et al. (2023) reveal that the wealthiest 10% of New Zealanders own approximately 67.2% of the nation's wealth, with the top 1% holding 26.1%. This concentration of wealth mirrors international patterns identified by Milanovic (2006), who argues that economic globalisation has accelerated wealth accumulation among elites while leaving marginalised communities behind. When this data is disaggregated by ethnicity, which is explored below, the picture becomes even more stark: Māori, especially those identifying solely as Māori, are overwhelmingly clustered in the lower wealth quintiles. These disparities are not accidental. They are rooted in Aotearoa's colonial past.

Māori were systematically dispossessed of high-value land and resources throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, destroying the foundation for intergenerational wealth transfer. While the rise of post-Treaty settlement mechanisms and iwi corporations has generated an asset base for tribal communities, the current wealth held by these entities on a per capita basis is extremely modest. In the 2023/24 financial year, the combined asset base of the 10 largest iwi was estimated at approximately NZ\$8.2 billion (TDB Advisory, 2024). However, these iwi collectively represent 799,569 members (Stats NZ, 2023), resulting in a per capita share of just NZ\$10,256. This figure underscores the crucial point that settlements have not, and could never (given their modest scale), translate into widespread individual or whānau wealth accumulation to close the economic gap between Māori and Pākehā. Moreover, their benefits are likely to be unevenly distributed to those with the technical competencies and political leadership capabilities to lead large political and corporate structures. Treaty settlements will not address embedded structural inequality.

Housing and land ownership are central to understanding how this gap persists. In 2021, property accounted for 54% of all household wealth in New Zealand (Ching et al., 2023). For much of the 20th century, homeownership was seen as a social right

in New Zealand, with bipartisan policy support. Labour governments built and rented state housing; National governments promoted homeownership by selling those houses to tenants (Rout & Walker, 2021). As Hickey (2019) notes:

Starting with Labour's Michael Joseph Savage and ending with Labour's David Lange and Roger Douglas, the Government built state houses, made low-interest-rate loans, paid for or subsidised suburban infrastructure and ensured first home buyers could get a deposit and buy a house for less than three times their income.

This model began to erode in the 1980s and was dismantled in the 1990s as part of broader neoliberal reforms. State investment in housing was replaced by market-based mechanisms and speculative investment incentives. The new housing dynamic – driven by deregulated finance, declining public construction, and a tax system that rewarded speculation – turned a right into an asset. Māori homeownership, which had been rising until the late 1980s, began to fall. Since the 1990s, Māori homeownership rates have consistently declined (Rout et al., 2019), contributing to the wealth inequalities visible today.

This transformation of housing into a financialised commodity has had profound effects. As Broome (2008) argues, homeownership in New Zealand is no longer about stability or shelter, but about capital gains. Rehm and Yang (2021) similarly describe the family home as “an object of speculation and credit”, while St John and Baucher (2015) describe housing as the prime vehicle for wealth accumulation – no longer a human right, but a store of capital. In 2020, a UN special rapporteur concluded that New Zealand's housing crisis is in fact a human rights crisis, rooted in a speculative housing market that turns homes “into commodities” (Cole, 2020).

For European New Zealanders who already owned property when the market began to soar, this transformation has vastly increased net worth. But for Māori – especially those who never gained a foothold in the housing market, or those who needed to sell their homes due to rising unemployment in the 1980s and 1990s – price inflation has further entrenched exclusion (Rout & Walker, 2021). Those unable to purchase a home face rising rents and stagnant incomes, which erode savings and prevent investment. Over time, this has compounded Māori disadvantage, while a majority of European New Zealanders have reaped the returns of property inflation and capital gains.

Wealth inequality is a persistent and critical issue in New Zealand, with the gap between European New Zealanders and Māori continuing to widen. Ching et al. (2023) show that Stats NZ's HES systematically underestimates the wealth of the top 1% by relying on self-reported survey data. High-net-worth individuals often under-report or exclude financial assets, shares, and offshore holdings. Using a

taxable income capitalisation approach, Ching et al. found that wealth is far more concentrated at the top than previously acknowledged. This has direct implications for Māori: as wealth concentrates out of reach, Māori remain cut off from the benefits of capital income, such as dividends, rental returns, and long-term asset growth. Instead, most Māori continue to rely on labour income, which is less stable, less flexible, and far less effective at generating intergenerational wealth. This results in a two-tiered economy: one group grows wealth through capital, while another remains dependent on wages. The wealthiest can transfer assets to their children, preserving advantage, while the majority of Māori families – already disadvantaged by historical dispossession – struggle to generate or retain wealth across generations.

This dynamic also undermines the long-term sustainability of New Zealand’s welfare state. As Ching et al. (2023) point out, the population is ageing unevenly. The European population is older and wealthier; the Māori population is younger, with higher fertility rates. This demographic divergence means that an increasingly young Māori labour force will be expected to sustain an ageing European population through taxes and productivity. Yet, due to systemic inequality, Māori households remain under-represented in higher wealth brackets. This imbalance creates a dangerous policy tension: How can a society ask its least wealthy group to carry its largest fiscal burden?

If left unaddressed, wealth inequality and demographic divergence may erode public trust and social cohesion. As Milanovic (2006) warns, such inequalities can generate resentment and political instability, particularly when marginalised groups feel they are subsidising systems that do not serve them.

Addressing this requires more than redistribution. It requires a transformation in how wealth is generated, retained, and shared – starting with a full acknowledgment of the historical and structural conditions that have excluded Māori from the benefits of asset-based prosperity. Accurate data is essential. The recalibrated methods used by Ching et al. (2023) offer a more truthful account of wealth concentration in New Zealand. They also reveal the urgency of the task: unless policy targets the real structures of inequality – including tax policy, land ownership, housing access, and intergenerational transfer – inequality will continue to widen. Wealth inequality is not just an economic problem. It is a moral and constitutional one, and its resolution is essential to a just and inclusive Aotearoa.

Te tōkeke koretanga: Te tōkeke koretanga o te whairawa Māori i te tau 2015 ki te tau 2021

The uneven inheritance: Māori wealth inequality across 2015–2021

The structural importance of wealth – both as a foundation for individual wellbeing and as a mechanism for intergenerational advantage – makes its unequal distribution a matter of pressing concern. As outlined in the previous section, wealth in Aotearoa New Zealand is heavily concentrated, and Māori – particularly those identifying solely as Māori – have been systematically excluded from its accumulation. This exclusion is not incidental. It is the legacy of colonisation, compounded by contemporary economic systems that reward those with capital and marginalise those without.

To understand how these patterns have unfolded in recent years, this section draws on data from Stats NZ’s HES for the years 2015, 2018, and 2021. This data provides rare insight into the distribution of net worth – that is, the total value of assets minus debts – across different ethnic groups and wealth quintiles. While limited by the sampling and reporting constraints of the survey, this dataset offers a valuable snapshot of wealth inequality in Aotearoa over time.

The analysis is organised by ethnicity using Stats NZ’s *total response* method, which allows individuals to identify with more than one ethnic group (Stats NZ, n.d.). Four key categories are used in this chapter:

- Māori-only: individuals who identified solely as Māori, and no other ethnicity
- Māori-European: individuals who identified as both Māori and European
- Māori-other: individuals who identified as Māori and one or more non-European ethnicities (e.g. Pacific or Asian)
- European-only: individuals who identified solely as Pākehā or European New Zealanders, and no other ethnic group.

These distinctions are essential. They allow us to see not only how Māori compare to non-Māori, but how wealth is distributed *within* the broader Māori population – revealing the intersecting effects of colonial legacies, racial identity, and social position. What follows is a breakdown of the changes in median net worth across each of the five wealth quintiles, disaggregated by ethnicity and tracked over time. It is a story of persistent inequality – where wealth remains unevenly distributed, where gains are unequally shared, and where intergenerational prosperity continues to elude many Māori whānau.

Before turning to the results, it is important to introduce a key statistical consideration: the relative sampling error (RSE). This metric indicates how precise a survey estimate is. A low RSE (e.g. under 10%) suggests the figure is statistically reliable, while a high RSE (e.g. over 30% or even 100%) signals wide uncertainty, often due to small sample sizes or high variability within a group. Across the three HES cycles used in this chapter, European-only figures are consistently associated with low RSEs. This reflects larger, more stable sample sizes and more predictable wealth distributions. In contrast, Māori-only and especially Māori-other groupings often carry higher RSEs, particularly in the lower quintiles – where economic hardship is most acute. For example, in 2021, RSEs in the first quintile exceeded 100% for Māori-other, meaning those figures should be read cautiously. Moreover, there was no substantive data in some quintiles; consequently, results for some quintiles are not analysed or reported in the discussion below.

But this missing data and the gaps in statistical confidence are themselves a form of inequality. They highlight the lack of robust, systematic wealth data for Māori communities – especially those experiencing the greatest financial precarity. When data is least reliable, it is often because the population is smaller, more marginalised, or more difficult to capture using standard tools. In short, data gaps are not neutral. They reflect the legacy of exclusion in institutional design and statistical priorities. The HES provides a rare and valuable window into intergenerational inequality, but the variability in RSEs reminds us that wealth statistics are not equally representative for all groups. With this in mind, the following sections present the results for 2015, 2018, and 2021 – drawing out both the visible patterns in wealth inequality and the limitations that come with interpreting absent, incomplete, or uncertain data.

2015: Poverty in the bottom three quintiles

In 2015, wealth inequality in Aotearoa was already well entrenched, and its ethnic contours sharply defined (see Table 4.1 in the Appendix at end of this chapter). Among those identifying solely as Māori-only individuals – the data revealed a disturbing level of financial fragility. At the bottom of the distribution, the poorest 20% (quintile 1) had a median net worth of –\$9,000. In other words, their debts outweighed their assets. Those in quintile 2 had virtually no wealth to speak of, and in quintile 3 – the middle of the population – the median net worth was just \$9,000. These figures place at least 50% of Māori-only individuals within the precariat: people without enough savings to buffer unexpected expenses, let alone plan for the future. At that time, a living wage earner would have required around \$10,000 in liquid savings to remain secure through a three-month job loss. Most Māori-only individuals were nowhere near this threshold.

The picture shifts somewhat for Māori-European individuals – those identifying as both Māori and Pākehā. In quintile 2, their median net worth was \$3,000, and in quintile 3, it rose to \$23,000. While these figures show greater wealth accumulation than for Māori-only individuals, they still fall dramatically short of their European-only peers, who held \$38,000 in quintile 2 and \$153,000 in quintile 3. Māori-other individuals – those identifying as Māori alongside a non-European ethnicity – were generally the most financially disadvantaged. In quintiles 2 and 3, their median net worths were just \$0 and \$2,000, respectively.

At the upper end, the pattern of exclusion persisted. In quintile 4, Māori-only individuals held a median of \$45,000, compared to \$334,000 for European-only individuals – a sevenfold difference. At the very top, in quintile 5, Māori-only individuals reached \$191,000, while European-only individuals had a median net worth of \$827,000. The gap remained significant even for Māori-European individuals, who had \$426,000, which was approximately half that of European-only, suggesting that shared ancestry does not equate to shared economic footing.

Though RSEs were not as prominently flagged in the 2015 dataset, the direction and magnitude of inequality were already clear. Māori individuals, particularly those without European ancestry, were consistently positioned at a disadvantage across the wealth spectrum.

2018: Stalled at the middle

Three years later, the 2018 data showed some movement – but no fundamental shift in the structure of inequality (see Table 4.2 in the Appendix at end of this chapter). At the bottom, Māori-only individuals still had a median net worth of –\$1,000, while Māori-European individuals had slipped further to –\$5,000. Māori-other individuals were even worse off, with –\$10,000 in net worth. European-only individuals in the same quintile also had negative net worth (–\$1,000), but the depth of indebtedness among Māori groups was more severe.

Quintile 2 provided little relief. Māori-only individuals had a median net worth of \$2,000, Māori-European individuals had \$7,000, and the median net worth of Māori-other individuals was unreported – likely due to insufficient data or high RSEs. By contrast, European-only individuals had a median net worth of \$46,000 – 23 times more than Māori-only, and over 6 times more than Māori-European individuals. The gap widened further in the middle quintile. Māori-only individuals held \$16,000, Māori-European \$27,000, and Māori-other \$2,000. Meanwhile, European-only individuals in the same quintile reported \$192,000 – 12 times that of Māori-only, and nearly 100 times that of Māori-other. RSEs were elevated for Māori groups, particularly Māori-other, but the disparities remained stark and consistent with prior years.

In quintile 4, Māori-only individuals had climbed to \$66,000, Māori-European had \$148,000, and Māori-other had only \$13,000. European-only individuals, by comparison, had \$416,000 – a nearly sevenfold gap over Māori-only individuals, and 32 times more than Māori-other. At the top, Māori-only individuals had reached \$320,000, Māori-European had \$591,000, and Māori-other just \$79,000. European-only individuals, however, had crossed the million-dollar mark, with a median net worth of \$1,034,000 – more than three times the Māori-only figure. Despite smaller RSEs in these upper quintiles, the gaps speak not just to inequality in outcomes, but inequality in accumulation. European-only individuals were not only wealthier – they were becoming wealthier faster.

2021: Rising tide, unequal lift

By 2021, median wealth had risen across most groups, likely buoyed by property inflation and asset growth (see Table 4.3 in the Appendix at end of this chapter). But the disparities between groups – especially those defined by ethnicity – remained both profound and predictable. At the very bottom (quintile 1), Māori-other individuals had a median net worth of –\$15,000. Data for Māori-only and Māori-European individuals was unavailable – due to small sample sizes or RSEs exceeding reporting thresholds. European-only individuals had \$2,000, modest but at least positive. The difference in these figures should be interpreted cautiously: in this quintile, RSEs were over 100% for Māori-other and Māori-European individuals, making precise comparison difficult. Still, the direction is unmistakable.

In quintile 2, Māori-only individuals had \$5,000, Māori-European \$11,000, and European-only individuals \$49,000. With RSEs around 24% for Māori-only and 32% for Māori-European, these gaps are statistically credible. Māori-other individuals were not reported for this quintile, continuing the trend of data invisibility for some of the most financially vulnerable. By quintile 3, the median net worth of Māori-only individuals rose to \$28,000, Māori-European to \$46,000, and Māori-other to just \$9,000. European-only individuals, by comparison, had \$203,000 – more than seven times the Māori-only figure and 23 times that of Māori-other. Again, RSEs in this band were higher for Māori groups (e.g. 63% for Māori-other), yet the pattern of under-accumulation remains evident.

In quintile 4, Māori-only individuals held \$102,000, Māori-European \$179,000, and Māori-other \$24,000, while European-only individuals held \$463,000. Even here, where Māori were seeing real gains, the European advantage was four to seven times greater. These are not simply marginal differences – they are structural outcomes. Finally, at the top of the wealth curve, Māori-only individuals had \$412,000, Māori-European had \$630,000, and Māori-other \$323,000. European-only individuals in this quintile had surged to \$1.2 million – a threefold advantage over

Māori-only and nearly double that of Māori-European. These upper-quintile figures came with relatively stable RSEs, reinforcing the reliability of the comparison.

As with previous years, the 2021 data confirms that Māori individuals, particularly those without European ancestry, continue to face deep and enduring barriers to wealth accumulation. And while some groups – particularly Māori-European – appear to experience greater upward mobility, the overall pattern is clear: wealth in Aotearoa is unequally distributed by ethnicity, and it is overwhelmingly likely that the legacy of colonisation has ensured that some groups inherit advantage while others inherit exclusion.

Te tupu o te whairawa huri noa i ngā haurima: Ngā tauira o te manarite-kore i te roanga o te wā

Wealth growth across quintiles: Patterns of inequality over time

The wealth data from 2015, 2018, and 2021 not only shows static disparities at a given point in time – it also reveals compounding trends over time. In this section, we focus on the percentage and absolute changes in median net worth across quintiles 3, 4, and 5 (see Table 4.4 in the Appendix at end of this chapter) – the middle to upper tiers of the population, where data is most reliable due to lower RSEs. These quintiles also reflect the strata where long-term asset growth and intergenerational transfers begin to accumulate meaningfully.

What emerges from this analysis is a pattern of entrenched and growing inequality. While Māori groups, especially Māori-only and Māori-other, have experienced large percentage increases in median net worth since 2015, these gains have occurred from a much lower base and have not closed the wealth gap. European-only individuals not only began with much higher levels of wealth – they also continued to accumulate at consistent and compounding rates, widening the gap in absolute dollar terms.

Quintile 3: The emerging disparities

In the middle quintile, European-only individuals saw steady and moderate growth: a 25% increase from 2015 to 2018, and a further 6% increase from 2018 to 2021, resulting in a total 33% gain across the period. This reflects stable and predictable wealth accumulation among the European middle class. In contrast, Māori groups – especially those with no European ancestry – experienced much higher percentage increases, albeit from much lower starting points. Māori-only individuals saw their median net worth increase by 78% (2015–2018) and 75% (2018–2021), a total of 211% growth, climbing from \$9,000 to \$28,000. Māori-European individuals gained 100% over the full period, rising from \$23,000 to \$46,000. The median net worth of

Māori-other individuals, starting from just \$2,000, rose to \$9,000 between 2018 and 2021 – a 350% increase, but still trailing significantly in absolute terms.

These high growth rates for Māori, while seemingly encouraging, do not reflect convergence. Rather, they indicate a catch-up dynamic – one that remains inadequate to overcome the sheer scale of historical exclusion. Between 2015 and 2021, European-only individuals in quintile 3 gained \$50,000, compared to \$19,000 for Māori-only, and \$23,000 for Māori-European. The gap persists in both statistical and structural terms.

RSEs for this quintile were higher among Māori groups – especially Māori-other – yet the trends remain consistent with broader patterns, showing persistent economic exclusion even among those in the statistical middle.

Quintile 4: Unequal wealth accumulation

Inequality becomes more pronounced in the fourth quintile, where net worth tends to reflect the accumulation of capital through homeownership, superannuation, and long-term savings. Between 2015 and 2021, European-only individuals experienced a 39% increase in median net worth, rising from \$334,000 to \$463,000.

In comparison:

- Māori-only individuals increased their net worth by 127%, from \$45,000 to \$102,000.
- Māori-European individuals gained 116%, reaching \$179,000.
- Māori-other individuals had a far more volatile experience: declining by 28% from 2015 to 2018 (from \$18,000 to \$13,000), then rising by 85% to reach \$24,000 in 2021.

These percentage gains again appear strong for Māori-only and Māori-European individuals, but the absolute growth remains limited. Between 2015 and 2021:

- European-only individuals gained \$129,000 in net worth.
- Māori-only individuals gained \$57,000.
- Māori-European individuals gained \$96,000.
- Māori-other individuals gained \$6,000, highlighting the marginal returns for this most disadvantaged group.

The disparities at this level point to compounding advantage: those who already possess capital are able to accumulate it more steadily and securely over time. Meanwhile, Māori – especially Māori-other – face inconsistent gains, likely shaped by insecurity in employment, housing, or capital markets.

The RSEs in this quintile were lower across all groups (e.g. 2.4% for European-only, 8% for Māori-European, and 10.6% for Māori-other), indicating that these figures are among the most reliable in the dataset – and thus, the disparities observed here are statistically robust.

Quintile 5: The upper wealth disparities

The sharpest and most persistent inequalities appear in the top quintile – the wealthiest 20% of individuals. In this group, European-only individuals grew their median net worth from \$827,000 in 2015 to \$1.2 million in 2021, a 46% increase. This cohort is likely to include those with significant property holdings, business interests, or investment portfolios – groups that benefited strongly from Aotearoa’s asset inflation over the past decades.

Over the same period:

- Māori-only individuals saw a 116% increase, from \$191,000 to \$412,000.
- Māori-European individuals rose 48%, from \$426,000 to \$630,000.
- Māori-other individuals had a volatile trajectory – declining 63% from 2015 to 2018 (from \$216,000 to \$79,000), then rebounding 309% to \$323,000 in 2021.

Despite strong percentage gains for some Māori groups, the absolute gains again favour European-only individuals:

- European-only: +\$380,000
- Māori-only: +\$221,000
- Māori-European: +\$204,000
- Māori-other: +\$107,000.

These figures reinforce how wealth, once accumulated, multiplies – and how systemic barriers continue to constrain Māori gains, even within the top wealth brackets.

RSEs in quintile 5 are relatively low for all groups (e.g. 8.6% for European-only and 16.9% for Māori-only), providing a high degree of confidence in these observed disparities.

The substantial gap in median net worth

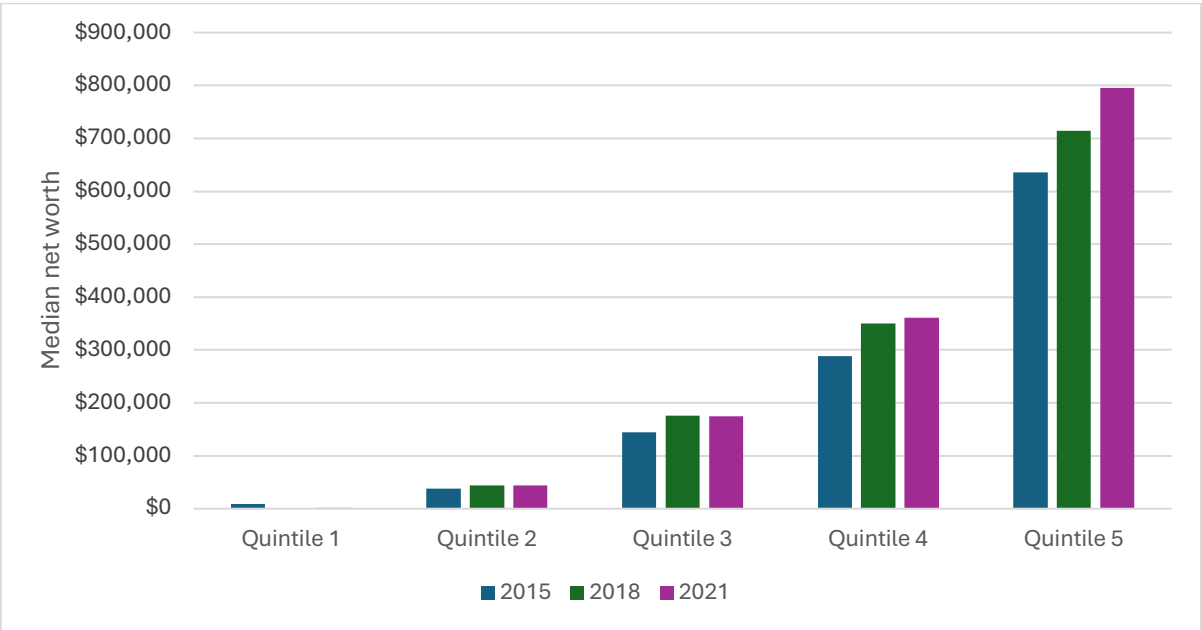
As outlined previously, while caution should be applied when interpreting the figures in the lower quintiles, the overall data clearly indicates a significant wealth gap between individuals identifying as European and those identifying as Māori-only.

In the 2021 data:

- In quintile 1, both Māori and Europeans had little to no net-worth.
- In quintile 2, Europeans had \$44,000 more in net worth than Māori-only individuals.
- In quintile 3, the gap was \$175,000.
- In quintile 4, it increased to \$361,000.
- In quintile 5, the disparity reached \$795,000.

Moreover, as shown in Figure 4.1, from 2015 to 2021, this gap has steadily widened in quintile 5, slowed in quintile 4, and remained relatively stable in quintiles 3 and 2. Although the positive trend — discussed in the previous section — shows increasing wealth for Māori-only individuals in quintiles 3, 4, and 5, the wealth gap between Māori-only and Europeans is not closing. This discussion is located in the third paragraph of the section titled “The substantial gap in median net worth.”

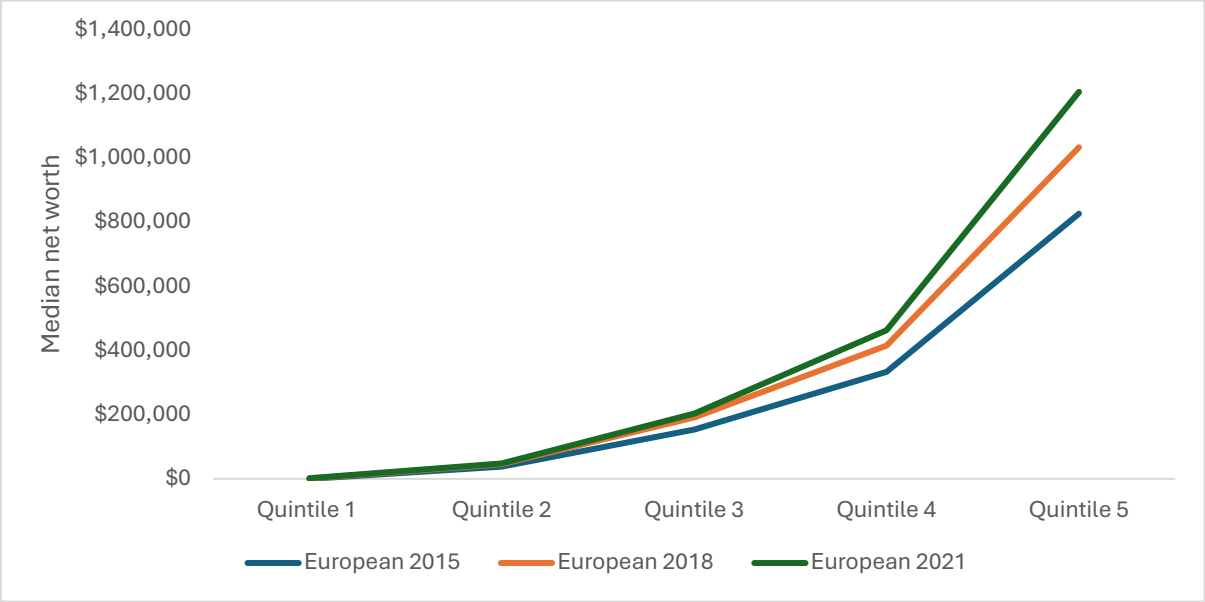
Figure 4.1. Gap in median net worth, by quintile and year.



An entrenched Māori-only precariat

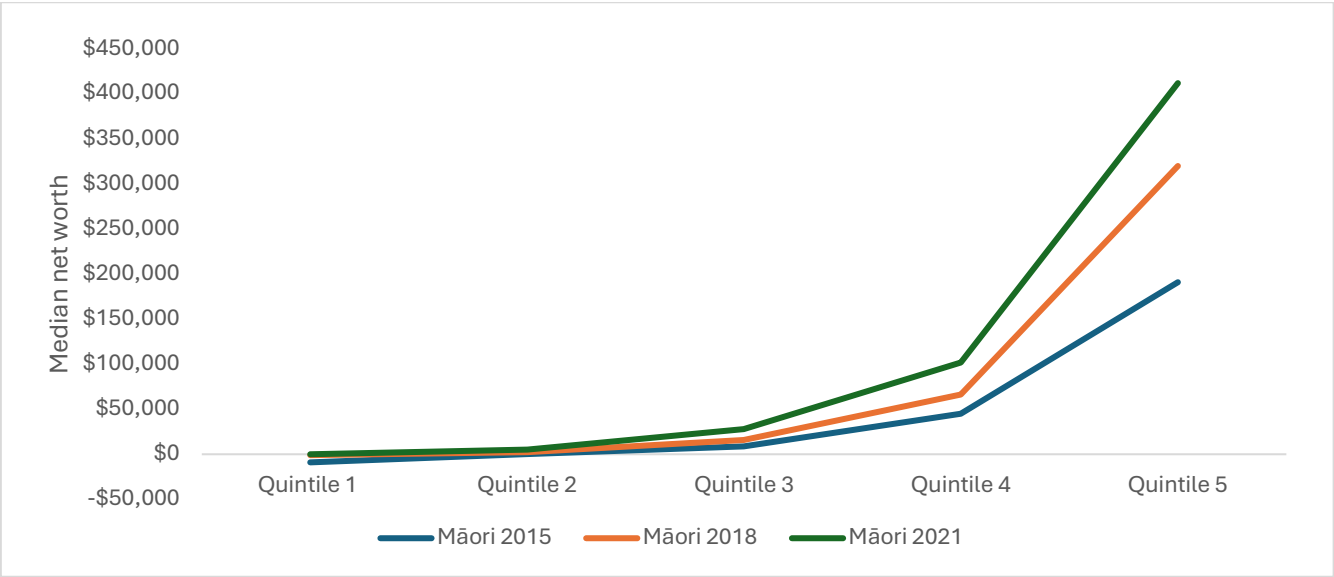
The data also reveals to us the general wealth distribution curves, distinct class structures, and inequality that exist within and across European and Māori-only ethnicities. In the case of European New Zealanders, while inequality certainly exists (with the top quintile holding a dominant share of net worth), the distribution of wealth follows a relatively graduated curve (Figure 4.2). Each quintile incrementally improves upon the last, and even the lower quintiles possess a measurable, albeit modest, share of wealth. This more continuous curve suggests that while inequality exists, it is tempered by a somewhat broader distribution of wealth, indicating a middle class that retains some economic resilience. The gap between the wealthiest and the least wealthy is significant but not so extreme as to suggest strong polarisation.

Figure 4.2. Distribution of European New Zealanders’ median net worth, by quintile (2015, 2018, 2021).



By contrast, the Māori-only distribution reveals a much more pronounced internal inequality (Figure 4.3). The bottom two quintiles – representing 40% of Māori – show virtually no wealth across all measured years. The third quintile shows only minimal improvement, while the fourth and especially the fifth quintiles demonstrate dramatic increases, particularly by 2021. This sharp rise at the top, combined with stagnation at the bottom, results in a steep curve that signals a highly stratified Māori society. A small segment is accumulating assets while a large proportion remains persistently asset-poor, resulting in what could be described as a significantly more stratified society, with a very ‘long tail’ of those in the precariat.

Figure 4.3. Distribution of Māori median net worth, by quintile (2015, 2018, 2021).



These patterns hold important implications for understanding the relative size and entrenchment of the precariat within each ethnic group. Among European New Zealanders, although there is a significant precariat in quintile 1, the overall

trajectory across other quintiles hint at some upward mobility or buffering capacity. For Māori-only individuals, however, the bottom 40% appear effectively locked out of wealth accumulation altogether, remaining static even in periods of national economic growth. The persistence of such disparities suggests not only a larger proportion of Māori within the precariat but a more deeply rooted and structurally constrained experience of economic marginalisation.

Ngā hiraunga kaupapa here me ngā huarahi e whano atu ana ki te tōkeketanga whairawa

Policy implications and pathways towards wealth equity

The evidence presented in this chapter makes clear that wealth inequality between Māori and European New Zealanders is persistent, structural, and historically entrenched. While some Māori groups have made notable percentage gains in median net worth over time, these gains remain marginal in absolute terms. This is not simply a reflection of economic performance – it is a direct consequence of exclusion from the institutional, legal, and policy frameworks that facilitate wealth accumulation for others.

Although Treaty settlements have returned over \$2 billion to Māori since the 1990s, the scale of historical loss far exceeds these reparations. Moreover, settlements have tended to strengthen collective iwi assets rather than individual or whānau-level wealth. While they are important symbols of justice and have generated employment and investment for some Māori, they have not, and could not, substantively close the wealth gap. As Mitrinen (2024) notes in the Finnish context, reparations only generate sustained intergenerational impact when they are coupled with structural change and investment in human capital and industrial capacity. For Māori, this means that Treaty settlements must be complemented by broader redistributive and systemic reforms that address inequality at the level of individuals and communities.

The following policy approaches provide pathways for shifting New Zealand's economy away from asset-based exclusion and towards inclusive wealth generation. Each one engages with core dimensions of structural stratification and the reproduction of class inequality, offering practical mechanisms to counteract the effects of colonisation and the financialisation of wellbeing.

1. Housing schemes: Restoring access to capital ownership

Homeownership has historically been a primary mechanism for wealth accumulation in Aotearoa. State housing initiatives in the mid-20th century, supported by bipartisan governments, enabled many working-class families – including Māori – to purchase homes, often through subsidised mortgages, capitalised benefits, or state-backed loans (Rout & Walker, 2021; Hickey, 2019). This created a period of relative

mobility that began to reverse with the neoliberal restructuring of the 1980s and 1990s. Re-establishing targeted housing schemes – particularly those that prioritise first-time Māori homebuyers – could serve as a corrective to decades of exclusion from capital-based wealth creation. These should be tied to broader reforms in finance, planning, and land use that recognise housing not simply as a market commodity but as a public good and human right.

2. Compulsory savings schemes: Leveraging income for asset growth

While Māori median incomes are only modestly lower than those of European New Zealanders, their capacity to convert income into wealth remains constrained. Strengthening compulsory savings mechanisms – such as KiwiSaver – through enhanced state and employer contributions, paired with deposit-matching schemes for Māori homeownership or business development, could help bridge the asset gap. This would require rethinking KiwiSaver not only as a retirement tool but as an instrument of intergenerational justice.

3. Universal basic income: Building financial security at the base

A universal basic income (UBI) – a regular, unconditional payment to all citizens – has been shown to improve wellbeing, reduce poverty, and increase health and education outcomes, without reducing labour market participation (Jones & Marinescu, 2022). For Māori, particularly those in the precariat or outside the formal labour market, a UBI could provide a baseline of financial stability from which to pursue education, entrepreneurship, or caregiving. However, UBI is less likely to address the structural wealth gap on its own, as it does not provide capital or ownership. It is best understood as a foundational floor, not a transformative asset strategy.

4. Asset transfers: Providing capital for intergenerational mobility

International models, such as India's Targeting the Ultra Poor programme, demonstrate that one-off asset transfers – whether in the form of land, livestock, or productive capital – can generate long-term improvements in income, consumption, and wellbeing (Banerjee et al., 2021). These interventions are effective not because they simply alleviate poverty, but because they provide the initial capital required to enter and sustain economic participation – something many low-wealth households are systematically denied.

While the Indian context is radically different to Aotearoa, asset transfers could offer a vital mechanism to address the historical exclusion from capital ownership – particularly if targeted to housing, land, and enterprise. They also provide an alternative to universal approaches like UBI, which redistribute income but do not

resolve the underlying issue of asset deprivation. While UBI can build a floor, asset transfers create a platform – enabling Māori to invest, accumulate, and participate in long-term wealth generation.

To maximise their effectiveness, asset transfers in Aotearoa could potentially be implemented through public-iwi partnerships, whereby the Crown works directly with iwi entities to design, co-invest in, and implement targeted economic development initiatives. These partnerships would build on the strengths of iwi corporations and trusts, many of which already possess strong governance, commercial disciplines, and deep knowledge of their rohe (territories), assets, and whānau needs. By aligning government investment with iwi-led strategies, such partnerships could support the development of industries connected to existing iwi resource bases – such as land-based enterprises, aquaculture, fisheries, farming, renewable energy, tourism, or digital infrastructure.

This model also addresses the risk of one-size-fits-all policy failure. Māori are not a homogenous group, and iwi vary widely in geography, population, assets, and post-settlement capacity. Asset transfer mechanisms designed in partnership with iwi ensure that interventions are locally responsive, culturally grounded, and strategically aligned with long-term whānau wellbeing. They also represent a step towards tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) – a process where Māori exercise autonomy not only in cultural or political spheres but in the stewardship and development of intergenerational wealth.

Unlike passive income redistribution, asset transfers tied to iwi development strategies have the potential to generate self-sustaining economic returns, build resilience, and transform structural inequality at the level of communities. They recognise that the solution to Māori wealth exclusion cannot be individualised. It must be systemic, historical, and generative.

5. Targeted cash transfers: Reducing volatility, enabling investment

While smaller in scale than asset transfers, cash transfers – whether conditional (linked to education or health outcomes) or unconditional – can alleviate poverty and enable short-term investments in wellbeing (Banerjee et al., 2016). Māori households in the lowest wealth quintiles, who face economic insecurity due to stagnant wages and rising living costs, could benefit significantly from targeted cash transfers as part of broader structural reforms.

6. Intergenerational insurance: Smoothing risk across time

Intergenerational insurance mechanisms, as explored by Lancia et al. (2024), involve risk-sharing across generations to stabilise income and wealth in the face of

economic volatility. Such policies could be designed to protect Māori households from the economic effects of recessions, job loss, or climate change related displacement. These schemes recognise that the effects of exclusion compound over time – and that redress must also be designed to span generations.

7. Multi-faceted interventions: Addressing structural barriers holistically

Complex problems require complex solutions. Programmes that combine cash transfers, asset provision, financial literacy training, and savings facilities – such as those trialled by Banerjee et al. (2022) – have shown long-term benefits in wealth accumulation. For Māori, these multi-pronged strategies could be developed through partnerships with iwi, hapū, and Māori social enterprises, offering locally responsive and culturally grounded pathways to prosperity.

Recommendations

To translate these policy approaches into real outcomes, a long-term, cross-sectoral commitment is required. The following recommendations are offered to guide policymakers, practitioners, and institutions working towards wealth equity in Aotearoa:

- **Acknowledge that the wealth gap exists – and that it matters.**
Public and political consensus is a prerequisite for meaningful reform. There must be an explicit recognition that the wealth gap between Māori and European New Zealanders is not only real but structurally embedded, and that it undermines national wellbeing.
- **Improve data quality and communicate findings honestly.**
Address the limitations of current statistical systems, particularly under-reporting at the top and bottom of the distribution. Invest in longitudinal and disaggregated wealth data, and ensure findings are shared transparently to inform public debate and policy design.
- **Address the problem holistically.**
Wealth inequality is not an isolated economic issue – it is tied to education, housing, taxation, health, colonisation, and social norms. No single policy will suffice. Instead, mutually reinforcing strategies must be developed across multiple domains.
- **Adopt a macroeconomic lens.**
Recognise that housing, finance, and taxation are deeply interconnected. Structural changes, such as taxing capital gains or regulating speculative investment, must be made with an eye towards their broader impacts on wealth distribution and social mobility.

- **Invest in Māori-led research and development.**

Support Māori research that investigates poverty, wealth accumulation, and effective interventions. Policies must be grounded not only in evidence but also in the values and knowledge systems of Māori communities.

- **Prioritise youth and intergenerational equity.**

Target resources towards tamariki and rangatahi Māori, whose life trajectories will shape the future of Aotearoa. Early intervention in education, housing, and capital access can prevent disadvantage from being passed on to the next generation.

Ultimately, wealth inequality is not just an outcome – it is a system, deeply embedded in Aotearoa’s colonial past and capitalist present. Transforming that system will require courage, sustained investment, and a commitment to equity not only in rhetoric but in resource allocation. The policy tools exist. The question now is whether there is the political and public will to use them.

Te whakaaro whakatepe: Te whiwhi i te tōkeke kore - he kōrero mō te whairawa, te papapori, me te anamata o Aotearoa

Conclusion: Inheriting inequality – wealth, class, and the future of Aotearoa

This chapter has traced the contours of wealth inequality in Aotearoa New Zealand through the lens of Māori experience, revealing not only the persistence of economic exclusion, but the structural mechanisms that continue to reproduce it. The data presented shows that Māori – especially those identifying solely as Māori or Māori-other – are consistently overrepresented in the lowest wealth quintiles and significantly under-represented among the asset-rich elite. Despite some gains in percentage terms, the absolute wealth gap between Māori and European New Zealanders remains significant, and in many cases, is growing.

These findings confirm what has long been known by Māori communities but often ignored by policymakers: that wealth inequality is not merely a reflection of income differences or individual behaviours, but a consequence of historical dispossession, ongoing structural exclusion, and the logic of an asset-based capitalist economy. Class theory offers a valuable lens for understanding these dynamics. The marginalisation of Māori within the wealth structure of Aotearoa aligns with Guy Standing’s (2011) concept of the precariat – a social class marked by economic insecurity, unstable employment, and limited access to capital. Many Māori whānau find themselves in precisely this position: living with insufficient assets to buffer

life's shocks, unable to invest in education or housing, and excluded from the compounding benefits of capital ownership.

At the same time, the consistent advantage held by European New Zealanders in every quintile – particularly in the top three – reveals the enduring power of structural stratification. As theorists like Keister and Moller (2000), Shapiro (2004), and Piketty (2014) argue, modern class hierarchies are not simply determined by wages, but by the capacity to acquire and grow assets. Wealth is increasingly intergenerational and self-reinforcing. It is a structure – one that distributes power and opportunity unevenly across society and passes that distribution down through time.

The form this stratification takes in Aotearoa has a particular character. Here, asset-based capitalism, which centres homeownership, investment property, and capital gains as the primary vehicles for wealth growth, operates atop a colonial foundation that systematically denied Māori access to those very assets. The exclusion of Māori from the housing market, capital markets, and land ownership has not only been historical – it remains current, perpetuated by policies that privilege those already holding wealth.

The data analysed in this chapter shows that the greatest returns accrue to those who already have capital – especially in housing. European New Zealanders' steady growth in median net worth reflects this reality. In contrast, the wealth growth of Māori – particularly in the middle quintiles – is volatile, uncertain, and too often insufficient to close the gap. The Māori-other group, in particular, experiences marked instability across time, underscoring the layered disadvantage that comes from being both outside of European identity and structurally removed from capital access.

Solutions, then, must be more than symbolic. They must be redistributive, reparative, and future-oriented. As outlined in the 'Policy implications and pathways towards wealth equity' section, this requires a suite of interventions – from housing reform and asset transfers to intergenerational insurance and targeted cash supports – that challenge the very architecture of inequality. But none of these policies will succeed unless they are grounded in acknowledgement: of the historical expropriation of Māori wealth, of the enduring privileges of asset-holders, and of the class structure that continues to stratify Aotearoa.

Wealth inequality is not simply a matter of who has more – it is a question of who is allowed to accumulate, who is structurally excluded, and what kind of society we are willing to sustain. Without intervention, the current patterns will continue. European New Zealanders will inherit more, accumulate more, and compound more. Māori, by contrast, will be expected to fund the future of the state while being denied its

returns. If Aotearoa is serious about justice – economic, social, or constitutional – then confronting wealth inequality is not optional. It is essential. The data presented here should not only challenge the myth of Māori privilege currently promoted, but it should also provoke a reckoning with the economic legacy of colonisation and the class structures that have grown in its shadow.

Ngā tohutoro

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Te āpitihanga
Appendix

This appendix provides tables of raw net worth data from Stats NZ.

Table 4.1. Median net worth statistics by quintile and ethnicity in Aotearoa New Zealand for 2015.

Quintile	Ethnicity	Median net worth (NZ\$)	RSE (95% confidence)	Median difference (European minus Māori identity groups; NZ\$)	Percentage difference	European wealth premium
1	European-only	–	618.4			
	Māori-European	(14,000)	76.2	14,000		
	Māori-other	(10,000)	177.6	10,000		
	Māori-only	(9,000)	102.6	9,000		
2	European-only	38,000	10.1			
	Māori-European	3,000	109	35,000	92%	13×
	Māori-other	–	0	38,000	100%	38,000×
	Māori-only	–	24.2	38,000	100%	38,000×
3	European-only	153,000	6.7			
	Māori-European	23,000	25.5	130,000	85%	7×
	Māori-other	2,000	38.3	151,000	99%	77×
	Māori-only	9,000	8.6	144,000	94%	17×
4	European-only	334,000	3.7			
	Māori-European	83,000	5	251,000	75%	4×
	Māori-other	18,000	45.4	316,000	95%	19×
	Māori-only	45,000	18	289,000	87%	7×
5	European-only	827,000	6.9			
	Māori-European	426,000	16.8	401,000	48%	2×
	Māori-other	216,000	263.1	611,000	74%	4×
	Māori-only	191,000	18.4	636,000	77%	4×

Note: The dashes in this table represent unreported data. The empty cells in this table represent instances where it is not practical to calculate a wealth premium.

Table 4.2. Median net worth statistics by quintile and ethnicity in Aotearoa New Zealand for 2018.

Quintile	Ethnicity	Median net worth (NZ\$)	RSE (95% confidence)	Median difference (European minus Māori identity groups; NZ\$)	Percentage difference	European wealth premium
1	European-only	(1,000)	72.9			
	Māori-European	(5,000)	6.4	6,000		0.2×
	Māori-other	(10,000)	152.8	11,000		0.1×
	Māori-only	(1,000)	113.5	2,000		1×
2	European-only	46,000	7.7			
	Māori-European	7,000	30.3	39,000	85%	7×
	Māori-other	0	0	46,000	100%	46,000×
	Māori-only	2,000	15.4	44,000	96%	23×
3	European-only	192,000	2.1			
	Māori-European	27,000	11	165,000	86%	7×
	Māori-other	2,000	28.2	190,000	99%	96×
	Māori-only	16,000	30.7	176,000	92%	12×
4	European-only	416,000	3.5			
	Māori-European	148,000	11	268,000	64%	3×
	Māori-other	13,000	97.5	403,000	97%	32×
	Māori-only	66,000	17.1	350,000	84%	6×
5	European-only	1,034,000	4.7			
	Māori-European	591,000	25.4	443,000	43%	2×
	Māori-other	79,000	147.8	955,000	92%	13×
	Māori-only	320,000	21.2	714,000	69%	3×

Note: The empty cells in this table represent instances where it is not practical to calculate a wealth premium.

Table 4.3. Median net worth statistics by quintile and ethnicity in Aotearoa New Zealand for 2021

Quintile	Ethnicity	Median net worth (NZ\$)	RSE (95% confidence)	Median difference (European minus Māori identity groups; NZ\$)	Percentage difference	European wealth premium
1	European-only	2,000	13			
	Māori-European	–	115.1	2,000	100%	2,000×
	Māori-other	(15,000)	132.4	17,000	850%	0.1×
	Māori-only	–	224.4	2,000	100%	2,000×
2	European-only	49,000	8.1			
	Māori-European	11,000	31.8	38,000	78%	2×
	Māori-other	–	171.5	49,000	100%	49,000×
	Māori-only	5,000	24.1	44,000	90%	10×
3	European-only	203,000	4.1			
	Māori-European	46,000	21.8	157,000	77%	4×
	Māori-other	9,000	63.4	194,000	96%	23×
	Māori-only	28,000	2.7	175,000	86%	7×
4	European-only	463,000	2.4			
	Māori-European	179,000	8	284,000	61%	3×
	Māori-other	24,000	10.6	439,000	95%	19×
	Māori-only	102,000	12	361,000	78%	5×
5	European-only	1,207,000	8.6			
	Māori-European	630,000	3.3	577,000	48%	2×
	Māori-other	323,000	69.5	884,000	73%	4×
	Māori-only	412,000	16.9	795,000	66%	3×

Note: The empty cells in this table represent instances where it is not practical to calculate a wealth premium.

Table 4.4. Percentage change in median net worth across ethnicities in Aotearoa New Zealand for 2015, 2018, and 2021.

Quintile	Ethnicity	Median net worth (NZ\$)			% change 2015–2018	% change 2018–2021	% change 2015–2021
		2015	2018	2021			
3	European-only	153,000	192,000	203,000	33%	25%	6%
	Māori-European	23,000	27,000	46,000	100%	17%	70%
	Māori-other	2,000	2,000	9,000	350%	0%	350%
	Māori-only	9,000	16,000	28,000	211%	78%	75%
4	European-only	334,000	416,000	463,000	39%	25%	11%
	Māori-European	83,000	148,000	179,000	116%	78%	21%
	Māori-other	18,000	13,000	24,000	33%	–28%	85%
	Māori-only	45,000	66,000	102,000	127%	47%	55%
5	European-only	827,000	1,034,000	1,207,000	46%	25%	17%
	Māori-European	426,000	591,000	630,000	48%	39%	7%
	Māori-other	216,000	79,000	323,000	50%	–63%	309%
	Māori-only	191,000	320,000	412,000	116%	68%	29%

Note: The dashes in this table represent unreported data.

Te whakamatua

Interlude

– Chellie Spiller, Tāne Karamaina,
Te Ata-a-rua Hansen-Cribb and Matt Rout

Karakia whakatuwhera

Whakataka te hau ki te uru
Whakataka te hau ki te tonga
Kia mākinakina ki uta
Kia mātaratara ki tai
E hī ake ana te atākura
He tio, he huka, he hauhū
Tihei mauri ora!

He puna manawa rawatoi tini tēnei whakamatuatanga, ko tāna he tuku pōwhiri ki a koe kia noho i tēnei wāhi auaha, whakamīharo hoki. Ko tā mātou he whakarato i tēnei hei wheako tairongo, tauwhati i te rongo me te kite hoki. E tono atu ana tēnei wheako ki ngā kaipānui kia pāhekoheko mai ki te ao Māori mā tētahi tirohanga hōu.

Ka tīmata ki te karanga ki te kōpikopiko i te ara o te wātū pūmau me te hoki atu ki te mātāpuna. Kuhu atu ki ngā ao o Te Kore rāua ko Te Pō – arā, te mutukoretanga, ngā taiawenga (mauri, hau, mana), me te waehere pūmahara. Tēra tētahi kōtiro Māori e anga atu ana ki roto i te makaurangi. Ko ia te whakatinanatanga o te whakawhitinga ki tua atu i te paepae – ka tokona ake te whakaaro ki ngā kōrero tawhito, hōu hoki, me ngā āhuatanga o te wā nei, tae atu ki ngā waihotanga.

Ka kawea tātou e ngā au toikupu ki Te Ao Mārama me Tāne Mahuta. Ka kuhu ia ki te ao o te tauutuutu, te whakapapa, me te rangatiratanga.

E akiaki ana tētahi hūnuku wete tāmi i a tātou ki te whakaaroaro ki ngā āhuatanga e maumaharatia ana me ngā āhuatanga e ngaro ana. Arā, ngā āhuatanga e mahue ana i tā tātou āta whai i ngā kōrero tuku iho me tā tātou kawē i aua kōrero ki mua.

Ka whakamutua te whakamatuatanga ki tētahi whāriki i oti ai te raranga. E whakaatu ana taua whāriki i ngā whakaaro mātuatua e whakatakotoria ana i te Wāhanga 2: Ngā Huanui. E whakamārama ana tēnei wāhanga i te ōhanga hāngai, ora hoki – ehara tēnei wāhanga i te rūnātanga, engari he tauira mataora kē e karanga atu ana ki a koe ki te tūhura i ōna hononga. Hei te whārangi whakamutunga he kōrero kotahi whārangi hei tuitui i ngā kōrero.

Kei te taha tonu o te haerenga e whakaahuatia ana i roto i ngā whārangi, tērā anō tētahi miro toikupu e whatua ana – e whakatakotoria ana he whakaaro ki ia o ngā kaupapa, e whakaoho ake ana i tēnei tūāoma i ngā rangi, i te mata o te whenua hoki. He purapura whetū tātou e takea ana i tēnei ao.

Ko tō mātou hiahia kia noho ngā toikupu i te reo Māori me te reo Ingarihi i te whakawhitinga kōrero – hei puna whakaaro whai.

The interlude is a multi-modal oasis in the middle for you to dwell in creativity and mystery.

We offer it as a sensory, sense-disrupting experience that invites readers to engage with te ao Māori from a different perspective.

It begins with an invitation to wander the path of the perpetual present and return to source. Enter the realms of Te Kore and Te Pō – timelessness, energies (mauri, hau, mana), and the memory code. A young Māori girl looking into a spiral symbolises this threshold – evoking the ancient and modern, the present and the intergenerational.

Poetic slipstreams then take us to Te Ao Mārama and Tāne Mahuta. She enters the world of reciprocity, whakapapa, and rangatiratanga.

A decolonial turn halts us to reflect on presences and absences – what gets left out in how we read history and carry the past forward.

The Interlude finishes with a woven whāriki that visually maps the core ideas explored in Part 2: Pathways. It illuminates a relational, living economy – not a summary, but a pattern. The final page provides a concise one-page narrative to sew things together.

Alongside the journey depicted across the pages, there's also a poetic thread running through – offering reflections on each theme igniting a cosmic vs earthly journey, speaking to the idea that we are both star-born and grounded in this world.

We wanted the te reo Māori and English poetry to be in dialogue with each other – not as translations but as pools of thought in relationship.

Te Hātea
WĀTEA

Kia wātea a tamaroto i te tūtuki
o ngā whakaaro,

PĀTEA

Kia noho pātea hoki i te
ngangau o te marea,

ĀTEA

Kia ātea te huarahi whakamua i
ngā taero a Kupe

This Interlude is a wellspring,
an oasis in the middle for you to
rest wonder and reflect
Wander the path of the perpetual
present return to the source

He puna wai tēnei upoko, he puna
manawa i waenga pū, he wāhi mōu
ki te whakatā, te whakamīharo me
te whakaaroaro hoki
Haere i te ara o te nāianeī pūmau,
me hoki atu ki te mātāpuna



Te Kore

Ngangahu kore,
Tō āhua,
Tō whanonga,
Tō koringa,

Arakore
Tō manawa,
Tō mōhio,
Tō kōrero,

Mutukore
Tō mana,
Tō toronga,
Tō tīaringa

Te Pō

Pō nui,
Pō roa,
Pō mamao,
He uhi mōku tō ataarangi,
I aku moenga,
Ō papanga,
Tē kitea tō mata,
Tē rangona tō reo,
Tē pāia tō kiri,
I tō tinana ia ko te whānau
mārama,
Kakapo ana me he tauira
oraora,
He tūpuna tiro tiro i te uri
tangata
me āna mahi i te pō – he
wānanga, he kanikani, he
takoto, he moe,
E tohu ana i te ara ki te
wānanga,
Ki Hawaiki,
Ki te hono-i-wairua,
Kia ao ai a ngāi tāngata

Go to the edge

Journey to the hidden realm at the
centre of the cosmos

Te Kore
reach through the folds of time
touch the timeless the void where
memory gathers and beginnings
are possibilities
Imprinted with the memory code

Ride the slipstreams of vital
energies mauri, mana, hihiri, hau
through the dark nights

Whano ki te mutunga

Haere ki te wāhi ngaro i te manawa
o te ao nui mārama

Te Kore

Kia toro atu i ngā ngene i te wā
Kia pā te ringa ki te korekore wā
kore
te wāhi e huihui rā te pūmahara,
he pitomata ngā tīmatanga kua oti
te tā ki te wae here pūmahara, te
wānanga

Whakatere i ngā au o ngā
taiawenga whaitake, arā, te mauri,
te mana, te hihiri, me te hau i ngā
pō uriuri



Te Ao Mārama

Pahū mai ko te mārama,
 Me he tainiwhaniwha,
 Rā atu, rā mai, he waipuke i tō
 tātou kāinga,
 He korakora e whai āhua ai ngā
 mea o tēnei ao,
 He tō mai i ngā āhuatanga kore
 kitea
 Kia whitikina e te aho,
 He kawē mahana hei kai mā
 kiri,
 He tūrama i te pōuri,
 E aho, he tere tō rere,
 Te kā mai o te rama i te whatu
 tangata,
 I tō hīnātore mai,
 He whakaata i te meka tūturu,
 E ngoto ai ki te rangi,
 He whaitake ki te ora

Tāne

Nāu te whakakitenga,
 Ki te kauawhi i Te Ao Mārama,
 He māia, he pakari, he tū tonu,
 He ārahi i ngā tuākana me ngā
 tēina,
 Te tamāroa i tauwehe ai a
 Rangi me Papa,
 Ko te rākau tō ritenga,
 Hei whakakāinga i a manu, i a
 tāngata,
 I tōu haerenga atu ki Kurawaka,
 Nāu a Hinetītama i āhua mai i
 te onekura,
 E toko ai te mauri,
 E puta ai te uri tangata,
 He wāhine, he tāne,
 Nāu te ao, nā Hine te pō
 Tū motuhake, tū takirua,
 He matua, he whaea
 He poipoi kōhungahunga,
 He manaaki taipakeke

Emerge in Te Ao Mārama, meet in
 the realm of Tāne Mahuta
 interlaced in radical reciprocity
 with ancestors human and of other
 kin
 Rocks, mosses, trees, insects, birds
 Stand in the ātea, a sacred clearing
 A rā ngāti rā bathed in shafts of
 light
 Arise light beings
 Tihei mauri ora!

Tū mai ki Te Ao Mārama
 tūtaki mai ki te wao nui a Tāne
 Mahuta,
 he ao e tuituia ana ki te tauutuutu
 tūturu,
 hui ki ngā tūpuna tangata me ngā
 tūpuna o ngā whanaunga
 pērā i ngā toka, ngā kohukohu, ngā
 rākau, ngā ngārara, ngā manu
 Tū mai ki te ātea, ki te waerenga
 tapu
 Arā te huhua noa o ngā mea koiōra
 e pāinaina ana i ngā pou o te
 Mārama
 E ara, e ngā uri o te ao Mārama
 Tihei mauri ora!



Te Whakapākehā

Ka whānau māori noa mai te
Māori,
Engari, ka pākehā tonu te āhua
o tōna kuranga,
He “takaporipori” i te Māori te
karawhiu,
E kāpō ai ia ki ngā meka,
E tika ai tāna tū i te ao Pākehā,
Hei aha mā wai te ao o nehe,
Kōkiri whakamua,
Nō te Pākehā te ao,
E te Māori, nunumi atu ki te pō,
E māmā ai tāna noho, kua ko
tāu

Te Whakamāori

Maranga!
He harikoa te pūrere,
te whakarere i a Whakamā, a
Kūware, a
Pōhēhē, a Riri, a Kanokanoā,
He harikoa te noho,
te kauawhi i a Māia, a Whēiro, a
Mārama, a Koa,
Hei wete i ngā here,
E herekore ai te wairua,
E rangatira ai te tū,
He tūhauora i te reo o te
tangata,
Kia kī pohapoha tōna
hinengaro i ngā kōrero o
tuaukiuki,
He whakamāori anō i te wairua,
Ko te whakapapa te tūāpapa,
Ki te whakatau atu –
He kākano ahau,
E kore anō e ngaro

Te Takapau Wharanui

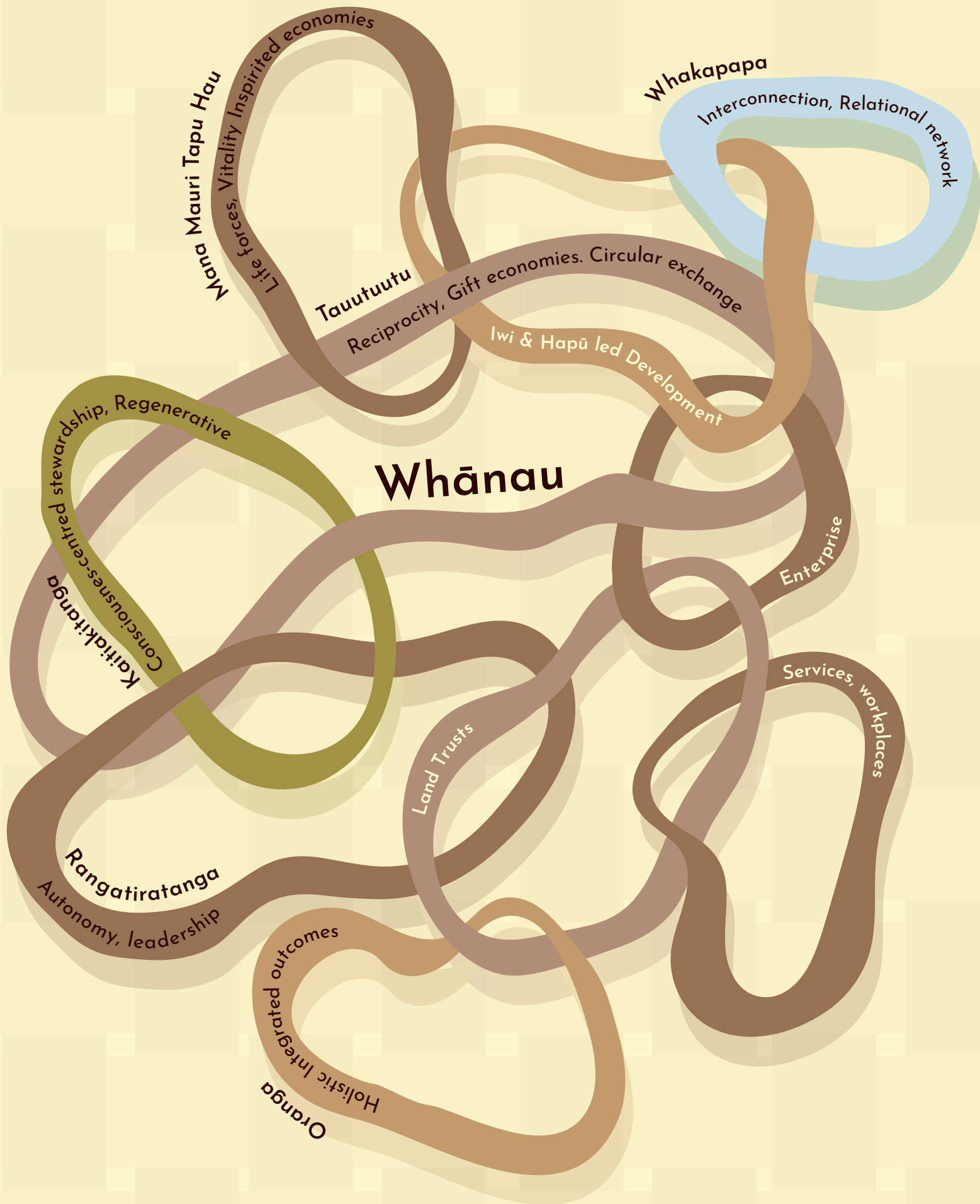
He mea mahi,
Hei takotoranga,
Hei moenga,
E maruāpō ai,
Ngā mātua,
Ki ngā uri whakaheke,
O raurangi,
E tutuki ai
Te whakahau
Kia ora

Whakapapa is presence
and absence

Gather the absences that give
pattern its
form
held in balance by the spaces in
between
The silences of words unspoken
stories untold
and the disappeared

He maumaharatanga,
he ngaronga hoki te whakapapa

Kohia ngā ngaronga e whai āhua ai
ngā tauira
e whakatautikangia ana e ngā
hemanga i waenganui
i ngā haumūmūtanga o ngā kupu
tē kīia,
ngā pakiwaitara tē kōrerotia,
me te hunga kua ngaro atu rā



Te Whāriki o te Oranga-
The fabric of Māori Economies of Wellbeing

Māori economies of wellbeing: Key ideas in brief

1. It starts with worldview

Te ao Māori (the Māori worldview) sees the world as alive and deeply interconnected. Everything – land, people, rivers, trees – is related through whakapapa (genealogy). This is more than ancestry; it's the blueprint of reality.

2. Economies are about relationships

Traditional Māori economies were not about profits or markets. They were about mana (prestige, authority), whanaungatanga (relationships), and reciprocity. Giving, not hoarding, was how value and status were built. An economy is an emergent property of the relational network in which it occurs.

3. Whānau at the centre

The whānau (extended family) was the core economic and social unit – not the individual. Decisions were made together. Resources were shared. Wellbeing was collective.

4. Guided by spiritual forces

Māori economics is spiritual. Concepts like mana, tapu (sacredness), wairua (spirit), and mauri (life force) shaped how things were made, traded, and cared for. All things had energy and dignity – even land and water.

5. Built for balance

Wellbeing came from balance – between people, with nature, across generations. This required kaitiakitanga (guardianship of the environment), utu (restoring harmony), and caring for the hau (spiritual essence) of all exchanges.

6. Not locked in the past

The traditional Māori economy was flexible and adaptive – it changed with time, place, and need. That same adaptability is key to building future Māori economies of wellbeing.

7. Wellbeing is holistic

Māori wellbeing spans physical, emotional, spiritual, and cultural dimensions. You can't trade one for the other. Economic decisions must honour all of them.

8. Building whakapapa and kaupapa networks

Māori economies have largely been decentralised networks rather than hierarchies. These networks are built on whakapapa and kaupapa, seeing people collaborate based on shared kinship, values, purpose, and goals. These networks are flexible and adaptive to change; they facilitate flows of information, materials, support, and aroha, and in so doing they grow collective wellbeing.

Ngā ōhanga Māori o te oranga: He whakarāpopototanga o ngā whakaaro mātuatua

1. Ka tīmata ki tā te ao Māori titiro, arā, ki Te Ao Mārama

E ai ki tā te ao Māori tirohanga (arā, te titiro a ngāi Māori) e ora ana te ao, ā, e kaha tūhonongia ana. E honoa ana ngā āhuatanga katoa - arā, te whenua, ngā tāngata, ngā awa, tae atu ki ngā rākau - mā te whakapapa. He nui noa ake tēnei i te tātai; ko ia te tūāpapa o tēnei ao.

2. Ko ngā hononga te pūtake o te ōhanga

E takea ana ngā ōhanga i te whanaungatanga. Kāore ngā ōhanga Māori o mua i aro ki ngā monihua, ki ngā māketete rānei. Ko te mana (arā, te ihi me te wehi tae atu ki te rangatiratanga), te whanaungatanga (arā, ngā hononga) me te tauutuutu te aronga o ngā ōhanga. Nā te koha i mana ai te tangata, ehara i te whakaputu rawa. He hua o ngā hononga te ōhanga. Ko aua hononga e waihanganga ana i te whatunga e whakatū ana i te ōhanga.

3. Ko te whanau te pokapū

Ko te whānau te waeine pāpori, ōhanga matua i te ao Māori - ehara i te tangata takitahi. Ka whakaae te katoa ki ngā whakatau. I tohaina ngā rauemi. Nō te katoa te oranga.

4. Ka arahina e te ao wairua

He taha wairua tō te ohaoha Māori. I whakaawe ngā whakaaro pērā i te mana, te tapu, te wairua, me te mauri i te āhua o te hanganga, te tauhokohokotanga, me te tiakitanga hoki o ngā taonga. He mana, he amaru tō ngā āhuatanga katoa - tae rawa atu ki te whenua me te wai.

5. I waihangatia kia taurite

I ahu mai te oranga i te taurite - i waenga i te tangata, i te taiao, i roto i ngā whakatupuranga. Ko te kaitiakitanga (arā, te tiakitanga o te taiao), te utu (te whakaea), te manaaki i te hau (te mauri) i ngā kurutete katoa.

6. Kāore i herea ki ngā wā o mua

He raungāwari, he urutau hoki te ōhanga Māori o mua - ka rerekē tōna āhua i runga i ngā āhuatanga o te wā, wāhi, me ngā hiahia. He āhuatanga whaitake taua momo urutau i te waihangatanga o ngā ōhanga oranga Māori i anamata.

7. He torowhārahi te oranga

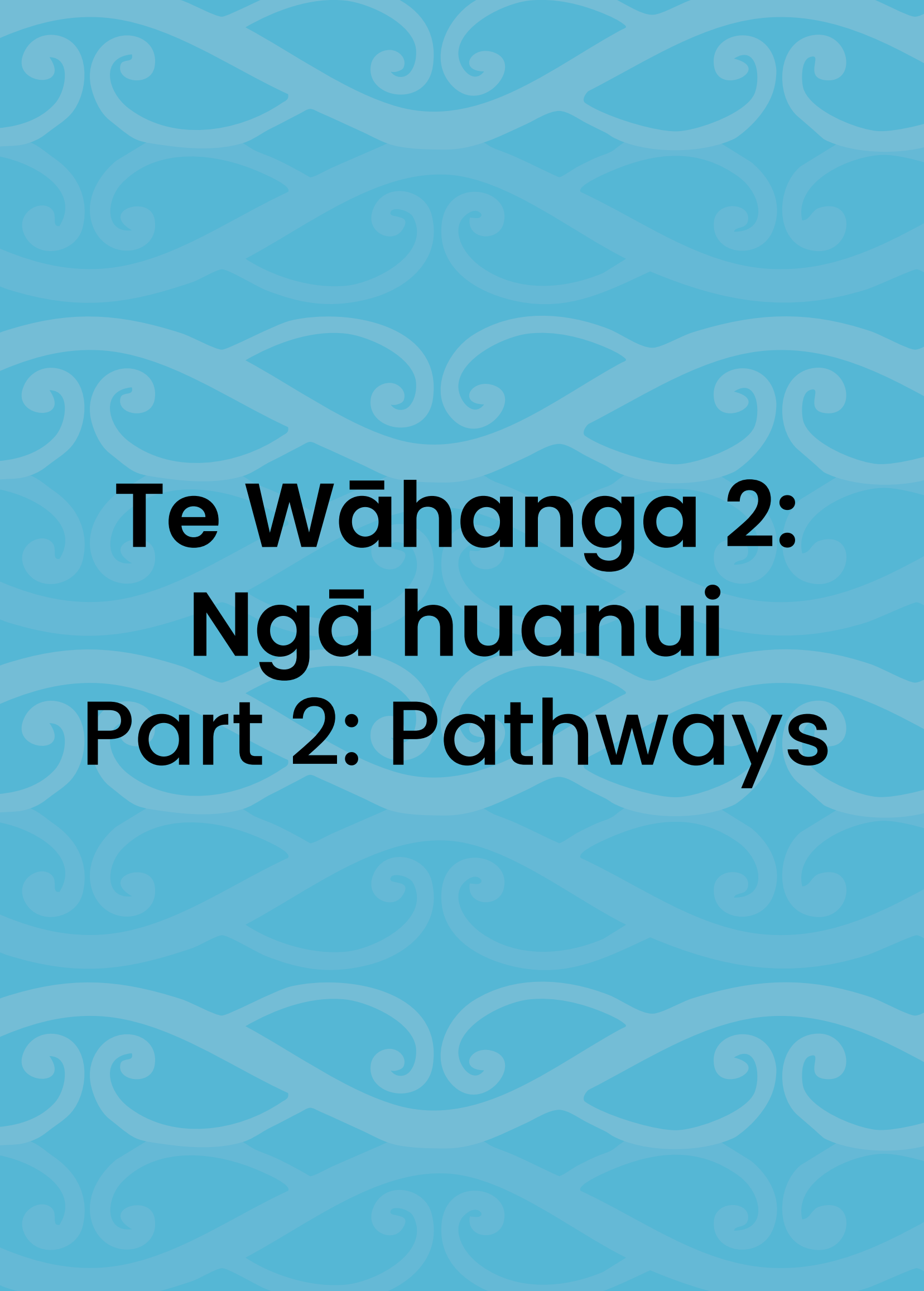
E whā ngā taha o te oranga Māori, arā, te taha tinana, taha hinengaro, taha wairua, tae atu ki te taha ahurea. E kore tētahi e taea e koe te whakakapi ki tētahi atu. Me whakakoha ngā whakatau ohaoha i aua taha katoa.

8. Te raranga hononga whakapapa, hononga kaupapa hoki

I te nuinga o te wā, he whatunga motuhake ngā ōhanga Māori, ehara i te whatunga whai paparanga. Ko te whakapapa me te kaupapa te tūāpapa o ēnei whatunga. I ēnei whatunga ka mahi tahi ngā tāngata i runga i te kotahitanga o te kaupapa, te whanaungatanga, ngā uara tae atu ki ngā whāinga. He raungāwari, he urutau hoki ēnei whatunga ki te panonitanga. Waihoki, e whakaahei ana ēnei whatunga i te tukunga o ngā pārongo, rawa, tautoko, me te aroha. Ko te tukunga iho ko te tupu o te oranga kiritōpū.

Karakia whakakapi

Kia whakairia te tapu
Kia wātea ai te ara
Kia turuki whakataha ai
Kia turuki whakataha ai
Haumi e. Hui e. Tāiki e!

The background of the image is a solid light blue color. Overlaid on this background is a repeating pattern of stylized, darker blue wave-like or scroll-like motifs. These motifs are arranged in a grid-like fashion, creating a textured, aquatic feel. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

Te Wāhanga 2: Ngā huanui Part 2: Pathways

Upoko 5: Ngā ōhanga Māori i te oranga

Chapter 5: Māori economies of wellbeing

– Matthew Rout

This chapter seeks to examine the literature on Māori economies of wellbeing with the aim of providing an overview of the key components and principles, and thus the pathways that will help guide future Māori economies of wellbeing. This is also intended to provide the theoretical, conceptual, and historical foundation for the rest of this section of the book. It has been organised according to the themes of Mānuka Hēnare's economy of mana (prestige, authority):

- It emanates from a Māori worldview and is informed by traditional Māori economics.
- It is inspired by a holistic view of wellbeing.
- It is embedded in the ecological system that sustains it.
- It is a system that is capable of reorganising itself to create new futures.
- It manifests as reciprocity and gift exchange.
- It requires a multidisciplinary approach to its research (Dell et al., 2018).

The reasons for utilising Hēnare's economy of mana as the main organising framework are manifold. Primarily, it is viewed as one of the most influential Māori economic frameworks. Most academics working at the nexus of Māori economics and wellbeing utilise or at least reference the economy of mana (see Dell et al., 2018; Mika et al., 2022; Rout et al., 2021; Scobie & Sturman, 2020; Spiller et al., 2011). It is also the most relevant analytical framework. Where scholars like Amoamo, Ruckstuhl, and Ruwhiu (2018) and Bargh (2011) have utilised Gibson-Graham's diverse economies theory, and Rout and Reid (2019) and Rout et al. (2021) have applied institutional economics as a key analytical framework to Māori economics, these approaches are not intended to capture the 'essence' of traditional Māori economic practices but rather serve as a useful armature for exploring various Māori economies over time. As well as being the most relevant, the economy of mana is also viewed as having a good balance between being prescriptive and descriptive,

providing both overarching guidance and freedom of applicability. It is a broad framework that covers all aspects of Māori economic reality but it is not dogmatic or doctrinal; it can be applied in a number of ways, suiting a multidisciplinary project like this. Finally, Mānuka Hēnare himself held huge mana in the field; he was the first lecturer in Māori Business Development at the University of Auckland, founded the Dame Mira Szaszy Research Centre, sat on the Māori Economic Development Advisory Board, which provided advice to Treasury on the Living Standards Framework amongst other functions, and was co-leader of the Ngā Pae o Te Māramatanga 'Whai Rawa – Māori Economies' theme.

Before addressing each of the themes of the economy of mana, outlining how various concepts and terms are seen to fit together is useful, as there are references to worldviews, values, principles, kaupapa (principles/beliefs), tikanga (values/ethics/norms), and numerous other nebulous and often overlapping ideas. The following will attempt to provide some order and connection to the chaos. This, it should be noted, is somewhat arbitrary as there is little consistency in how these concepts are used in either broader scholarship or Māori-specific work.

Here worldviews are understood as the primary lens through which people understand reality. They are “the fundamental cognitive orientation of a society, subgroup, or even an individual” (Palmer, 1996, p. 114). Worldviews have been broken up in a number of ways. They can be seen as covering ontology (what reality is), epistemology (how reality can be understood), axiology (what matters in reality), and anthropology (what humanity’s role is in reality) (de Witt, 2015). Similarly, they can be described as containing an explanation of the world; a purpose or destination for the world; answers to ethical questions; a praxeology, or theory of action; an epistemology, or theory of knowledge; and an aetiology, or story of origins (Aerts et al., 2007). An apt metaphorical categorisation that captures these more complex notions is that worldviews provide lenses for focusing perception, filters for aiding interpretation, and compasses for guiding actions (Naugle, 2002). Worldviews are made up of presuppositions that people hold about how the world works. The presuppositions run the gamut from simplistic insights into sensory experiences through to more fundamental beliefs – often referred to as axioms, principles, or postulates – that inform how people think and behave, as well as a corresponding set of norms and rules that provide more specific guides to action and also often motivate that action.

For many though not all Māori, these are kaupapa and tikanga, respectively. As Marsden (2003) explains, kaupapa and tikanga “are juxtaposed and interconnected in Māori thinking” (p. 66). Kaupapa is the foundational source of guidance, with tikanga as the way in which these presuppositions are put into action. However, these are not used in the same way by everyone, and in some cases their definitions

are flipped. Here, this chapter will be consistent in the use of these terms, with te ao Māori or Māori worldview referring to the overarching cognitive framework, kaupapa referring to the core principles that emerge from it, and tikanga referring to the even more specific and often action-oriented norms and rules.

E ahu mai ana i te tirohanga Māori, ā, e whakaawengia ana e ngā ōhanga Māori tuku iho

Emanates from a Māori worldview and is informed by traditional Māori economies

Future Māori economies of wellbeing need to be guided by te ao Māori and need to operate with similar – if modified to suit the current context – parameters to the traditional pre-contact Māori economy. Economies “as relational systems are both embedded in and emerge out of worldviews”, Wolfgramm et al. (2018, p. 7) note. “In Māori economies”, Scobie and Sturman (2020) specify, “kinship was woven through economic groupings so that it exerted comprehensive economic functions” (p. 31). A Māori economy emerges out of te ao Māori and is guided by the core precepts of this worldview, which, as both these quotes indicate, are premised on relationality and kinship. These will soon be addressed.

However, it should be stated that reference here to a singular ‘te ao Māori’ needs to be moderated somewhat. While it is likely that most pre-contact Māori groups shared very similar fundamental presuppositions about the world, particularly around the centrality of whakapapa and the role of the cosmic forces, the ways in which different Māori groupings over time and across the motu would have embodied and expressed these would have varied. That is the reason there is so much divergence in tikanga between different groups, because even when the fundamental elements of a worldview are similar, the ways they are expressed or interpreted can vary enormously. So while this chapter and the book as a whole speak of ‘te ao Māori’ like it is a monolithic and unchanging singular framework, the reality is that it provides a shared ‘foundation’, but the structures built on top would have been and are different depending on who was and is building them and what they had or have to hand in terms of ‘materials’. Nevertheless, we need to focus on te ao Māori in a singular way here, otherwise the chapter will be mired in caveats, exceptions, and clarifications.

In its discussion paper for the Treasury’s Living Standards Framework, Te Puni Kōkiri, the principal policy advisor of the Government of New Zealand on Māori wellbeing and development, and Treasury explain:

The way Māori view wellbeing is different from the way other New Zealanders view wellbeing. It is informed by te ao Māori (a Māori world view) where, for example, whenua (land) is not seen just for its economic potential, but through

familial and spiritual connections defined by cultural concepts such as whakapapa (genealogy) and kaitiakitanga (stewardship). (Te Puni Kōkiri & the Treasury, 2019, p. i)

Te ao Māori is the fundamental shaper of economic thought and action. As Hēnare (2015) explains:

Indigenous worldviews transmit certain crucial features. First, myth and legends are neither fables nor fireside stories; rather, they are deliberate constructs employed by the ancient seers and sages to encapsulate and condense into easily assimilated forms their views of the world, of ultimate reality, and of the relationships between the Creator, the universe, and humanity. (p. 81)

Worldviews, then, are at the heart of Māori culture, touching, interacting with, and strongly influencing every aspect of it. For Mikaere (2011), te ao Māori:

provides the lens through which we view our world. It determines the way in which we relate to one another and to all other facets of creation. It enables us to explain how we came to be here and where we are going. It forms the very core of our identity. (pp. 357–358)

While future Māori economies of wellbeing need to emanate from the Māori worldview and be built on the kaupapa and tikanga of the traditional economy, much has changed since this economy was in full operation, and any attempts to revive it will require what might be considered ‘contextual calibration’ – that is, adaptation to suit the current institutional framework in which it will operate. That said, there also needs to be care when doing this. Reviewing the literature on this, Roskrug et al. (2022) note that some critiques of ‘bridging’ te ao Māori and modern economics express “concerns about indigenous values being subjected to monetary reductionism and highlight the challenge of using economic approaches based on trade-offs to value intangible indigenous values that may have no substitutes” (p. 33). As they continue:

To successfully bridge modern economics and te ao Māori, it is important to acknowledge and address these critiques while exploring examples of modern economic techniques being tested in indigenous or heterogenous situations ... To achieve this, research is needed that draws on kaupapa Māori principles to explore the intersection of mātauranga [Māori knowledge/knowledge system] and tikanga Māori with modern economic techniques to deliver findings which are meaningful in both te ao Māori and te ao Pākehā [the European New Zealand world]. (p. 33)

While the concerns are very real, unfortunately there is little choice but to make some kind of bridge as there is no other ‘territory’ – to extend their bridge metaphor

– to which pure Māori economics could build a bridge at the current point in time. Certainly, there are other pathways for Māori to reorient economics to deliver wellbeing, including what might be called the jurisdictional authority route similar to those that Canadian First Nations are following. However, these require significant changes in the institutional framework of the country, as well as significant underlying political and social changes. This project is focused on what is possible within the current institutional framework, though there are some areas where possible changes might be useful and these are indicated. Also, as outlined in the section below on the flexibility of te ao Māori, while there have been severe impacts from this type of bridging between the Māori world and modern economics, there have also been numerous successes. Furthermore, there are still elements of the traditional economy in practice across the contemporary 'Māori economy', in particular the focus on intergenerational thinking and the use of what might be called the quadruple bottom line of economic, environmental, social, and cultural outcomes. These are growing in terms of both application and scope.

There are a number of key aspects of te ao Māori that need to be explored here, particularly the centrality of whakapapa, the role of the cosmic or life forces, and the knowledge framing and storage of mātauranga. In the following section, the various traditional economic kaupapa will show how te ao Māori informs the operation of an economy in practice. The aim is to understand the underlying kaupapa, or operating principles, that enabled the traditional economy to fulfil wellbeing, as well as to develop a thorough understanding of the dimensions of Māori wellbeing. This will provide the scope and potentiality for calibration as well as insights into the desired outcomes and their interconnections. But first, the underlying beliefs and forces that shape te ao Māori need to be outlined.

Whakapapa

Whakapapa is in many senses *the* Māori worldview (Te Rito, 2007). As the primary Māori ontology, it serves as the lens through which Māori understand reality (Graham, 2009). It functions as an oral framework for knowledge transmission across generations (Te Rito, 2007). While often translated as 'genealogy', whakapapa extends beyond ancestry to encompass a cosmic taxonomy that links all things (Rout et al., 2021). The Māori cosmos is conceptualised as a vast kinship system connecting plants, animals, and people (Dell et al., 2018). Whakapapa unfolds as a genealogical narrative, tracing all existence back to atua – supernatural ancestors who personify all natural phenomena. At the core are Papatūānuku (Earth mother) and Ranginui (sky father), with some tribal traditions tracing their origins to Io, the supreme being (Roberts et al., 2004).

Beyond ontology, whakapapa is also the primary epistemological framework, organising knowledge by mapping interrelationships and storing them in whakapapa

kōrero (genealogy stories) (Roberts et al., 2004). Scholars describe it as both a 'mental construct' and a 'taxonomic framework' (Roberts, 2013; Roberts et al., 2004; Taonui, 2011), with one characterising it as a 'taxonomy of the universe' (Roberts & Willis, 1998). As an analytical tool, whakapapa situates phenomena in space and time (Shearer, 2018), revealing connections across the human and natural worlds. It also provides practical knowledge on ecology, geography, and climate (Roberts, 2013). Whakapapa is dynamic, likened to a living map of relationships through which mana and tapu (sacredness) flow (Hartendorp, 2018). As both a philosophical and a practical framework, it orders Māori relational epistemology, linking past, present, and future (Amoamo, Ruckstuhl, & Ruwhiu, 2018). In an economy of mana, economic exchanges are shaped by whakapapa, prioritising relationships and communal obligations over market forces (Hēnare, 2014a). Since everything is interconnected through whakapapa, all entities possess intrinsic value (Mika et al., 2022).

Whakapapa also carries ethical obligations. By tracing descent from atua and, through them, to the natural world, Māori inherit a duty to care for these domains as kin, extending stewardship into the future (Te Rito, 2007). This framework fosters respect and reciprocity, reinforcing the deep connection to whenua (land), which sustains life and is symbolically linked to birth (placenta). Identity is similarly shaped by whakapapa, tying individuals to place rather than a self-contained notion of identity (Wolfgramm et al., 2018). While urbanised Māori maintain ancestral ties, they also build relationships with new places (Houkamau & Sibley, 2011).

Whakapapa is the central framing concept within which virtually all Māori economic activity is undertaken. As all of creation can be traced back to the atua and is interconnected, whakapapa can be seen as the ultimate source of value in a Māori economy (Mika et al., 2022). It is also the framework that shapes and guides economic exchanges, but to understand how this functions, the cosmic forces need to be outlined.

Cosmic forces

The different 'cosmic forces' of wairua (spirit), mana (prestige, authority), mauri (life force), tapu (sacredness), and hau (vital essence) shape and inform economic behaviour and action. Wolfgramm (2016) describes how the "Māori worldview is a belief in life forces and their significance in society and nature. Māori see themselves as descendants of spiritual powers in a physical and spiritual universe" (p. 16). Māori cosmology is a philosophy of vitalism, as embodied by the interactive life forces of wairua, mana, mauri, tapu, and hau (Hēnare, 2015). In Māori cosmological thought, these five forces "came from Io, the Supreme Cosmic Being that existed before the Sky Father and Earth Mother and from which emanates the cosmos we know and understand" (Hēnare, 2015, p. 207). Critically, these are all interactive

forces, both in that they can vary depending on the quality and outcome of interactions within the web of whakapapa and that they interact with each other. They will now be examined in further detail separately, with reference where relevant to how they interact with each other.

Wairua

Wairua is a fundamental concept in Māori cosmology, referring to the spiritual essence or soul of a person, living being, or even an object (Hēnare, 2015). It is considered an intrinsic part of one's identity and wellbeing, closely linked to both physical and mental health. Wairua extends beyond the individual, encompassing a deep connection to others, tūpuna (ancestors), and te taiao (the environment). This interconnectedness is a key feature of the holistic nature of Māori worldview, where spiritual and physical realities are interwoven rather than separate domains. It is the mauri that binds the wairua and the embryo together in the womb (Hēnare, 2015). The health of wairua is critical for overall wellbeing in te ao Māori. "Traditional notions of Māori well-being", Valentine et al. (2017) explain, "were very much dependent on beliefs, practices and behaviours related to wairua" (p. 65). If wairua is damaged or compromised, it can lead to a breakdown in other areas of health, including taha tinana (physical health), taha hinengaro (mental health), and taha whānau (family health). Death occurs when mauri is no longer able to bind the body and wairua together (Hēnare, 2015). Showing its centrality, Marsden (2003, as cited in Valentine et al., 2017) details that the "ultimate reality is for Māori the reality of the spirit", identifying wairua as the "source of existent being and life" (p. 65).

Mana

Mana is fundamental to the operation of Māori economies of wellbeing. Mana has been defined as the "quality, energy or consciousness in the world which can be harnessed and expressed in human activities through acts of generosity and wisdom" (Royal, 2006, as cited in Dell et al., 2018, p. 54). Hēnare (2014a) further outlines it as "a theory of power, authority, and ends" (p. 69). Mana has four sources: mana atua, god given; mana tūpuna, inherited from ancestors; mana whenua, derived from land; and mana tangata, acquired through personal attributes and actions (Dell et al., 2018). The quadratic nature is crucial as it sheds light on the dynamics of Māori status and leadership, along with the accountability pathways between leaders and their people, and between people and their relationships with nature. Mana is earned when leaders and communities cultivate mutually beneficial and harmonious relationships with their non-human kin, but it diminishes through harmful, parasitic interactions that degrade the wealth, health, and wellbeing of both humans and non-humans. While mana tangata can be seen as the primary force in this, other forms of mana, particularly mana whenua, serve as 'collateral' in these exchanges. He Ara Waiora (Cook et al., 2020), the framework used by the

Treasury to understand wellbeing from a Māori perspective, emphasises that the “concept of mana (power, authority) is seen as key to wellbeing” (p. 34). People thrive when they have mana tuku iho (strong sense of identity), mana tauutuutu (connect with their community), mana āheinga (can determine their life course), and mana whanake (can grow sustainable, intergenerational prosperity) (O’Connell et al., 2018).

Mauri

Mauri is described as “an interactive life force” (Hēnare, 2001, p. 207). In the context of the economy of mana, Hēnare (2014a) also describes it as “a theory of life and its causation” (p. 69). It manifests itself in the natural world through the spiritual realm (Royal, 1998). Everything possesses mauri – all things are living and have genealogical connections to one another. Mauri represents the essential vitality of any entity – whether human or natural – where its health and life-sustaining capacity are both determined by and reflective of its mauri (Hēnare, 2001). As an interactive life force, mauri is either enhanced or depleted through relationships. Four key types of relationships determine mauri: symbiotic (enhancing each other’s mauri), mutualistic (maintaining each other’s mauri), commensalistic (not affecting each other’s mauri), and parasitic (one entity diminishing another’s mauri) (Reid & Rout, 2018). “Mauri is the physical manifestation of hau and embodies the lifeforce,” Reweti (2023) explains that “it is present in all things and binds people to the environment (taiao) and primal energy sources (atua)” (p. 13). Mauri, then, is closely connected to hau, as will be explored more in the ‘Hau’ section below.

Tapu

The concept of tapu is essential in defining the relationships between people and with nature, guiding and restricting interactions. Tapu, Hēnare (2014a) notes, is “a theory of being” (p. 69). Tapu refers to something “sacred, holy, sanctified, pertaining to the gods” (Buck, 1910, p. 21), highlighting the latter as key. It is a “cosmic power imbued in all things at the time of creation” by the atua and represents the “intersection between the human and the divine” (Benton et al., 2012, p. 404). It is connected to the notion of mana, conveying the idea that everything possesses a real potency, or mana, once it exists (Hēnare, 2001). A core aspect of tapu is the recognition that the world is not ours. Tapu instils respect for all of nature, as animals, plants, and ecosystems are considered tapu and must be treated with respect, awe, and sometimes fear, depending on one’s own tapu in relation to the tapu of other beings and life systems (Hēnare, 2001). As O’Sullivan and Dana (2008) explain:

Tapu also provides a valuable system for the regulation of conduct; it sacralises and sets apart things with which one should not meddle, and, by the associated belief in supernatural punishment for infringement, it imposes a religious sanction

upon these rules. Moreover, in the production of more important economic goods, tapu often imposes an adherence to work and a concentration of energy that are of the utmost value. The institution of tapu allowed Maori communities to have a high degree of social control and discipline. (p. 367)

Tapu, they continue, is “considered sacred or restricted in its economic aspect” (O’Sullivan & Dana, 2008, p. 367), with ‘economic’ here referring to the role it plays in exchanges.

Hau

Hau is described as “an integrated theory of life force and economics that involves obligatory reciprocity and social relationships” (Hēnare, 2014a, p. 69). Hau, Mika et al. (2022) explain, is a “metaphysical concept interpreted as the vitality of a person, place, or object, embodying the spiritual essence and material effect of gift-giving on relations between people” (p. 451). Hau was fundamental to the economy of mana, acting as the ‘spirit of the gift’. Hau acts as the conduit for other life forces, including mana and mauri. In an exchange it imbues ‘gifts’, or really any item of exchange, with the mauri of the giver, and retains potency after the gift has been given. Hau acts “as a cosmic mediator between te ao wairua (spiritual realm) and te ao mārama (physical realm), with hau constantly aspiring toward hau-ora (states of life and wellness) and away from hau-mate (the onset and state of death)” (Mika et al., 2022, p. 451). There are two hau associated with the gift – the first is a hau that is intrinsic to the gift, and the second is the hau of the giver of the gift that is associated with their possession of the gift. The hau “that accompanied each gift assured its return for fear of supernatural punishment, which was accomplished through the medium of the hau” (Ministry of Justice, 2001, p. 71). “If a person fails to uphold their obligations in such exchanges,” Salmond (2014) explains, “their own life force is threatened” (p. 293). Hau “is a process of continuous receiving and giving, in which all of creation exists in a state of reciprocity through the exchange of life-energy” (Spiller & Stockdale, 2012, p. 164). “Over the millennia,” Hēnare (2001) details, hau “was established as a complex totalizing system of obligatory gift exchange infusing Māori social, economic, and religious life with profound implications for the management and guardianship of the natural world” (p. 211).

Hau is closely connected with mauri. They are “so closely linked in effect and power that they are symbiotic” (Hēnare, 2018, p. 454). In any exchange, hau imbues gifts – or any exchanged items – with the mauri of the giver, retaining its potency even after the gift is given. Mika et al. (2022) explain that “in respect of mana, the hau of a thing or person is maintained and transformed by mana as spiritual power and authority, expressed through human agency” (p. 451).

Mātauranga

Mātauranga is usually defined as Māori knowledge, but it is also the Māori knowledge system, or epistemology. “Mātauranga Māori”, Sadler (2007) details, “is a knowledge tradition or an epistemology” (p. 34). It is both “a method for generating knowledge, and all of the knowledge generated according to that method” (Hikuroa, 2017, p. 6). Whakapapa is the key cognitive tool of mātauranga, used for exploring and critically analysing new phenomena. Kawharu et al. (2017) link mātauranga with whakapapa, noting that the latter was “a way of framing information and knowledge that descends from the ancestors” (p. 23). Whakapapa, they continue, is:

the accumulation of layers of associated knowledge and events, providing a multi-levelled worldview, a way of thinking maintained by the tohunga [expert, priest, healer]. It is an organizing principle, connecting the vertical continuum of time past with time present, and time future; connecting past ancestors and spiritual beings with the living: in essence connecting kin-communities to their non-material and material worlds. (p. 23)

As Sadler (2007) explains:

A Rangahau approach is one of searching for connectiveness, Whanaungatanga looking for relationships that connect all phenomena whether animate or inanimate. Identifying its roots, finding out how it came into existence. Through this process it became much more palatable for Māori to be reconciled to and become one with all phenomena that they came in contact with. (p. 36)

Traditionally, mātauranga was communicated orally.

History (of people, events and places) and values were customarily recorded and carefully transmitted orally within a kin-community. Oral recitation meant that specific ideas, messages or values were transmitted, and importantly, imbedded in people’s thinking and behaviour. (Kawharu et al., 2017, p. 23)

The insights and information Māori gained through interpreting reality through whakapapa was generally codified through oral forms, including mōteatea (chants, poems), whaikōrero (oratory, speechmaking), maramataka (calendar), waiata (songs), pepeha (quotations), whakataukī/whakatauākī (proverbs), whakapapa (genealogies), and pūrākau (stories) – each with their own categories, style, complex patterns, and characteristics (Hikuroa, 2017). The oral codification is presented in a narrative heuristic. Pio et al. (2012) connect values with knowledge and wisdom, explaining that:

values contain relational wisdom that has been forged in a participatory relationship with the world through the ages – and transmitted from one

generation to another as taonga tuku iho, precious knowledge handed down by ancestors. Each generation reflexively engages with practicing these values to support the creation of multidimensional relational well-being. (p. 211)

Mātauranga incorporates both kaupapa and tikanga because they emerge from and shape mātauranga Māori. Rout et al. (2019) note:

While it is shaped by the Māori world view and the operating principles, as these determine how Māori perceive reality to be including what is regarded as actual, probable, possible or impossible, mātauranga is also rigorous in ensuring it has a verisimilitude to observable reality. (p. 19)

Shaped by kaupapa and tikanga

Critical to how te ao Māori influences and informs economics are the kaupapa and tikanga that emerge from a worldview, as these can be seen as taking the deeper beliefs and turning them into more practical and applied guidance. One of the most common insights from across the Māori wellbeing economic literature is the role of kaupapa and tikanga in shaping and guiding wellbeing. It is the kaupapa and tikanga, in particular, which enable the variation in expression across different Māori groups when the underlying worldview is effectively the same. The focus here is largely on kaupapa because of this variation in tikanga and because the kaupapa are foundational. Nevertheless, tikanga are equally important in how an economy can 'emanate' from a worldview, hence why they are referenced in this chapter despite not being a primary focus of this section. In terms of the overarching kaupapa, or what might be understood as operating principles here, there are many that are relevant to Māori economies of wellbeing that will be detailed in this section.

There are several caveats and explanations required before describing these kaupapa. First, it needs to be noted that the following is generalised. Providing a brief description of the kaupapa that guided an economy that lasted for roughly 500–700 years, was regionally and even locally distinct, was drastically different from current conceptions of what an economy is, and occurred before written records, is difficult at best (Rout & Reid, 2019). Second, as noted, reference to the traditional Māori 'economy' is problematic as it has little in common with what is currently understood as an economy beyond that they both involve the exchange of goods and services. Many of the differences will be outlined in the following kaupapa, but suffice to say here that the Māori economy was socially constituted, such that these exchanges were not only functional but also served as a way of creating and maintaining relationships, and it was also environmentally embedded, in that the same considerations regarding the impact of exchanges were given to the natural world as the social world. Finally, the following kaupapa have been

discussed in the past tense even though many of them are still present and of vital importance today.

Holistic

Māori reality was inherently holistic, integrating the material and spiritual within a unified socioecology. Rather than seeing themselves as separate from nature, Māori understood themselves as part of it, with the spiritual realm shaping and sustaining the material world (Hēnare, 2016). This spiritual-socioecology was encapsulated in whakapapa, which extended beyond human lineage to include all living things – animals, plants, rivers, and mountains – tracing their descent from the atua (Rout et al., 2021). The primal parents, Papatūānuku (Earth mother) and Ranginui (sky father), gave rise to all other atua, who in turn created the natural world. As a result, everything was genealogically connected, fostering a deep sense of kinship with nature. This interconnectedness meant that the Māori economy functioned as an economic spiritual-socioecology, where economic activity was inseparable from natural and spiritual dimensions.

Holism also shaped daily economic life. Work, production, and exchange were intertwined with sociality, spirituality, and leisure. Fishing, for example, was not merely a productive process but a spiritual act. Karakia (prayers) were offered to Tangaroa, the atua of the sea, requesting an abundant catch (Meredith, 2006). Customary practices included returning the first fish to the ocean and making ritual offerings onshore. Tapu governed all aspects of fishing, requiring strict adherence to maintain spiritual balance. Food, particularly when cooked, was believed to compromise tapu, necessitating ritual removal by a tohunga upon returning to land. Despite these spiritual dimensions, fishing also included elements of recreation, with singing and conversation often accompanying expeditions. The distribution of the catch was likewise guided by whakapapa, reinforcing both social and economic relationships.

This holistic approach extended across all aspects of life. Daily activities – including games, song, dance, decorative arts, warfare, and death – were deeply interconnected (Tsai et al., 2013). Even games were linked to spirituality, contributing to physical, mental, and spiritual development and wellbeing. Māori life was thus a seamless integration of the practical, social, and sacred, with every action existing within a wider web of relationships.

Sustainable

The traditional Māori economy promoted careful resource management and had measures in place to protect depleted areas and species (Kahui & Richards, 2014). The environment – including flora, fauna, and broader ecosystems – was not merely a resource to be exploited but was regarded as kin to be nurtured (Hēnare, 2016).

After adapting to the unique geography and ecology of Aotearoa, Māori developed sophisticated environmental protections to ensure resource conservation (Rout et al., 2021). Central to this sustainable approach was the concept of kaitiakitanga (guardianship), which entrusted communities with the responsibility of managing and protecting their natural resources. This guardianship was not solely about conservation but reflected an understanding of the interdependence between people and nature, ensuring the wellbeing of both (Marsden & Henare, 1992). Another key mechanism was rāhui, a temporary prohibition on resource use in a specific area to allow for regeneration (Kahui & Richards, 2014).

Traditional Māori agriculture exemplified sustainable practices. Techniques such as crop rotation and the use of ash helped maintain soil fertility. The cultivation of kūmara (sweet potato) required careful site selection and the use of pāraharaha (earth mounds) to improve drainage and aeration. These methods maximised yields while preserving land productivity across generations (Leach, 1984). Fishing practices were similarly sustainable (Maxwell & Penetito, 2007). Seasonal rāhui allowed fish populations to recover, preventing overexploitation. Māori possessed extensive knowledge of marine ecosystems, understanding breeding and migration patterns to inform their fishing practices. Selective fishing techniques, including specialised nets and traps, minimised bycatch and targeted specific species, protecting the broader marine environment (Smith, 2011).

Forestry and plant resource use also reflected sustainable management. Māori selectively harvested trees, ensuring that some were left to mature and regenerate, thereby maintaining forest health and biodiversity while securing a continuous supply of timber. Harakeke (flax), a crucial resource for weaving and clothing, was gathered in a way that allowed the plant to continue growing – only the outer leaves were taken, leaving the central shoot intact (Riley, 2004). This ensured a sustainable and enduring supply of materials.

Water management further underscored Māori commitment to sustainability. Streams and rivers, regarded as sacred (wai tapu), were carefully managed to maintain clean water supplies and healthy aquatic ecosystems. Village placement and irrigation systems were designed to minimise environmental impact and preserve water quality. Respect for water sources was fundamental to the sustainability of the Māori economy and overall wellbeing (Tipa & Nelson, 2008). Māori property rights also played a key role in reinforcing the sustainable nature of their traditional economy.

Nuanced resource allocation

A key shaper of the traditional Māori economy was property rights, which were nuanced and nested, ensuring efficient resource allocation. Māori had “a complex

arrangement of nested rights and responsibilities relating to extended families, villages and tribes” (Paulin, 2007, p. 21). Rather than holding rights to a single territory where they could gather resources, individuals, whānau (extended families), and hapū (clans/subtribes) had overlapping areas from which they could hunt, harvest, and fish (Banner, 1999). Māori “tended to allocate property rights among individuals and families on a functional rather than a geographical basis” (Banner, 1999, p. 811). Instead of owning property outright, they held resource user rights. These rights existed at multiple scales, from individuals to hapū, and were overlaid in a highly sophisticated manner, such that rights to fowl from one single tree might be given to one whānau while another whānau might have the rights to gather berries from the same tree (Banner, 1999).

The hapū chief held ultimate authority over these rights and adjudicated claims or disputes, but in practice, rights were exercised by individuals, whānau, and hapū. While individuals and whānau utilised resources, the chief acted as the final arbiter of who could access them. Tau (2016) argued that “there was no contradiction in the idea of a tribe holding its territory as a collective while also having individual ownership of land and resources” (p. 678). In many respects, this structure aligned with Western notions of property, with the hapū playing a role comparable to that of the nation-state (Tau, 2016). Rights were allocated based on the labour and tools required for their use; for instance, resources that a whānau-sized unit (typically 20–30 people across three generations) could harvest remained at the whānau level, whereas large-scale activities such as fishing with a seine net, which required hundreds of people, operated at the hapū level (Rout et al., 2021). These rights could shift with the seasons and be revoked or suspended for various reasons, including disuse or the need to protect a resource (Rout et al., 2021). User rights were held at the appropriate level of use, fostering a connection between the rights holder and the resource to ensure careful monitoring and conservation. At the same time, a ‘higher authority’ oversaw the system, ensuring that rights were exercised responsibly. This system effectively allocated resources, ensured they were used at appropriate scales, and entrusted their care to those who benefited from them.

The concept of mana whenua (authority over land) was central to Māori property rights. This principle emphasised the relationship between people and their ancestral lands, where land was not owned in the Western sense but was instead cared for and connected to its people. Mana whenua conferred rights and responsibilities upon groups to manage and use the land, ensuring its continued productivity and health. This stewardship was a crucial aspect of kaitiakitanga, in which hapū and iwi acted as guardians of the land, maintaining its vitality for future generations (Kawharu, 2000). Māori property rights also included mechanisms for resource sharing and conflict resolution. Chiefs could impose rāhui to conserve resources or restore ecological balance. These bans were respected by all community members and

represented a collective effort to manage resources sustainably. Additionally, disputes over resource use were settled through hui (gatherings) and kōrero (discussions), where all affected parties could voice their concerns and reach a consensus. This participatory approach ensured that resource management decisions were equitable and incorporated the community's needs and knowledge (Mahuika, 2015).

Democratic

Decision making in the traditional Māori economy operated through democratic processes. Leadership was not autocratic but consensus-based, with decisions made collectively. Chiefs and elders exercised authority through consultation, ensuring that choices reflected the interests of the wider group (Anderson et al., 2014). Chiefs and elders were selected based on their leadership abilities and the respect they commanded within the community rather than solely on hereditary status. These leaders were expected to prioritise the wellbeing of the collective, and their decisions were often subject to discussion and approval by the community. This inclusive process ensured that a broad range of perspectives was considered in governance (Metge, 1995). The term 'rangatira' itself, meaning 'to weave together', highlighted the interconnected and communal nature of Māori society (Kennedy, 2007).

Mana tangata (personal influence) played a crucial role in shaping leadership, as a chief's authority relied on continued support from the collective. Chiefs functioned more as symbolic figures of identity and unity rather than as rulers who exercised absolute control. Their words held considerable influence in shaping tribal strategies, particularly because they were seen as intermediaries between the spiritual and human realms, as well as between past and present generations (King, 2003). Additionally, a chief's authority was closely tied to their willingness to seek advice from those they served, reinforcing the importance of consultation and collective leadership (Anderson et al., 2014). This structure encouraged not only the redistribution of resources but also an engaged, hands-on approach to governance (Rout et al., 2021). Such principles ensured widespread participation in decision making, fostering legitimacy through a direct democratic process and maintaining a relatively flat social hierarchy.

Hui were central to Māori democratic traditions, providing forums for discussion and collective decision making. These gatherings allowed all members of the community to voice their perspectives, ensuring that decisions emerged from open dialogue rather than from unilateral authority. The emphasis on kōrero and agreement reflected a deep commitment to participatory governance (Mead, 2003). The practice of whakawhanaungatanga (relationship-building) further reinforced a sense of unity and collective responsibility, essential elements of a democratic society.

The Māori justice system also reflected democratic values, particularly in its approach to dispute resolution. The process of whakawā (judicial proceedings) involved communal deliberation rather than punitive judgments imposed by a single authority. Through discussion and consensus, conflicts were resolved in a way that prioritised restoring balance and harmony within the community, embodying principles of restorative justice rather than retributive punishment (Jackson, 1988). The democratic nature of traditional Māori society was evident in the intricate balance between leadership, community participation, and respect for diverse perspectives. These elements ensured that decision-making processes served the collective good, demonstrating a strong commitment to inclusive and participatory governance.

Collective

The Māori economy operated with a collective orientation. At the centre of economic life was the whānau, which functioned as the most fundamental economic unit (Petrie, 2013). Whānau groups typically worked as self-sufficient units, cultivating crops, gathering food, and producing essential items such as clothing, small canoes, and tools for their own use (Petrie, 2013). Similarly, hapū played a crucial role, particularly as social and political entities, as they provided an optimal scale – typically around 100–150 people – for ensuring territorial security and community wellbeing. However, hapū remained essentially collections of related whānau, each of which had its own leadership and maintained a degree of independence in decision making (Meijl, 1995).

The production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services primarily aimed to sustain and support the wellbeing of whānau. Economic cooperation usually occurred within families or among closely related groups, with larger-scale collective efforts only being organised when required, such as for major projects involving multiple hapū (Petrie, 2013). Despite the emphasis on collective wellbeing, individuals retained a significant degree of freedom, particularly in times of abundance. Chiefs generally did not exercise direct authority over individuals' choices and could not easily compel or prohibit specific actions (Petrie, 2013). Individuals frequently contributed their independently acquired goods, labour, or skills to their wider kin group voluntarily.

Personal autonomy remained a defining feature of the kin-based economy, with participation driven by mutual benefit rather than obligation. Kinship ties fostered social cohesion, but the influence of leaders depended on their personal qualities, persuasive abilities, and economic standing. While individuals had the freedom to pursue their own economic interests, incentives such as security encouraged them to share their skills and wealth with the wider community (Petrie, 2013). The

economic system did not rigidly separate individual and collective interests but rather integrated them in a layered, interdependent way.

Māori tended to prioritise collective success, understanding it as a foundation for individual achievement (Eaqub, 2022). Their economic framework was well established, with stable protocols governing trade that balanced both individual and communal needs. Their extensive distribution networks were maintained and strengthened through an approach that valued relationships and reciprocity (Pio et al., 2012). However, this collectivism was not rigid or doctrinaire but instead allowed for flexibility and pragmatism, ensuring both community cohesion and personal agency.

Decentralised

The traditional Māori economy was decentralised. With whānau as the core economic unit, and hapū each occupying a specific area of land within which these economic units operated, the traditional economy was dispersed, with most whānau functioning as a self-sufficient grouping (Meijl, 1995; Petrie, 2013). Māori social structure had “a tendency towards decentralisation to the extent that sociocultural life occurs in small, local, autonomous groups” (Lian, 1992, p. 395).

Over time and in certain regions this decentralisation would have been to differing degrees, with those living in the harsher South Island more decentralised than those living in the more abundant North, particularly in the latter stages of the pre-contact era. Still, generally speaking, the traditional economy was highly decentralised, with each whānau able to largely provide for itself in terms of food and basic supplies. Most of the time each hapū was essentially self-sufficient, with the inter-hapū trade providing access to regional or seasonal resources that were otherwise unavailable (Reid et al., 2019).

The traditional economy was even more granular than how it is described above in many respects, as the scaling user rights meant that even individuals could often maintain a degree of self-sufficiency in terms of food. Social groupings were relatively fluid as well, merging and dividing depending on necessity (war and famine) and other practical or emotive considerations. Showing both the central role whānau played and the inherent adaptability of the collective focus, hapū were actually relatively fluid, with whānau able to come and go to a degree if the need or desire arose (Meijl, 1995).

Petrie (2013) notes the “flexibility of this social structure and the inherent links between individuals, whānau, hapū, and iwi allowed for a variety of regroupings in the face of social, political, and economic stress” (p. 3). As well as being free to be economically independent within their whānau and hapū, individuals could choose to connect to the hapū of any parent or grandparent or move to another community

due to a fight, getting married, or any other reason (Petrie, 2013). This fluidity and flexibility functioned as a safety valve to release intra-group pressures as well as working as a mechanism to ensure groups were aligned with their available resources. Decentralisation, along with an adaptive collective ethic, helped ensure that Māori were able to cope with change, and especially negative change, relatively well.

Redistributive

The Māori economy emphasised redistribution over personal accumulation, as chiefs derived mana from generosity rather than wealth retention. Chiefs controlled access to resources such as hunting and fishing, ensuring equitable distribution within the hapū (Lian, 1992). Their influence depended on the wealth they circulated rather than what they kept, allowing them to direct resources towards communal projects and obligations (Rout & Reid, 2019). Despite greater resource access, chiefs typically held little more fixed wealth than other members, as their status was tied to redistribution (Lian, 1992). Early European accounts confirm this, noting that chiefs prioritised generosity to maintain influence and attract supporters (Petrie, 2002).

Large food reserves were key to leadership, used to support communal initiatives and sustain the hapū in times of need (Reid et al., 2019). Leaders were expected to work hard, as reflected in proverbs such as “Short fingernails show the rank of the man in power” (Reid & Rout, 2016b). Chiefs also reinforced their mana through food-based exchanges like takoha, where contributions reflected effort, strengthening both social bonds and leadership legitimacy (Petrie, 2013).

The hākari, or feast, was a major inter-hapū exchange, showcasing a chief’s ability to provide while reinforcing alliances. Chiefs divided food among guest hapū, who were then expected to reciprocate with an equal or greater feast, ensuring balance and ongoing ties (Reid et al., 2019). Another key practice, kaihaukai, involved trading specialised or geographically unique goods. While initially utilitarian, repeated exchanges evolved into ritualised gift-giving, deepening social connections (Cumberland, 1949; O’Malley, 2012). These systems ensured resources flowed between groups while reinforcing collective cohesion and leadership authority (Reid et al., 2019).

Embedded

The traditional Māori economy was socially embedded, meaning economic exchanges reinforced social networks and served society (Reid et al., 2019). However, it extended beyond human society, being also intertwined with the spiritual realm and nature (Rout et al., 2021). Economic activity maintained social bonds and ensured resource distribution, with all exchanges carrying both material

and relational significance, guided by whakapapa. Unlike modern disembedded markets, the Māori economy was constrained by social institutions and tikanga (Dell et al., 2018).

Tikanga, defined as Māori values and principles governing conduct, was central to economic life (Gallagher, 2016). It encompassed key values such as whanaungatanga (relationships), mana (prestige and authority), tapu and noa (sacredness and restrictions), manaakitanga (generosity), and utu (reciprocity). These values were action-oriented, functioning as guiding principles that impelled behaviour rather than merely shaping it (Mead, 2003; Patterson, 1992). As Thompson (1994) explains, Māori morality was outcome-driven, with actions judged by their impact on mana, mauri, and tapu rather than by rigid ethical rules.

Practically, whakapapa and values such as manaakitanga and kotahitanga influenced economic exchanges, particularly food distribution, which was central to economic control and social power (Petrie, 2013). The spiritual realm also shaped economic activity; for example, karakia were recited before felling trees to acknowledge Tāne-mahuta, and tapu restrictions prohibited using manure as fertiliser to prevent contamination of food. These spiritual and social constraints ensured economic practices aligned with Māori cosmology and societal wellbeing.

Needs focused

The traditional Māori economy was fundamentally designed to satisfy needs rather than wants, with the kaupapa structured to ensure essential resources for a safe, stable, and healthy life. Unlike capitalist economies – especially neoliberalism – which prioritise generating and fulfilling wants for growth and profit (Max-Neef, 2017; Gough, 1994), the Māori economy was holistically understood, sustainability-focused, and socially embedded, aiming at efficient resource allocation and reciprocal, redistributive exchange (Reid et al., 2019).

‘Needs’ in an economic sense refers to essentials whose absence results in dysfunction or harm. While modern economics often blurs the line between needs and wants, early economists recognised a hierarchy where basic needs must be met before higher-level desires (Joffe, 2024). In the Māori context, even items like jewellery and musical instruments, which might be framed as wants, were integral to fulfilling deeper needs – mana maintenance, social cohesion, and creative expression.

The Māori economy’s broad, holistic view of needs extended beyond material sustenance to include social and spiritual wellbeing. While not all needs were always met, the system’s kaupapa worked in synergy to ensure economic activity was fundamentally aligned with meeting essential human and collective needs.

Values based

The traditional Māori economy was constrained and shaped by a wide range of values. Critically, these values were action-oriented, functioning as ethics that guided decision making and behaviour (Mead, 2003). As Houkamau (2019) explains:

The practical realities of pre-colonial Māori economic life and culture gave rise to the core cultural values often cited today: respect for whakapapa (genealogical ties), whānaungatanga (family, relationships and interdependence) and kotahitanga (collective wellbeing and unity). To uphold these, a complex system of tikanga Māori (Māori traditional rules, lore and customs) existed for each tribe and when it came to land, the concept of kaitiakitanga (guardianship, responsibility and commitment to land and natural resources) was a particularly important concept. (p. 210)

These values – which are sometimes referred to as tikanga but often, as the above quote illustrates, differentiated from tikanga – were a critical element in motivating prosocial behaviour.

He mea whakaawe e te māramatanga torowhārahi o te oranga

Inspired by a holistic understanding of wellbeing

Māori wellbeing is a holistic and interconnected concept – wellbeing as hauora (wellbeing) and oranga (health). This is itself built on the fundamental kaupapa of holism outlined above and from the insights into the entwined nature of existence that lies at the core of Māori cosmology and thinking. As Nicholson et al. (2019) outline:

Indigenous philosophies stress kinship with all of creation and a sense of sacred ecology. Well-being, in an Indigenous sense, is related to all aspects of creation. Indigenous cultures recognize and revere their physical and spiritual ties to the Earth and the environment that sustains them. The universe and life are a unified system where the well-being of humans is intimately connected to the well-being of ecosystems that sustain human and nonhuman life. Therefore, humankind belong to each other and to the rest of creation; serving others is to serve one's extended self. (p. 34)

The economy of mana, Hēnare (2014a) emphasises, “prioritises holistic wellbeing and creating value over ‘profit maximisation’” (p. 66). Hēnare (2014a) identifies spiritual, environmental, cultural/kinship, and economic wellbeing as four critical pillars serviced by the Māori economies of wellbeing. Likewise, Spiller et al. (2011) determine five types of wellbeing from their work with a number of Māori businesses: spiritual, cultural, social, environmental, and economic. Mika et al.

(2022) detail how Hēnare's four wellbeings – spirituality, environment, culture/kinship, and economy – constitute four types of capital: spiritual capital, ecological capital, kinship capital, and economic capital. When the four wellbeings and four forms of capital work together, they do so according to a system of reciprocity between spiritual, ecological, and human societies. As a slight counterpoint, Cram et al. (2019) note that “whakapapa, whenua and whānau form the foundation of oranga, a holistic view of wellbeing” (p. 2).

As Spiller et al. (2011) show in their conclusion, holistic wellbeing needs to be at the very centre of all thinking:

By adopting a largely long-term developmental view, the businesses in this study demonstrate concern for creating well-being along the way, rather than after creating 'wealth' in financial terms, usually considered to be the conventional business definition of wealth. The businesses in this study demonstrate that they value the economic 'bottom line', but that they are willing to make decisions that prioritise people and planet over short-term profits, and thus can be expected to yield greater long-term sustainable well-being across economic and other dimensions. (p. 166)

Providing a linguistic and conceptual oversight of the holistic nature of Māori wellbeing or hauora and oranga, in their article on ngā hono, Wolfgramm et al. (2020) explain that the root word 'ora' means “to be well, healthy and flourishing” (p. 23). In terms of wellbeing, ora as a concept creates “a force field of dynamic energy fuelled by Māori values to generate transformation through activity designed to deliver economies of well-being” (Wolfgramm et al., 2020, p. 22). It can be viewed as the prime motivator of Māori economies of wellbeing. The concept of 'ora' can be found in many spheres, from the greeting 'kia ora', which is a wish for the individual to have continuing good health, through to 'mauri ora', which is the drive to have flourishing communities and societies, through to hauora, which is the focus on physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health (Wolfgramm et al., 2020). Oranga is a broad understanding of wellbeing that incorporates physical, spiritual, mental, and collective forms of wellbeing (Wolfgramm et al., 2020). The term hauora “is a holistic concept that encompasses all dimensions of a person, including their spirituality and cultural identity, alongside physical and mental wellbeing” (Reweti, 2023, p. 2). Breaking down the kupu (word), one of the meanings of hau is the vital essence embodied in all persons and living things according to a Māori worldview, as discussed above. However, another expression of hau in people is breath.

Therefore, combining hau with the descriptions of ora above, hauora “can be understood as representing the complete set of vital elements that contribute to a dynamic and thriving spirit of life” (Reweti, 2023, p. 2). Both mauri and mana also

help define hauora. “Mauri”, Reweti explains, “is the physical manifestation of hau binding the wairua (spiritual element) and tinana (physical element), making it the very essence of life” (p. 2). Similarly, mana, through manifestations like manaakitanga and mana motuhake, is “crucial in realizing health and wellbeing for a people” (p. 2). Reweti also incorporates another concept along with oranga and hauora: toiora. Toiora “is a Māori concept encompassing holistic wellbeing and balance across physical, mental, spiritual and social aspects of life” (p. 2). It is focused on the “pursuit of enduring wellbeing, rooted in cultural identity, connection to land, and a vibrant sense of vitality and purpose” (p. 2).

“The origins of holistic models of oranga and Māori well-being”, Wolfgramm et al. (2020) explain, “are inspired by frameworks such as [Pere’s] Te Wheke” (p. 20). Durie, they add, “argues cogently that to achieve well-being, Māori advancement should include economic self-sufficiency, social equity, cultural affirmation, political strength, a compelling worldview and articulating a clear vision of future well-being that is holistic” (p. 23). “From a Māori perspective,” Mark and Lyons (2010) describe, “health is invariably holistic, including wellbeing across spiritual, mental, and physical dimensions” (p. 1757), also detailing the influential role of both Durie’s and Pere’s original wellbeing frameworks – which are discussed at the start of the following chapter.

Critically, from the Māori perspective, while wellbeing can be divided up into different categories, such as spiritual and economic, they are all interlinked and cannot be considered in isolation. For example, everything has a spiritual dimension, while likewise kinship is important to all other dimensions. The holistic constitution of wellbeing also means that forms of substitution cannot occur, such that you could not replace spiritual wellbeing with economic wellbeing. While he references capital rather than wellbeing, Eaqub (2022) notes regarding the engagement between worldview and economics, “It is not possible to easily trade off one capital against another, when they are deified” (p. 4). In other words, these elements have their own intrinsic worth and being, as determined by their atua origins, and cannot be swapped out for other forms of capital, or wellbeing. Thus, the holistic nature has two components: the first is that each dimension of wellbeing has ramifications for the other dimensions, and all interrelate with one another; the second is that these various components of wellbeing cannot be supplanted by other elements.

He mea whakatō te ōhanga Māori ki te pūnaha hauropi e tautoko ana i a ia anō

Embedded in the ecological system that sustains it

A Māori economy is inherently embedded in the surrounding ecological system. This is due to the way in which whakapapa and the cosmic forces shape Māori relationships with the natural world. “Māori have an intricate, holistic and

interconnected relationship with the natural world ... [this] bond links indigenous Māori to ecosystems and governs how they see and understand ecosystems and ecosystem service” (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013, p. 274). Māori see nature, but more specifically the local ecosystem that sustains them, as kin with their own mauri and tapu, and this demands it is treated with same the respect and reverence of any relative. These cosmic forces, Patterson (1998) explains, “joins all beings – humans, gods, plants and animals, mountains and rivers and seas – into one interdependent whole, each part depending for its well-being upon the health of each other part and of the whole itself” (p. 70).

Any Māori economy is an environmental economy, in that it not only understands that its economy is substantiated from ecology but also that this necessitates the conservation and care of the natural world (Rout et al., 2021). At the same time, Māori were and remain practical and pragmatic with regard to natural resources. Just as they see nature as family they also understand that there are critical resources necessary to surviving and thriving. Both the pragmatic and philosophic views of nature demand natural systems are treated with care and respect. Philosophically, this is driven by whakapapa and the cosmic forces, and expressed through the tikanga or the ethic of kaitiakitanga.

While kaitiakitanga is most frequently translated as ‘the act of guardianship’, it can also mean ‘conservation, fostering, protecting, sheltering’, and in a more contemporary sense ‘resource management’ (Rout et al., 2021). Kaitiakitanga provides the fundamental framework that guides relationships between humanity and nature. Kaitiaki, or the guardians, have a duty to protect the health and vitality of nature. In this way, kaitiakitanga is “an active, rather than passive, relationship”, Māori must act as kaitiaki in all their relationships with nature (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013, p. 275). Kaitiakitanga must be viewed in the “context of the cosmic unity between humans and the universe” (Kawharu, 2000, p. 350). In other words, it is premised on shared whakapapa across both descent-time and kinship-space. Kaitiakitanga is:

equally about the past and managing sets of relationships that transcend time and space ... Present and future circumstances are made sense of by referencing the past and all it contains ... [Kaitiakitanga] involves managing relationships between people in the past, present and future. (Kawharu, 2000, p. 352)

It is also motivated by the need to maintain balance. It “embraces social and environmental dimensions. Human, material and non-material elements are all to be kept in balance” (Kawharu, 2000, p. 349). Kawharu outlines that:

Kaitiakitanga is a fundamental means by which survival is ensured – survival in spiritual, economic and political terms. Since Maori society is a tribal society with

respect to relationships with environmental resources, their actual management is itself a constituent element in the tribal kinship system. (p. 350)

The pragmatic motivation is a more complex admixture of this same kaitiaki motivation as well as a more grounded focus on increasing future returns. In terms of the pragmatic motivation, as Reid et al. (2019) explain:

The investment is placed into the non-human family (land, water bodies, and their offspring) in the form of respect, care, responsible management, and observances. In short, if society takes from the land and water it must give back the equivalent or greater value, with the idea that such investments will result in greater returns in the future. This is based on two pragmatic, fundamental facts often overlooked in modern economic thought: that humans are reliant on the life-supporting capacity of the ecosystems in which we live and that the resources of these ecosystems are not infinite. In turn, this generates the insight that the prudent use and care for a resource today will ensure its capacity to provide in the future. (pp. 3–4)

Underpinning this mix of philosophical and pragmatic drivers is the flexibility and adaptability of te ao Māori. As O'Regan (1984) explains, Māori have a cognitive duality that means they view nature as both kin and a natural phenomenon, as both a spiritual entity alive with cosmic forces and a resource:

It was through these atua [gods] that our old people related to the physical world. The physical world was those atua ... water was Tangaroa [God of the Sea]. They were not silly, they knew water was wet and all that, but they also knew it as Tangaroa. There was a unity in their perceptions ... This does not mean that because my river represents an atua they should not be touched or used. One of the more endearing characteristics of Māori is their capacity to tie the practical together with their theological beliefs. (pp. 8–10)

Māori were not only able to perceive dualities, such as something having two simultaneous natures, but they also seamlessly integrated the spiritual and the practical. This allowed them to revere something while still making use of it. These dualities help illuminate the functional aspects of kaitiakitanga, with the preservation of mauri being central to it, closely tied to the concept of tapu. Prohibitions in certain areas and the sacredness of places served to protect mauri. For instance, it was tapu to leave bird feathers from snared birds in the forest, as other birds would detect danger and avoid the area. Similarly, cleaning fish in the sea was seen as not only physical pollution but also spiritual contamination. A rāhui, marked by a symbol and imposed by high-ranking individuals, restricted access to certain areas or resources. Violating a rāhui resulted in severe consequences. This connection between the sacred and the practical, the physical and the spiritual, fostered

sustainable practices. As Firth (2011) observed, mauri exerted a powerful influence on Māori, ensuring they treated the environment with respect and foresight.

E whakatinanatia ana i te tauutuutu

Manifests in reciprocity

The core operational parameter, then, of the economy of mana is that it manifests as reciprocity. Reciprocity, alongside humanism, lies at the heart of Māori philosophy and cosmology, as Hēnare (2015) sees it. At the most basic level, 'reciprocity' is the practice of exchanging goods or services with others for mutual benefit.

Anthropologists have labelled this 'gift exchange', but that does not provide the scope of reciprocity in the economy of mana (Kranton, 1996; Metge, 2002).

Reciprocity can be understood as the primary framework guiding all Māori exchanges. In theory, all exchanges in the economy of mana are mutually beneficial – that is, both parties to the exchange should be left in a better position, or at a minimum the same position, than they were before the exchange (Reid et al., 2019). Reciprocity is generally translated in te reo Māori as utu, which is broadly defined as maintaining balance and harmony in physical, material, and spiritual relationships (Jones, 2018). Knox (2005, as cited in Mika et al., 2022) notes the role of utu in "maintaining balance and harmony through 'give and take', reciprocal obligations, honesty in all things, the punishment of wrongdoing, and the exchange of gifts" (p. 443).

Utu is underpinned by whakapapa and the centrality of relationships to existence that this view of reality manifests. The understanding that all of reality is interconnected means that relationships are viewed as fundamental, the primary ontological, epistemological and axiological precept. Harmsworth and Awatere (2013) explain that the "Māori world view acknowledges a natural order to the universe, a balance or equilibrium" (p. 274). Utu is "a driving force in the maintenance of relationships ... It drives actions which seek to restore balance and to provide for reciprocity" (Jones, 2018, p. 25). This is because, as Whaanga (2012) explains, the "underlying polarity in the universe is upset from time to time and it needs to be restored or balanced" (p. 22).

Balance is a guiding belief of Māori reality, but while everything is focused on "working toward equilibrium ... this is always temporary and contingent" because reality itself, and the numerous nested and interconnected relationships that underpin it, is dynamic rather than static (Salmond, 2012, p. 121). The framework that underpins utu is encapsulated in the phrase 'take-utu-ea'. As Gallagher (2016) explains, "There would be an action (take), which requires an appropriate resolution (utu), which would hopefully resolve the matter and there would be a state of ea (restoring balance and thereby maintaining whanaungatanga)" (para. 26). So called 'positive utu' maintained social stability as favours given led to favours returned,

and utu laid the foundation for cooperative relationships, though in its negative form it also obliged negative reciprocity as well where actions that restored balance needed to be taken (King, 2003).

While utu is the usual translation for the term 'reciprocity', when focusing on economics and reciprocal exchanges, the term 'tau ututu' or 'tautuutu' is often used (Reid et al., 2019; Spiller et al., 2011). However, before detailing tauutuutu (as it will be referred to from here on), it is useful to examine the term 'exchange'. Exchanges, interactions, and transactions amongst humans or between humans and non-humans – or even more broadly, relationships – are the foundational component of Māori reality as determined by whakapapa. These interactions are shaped and in turn impact the cosmic forces.

It is useful to briefly outline what is meant by 'exchanges' here. In effect, this term, along with 'interaction', 'transaction', and even 'relationship', refers to virtually every impactful or effecting engagement between two entities, human or non-human. This can range from what could be understood as material, physical, and tangible interactions, such as the gifting of an item of food to a family member through to the selection, felling, and carving of a tōtara (podocarp tree) into a waka (canoe), or it can refer to metaphysical, emotional, or social interactions, such as offering kind words of support to a friend through to deliberation and discussion amongst a hapū over a critical decision with the aim of building consensus. Of course, the holistic nature of Māori reality means that all these interactions have material and spiritual components, so they are best seen as existing on a spectrum, and really any interaction between two or more entities is included here, as long as there is some kind of meaning or significance to the exchange.

Tauutuutu, the ethic of reciprocity in exchange, is the framework underpinning the economy of mana. It motivates a dynamic equilibrium of obligated, escalating, respectful reciprocal exchanges. The life forces of mana, tapu, mauri, hau, and wairua are critical to understanding tauutuutu. In brief, mana drives escalation in exchange, tapu prevents or restricts depleting or harmful exchanges, mauri pressures exchanges to be balanced, hau creates an obligation for a return exchange, and wairua gives exchanges meaning as it bridges the material world with the spiritual realm. Of course, this is a somewhat simplistic explanation of a set of very complex and intertwined forces, and greater elaboration will help delineate these functions. The role of mana is probably the most well-known of the five. The giver in an exchange acquires mana (Dell et al., 2018). Traditional exchanges were conducted through a series of 'gifts', and unlike modern bartering, the value gained in these exchanges was both practical – securing resources like food, rare materials such as pounamu, or services such as medical care from a tohunga – and social, as gifting enhanced the mana, or status, of the gifter. Failure to return a good or

service, or providing one of insufficient value, resulted in a loss of mana, or prestige. Such a loss had serious implications for a person's social and political standing and, in extreme cases, could affect psychological wellbeing and physical health (Reid et al., 2019). Returning a good or service of equal value maintained mana, but offering one of greater value enhanced it (Metge, 2002).

Altruistic behaviour by those in power, such as redistributing wealth to allies, strategic partners, and within social (whānau), political (hapū), and military (iwi) groups, was a crucial way to gain mana. Transactions often followed this pattern, with the value of exchanged goods or services increasing with each cycle. In this way, the tauutuutu framework can be seen as one that encourages initial investments by promising greater future returns, with mana driving the escalation in value through each exchange.

The role of tapu is less overt than that of mana; it can be seen as working to prevent or restrict depleting or harmful exchanges, thus protecting intrinsic value. Put simply, some 'gifts' were out of bounds because they were considered too sacred to be exchanged. Tapu requires that the nature of the exchange, the entities involved, and the impacts are considered. It limits the potential of exchanges to ensure that inherent sacredness is not impacted and that the dignity of the entities in the exchange is maintained, thus imposing a degree of social control and discipline into the framework of tauutuutu. In so doing, it ensures that the entities involved in the exchange, rather than the exchange itself, is valued. In other words, tapu can be seen as playing a socially regulating role, as well as functioning as a limiting device that ensures that exchanges are mutually beneficial rather than zero-sum.

Mauri in many ways can be seen as functioning as a counterbalance to mana as it seeks to ensure exchanges are balanced. Mauri is the animating force of existence, and every exchange impacts the mauri of both parties; it can result in depleting or growing it in either party. There is a fundamental urge for mauri to be mutually grown in exchanges for a balanced increase to the result. When mauri is depleted to a serious degree, then a rāhui (which makes the depleted entity tapu) or temporary restriction can be put in place. In this way, tapu can be seen as providing the driving force for this balance in exchange, as exchanges that deplete mauri result in the entity becoming off limits to further exchange.

Hau can be seen to generate the obligation for a return exchange, though in many ways hau is the binding force for the whole tauutuutu framework. Hau requires that an exchange is reciprocated through threat of supernatural repercussion. By contrast, an exchange and the return of an exchange sees hau vitalised. Every person, animal, plant, ecosystem, and object has its own intrinsic hau, which is

either diminished or enhanced by the hau of others and the hau of the collective – of spiritual, natural, and social ecosystems. “When the exchanges are in a state of balance,” Salmond (2014) explains, “hau flows unimpeded and the networks of relations (families, communities, and ecosystems) are in a state of ora – healthy, prosperous, and in good heart” (p. 293). In other words, in many ways the transference and accretion of hau is the vitalising energy of exchange, and it generates an obligation to ensure that an exchange is reciprocated. Hau also provides the overarching ethical motivation for exchange; it urges reciprocity in exchanges.

Finally, the role of wairua is – like tapu – less overt but still important. It connects the material world with the spiritual, with hau acting as a binding force or facilitator for this connection (Hēnare, 2018). As the spiritual world is of foundational and pre-eminent importance, with the material a manifestation of the spiritual, this connection is essential as it gives all exchanges their meaning, whether that meaning is positive or negative. Wairua acts as a guarantor of the exchange by connecting exchanges to the atua; it gives all exchanges meaning, importance, and consequence.

The tauutuutu framework, then, is built through mana-escalating exchanges, which temporarily disturb the balance that mauri requires, while being driven by the obligation of hau to return the exchange, as tapu ensures that the exchanges do not dangerously deplete the entities involved, and wairua gives the exchanges meaning. While all the cosmic forces are vital, hau stands as possibly the most important in the context of economic exchanges, as caring for the hau will maintain the mana, tapu, mauri, and wairua (Hēnare, 2014a).

The tauutuutu framework provides a fairly comprehensive set of parameters to guide interactions, providing a baseline for how people can interact with each other and the natural world. It focuses on reflection of the intrinsic dignity of all participants in an interaction, on their place in the web of whakapapa, and their connection to the spirit world. It aims for balance but through the process of escalation and obligation creates outcomes that are progressive and mutually beneficial while also creating and maintaining social and ecological collective bonds. As Spiller et al. (2011) explain:

Reciprocity, from a Māori economic perspective, is not necessarily about achieving an immediate financial return, but instead can be viewed as a qualitative state of reaching long-term equivalence that has spiritual as well as material dimensions. According to the Māori economic approach, the quality of relationships is paramount, so that everyone and everything is linked in an ever-looping progression of ongoing relatedness where the parties act in good faith with each other. (p. 143)

The primary purpose of the mana economy is not profit or growth but rather social cohesion, resource distribution, value alignment, and spiritual fulfilment, all of which are fulfilled through reciprocal exchange.

He pūnaha e kaha ana ki te whakatikatika i a ia anō ki te waihanga i ngā anamata hōu

A system that is capable of reorganising itself to create new futures

Future Māori economies of wellbeing must be highly adaptive, capable of reorganising according to changing contexts. Te ao Māori is inherently flexible, with an emphasis on relationships over materialism, and process over static structures. Unlike the mechanistic and progress-driven Western worldview, te ao Māori remains fluid and relational, enabling it to recalibrate in response to new conditions (Reid & Rout, 2018; Rout & Reid, 2020).

Te ao Māori does not perceive reality as a set of discrete, measurable objects but rather as an interconnected and dynamic system requiring continuous interpretation. This contrasts with the Western worldview, which portrays itself as the sole objective reality while marginalising Indigenous perspectives (Reid & Rout, 2016a; Rout & Reid, 2020). The flexibility of te ao Māori is embedded in te reo Māori, where meaning is derived contextually rather than through fixed definitions. This linguistic structure fosters a worldview that resists rigid categorisation, allowing Māori to integrate external knowledge while maintaining cultural integrity (Rout & Reid, 2020).

Historically, Māori have demonstrated the ability to merge different economic approaches without compromising their worldview. Early trade interactions with Europeans illustrate this adaptability, as Māori engaged in both barter and exchanges with social obligations, depending on their intentions (Petrie, 2013). During the Māori economic 'golden age' (1830–1860), Māori commerce dominated the national economy, with engagement in the settler economy carefully managed to align with collective interests (McCreanor et al., 2011; Reid et al., 2019). Chiefs played a central role in trade, ensuring economic activities served communal wellbeing rather than individual gain (O'Malley, 2012).

Despite significant disruptions, including land loss and economic marginalisation, te ao Māori remained a crucial support network. During the early 20th century, Māori communities maintained economic exchange within traditional structures, supplementing subsistence agriculture with seasonal labour (Reid et al., 2019). Urbanisation from the 1940s to the 1970s reduced opportunities for traditional practices, but many Māori continued to uphold economic values rooted in whakapapa and reciprocity (Waitangi Tribunal, 1991).

Today, the Māori economy operates within a global capitalist framework while maintaining distinct characteristics. Some argue that the term 'Māori economy' primarily refers to Māori businesses within the wider economy, while others emphasise its unique elements (Scobie & Sturman, 2020). The Māori economy exists at the intersection of formal and informal systems, shaped by both external constraints and enduring tikanga (Dell et al., 2018; Houkamau, 2019). Māori businesses and workers integrate principles such as manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga, and rangatiratanga, reflecting the continued influence of traditional economic kaupapa (Haar & Delaney, 2009; Mika et al., 2022).

Resilience and adaptability underpin the Māori economy's potential to support wellbeing. The economy of mana has withstood colonisation, evolving in response to changing conditions while retaining core values (Wolfgramm et al., 2018). The COVID-19 response highlighted this adaptability, as Māori-led initiatives provided essential support to communities, demonstrating the strength of alternative economic structures (Scobie & Sturman, 2020).

Future Māori economies of wellbeing must build on these foundations by integrating contemporary wellbeing frameworks while maintaining Māori-specific indicators (Durie, 2006; Te Puni Kōkiri & the Treasury, 2019). Te ao Māori excels at synthesising diverse insights, making it well-suited to developing holistic economic models that balance cultural values with broader wellbeing goals.

Ko te hiahia ki te ara kōkiri peka mātau-rau ki te rangahau

Requires a multidisciplinary approach to research

Hēnare (Dell et al., 2018) emphasised the need for multidisciplinary research into future economies of mana, aligning with the objectives of this book and the broader project. From a Māori perspective, an economy is not merely what is defined by the dominant legal framework but an emergent property of the relational networks in which it operates. This perspective promotes a bottom-up view, recognising the existence of multiple economies in Aotearoa, many of which are guided by kaupapa and tikanga. Key attributes include mutually beneficial exchanges that enhance the mana of all participants while maintaining the mauri of ecosystems, embedding transactions in social connections and reciprocity, and prioritising intergenerational outcomes. These economies, while grounded in tradition, must also adapt to future needs within the broader framework of te ao Māori, representing a values-driven transformation (Wolfgramm et al., 2020).

Hēnare (2014a) argued that the free-market system, with its rules-based approach, leaves little room for Māori metaphysics and ethical responses in social, political, and economic planning. He proposed that Māori ethics offer a distinctive humanism,

valuing human dignity (tapu and mana) above capital. He also highlighted the potential for Māori concepts, such as hau, to inform labour relations, fostering solidarity between management and workers through reciprocal exchange (Hēnare, 2014a). In applying these ideas to forestry, he envisioned a cluster of Māori-led businesses overseeing the entire supply chain, blending indigenous and exotic forestry to enhance wellbeing (Hēnare, 2014b). This vision prioritises Māori governance, economic diversification, sustainable growth, innovation, and the development of an investment portfolio that supports both the Māori forestry sector and wider economic wellbeing.

Amoamo, Ruwhiu, and Carter (2018) expand on this by using the 'diverse economies' framework to reframe the Māori economy as a system designed to serve people rather than the reverse. They conceptualise it as an ecosystem of collective action, where economic activity is an integrated flow of ethical and energetic interdependencies. By broadening the scope of what constitutes an economy, they identify alternative economic practices contributing to wellbeing, including trust, stewardship, reciprocity, cooperation, and environmental and social justice. They categorise diverse economies as hybrid (integrating market, state, and customary sectors), ethnic (reflecting spatial, economic, and social community structures), informal (including unpaid domestic and voluntary work), alternative (focused on collective action and cooperation), bio (utilising renewable resources sustainably), circular (eliminating waste through design), blue (reducing environmental risks while promoting social inclusion), and sharing (facilitating access to underutilised resources) (Amoamo, Ruwhiu, & Carter, 2018).

Scobie and Sturman (2020) raise key research questions on how economies of mana might evolve alongside global economic transformations, the forms of labour required to meet intergenerational and kinship obligations, and how Māori economic principles could contribute to resilient and sustainable economies. They call for further exploration of how insights from te ao Māori can shape labour practices, improve economic relations, and provide leadership beyond Māori communities. These questions align with the broader themes of this book, particularly discussions on labour (Chapter 3) and leadership (Chapter 11).

Ngā whakaaro whakatepe: Ngā tīpona whānau me ngā whatunga whakapapa (kaupapa hoki)

Concluding thoughts: Whānau nodes and whakapapa (and kaupapa) networks

The economy of mana provides a powerful framework for the project, but equally it is flexible and loose enough to not be too prescriptive and limiting. It provides an intellectual armature around which a wide variety of possible configurations can be built, though it also provides hard stops where certain options cannot be accepted.

The need for it to be aligned with te ao Māori offers a deep resource for any future Māori economies of wellbeing project – this cognitive orientation is rich with insights. Whakapapa alone is a powerful organising framework and intellectual guide. To understand reality is a web of relationships is to see the function of an economy clearly. The role of the cosmic forces is also vital, their influence on interactions and relationships is fundamental to wellbeing. Likewise, kaupapa and tikanga provide a huge range of useful guides and rules, with tikanga in particular also showing how these economies of wellbeing will be diverse and pluralistic.

That wellbeing for Māori is holistic yet also has clearly identifiable elements is also a useful guide; it ensures that the scope of wellbeing is broad but also offers manageable aspects that can be worked on. This is a powerful counterpoint to the still dominant view in Aotearoa that wellbeing can be worked on in separate silos, that one form of capital can replace or supplement another.

The importance of understanding that all human wellbeing is premised on ecological wellbeing is also of vital importance. This demands that any economic development is conducted within environmental thresholds, and it also reinforces the holistic nature of wellbeing. Seeing nature as family that needs to be cared for so that it can care for you in turn is vital for collective wellbeing, and any Māori economies of wellbeing will need to place ecological wellbeing at the core of their operations.

Noting the need for a future economy that is adaptable is also seen as critical. In our previous report for this project (Rout et al., 2022) we detailed the complex and changing nature of near future, indicating how unpredictable factors like climate change, resource depletion, and political and economic chaos will be in the coming years and decades. For this reason, it is vital that any future economies of wellbeing are able to adapt to any major changes.

The need for multidisciplinary in particular feels like a useful clarion call for future research, as the holistic nature of te ao Māori means that solutions will need to come from everywhere. As noted, this is what this book hopes to do.

Finally, it is important to expand on several aspects that were discussed in our previous report (Rout et al., 2022), which are detailed as key kaupapa here, and which are understood as vital to this project: the role of whānau as the 'nodes' and the importance of decentralised 'networks' in any future economies of wellbeing. There are several reasons for this: the first is that traditional Māori economies were based around whānau nodes and they were networked, as explained in the sections on collective orientation and decentralisation above. Also, however, this structure provides resilience in the face of future unpredictability. The coming years and decades are likely to see the world become increasingly problematic. Aotearoa New Zealand and the world face a looming local/global 'metacrisis' of compounding,

interconnecting issues, including a degrading environment, declining resources, depleting energy, deteriorating international consensus, divisive economics, and demographic upheavals (Rout et al., 2022). Ensuring that Māori economies of wellbeing are structured appropriately to weather these coming storms is critical. With that in mind, a brief discussion on whānau nodes and whakapapa (and kaupapa) networks is useful.

Whānau nodes

Whānau are the key 'nodes' of the network – each whānau is the lodestone of meaning and relationship that bind networks together. Whānau is usually translated as either 'family' or 'extended family'. The actual concept is much broader. As Walker (2011) explains, whānau "can be multi-layered, flexible and dynamic. Whānau is based on a Māori and a tribal world view. It is through the whānau that values, histories and traditions from the ancestors are adapted for the contemporary world." In modern use the term covers a range of biologically related and unrelated yet unified groups:

- whānau as kin: e.g. descend from a common ancestor;
- whānau as shareholders-in-common: e.g. shareholders in land;
- whānau as friends: e.g. share a common purpose;
- whānau as a model of interaction: e.g. in a school environment;
- whānau as neighbours: e.g. have a shared location of residence;
- whānau as households: e.g. urban dwellers;
- the virtual whānau: e.g. meets in cyberspace due to geographical separation (Pihama & Gardiner, 2005).

Critically, whānau here is used in the expanded fashion. These whānau economic nodes may be either whakapapa-based or kaupapa-based but they all need to operate with whanaungatanga. Nicholson et al. (2012) argue that whanaungatanga, a derivative of whānau that means family or kinship relationships in its broadest sense, extends the concept of familiness in family business to incorporate the spiritual and pragmatic differences of what it means to be whānau. In the entrepreneurship literature, familiness denotes the distinctive capabilities that help family firms compete (Chrisman et al., 2005). These capabilities include common aspirations, skills, and resources available to the firm because the family are members of the firm, they interact with one another, are involved in it, and are vested in its outcomes because they and their descendants stand to gain from doing so (Chrisman et al., 2005).

Pearson et al. (2008) use social capital theory to conceptualise familiness as cohering in the structural properties of social ties, the cognitive dimensions of shared meanings, and relational resources of personal interaction. Nicholson et al.

(2012) argue that familiness differs in important ways when interpreted within a Māori worldview. First, whānau “is at the heart of all other relationships” (Nicholson et al., 2012, p. 10). Second, social and cultural capital distinctions disappear because one depends on the other. Both orient whānau enterprise towards collective wealth measured in terms of multidimensional wellbeing: spiritual, environmental, kinship, and economic. Third, Nicholson et al. (2012) argue that relational wealth, or relationships grounded in valuing the intrinsic worth of others, is an essential element of whanaungatanga. Moreover, whanaungatanga is intensified in enterprise collaboration through the principle of kotahitanga – unity and solidarity – and behaviour, which is mana-enhancing because this invokes the strength of reciprocal relations between family and non-family members (Nicholson et al., 2012).

Whānau as a concept has always had flexibility, and this flexibility will be useful if it is to form the central organisational node in Māori economies of wellbeing. Already in contemporary settings, the “concept of whānau is used widely by many groups and organisations to provide a management framework for organising and managing relationships” (Moeke-Pickering, 1996, p. 11). Whānau has been found to be advantageous in the work experiences of Māori employees (Haar et al., 2012). Māori have used it to provide a framework in which to assist and support Māori initiatives by Māori businesses, committees, land trusts, health groups, and family groups (Moeke-Pickering, 1996). That said, in significant ways the whānau has gone from the site of invention to the site of intervention. Even the government department for Māori affairs, Whānau Ora, which takes a whānau-centred approach to wellbeing and development, is focused on supporting struggling whānau to ‘enter the world’. As Durie (2021) suggests:

The overriding aim is that whānau should be self-managing and self-directing, equipped to enter fully into society, education and the economy, and to be confident and active participants in the Māori world. (p. 829)

Nevertheless, we believe the whānau should serve as the core node upon which wellbeing strategies, policies, and practices should be directed, both because it is the tuturu (authentic) traditional economic unit and because decentralisation is an important facet of many of the current economic alternatives. This is not to say that there is not a role for the hapū and iwi (tribes). Iwi in particular are already significant economic actors in the national economy, with the nine largest holding a combined \$11.7 billion in assets in 2022. However, a common criticism of iwi is that even as their wealth and influence have grown, this has not significantly impacted the everyday lives of their members. This is why there needs to be a focus on whānau at the core of a wellbeing economy. Of course, while whānau are seen as the fundamental building bloc, these networks will also need to incorporate hapū, iwi, trusts, incorporations, and all other Māori businesses and organisations.

Whakapapa (and kaupapa) networks

Whakapapa is the original 'network theory'. Whakapapa and network theory share fundamental conceptual similarities, as both describe systems of interconnected relationships that shape structure, function, and meaning. Whakapapa is a framework for understanding relationships – not just between people, but also between land, environment, knowledge, and the cosmos. Similarly, network theory studies how entities (nodes) connect through relationships (edges) to form dynamic systems.

Nodes and connections: In network theory, nodes represent individual entities, while edges depict relationships between them. Whakapapa operates in a similar way, mapping kinship, ancestry, and interconnections between people, land, and spiritual forces. Each whānau can be viewed as a node, linked through whakapapa to other whānau, hapū, and iwi. But whakapapa extends beyond human ancestry – it also connects people to atua, whenua, and mātauranga. This expansive, relational approach mirrors complex networks where nodes are not just people but also ideas, places, and phenomena.

Meaning through connection: A key principle of whakapapa is that identity and meaning arise through relationships. This aligns with network theory's emphasis on relationality: the value and function of a node depend on its position within the network. In whakapapa, a person is not defined in isolation but in relation to their tūpuna, whenua, and whānau.

Distributed and decentralised knowledge: Network theory highlights decentralised structures where knowledge and influence are distributed across multiple nodes rather than concentrated in a single authority. Whakapapa functions similarly – knowledge is held collectively within whānau and hapū, transmitted through oral traditions, including waiata, karakia, and whaikōrero. This resembles peer-to-peer knowledge transmission seen in distributed networks, where resilience and adaptability emerge from the collective rather than a top-down system.

Changing networks: Both whakapapa and network theory acknowledge that connections are not static but evolve over time. Just as networks adapt to new information and shifting relationships, whakapapa allows for adaptation in response to new relational dynamics.

Multi-layered and non-linear relationships: Network theory recognises multi-layered, non-hierarchical relationships, where nodes can be connected in multiple ways. Whakapapa also operates across multiple dimensions, incorporating spiritual, ecological, and social layers. A person is simultaneously connected to their ancestors, the whenua, atua, and other beings, forming a web of interdependence rather than a simple linear ancestry.

Many whakapapa and kaupapa networks already exist. These networks have whānau at their core, functioning as the nodes, specifically the flexible whakapapa- or kaupapa-based whānau, but also bringing together hapū and iwi groupings as well as trusts, incorporations, and other Māori entities and groups. For example, across the many Māori agribusinesses, owned by land trusts, incorporations, iwi rūnanga (tribal councils), and privately, there a number of such networks in existence (Rout et al., 2020). While often these are whakapapa-based, particularly as they will often emerge out of geographical as well as biological proximity, in some cases they are kaupapa founded. As an interviewee told Rout et al. (2020), they are “focused on collaboration with our neighbouring Māori land holdings. All this development is around collaboration with our other whanaunga” (p. 198). He then explained that “I call it my whanaunga, because even if they come to me as a group that I can’t whakapapa into, at the end they become my whanaunga” (p. 198). Similar types of networks are present in the fisheries sector as well, with whānau fishing operations joining with larger entities like Moana NZ into mutually beneficial networks based on shared interests (Mika & MacDonald, 2024). Whale Watch Kaikoura is another useful example. It started as the brainchild of several local whānau who belong to the hapū Kati Kuri. After a while they reached out to Ngāi Tahu for some funding, and they grew to employ almost 70 people, mostly Māori, and they support many extended whānau across the region (Spiller & Erakovic, 2005).

There are also a number of ‘networks’ designed to facilitate such networking. For example, the Whāriki Māori Business Network links together over 3,000 Māori businesses. As Whāriki Māori Business Network (n.d.) explains:

In the Māori economy, business networks play a crucial role in fostering growth and success. At Whāriki, we view networking as the weaving of whanaungatanga in the business world. Our kaupapa is to create a platform where professional relationships are formed, experiences are shared, and collaboration thrives. By helping businesses enhance their capabilities, expand their reach, and boost profitability, we contribute to the development of the Māori economy, enabling growth and creating employment opportunities for others.

These networks exist, but more could be done to facilitate their creation and growth. Chapter 9 in particular focuses on how these networks might be encouraged.

Ngā tohutoro

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Upoko 6: He tāhuhu kōrero mō te oranga Māori

Chapter 6: A history of Māori wellbeing

– Matthew Rout

He tirohanga whānui ki te oranga Māori A general outline of Māori wellbeing

As explored throughout this book, wellbeing from a Māori perspective is complex and nuanced. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a historical overview of Māori wellbeing over time, as divided into six relatively arbitrary periods – before contact, after contact, during isolation from settler society, during integration with settler society, under neoliberalism, and today. To structure the analysis, and provide those first insights, the first focus will be on providing an outline of wellbeing from a Māori perspective. In particular, it will focus on the work of Mānuka Hēnare and Mason Durie as their mahi on this topic can be seen as foundational and, as will be shown, complementary. While Durie's model is labelled a 'Māori model of health', because of the model's holistic scope it can be seen as relating to wellbeing. From a Māori perspective, health and wellbeing are intrinsically connected. Also important, Durie's model was one of the first times that Māori perspectives on this topic were engaged with by the public sector. The work of Hēnare in many ways builds on this, but takes a broader perspective that works well with Durie's. Ultimately, this first section will provide a synthesis of the models by Durie and Hēnare, producing a simple framework that the chronological analysis will utilise for the rest of the chapter.

Te oranga Māori Māori wellbeing Māori wellbeing (re)forms

Up until the end of the 20th century, Māori health and wellbeing was not frequently thought of in distinct or culturally specific ways – at least at a national or public level (Dow, 1995). Even when the First Labour Government of New Zealand launched universal healthcare with the aim of delivering social and economic equality it "ignored Māori concepts of health and wellbeing ... because a health system which

has been designed for 'all New Zealanders' is a system designed for Pākehā/white New Zealanders" (Brown & Bryder, 2023, p. 2). In the 1970s, the concept of Māori wellbeing began to (re)form, at least in public fora. These modern conceptions and models began to emerge in the 1970s and 1980s, as wellbeing came on the radar more generally in the country (Durie, 1994).

A 1972 report called *Social Security in New Zealand* saw the government consult New Zealanders on what they valued, reviewing the benefits-related aspects of social security, concentrating on the extent, adequacies, and levels of various benefits available to those deemed to be in need (O'Connell et al., 2018). In 1988, the Royal Commission on Social Policy systematically consulted New Zealanders across the country. Its mission was to determine what policy changes were needed to "secure a fairer, humanitarian, consistent, efficient and economical social policy" and thereby "achieve a more just society" (Royal Commission on Social Policy, 1988, as cited in Barnes & Harris, 2011, p. 3). The Commission analysed 6,000 written submissions, held 60 public hearings, visited 35 marae, and had dedicated phone lines for further oral submissions. In the same year, New Zealand MP and economist Marilyn Waring (1998) began to question value and worth, publishing a book called *If Women Counted: A New Feminist Economics*. She was concerned that the exclusive focus on market production in modern fiscal management meant that economic activities essential for human wellbeing (like caring for children by parents or the provision of ecosystem services by the natural environment) were made invisible to economic policymakers. As Dalziel and Saunders (2015) note, with this book Waring "introduced wellbeing economics in all but name into New Zealand policy discourse" (p. 4).

Initial work by Māori on wellbeing came from the health sector, and while this has often been labelled as 'health', it can be understood more accurately as wellbeing from a health perspective. Before the mid-1970s, Durie (1994) explains, "professional and academic interest in Māori perspectives on health and sickness tended to confine discussion to particular clinical syndromes which were unique to Māori and of anthropological as much as medical interest" (p. 67).

During the 1970s, Māori agitation against the reductive Western approach to health and wellbeing grew, with interest in te ao Māori (the Māori worldview) framing burgeoning, and gradually the health sector accepted that ethnicity and culture had implications for health. As Cram (2014) notes, "Western psychological concepts, including wellbeing, have been criticised by Indigenous peoples as narrow because of their presumptions of universality and their preoccupation with the individual self" (p. 20). Te Whare Tapa Whā, developed by Mason Durie in the 1980s during discussions with the Māori Women's Welfare League, was probably the first 'modern' Māori wellbeing model (Palmer, 2002). The model uses the wharenui (meeting

house) as a symbol, with all four 'walls' necessary to provide strength and symmetry (Durie, 1994).

Te Whare Tapa Whā has four walls, or dimensions:

- **Taha tinana (physical wellbeing):** This dimension emphasises the physical health of an individual. It is not just about the absence of illness but includes physical fitness, healthy living, and access to healthcare services.
- **Taha hinengaro (mental wellbeing):** Mental health in the Māori context includes emotional and psychological aspects. It is about expressing thoughts and feelings and maintaining a positive outlook.
- **Taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing):** Spiritual health is central to Māori wellbeing. It involves a sense of belonging, identity, and a connection to the ancestral land and the spiritual world.
- **Taha whānau (family wellbeing):** This dimension underscores the importance of family and community. Wellbeing is seen as a collective responsibility, with strong family ties providing support and a sense of identity (Ministry of Health – Manatū Hauora, n.d.-a).

As Durie explains, the four 'walls' of his whare (house) model are all necessary to ensure strength and symmetry. Core to Durie's model is rangatiratanga, or autonomy. As he notes, "Māori health development is essentially about Māori defining their own priorities for health and then weaving a course to realise their collective aspirations" (Durie, 1994, p. 1). Durie also provides a holistic view of wellbeing, advocating for an integrated approach to cultural, social, economic, and spiritual development as part of physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing.

Another important model is Te Wheke (The Octopus), developed by Rose Pere, which was also introduced in the 1980s. It is similar to Te Whare Tapa Whā but adds several extra dimensions:

- Wairuatanga – spirituality
- Hinengaro – the mind
- Taha tinana – physical wellbeing
- Whanaungatanga – extended family
- Mauri – life force in people and objects
- Mana ake – unique identity of individuals and family
- Hā a koro mā, a kui mā – breath of life from forbearers
- Whatumanawa – the open and healthy expression of emotion (Ministry of Health – Manatū Hauora, n.d.-b)

Around the same time as Durie’s and Pere’s models were being developed, the Ngā Pou Mana model, which emerged out of the broader Royal Commission on Social Policy held in 1988, was introduced. This model, unlike the previous two, put a greater emphasis on the external environment and the role of oral tradition as a stabilising force. Like Durie’s Te Whare Tapa Whā model, it utilises the metaphor of four supports: family (whanaungatanga), cultural heritage (taonga tuku iho), physical environment (te ao tūroa), and an indisputable land base (tūrangawaewae) (Durie, 1994). Durie provides a useful overview of these three foundational models of Māori wellbeing (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1. Components and features of three foundational models of Māori wellbeing (adapted from Durie, 1994)

	Te Whare Tapa Whā	Te Wheke	Ngā Pou Mana
Components	- Wairua - Hinengaro - Tinana - Whānau	- Wairuatanga - Hinengaro - Tinana - Whanaungatanga - Mana ake - Mauri - Hā a koro mā, a kui mā - Whatumanawa	- Whanaungatanga - Taonga tuku iho - Te ao tūroa - Tūrangawaewae
Features	- Spiritual health - Mental health - Physical health - Family health	- Spirituality - Mental health - Physical wellbeing - Family - Uniqueness - Vitality - Cultural heritage - Emotions	- Family - Cultural heritage - Environment - Land base

As Roche et al. (2018) note, both Durie’s and Pere’s models “have been particularly influential in Aotearoa New Zealand in the previous two decades” (p. 27). These models serve as the basis for most of what follows on Māori wellbeing. Several additional health and wellbeing models have been proposed in recent years, although their overall scope and emphasis remain largely aligned with the foundational work of Durie and Pere. Rather than introducing entirely new dimensions, these models tend to highlight particular aspects already present in earlier frameworks. For instance, McIntosh et al. (2021) and Panelli and Tipa (2007) both explore the relationship between land and health or wellbeing. McIntosh et al. (2021) discuss the idea of ‘therapeutic landscapes’ in relation to culture and health, asserting that “all three concepts, culture, health and landscape, are interconnected and must be balanced to reduce Māori health inequalities and to provide a more

sustainable model for health and wellbeing” (p. 143). Likewise, Panelli and Tipa (2007) present a geographical perspective that links culture and environment, grounding their approach to Māori wellbeing in “the need for cultural specificity and analyses of place-based issues” (p. 448). More recent contributions have refined these models for particular contexts, such as clinical assessment (Pitama et al., 2007) or Māori healing practices (Mark & Lyons, 2010).

Māori wellbeing concepts today

At the turn of the millennium the New Zealand Treasury published a series of papers on the topic of an inclusive economy, which began the tentative manoeuvres of officialdom towards a broader understanding of economics that went beyond the neoclassical-neoliberal consensus (New Zealand Treasury, n.d.). In the key document produced by Treasury in 2001, then Minister of Finance Michael Cullen described a utopian “vision where prosperity, opportunity and social justice combine to continuously improve the well-being of all citizens” (Claridge et al., 2001, p. 4). Fast-forward a decade and Treasury introduced the first version of the Living Standards Framework (LSF), with its differentiation between financial, social, human, and natural capital and its mapping of how these forms of capital could impact an array of wellbeing domains (New Zealand Treasury, n.d.). Around the same time, the First International Conference on Wellbeing and Public Policy (WAPP) was held in Wellington.

In 2018, Treasury produced its second LSF, Aotearoa became a founding member of the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll), and the Third International Conference on WAPP returned to Wellington with over 150 presentations (Weijers & Morrison, 2018). In 2018, Te Puni Kōkiri submitted a discussion paper to Treasury regarding the development of the LSF, the core national-level decision-making tool intended to drive wellbeing. As noted, Treasury has been iteratively developing the LSF since 2011. Public engagement on the 2018 version of the LSF identified several limitations, including incompatibilities and inconsistencies with te ao Māori. Hence the discussion paper by Te Puni Kōkiri.

Māori began to (re)conceptualise wellbeing from a te ao Māori perspective, with most of the early work being done in the health sector. In 2006 at a Treasury guest lecture series, Durie would outline a more expansive model of Māori wellbeing, still from a health perspective but with several levels as well as universal and Māori-specific measures that show a broadening and deepening of his focus (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2. Frameworks for measuring Māori wellbeing (adapted from Durie, 2006)

	Individuals: The wellbeing of individuals	Collectives: The wellbeing of families, groups	Populations: The wellbeing of whole populations
Universal measures	Measures that are relevant to all people (e.g. life expectancy, mortality data)	Measures that can be applied to diverse groups (e.g. aggregated data)	Measures that apply to all populations and nations (e.g. gross national product, global burden of disease)
Māori-specific measures	Hua Oranga: • Taha wairua (spiritual health) • Taha hinengaro (mental health) • Taha tinana (physical health) • Taha whānau (relationships with family and community)	Whānau capacities: • Wellbeing of whānau members • Management of whānau estate • Whānau participation in society • Future generations • Whānau members, whānau • Protocols • Whānau cohesiveness	Te Ngahuru: • Secure cultural identity • Collective Māori synergies • Cultural and intellectual resources • The Māori estate

Durie built on his previous conception of wellbeing by incorporating objective measures of wellbeing into a nuanced and nested model that views wellbeing as both individual and collective as well as having both universal and culturally specific components.

In the past few decades, a number of Māori models of wellbeing have also come from a range of other fields and disciplines. Māori wellbeing has been addressed from an economic perspective, though of course these come from a much broader conception of ‘economics’ than the mainstream. Mānuka Hēnare was one of the leading proponents of this economic perspective with his ‘economy of mana’ model, which has been the core organising framework around which much of the wellbeing work from an economic perspective has been conducted and which has already been outlined in detail in the previous chapter.

A synthesis of Durie and Hēnare

As can be seen from the brief outline, Durie’s model emphasises physical, mental, social, and spiritual domains while the work by Hēnare on wellbeing does not focus as much on physical and mental health, but instead includes environmental and economic domains. These different perspectives seem to be exactly that, perspectives. Durie, working from a health paradigm, is viewed from a more narrow frame looking out, while the economic wellbeing model by Hēnare is viewed from a

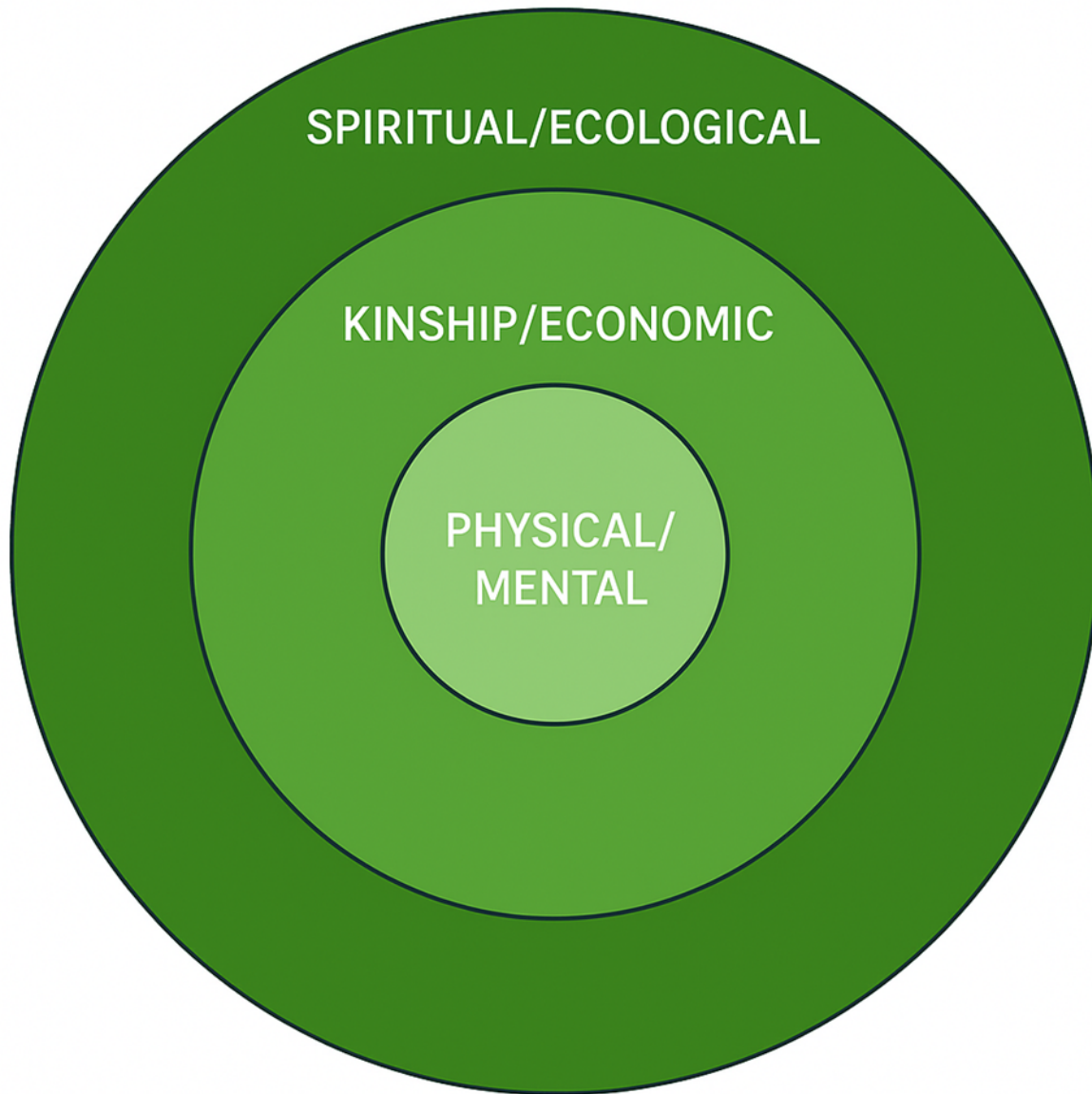
broader frame looking in, yet they are fundamentally both looking at the same thing.

Of course, this is a somewhat reductive way of framing the work of Durie, Hēnare, and others and there has been increasing convergence between the health and wellbeing schools of scholarship in recent years. Working in the Māori economies of wellbeing space, Wolfgramm et al. (2020) explain that the “origins of holistic models of oranga and Māori well-being are inspired by frameworks such as [Pere’s] Te Wheke” (p. 20). Conversely, Durie has come to focus on the broader conceptions of wellbeing, with his 2006 lecture to Treasury outlining a framework that incorporates subjective and objective wellbeing measures at individual, collective, and population levels. To this, Wolfgramm et al. (2020) note that Durie “argues cogently that to achieve well-being, Māori advancement should include economic self-sufficiency, social equity, cultural affirmation, political strength, a compelling worldview and articulating a clear vision of future well-being that is holistic” (p. 23).

There is a need for a synthesis between the models of Durie and Hēnare as a way of incorporating the broader economic elements into the more focused health thinking. The aim is to bring these two schools of thought – Māori health and Māori wellbeing – together in a way that is useful for analysis, meaning that it needs to capture the essence of both without adding extra complexity. To do this, the focus is restricted to Durie’s Te Whare Tapa Whā model with Hēnare’s economy of mana, both because they can be seen as the pre-eminent models in each school of thought and because they provide relatively condensed categorisations that can be easily synthesised.

Thus, there are effectively eight components to merge. From Durie we have physical health, mental health, spiritual health, and family health, and from Hēnare we have spiritual wellbeing, environmental wellbeing, kinship wellbeing, and economic wellbeing. It is helpful to think of these as nested levels, with the caveat that these levels are interconnected, porous, and fuzzy. At the core, there is the physical and mental wellbeing of the individual (though this can also be expanded out to be whānau), the next level encapsulates the social world of the individual/whānau, including kinship and economic wellbeing, while the final level – which incorporates the two other levels – is the cosmological, which brings together spiritual and ecological health and wellbeing. This is shown in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1. Nested levels of wellbeing from a te ao Māori perspective: A synthesis of Durie and Hēnare.



These three levels provide the analytical structure for the rest of this chapter. They will be referred to using either the labels individual, social, and cosmological, or physical and/or mental, kinship and/or economic, and spiritual and/or ecological.

He tāhuhu kōrero mō te oranga Māori

A history of Māori wellbeing

Māori wellbeing before contact

In 1769, Captain Cook on the *HMS Endeavour* sighted Aotearoa, connecting one of the last significant landmasses with the broader mass of humanity. Contact, unsurprisingly, changed almost everything, when “Europeans stepped into the southern dawn, the people who thought of themselves as constituting the whole human world found that they were one of its fringes” (Head, 2001, p. 99). Suddenly, the scale of Māori existence had changed enormously. For hundreds of

years, Māori had been living isolated at the bottom of the world, their world guided solely by te ao Māori, or the Māori worldview.

Māori wellbeing – it is contended – was higher before contact than it has been since colonisation. Of course, making claims about Māori wellbeing in what is termed ‘prehistory’ by the academe is contentious as there are no written records, as the term ‘prehistory’ suggests. That said, there is sufficient evidence from within Māori culture, archaeological records, and first-hand reports by early European explorers, as prehistory tipped into history, to confirm that *from a Māori perspective*, their economies delivered collective wellbeing in a way that the settler and neoliberal economies never have.

Māori physical wellbeing before contact appears to be relatively high, particularly in contrast to the wellbeing of the European sailors who first made contact. This was despite the fact that unlike the more tropical islands from which their ancestors came, Aotearoa presented a much more challenging environment to survive in – not just because of the temperatures but also due to the endemic flora and fauna (Belich, 2002). Māori, Cram et al. (2019) explain, also “enjoyed a reasonably low incidence of disease prior to their introduction by Europeans” (p. 20). In 1770 Captain Cook wrote that Māori were:

Stout, well-limbed, and fleshy ... they are also exceedingly vigorous and active. Their teeth are extremely regular and as white as ivory ... they seem to enjoy high health and we saw many who appeared to be of a great age. (Cook, 1842, p. 187)

Cook also noted that Māori were “a Strong, rawboned, well made, Active People, rather above than under the common size, especially the Men” (Cook, 2005, as cited in Daley, 2013, para. 1). Similarly, Banks, the naturalist and botanist who travelled with Cook on his first expedition, noted that the “men are of the size of the larger Europaeans, Stout, Clean Limnd and active, fleshy but never fat” (Banks, 2005, as cited in Daley, 2013, para. 1). Banks would also write that:

A further proof, and not a weak one, of the sound health that these people enjoy, may be taken from the number of old people that we saw ... who, if we may judge by their grey hairs and worn out teeth, were of a very advanced age. Of these few or none were decrepit: the greater number seemed in vivacity and cheerfulness equal to the young, and indeed inferior to them in nothing but the want of equal strength and agility. (Banks, 1896, as cited in Cram, 2014, pp. 18–19)

Certainly, these descriptions, if accurate, denote positive physical wellbeing, though Moewaka Barnes and McCreanor (2019) do warn that “this objectification – the earliest European statement about Maori health – plays ambiguously as both

resource and threat to potential imperial interests” (p. 20). That said, Kingi (2018) seems to take the reports from these explorers as relatively accurate, writing that:

Early descriptions of Māori (at least in terms of their health and wellbeing) were largely positive. Life expectancy was on a par with other parts of the world, and while the population was not immune to illness and disease, the impression was that of a sophisticated society that was healthy, robust and resilient. (p. 9)

Pool (2012) notes that:

Evidence suggests that Māori life expectancy at the time of James Cook’s visits to New Zealand (between 1769 and 1777) was similar to that in some of the most privileged 18th century societies. Māori may have had a life expectancy at birth of about 30. (para. 2)

Reverend William Colenso, whom Pool calls “knowledgeable and sympathetic”, had lived in Aotearoa New Zealand from 1834, was well travelled for the pre-colonial era, and was an outstanding natural scientist of his day. He argued that “Cook found the New Zealanders healthy happy and contented in the midst all their wars and poverty; – *are they so now?*” (Colenso, 1868, as cited in Pool, 2015, p. 102, emphasis in original). Obviously there is some problematic framing here, the idea that Māori were more warlike than the British is laughable, and his labelling of the pre-contact era as ‘poverty’ is more a reflection on his own values than on the Māori lived experienced. The painter Augustus Earle (1832), who spent eight months in Aotearoa in 1827, wrote of Māori:

They were generally taller and larger men than ourselves; those of middle height were broad-chested and muscular, and their limbs as sinewy as though they had been occupied all their lives in laborious employments ... the disposition of the New Zealander appears to be full of fun and gaiety. (Chapter II, para. 3)

Likewise, Reverend J. W. Stack, the Anglican missionary to the Canterbury Māori in the 1850s, described pre-contact Māori as “living in peace and plentitude [*sic*]” (Stack, 1893, as cited in Major, 1964, p. 3). There is a wealth of early reporting that covers similar ground, effectively portraying Māori in this early post-contact period as physically and mentally healthy. In terms of mental wellbeing, while not much can be definitively known, Kingi (2018) does note:

Mental illness (as defined according to Western criteria) is likely to have existed within Māori communities before European contact. This conclusion is simply based on the notion that mental disorders have been known to occur within all cultures and that it is most unlikely that Māori alone could have developed the means, biological or otherwise, by which such conditions (now termed mental disorders) could have been avoided. Linguistic and literary evidence also suggests

the existence of problems specifically related to the mind. Terms such as pōrangi, wairangi, poorewarewa, haurangi and pooteetee are often used by Māori to describe individuals considered to be mad or out of their mind. Leaving aside the difficulties in equating these words with psychosis or other serious disorders, the words themselves suggest a departure from the norms of the community and at least a recognition of abnormal states of mind. (p. 8)

While some may approach these early records as questionable, Ballara (1998) believes that the:

18th century explorers arrived in New Zealand ignorant of Māori other than from the glimpses recorded by Abel Tasman ... the explorers were relatively open-minded compared to some later observers. As a result their recorded observations are comparatively valuable to scholars. (p. 55)

Likewise, King (2003) reinforces the position that Cook's accounts have a high degree of integrity, that Cook had an understanding of Māori as equally human, of understanding that "on each side there was 'savagery and kindness, generosity and greed, intelligent curiosity and stupidity'" and "the honest and humane way that Cook had, on the whole, dealt with indigenous peoples, and of his essential humanity" (p. 108). Even more importantly, as King explains, the "greatest compliment his biographer John Beaglehole could pay him was that Cook 'saw and [by his own lights] reported truly'" in what King refers to as "an understatement that would have been characteristic and worthy of the man himself" (p. 109). Also, while Major (1964) does explain that "Stack is inclined to over-colour his writing", she notes that his account of Māori life "when compared with the observations of other Europeans seems substantially true" (p. 3). Of course, Cook has been the subject of both hagiography and demonisation. However, it is felt that the descriptions of Māori by Cook and his contemporaries were relatively accurate, particularly as this is backed up by archaeological evidence.

It is believed that one of the key reasons that Māori wellbeing was relatively high across physical, mental, and social domains was because of this traditional economy. This section will provide a brief outline of the Māori economy. In the traditional Māori context, wealth was not measured by individual accumulation but by the ability to nurture and sustain relationships within the hapū (clan) and iwi (tribe). Resources were shared according to need, and the redistribution of goods served to reinforce social bonds and communal wellbeing. In particular, the mana of rangatira came not from how much they accumulated but how much resource they were able to redistribute. They kept food supplies high so they were able to hand it out when needed (Reid et al., 2019). As Dell et al. (2018) note:

Māori relationships with each other held the system together, governing the use of and access to resources. Access to resources focused iwi, hapū and whānau attention and energies on nurturing relationships and genealogical alliances. Distinct and defined physical land boundaries tended to be cast aside for a dynamic system involving relational processes. (p. 53)

Food production and distribution were central activities within Māori society, and the process was highly communal. Houkama (2019) explains:

Traditional Māori lore required *whānau* and *hapū* to cooperate harmoniously on such matters as tribal survival relied upon symbiotic relationships between group members ... As a reflection of this social system, family interdependence and economic wellbeing were not experienced as separate entities. (p. 210)

Surpluses from one whānau or hapū would be gifted to another, not only as an act of generosity but as a way to maintain reciprocity and social harmony. The emphasis was on collective prosperity, where individuals and families worked together to ensure that all members of the community had what they needed to thrive. As Dell et al. (2018) explain:

The production and consumption of goods and services was a pragmatic and tangible part of traditional Māori economic models. However, the market existed within the social realm whereby the community kinship structures both drove trade and were the purpose for its existence. Commercial relationships were not separate economic, ecological, political, social and spiritual spheres but fused together as one in a Māori exchange system. Māori did not consider the exchange of goods and services as an isolated transaction; instead, layers of relational interactions and exchanges emerged from economic agreements and commercial contracts. (p. 53)

Mana is a complex and multifaceted concept in Māori culture, often described as a form of spiritual power, authority, or prestige. Mana has many definitional aspects, from its function as an indicator or symbol of influence and authority to its multiple sources, including the atua (gods), ancestors, land, and personal actions, through to its interactive nature that sees it grow or diminish depending on actions and relational dynamics (Dell et al., 2018; Rout et al., 2021).

Mana is evaluated through the judgements of others. It cannot be self-claimed; instead, it is acknowledged, affirmed, and conferred by the community (Dell et al., 2018). Typically, a person's mana grows in proportion to their contributions, support, and generosity towards others, or when their individual success benefits the broader collective. However, in economic terms, mana can be understood as the currency of social capital. Economic activities were often undertaken not just for

material gain but to enhance the mana of individuals, families, and entire communities. In traditional Māori society, the accumulation of material wealth was less important than the enhancement of mana, which could be achieved through acts of leadership, generosity, hospitality (manaakitanga), and the successful management of resources.

A chief (rangatira) who ensured the wellbeing of their people through wise resource management and strategic alliances would see their mana – and by extension, the mana of their entire hapū or iwi – enhanced. This economy of mana created a form of social accounting where prestige and authority were earned through service to the community and the environment.

The Māori worldview sees the environment not as a resource to be exploited but as an ancestor to be respected and cared for. The careful management of resources, such as through the concept of kaitiakitanga (guardianship), was thus a way to maintain both the mana of the community and the health of the environment. In traditional Māori society, economic actions were not isolated from social responsibilities or spiritual beliefs – they were embedded within them.

The Māori economy was, therefore, an economy of relationships – relationships with other people, with the land, and with the spiritual world. These concepts challenge the Western notion of economy as a domain separate from society and culture, offering instead a model where economic activity is fundamentally about sustaining life, relationships, and the environment.

At the cosmological level, Māori wellbeing was built on their intimate relationships with the supporting ecosystem, which was understood and cared for as kin and infused with spiritual significance. Nature was “a medium for physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health and wellbeing through the whenua, te wao nui ā Tane (the forest), ngā wai ora (the water) and te rohe reporepo (wetlands)” (Mark et al., 2022, p. 2). The deep relationship with nature, coupled with a profound understanding of plants, animals, and the landscape, fostered a worldview that acknowledged the tapu of all living things and the land itself.

By recognising their place within the natural world and seeing the vitalism and spirit infused in all its various elements, Māori had an immensely fulfilling connection with the life forms and entities that surrounded them (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013). Even the way Māori thought of themselves was through whakapapa and whenua. The term ‘Māori’ only came to be used as a proper noun after colonisation, before the arrival of Pākehā it had meant ‘natural’ or ‘normal’. If there was any label they used it would have been their hapū affiliation, usually an ancestor’s name, or ‘tangata whenua’ or people of the land (Ballara, 1998). Durie (1998) writes, “there was no concept of a Maori identity in the sense of cultural or even national

similarities. Instead, the distinguishing features which demarcated groups were mainly attributable to tribal affiliations and the natural environment” (p. 53).

In other words, it was whakapapa and whenua that gave Māori meaning and connection. Similarly, Kukutai (2010) explains that “prior to European contact, indigenous identities in New Zealand derived from a complex and fluid web of ambilateral whānau (family) hapū (clan) and iwi (tribal) affiliations, and connections to territory” (p. 46). The cosmological reality for Māori was of life shaped by the life forces through the web of whakapapa, with this web providing emotional, physical, material, and spiritual support in ways not experienced since 1769.

Māori wellbeing after contact

It is no surprise that in the decades following contact, Māori wellbeing in general took a significant downturn. “Colonisation”, as Moewaka Barnes and McCreanor (2019) write, “has had profound negative consequences for the health, wellbeing and indeed the very existence of Maori populations in Aotearoa” (p. 19). Mapping this decline out is far easier than the previous section though still it requires piecing together various strands and must be described as general and simplistic in its coverage of the period.

The first impacts on physical wellbeing were largely due to the introduced infectious diseases. The impact of these diseases on Māori health “was a disaster of unprecedented proportions”, caused by the lack of Māori immunity, an inability to treat these diseases, and as time went on, the poverty and associated living conditions that made Māori more susceptible to disease (Lange, 1999, as cited in Cram et al., 2019, p. 20). As Cram et al. (2019) note in their review of Māori health for the Ministry of Health:

Between 1769 and 1859, tens of thousands of Māori men, women and children lost their lives as wave upon wave of infectious diseases brought painful and, at the time, unexplainable deaths. Because Māori had no prior exposure to those diseases, they lacked immunity and were thus exposed to an eventual high morbidity (disease) and high mortality (death) rate. Good health did not guarantee individuals could fight infection or rapidly recover. Even survivors who built up immunity over time were still vulnerable to the influenza virus which could mutate and sweep through a community over and over again. At the time no-one knew what caused diseases, how and why they spread, and how to treat them. (p. 21)

Critically, these diseases not only impacted Māori morbidity and mortality, but also had impacts on beliefs and practices as they were not only so virulent but so unknown (Cram et al., 2019). By the early 19th century, the main causes of death for Māori were from influenza, whooping cough, measles and dysentery, with an

outbreak of influenza and dysentery reported to have killed 60% of Māori in the southern North Island at one point (Cram et al., 2019). In the 1820s, tuberculosis, catarrh, whooping cough, measles, mumps, and polio were increasingly common as the amount of contact with Europeans grew. This had a significant impact on the Māori population, with one estimate being that “from around 100,000 in 1769, the Māori population had declined by 10–30% by 1840” (Lange, 2018, as cited in Cram et al., 2019, p. 24).

Māori demographic decline was so precipitous that it was widely believed they were dying out, with the Māori population dropping by half between 1840 and 1900 (Pool, 2015). This was driven by a range of factors, most particularly poverty and poor health, itself driven by disease, malnutrition, and sanitation (Pool, 2015). Life expectancy provides a good insight into Māori physical wellbeing during this period. Moewaka Barnes and McCreanor (2019) note that “by the 1880s the life expectancy disparity between tangata whenua and settler was around 30 years as Maori longevity fell to the mid-20s and settler equivalents rose to mid-50s” (p. 22). As Pool (2015) explains, healthcare was woeful during this period, even for poor Pākehā – for Māori, it was virtually non-existent. It was only in the 1890s “that Maori began to ‘make it’, whereas their material and social wellbeing, their development, was still ‘broken’, and would not start to ensure them a path towards a more secure future until well into the middle of the twentieth century” (p. 179).

The impacts of contact and colonisation at the social level were slower to manifest than the imported diseases, but by the end of this period in question the Māori economy was in tatters though the broader bonds of whakapapa were less impacted. The majority of the focus here will be on economic wellbeing both because there is more evidence and because it experienced the most change. During the 19th century, Māori economic wellbeing experienced a catastrophic decline. Granted, several decades from roughly the 1830s to the 1840s were a time of relative economic prosperity for Māori, as they adapted to the newly introduced settler economic system, and the technologies and methods that underpinned it (Reid et al., 2019). However, this boom would not last. As the settler demographics grew, they became less reliant on Māori for food and services and hungered for the productive Māori land (Reid et al., 2019).

The second half of the 19th century saw a near complete transfer of land from Māori to settlers via the Crown. Māori remuneration for this land was extremely low. One estimate is that the Crown paid £21,150 – roughly \$3 million (inflation-adjusted 2024 New Zealand dollars) – for two-thirds of the country under pre-emption (Fyer, 2018). The Crown was then on-selling this land for around 10 times the price paid (Hooper & Kearins, 2003). Pool (2015) believes “it is an understatement to say that Maori were ‘deprived of their resources’; their loss was so thorough that it was akin

to robbery” (p. 196). Likewise, Boast (2008a) writes, “Maori might as well have given their North Island lands to the Government for all the economic difference it made” (p. 82). Easton (1995) has calculated the losses for one smaller iwi to be \$1.7 billion in 2024 dollars. This was through both land loss and indirect losses, with the latter calculated based on income deficit across time between Māori and Pākehā (Easton, 1995). Land loss was a significant factor in the decline in Māori economic wellbeing, which in turn further impacted Māori physical wellbeing. As Anderson et al. (2014) note:

Māori poverty became widespread in the wake of relentless land purchasing and laws that had created complicated Māori land titles, and inadequate provisions for Māori to manage land in multiple ownerships or raise capital for its development. These factors in turn gave rise to a classic spiral of underdevelopment (poverty giving rise to poor health and poor educational achievement, affecting the potential of the next generation to earn an adequate income). (pp. 340–341)

A key focus of the Crown was assimilating Māori. Assimilation was focused on creating ‘brown Pākehā’, a subservient class of the populace who:

would resile from the ‘beastly communism’ of the tribal collectivity...[,] embrace individualism fervently, maximise their profits by selling the land to those with the superior technology to use it efficiently (whites), and behave in such a fashion as not to disrupt ‘the natural order of things’. (Hill, 2004, pp. 19–20).

In this narrative, Māori wellbeing would be met by becoming a form of culturally colonised vassal to the new settlers. This focus has meant that the Crown acted in a paternalistic manner towards Māori. As Rangihau (1986) writes:

[The] history of New Zealand since colonisation has been the history of institutional decisions being made for, rather than by, Maori people. Key decisions on education, justice and social welfare, for example, have been made with little consultation with Maori people. Throughout colonial history, inappropriate structures and Pakeha involvement in issues critical for Maori have worked to break down traditional Maori society by weakening its base – the whanau, the hapu, the iwi. It has been almost impossible for Maori to maintain tribal responsibility for their own people. (p. 18)

Much has been written about the colonisation of Aotearoa, though until recent years the focus has largely been on the material impacts, the loss of land, the loss of political control, and the economic decline. The scholarship has expanded significantly, with increasing focus on the psychological and psychosocial consequences of colonisation (Reid et al., 2017). As Jackson (2004), referencing Said (1993), writes:

Colonization and imperialism are more than tangible acts of land theft or physical genocide. They are also an accretion of intangibles that ... “Linger where they have always been, in a kind of general cultural sphere, as well as in specific political, ideological, economic and social practices.” (p. 96)

Mikaere (2011) reiterates this, writing that:

in Aotearoa, as elsewhere, colonisation has always been about much more than simply the theft of land, the decimation of an Indigenous population by introduced disease and the seizure of political power. It has always been about recreating the colonised in the image of the coloniser. (p. 246)

The negative impacts on wellbeing would have been significant in this period, with diseases ravaging communities and land loss seeing not just economic means decreased but also the spiritual connections to whenua (land) eroded. That said, it is also posited that mental and social wellbeing were not as severely impacted as physical and economic wellbeing because Māori still lived largely enveloped in their culture and protected from some of the more insidious aspects of the colonial narrative and the systemic and individual racism. In terms of mental wellbeing, Kingi (2018) makes a strong case for relatively low negative outcomes at this stage despite lack of direct evidence:

Amidst the various accounts of Māori ill-health, while there is concern, there is an absence of information about Māori mental health or psychological distress. While it would be unreasonable to imply that a lack of information should necessarily equate with an absence of illness, it does suggest that other health concerns were afforded more attention and were of higher concern. If mental health problems were of particular interest, they were certainly not worthy of any special mention – at least they are not seen when reviewing historical texts, transcripts and manuscripts. (p. 10)

This isolation and incubation would continue into the next period.

The changes to spiritual-environmental wellbeing during this period would have been significant, largely due to the substantial land loss Māori experienced. In the first three decades after the signing of te Tiriti, Māori were alienated from the majority of their land. In the case of Ngāi Tahu, whose territory made up approximately three quarters of the South Island, 99.9% of tribal territory was in Crown possession by 1863.

The rapid alienation of Māori land was also occurring in the North Island. By 1890 Māori held around 40% of the North Island, after both sales and raupatu – the confiscation of land by the state following the New Zealand Wars (Orange, 2015). Put another way, between 1840 and 1865, “about two-thirds of the entire land area

of New Zealand” was bought by the Crown (Boast, 2008. In Kawharu’s (1977) now famous framing, the Native Land Court was “a veritable engine of destruction for any tribe’s tenure of land, anywhere” (p. 15). The “colonial government continually adjusted the complex of laws that constructed the market in ways that caused the prices received by the Maori to be lower than they would have been otherwise” (Banner, 2000, p. 54). The colonial government changed the laws determining who could purchase the land, who could sell the land, and who bore the administrative costs of establishing the market. For example, Crown pre-emption, which created a monopsonic situation where only the state could buy land, was in place between 1840 and 1865. As Banner (2000) explains, as Māori were not able to form a united front to counter the colonial government, “preemption was thus an instance of the importance of political organization in structuring the marketplace. Two peoples converged, and the better organized was able to take wealth from the poorly organized” (p. 61).

The significant loss of land was facilitated by the structural inequalities of the colonial state – it was, in Banner’s (2000) coinage, a ‘conquest by contract’. It was during this period that numerous acts were passed designed to hasten land alienation, including the Native Land Act of 1862, which sought for the ‘rapid individualisation’ of Māori land (Pool, 2015). The entire settler institutional framework disenfranchised Māori from the environment. “For Māori,” as Lambert and Mark-Shadbolt (2021) note, “colonial legislation systematically stripped away control of the environment, including the 1874 and 1885 Forests Acts which were motivated in part by public – that is, non-Māori – concern for ‘the great conflagrations of timber-bearing forests’” (p. 369).

Māori wellbeing during isolation from settler society

From about the 1890s until the 1930s, Māori lived relatively separate from wider settler society, usually rural and mostly in their kāinga (villages). “Although Māori society had changed rapidly between 1840 and 1940,” Houkamau (2010) explains, “due to geographical isolation the maintenance of a distinct Māori identity was still possible for Māori up until the 1950s” (p. 182). This was the period in which the colonisation of Aotearoa could be seen to have been secured and, to all intents and purposes, completed, as Crown sovereignty went from nominal to substantive (Hill, 2004). At this point the settlers no doubt felt that all that was required henceforth was further consolidation and minor tweaks to the formula. However, in many ways this period would mark the high point, before the two global conflagrations, the UK’s abandonment of its most loyal colony, economic decline, and the resurgent roar of Indigenous and marginalised peoples around the world, amongst many other factors, would see the foundations of Pākehā New Zealand society questioned.

Māori physical wellbeing during this period was dire, with frequent local typhoid outbreaks, and tuberculosis ravaging Māori communities, though it did improve over the period, even if this advancement was slow and inconsistent (Lange, 2011). This was largely driven by the Young Māori Party, who “pushed for improved health practices in Māori settlements around the country, and advocated greater use of the available health-care services and facilities” (Lange, 2011, Māori Health Development section).

In the first half of the 20th century, infectious diseases were the leading cause of death for Māori, and Māori died in far higher proportions due to diseases throughout this period (Cram et al., 2019). In 1934 official statistics indicated that the Māori death rate was more than double that of non-Māori, with an East Coast study in 1935 showing that the mortality rate for Māori suffering from tuberculosis was about 10 times the rate for Pākehā (Lange, 2011). Child mortality rates were high. In 1903 it was estimated that fewer than half of all Māori infants reached four years of age (Cram et al., 2019). Māori suffered 50% higher rates of mortality than Pākehā (Cram et al., 2019). As Bryder notes, “Māori mortality and illness in the early 1900s was a reflection of Māori poverty, such that infectious diseases killed Māori in far greater numbers than Pākehā” (Bryder, 2015, as cited in Cram et al., 2019, p. 73). Largely thanks to the Young Māori Party, government expenditure on Māori health increased significantly in the 1930s (Lange, 2011).

During this period, there were critical moments where the state became concerned about Māori wellbeing, though usually because of the potential wider impacts it may have rather than for the intrinsic health of Māori. For example, the influenza epidemic that followed World War I saw Māori dying at seven times the rate of the wider population (Wanhalla, 2006). As Wanhalla (2006) explains:

The epidemic brought into Maori communities many observers and officials, who commented on what they considered to be ‘shocking’ living conditions. Houses were repeatedly described as ‘hovels’ and communities as ‘slums’ and ‘filthy.’ The revelations of the influenza epidemic led to a major effort by the Health Department, during the interwar years, to improve sanitation in Maori settlements. (p. 102)

In fact, health and its relationship to housing conditions would feature as the main area of concern for Māori wellbeing up until the 1960s, largely because Māori were more likely to suffer from illnesses and diseases caused by or at least correlated to poor housing until this time (Rout & Walker, 2021). Many Māori dwellings lacked basic amenities, such as running water, insulation, raised floors, and sealed windows, and were overcrowded and unsanitary, providing fertile conditions for meningococcal disease, rheumatic fever, tuberculosis, pneumonia, bronchiolitis, bronchitis, *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Helicobacter pylori*, gastroenteritis, dysentery,

asthma and hepatitis A (Rout & Walker, 2021). More generally, Māori physical wellbeing was heavily reliant on the state; however, “a major problem during this period was the government’s failure to administer and fund Māori health in an equitable, tribally responsive and consistent way” (Cram et al., 2019, p. 60).

As has been noted by a number of scholars, this meant that while Māori economic and physical wellbeing was significantly impacted, their mental and social wellbeing were still somewhat insulated because Māori remained in their traditional kainga. As Hill (2004) writes:

After the Anglo-Maori wars, Maori had withdrawn into reservation-like areas and villages to preserve their identity. By the end of the nineteenth century, then, while they necessarily had to engage with the politico-economic world of the pakeha, Maori cultural autonomy and identity survived the impacts of Europe ... State and pakeha attitudes and Maori refusal to assimilate had manifested itself in tangata whenua ‘withdrawal’. (pp. 28, 45)

Reid et al. (2017) argue that:

this period was one where Māori were segregated from Pākehā society, living as insulated pockets dotted across the settler state meaning that they were able to preserve their own informal institutions and culture, as well as ensuring they were largely buffered from the full extent of the racist views of the settlers. (p. 38)

As evidence of how Māori were somewhat isolated from the psychological and psychosocial pressures of settler society, “the insanity rate for Māori at the turn of last [19th to 20th] century was about a third that of non-Māori” (Kingi, 2018, p. 10). The number of Māori who entered the mental health system was low during the 19th century. For example, in 1881 only five ‘lunatic Māori’ males were recorded at Auckland’s Whau Asylum (Cram et al., 2019).

In 1941, the mental health system housed just over 8,000 patients, 164 (2%) of whom were Māori. Gassin (2019) makes a similar point in his Waitangi Tribunal report on mental health: “In 1909, Māori made up just over one percent of the total of 3,549 psychiatric inpatients nationwide, rising to 1.8 per cent in 1938 of a total of 7,797” (p. 6). This is further explored by Beaglehole and Beaglehole’s prescient 1947 monograph, where they outline that:

The incidence of all types of mental disorder among Maoris was about one third that of the pakeha incidence. An earlier investigation into the relative incidence of the major functional psychotic disorder among the inmates of New Zealand mental health hospitals shows that these disorders occur about half as frequently for Maori as among pakeha inmates. A similar difference exists in the incidence of war neurosis among Maori and pakeha soldiers. According to the report of the

New Zealand Rehabilitation Board 14 per cent of the demobilized pakeha returned soldiers are classified as psychiatric cases whereas only 7 per cent of the Maori returned soldiers are so classified. (Beaglehole & Beaglehole, 1947, as cited in Kingi, 2018, pp. 10–11)

Beaglehole and Beaglehole note that the “fact that there are fewer neurotic and psychotic illness [sic] among Maori than among Pakehas in New Zealand emphasises among other things the tremendous value to the Maori of possessing a psychological security that comes from tribal and family security” (Beaglehole & Beaglehole, 1947, as cited in McIntosh & Mulholland, 2011, pp. 10–11). Their conclusion was, as Kingi notes, prophetic:

Judging from experience in other parts of the world, we may hazard a guess that the increasing adjustment of the Maori to the Pakeha way of life with its standards and values, morality and behaviour, will bring a tendency for the Maori mental disease figures to approximate more and more to those of the Pakeha population. (Beaglehole & Beaglehole, 1947, as cited in Kingi, 2018, p. 13)

Māori mental wellbeing was protected from the impacts of colonisation because of the relative continuity of life in their kāinga during this time.

The story at the social level during this period is interesting. Economically, the situation was dire, though as outlined above life in the kāinga did have its advantages, not just for mental health but most likely on social cohesion as well. Certainly, this time saw Māori living in extreme poverty. Not only had they lost most of their land, but the land remaining to them was almost impossible to use as collateral as it was collectively owned (Reid et al., 2017). This period was marked by “the impoverishment of Maori in a cash-oriented economy” (Hill, 2004, p. 76). Māori “lived in isolated villages and reverted to a subsistence type of agricultural economy supplemented by land clearing and seasonal labour for pakeha farmers and for the railway and public works departments” (Ausubel, 1961, p. 220). The income they earned from work in the settler economy was “supplemented by resource gathering in the forests, fishing (whether in coastal waters, or in rivers and lakes), growing crops on Maori-owned land (sometimes for sale) and delivering milk on a small scale to dairy factories in some districts” (Boast, 2019, p. 5). Likewise, Māori had little political influence, as the settler state consolidated its political power (Hill, 2004).

While land loss as discussed in the previous period has a significant impact at the cosmological level, it also has an obvious connection to socio-economic wellbeing, or as Moewaka Barnes and McCreanor (2019) frame it: “whenua as the determinant of health and whenua as the determinant of wealth” (p. 24). It was during this period that land loss would have significant consequences for Māori economic wellbeing. From about 1870 onwards, Pool (2015) notes, “Pakeha hegemony was achieved, not

through conquest but through ‘swamping’, by Maori resource loss and the transfer of these resources to settlers” (p. 186). The “loss of most of their physical capital [land] by Maori was the most cardinal economic event” (p. 255).

Furthermore, in a pastoral economy, land and profits from the land often generated other forms of capital assets, in particular financial capital. Māori were effectively excluded from accessing financial capital by the loss of their land (Pool, 2015). “Land loss separated people from their whenua,” Moewaka Barnes and McCreanor (2019) continue, “destabilising place based whanau, hapu and iwi identities, breaking long established knowledge-practices around land use, resulting in dependence on colonial economic systems and undermining the very fabric of Maori society” (p. 24). The loss of land as a resource was significant for Māori economic wellbeing during this period. As Kelsey (1995) has summarised: “Maori were the most marginal of the marginalised. Having been systematically stripped of the resources that guaranteed their economic, cultural and spiritual well-being, Maori were reduced to an underclass in their own land” (p. 235).

In terms of kinship, despite the impacts to whakapapa caused by land loss, the relative isolation of the kāinga seemed to deliver health and wellbeing benefits, as hinted at in the section above on mental health and wellbeing. Pool (1991) identifies this time period as “recuperation through isolation” (p. x). “Ngata”, Morrow (2013) indicates, “observed that traditional social structures had not significantly unravelled in many Māori settlements” (p. 189). Likewise, Ballara (1998) writes of this period, Māori “in each district constantly endeavoured to find ways to ... proclaim their group identity whether as tribe or hapū” (p. 332). Houkamau (2010) explains that:

Although Maori society had changed rapidly between 1840 and 1940, due to geographical isolation the maintenance of a distinct Maori identity was still possible for Maori up until the 1950s ... since generations of Maori families lived in the same communities young Maori were socialised by their own familial role models. (p. 185)

The Young Māori Party can be seen as a manifestation of this relatively buoyant sense of kinship. Its key leaders – Ngata, Pōmare, and Buck – aimed to “create pride in a Maori identity and Maori culture and use that as a platform for accessing the best of western technology”, and they “believed it was possible to retain a secure Maori identity while embracing Pakeha values and beliefs” (Durie, 1997, p. 34). It is also important to address the influence of the pan-iwi and pan-Māori organisations during this period. Hill (2004) explains how Māori actively fought the state’s “desire to destroy tribal and ethnic identity” by creating these organisations as a means of countering the corrosive effects of the state (p. 28). The Young Māori Party is one of the most prominent pan-Māori groupings, but there were many of the

others that were focused on “federal, tribally based action” (p. 47). These help show how Māori will reorganise socially to build or maintain health and wellbeing.

At the spiritual-ecological level, this period saw the near total transmutation of Aotearoa from a place dominated by forests, wetlands, and ‘natural’ landscapes to a largely pastoral territory (Brooking, 2020). As Wilson et al. (2019) explain:

Within just a few generations forests which were traditionally hunted for birds were cleared for farming, fishing grounds were left depleted of life, waterways polluted and many wahi tapu (mountains, rivers and other locations with cultural and spiritual significance) were desecrated to build roadways or for other ventures. (p. 76)

By the end of the 19th century, the forest cover had shrunk from around half in 1840 to a quarter of the landmass (Beattie & Star, 2010). The prime purpose of this deforestation “was to put into place a pastoral economy organized on the basis of the family farm” (Roche, 1990, p. 295). The impacts on wellbeing of such significant land loss and the resulting devastation of that land are impossible to quantify beyond understanding that they run the gamut from material through to spiritual. As Harmsworth and Warmenhoven (2003) write:

Deforestation and land development ... have had an enormous impact on cultural values and Maori well-being through spiritual loss, degradation and reduction in the area of natural resources, decreased access to traditional resources, increased flooding risk, loss and deterioration of culturally significant flora and fauna habitats, loss and modification of cultural sites, and the continuing decline in the mauri. (p. 8)

The loss of land and its dramatic destruction would no doubt have deep impacts on ecological and spiritual wellbeing during this period.

Māori wellbeing during integration into settler society

Following World War II, there was a significant demographic shift as Māori urbanisation progressed rapidly between the 1940s and the 1980s. Morrow (2014) explains that only “twenty-six percent of Māori lived in towns and cities at the end of the Second World War. By 1956, this proportion had increased to 35 percent. Urban dwellers accounted for 62 percent of Māori in 1966 and nearly 80 percent by 1986” (p. 85). This movement is generally referred to as ‘urbanisation’, though in fact many Māori – particularly in the South Island – did not move to urban centres but instead to smaller-sized Pākehā towns, where there was manual work, such as timber milling and public infrastructure projects. Even though Māori and Pākehā had coexisted for over a century, they “had lived in separate realities and experienced very limited interaction” (Nikora, 2007, p. 47). This urbanisation was driven by a

push–pull of state policies encouraging it, largely as the economy needed a workforce, and a “proactive Māori response to managing rural poverty, unemployment, and a lack of basic housing, educational and health facilities” (Cram et al., 2019, p. 86).

In terms of physical wellbeing, urbanisation had a positive impact, generally. As Pool notes, between 1945 and 1966 Māori experienced a decline in mortality due to an epidemiological transition from diseases that affected the young, including infectious, tubercular, respiratory, and diarrhoeal diseases, as well as diseases affecting older people such as degenerative disorders, cardio-vascular diseases, cerebro-vascular diseases (strokes), and cancer (Pool, 1991, as cited in Cram et al., 2019). As Cram et al. (2019) conclude, “good gains in Māori health and its indicators were made during this period”, though they note that “health equity and the broader aim of ‘universal welfare’ in New Zealand ... failed to transpire” (p. 86). Still, the period of urbanisation can be seen as one of improving Māori physical wellbeing.

By contrast, mental and social wellbeing suffered as Māori integrated into the settler population. “Urbanisation”, Kingi (2018) explains, is “linked with social and cultural disorder, which, in turn, provides a catalyst for mental ill-health” (p. 13). Kingi continues:

As the process of urbanisation took hold, traditional ties and cultural expectations were inevitably weakened. No longer could the whānau be relied on to care for those in need: some had lost contact with whānau, while for others the distance from whānau was too great. (p. 14)

Regarding mental wellbeing, Robinson explored the data, showing that:

rates of admission for both Māori and non-Māori increased in the early 1960s, [but they] increased more quickly for Māori. Following this increase, non-Māori rates remained stable before declining slightly from the mid-1970s and throughout the 1980s. Rates for Māori, by contrast, continued to rise throughout the late 1960s, stabilised throughout the 1970s, and increased again during the 1980s. (Robinson, 2011, as cited in Gassin, 2019, p. 9)

As Robinson (2011, as cited in Gassin, 2019, p. 9) concludes, there does appear “to have been a significant decline in overall Māori mental health from the 1960s until at least 1990.” Hill (2004) explains that integrated Māori “mostly had to interact with, and often came largely to conform to, cultural norms that were largely alien to their rural and tribal upbringing” (p. 260). Often these were not just ‘alien’, they were in many cases hostile. Moving into settler-dominated spaces saw Māori:

face-to-face with racism and discrimination on a daily basis, from their portrayal in newspapers to their treatment by landlords, the 'inferiority' of their culture and identity as portrayed by the narrative was woven into the very fabric of settler society. (Reid et al., 2017, p. 43)

As Hill (2010) explains, urbanisation saw:

an upsurge of ethnocentric incidents and racist attitudes towards Maori. Official pronouncements, however, still tended to promote the idea that New Zealand had as near to perfect an understanding and tolerance between the races as was possible, and this seemed to be generally believed throughout pakeha society. (p. 85)

This was further amplified by the loss of the social, cultural, personal, and spiritual support provided by whānau, hapū, and whenua. Durie (2003) explains:

Left behind were nurturing kāinga, familiar landmarks, culture and language. Urbanisation meant diminished access to those institutions and skills which nurtured a positive identity so that being Māori was measured more by deficits in comparison to the Pākehā middle class than by any notion of a secure Māori identity. (pp. 90–91)

Many Māori became alienated from their whānau, their whenua, and their culture, as well as the psychological sustenance that comes from being surrounded by members of one's own cultural group (Reid et al., 2017). Consequently, many felt "rejected by the dominant culture and at distance from their ancestral culture, concentrated in poor housing, working for low wages or on welfare, and subject to across-the-board racism" (Taonui, 2010, p. 196). Durie (2003) notes that urbanisation:

propelled Māori into an urban industrial economy, largely as labourers and often at the unskilled end of the business ... the formula was explosive. As more and more low-paid works congregated in the State's new housing areas, so the discontent arose ... Jack Hunn in his 1960 report, pointed to a new class of urban dwellers – poor, unhealthy, housed in sub-standard homes, more likely to offend, less likely to succeed at school, and Māori. (p. 91)

Māori mental wellbeing was put under intensive pressure during urbanisation, with many cracks appearing, as revealed by the data. In 1951, the incidence of Māori admissions to psychiatric hospitals was less than half that of the wider population. In 1960, Māori were admitted at 60 per 100,000 while the non-Māori rate was 119 per 100,000 (Kingi, 2018). Between 1960 and 1990, non-Māori first-time admissions to psychiatric facilities had barely increased, while the corresponding Māori rate was more than 200%, with some categories seeing a 300% increase

(Kingi, 2018). Between 1980 and 1991, suicide rates for Māori males had also increased by 162% (Kingi, 2018).

The same negative statistics can be found across many other areas that correlate to declines in mental and social wellbeing. For example, in 1945, Māori made up 21% of prison admissions, when they were 6% of the total population, but from 1955, the proportion of Māori prisoners increased dramatically and by 1971 Māori were 40% of the prison population, while forming around 10% of the country's total population (Clayworth, 2012).

Set during the most buoyant economic period in the 20th century and driven as it was by the national economy's need for labour, and the state's focus on full employment and comprehensive social welfare, this was a period of economic prosperity for Māori. Urbanisation occurred as Keynesian economics saw Aotearoa enact state-controlled incomes, prices, domestic credit, import quotas and tariffs, interest rates, and exchange transactions, all of which enabled governments to pursue the goals of full employment and comprehensive social welfare (Rout, 2022). It was a period characterised by sustained economic growth that was driven by high levels of profitability and productive investment, full employment, low inflation, rising real wages, and the absence of prolonged balance-of-payments problems owing to the historically favourable terms of trade (Rout, 2022). This was a period of relative economic prosperity for Māori, though as they became fully integrated into the settler economy they also became totally reliant on it, which would have serious consequences in the next period. Furthermore, while they may have seen an increase in income, this urbanisation:

unraveled Māori social and economic structures even further, and over time Māori adapted to a new mode of 'individualistic' economic behaviour, along with a new set of economic priorities ... this adjustment was not easy for Māori whose traditional values stood in stark contrast with Pākehā economic imperatives, which championed individual competitiveness and the accumulation of personal wealth. (Houkamau, 2019, p. 211)

Here, Houkamau raises the potential for increases in economic wellbeing, in one sense at least, impacting wellbeing negatively in other ways. Furthermore, relative to Pākehā, Māori were still poorer, with lower incomes in largely manual labour jobs (Rout, 2022). The vast majority of Māori families were incorporated into the working class and into the lower levels of segmented labour markets; they were concentrated in blue-collar occupations such as in the freezing works, on the waterside, in construction and transport, and as coalminers and railway workers. These occupations often had long hours, low pay, and difficult and unpleasant working conditions. The limited opportunities for economic advancement were

reinforced by discrimination in hiring and promotion practices (Poata-Smith, 2013). Belgrave (2012) claims that:

Maori achieved the most dramatic increases in social and economic well-being during the decades immediately following the Second World War. These ... coincided with the protected welfare state and can be attributed ... primarily to higher incomes as a result of urbanisation and full employment. (p. 18)

Certainly, he is correct about economic wellbeing, though social wellbeing is less certain. During this period, the state was focused on assimilating Māori into settler society, or in the language following the 1960 Hunn report, 'integrating' (Reid et al., 2017). Official government policy 'softened' the language used to describe integration, promoting cultural 'combination but not fusion'. However, underlying this new wording, Māori were still expected to adopt a pseudo-Pākehā identity in this period while most settlers still frowned on the use of 'kia ora' as a form of greeting – it was not an even 'integration' (Morrow, 2014). "Māori had become increasingly dependent on a state that was essentially committed to policies and programmes that would assimilate Māori into the prevailing systems of colonial New Zealand", explains Durie (2003, p. 1). The assimilation policies of this period "resulted in the atrophy of traditional Māori social structures such as whānau (extended family) and led to a profound degradation of cultural, social and physical living environments" (Ryks et al., 2014, p. 5).

At the spiritual-ecological level, one of the most significant impactors on wellbeing was the move away from traditional whenua, and the consequent disruptions to whakapapa and mātauranga this caused. Up until the 1950s most Māori still lived in intergenerational communities where vertical knowledge transfer occurred, but urbanisation would disrupt these communities (Houkamau, 2011). "Urbanisation had repercussions for the connection to land", Menzies et al. (2022) explain, specifically noting that Māori are "dislocated and disconnected from their tribal land, with the result that they can lose their knowledge of tribal connections" (p. 25). Likewise, Reweti (2022) notes that "for many whānau, urbanisation resulted in a disconnection from their whenua and ancestral marae causing intergenerational loss of knowledge and values that secure cultural identity and belonging" (pp. 375–376). "Cultural identity", Reweti continues, "is an important contributor to well-being and has been linked to positive outcomes in areas such as health, education, and mental well-being" (p. 376).

Land would also play a role in the Māori renaissance that began at the end of this period. Despite having miniscule holdings of usually remote or substandard land, Māori still faced attempts by the Crown to alienate them from it. As Kukutai (2010) explains, in "1967, legislative attempts were made to vest 'uneconomic interests' in Māori land in the hands of the judicial body of the Māori Trustee for potential

alienation” (p. 52). This grasp at the final bits of whenua in Māori hands sparked a movement. “Concern and anger over the historical and ongoing loss of Māori land was articulated via land occupations and the Māori land March of 1975” crying ‘Not one more acre’ (Cram et al., 2019, p. 95). These occupations and the march would help catalyse Māori political activism and growing pride in the Māori identity that would underpin the Māori renaissance. As McIntosh et al. (2021) state, the “Māori Renaissance [was] grounded on the revival of language and land claims based in te Tiriti O Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) and supported by the Tribunal of Waitangi” (p. 146).

Māori wellbeing under neoliberalism

The seismic shifts ushered in by successive governments in the 1980s and 1990s saw many negative impacts on Māori wellbeing. In many ways the transition to neoliberalism and the growing inequalities it has manifested in Aotearoa have been part of the driving force for the new focus on wellbeing economics as a countervailing response to the deprivations of neoliberalism. Cram et al. (2019) note that “the time period from 1976 to 1992 witnessed the decline in Māori wellbeing and a steady increase in Māori political activism” (p. 99). They quote Harris and Williams in describing this period as a “narrative of trying socio-economic conditions in a long history of colonization-induced inequities and marginalisation consistently underwritten by Māori stories of resilience and fortitude, persistence and insistence” (Harris & Williams, 2014, as cited in Cram et al., 2019, p. 99).

In terms of physical wellbeing, the 1990s have been described as “the only decade of the twentieth century in which the health of Māori is, by critical measures, not improving and is likely to be worsening” (Cram et al., 2019, p. 106). Poor income and living conditions were linked to a range of illnesses, such as an increased risk of middle-ear infections, especially glue-ear and the loss of hearing that is often associated with that condition. Cancer and smoking-related illnesses also contributed, with nearly half of Māori over the age of 15 smoking regularly in 1993, double the rate for non-Māori (Cram et al., 2019). Māori babies were between 2.1 and 2.5 times as likely to die post-neonatally as non-Māori babies during this period (Cram et al., 2019).

Considering the economic changes and the ongoing impacts of urbanisation more broadly, many of the proxy measures for mental wellbeing were, unsurprisingly, suffering. Kingi (2018) notes the links between urbanisation and mental health, because it led to “to cultural isolation and alienation from ... traditional structures that in the past had protected and nurtured Māori” (p. 15). Gassin (2019) notes that “current disparities in Māori and non-Māori mental illness are a relatively recent phenomenon, beginning in the mid-1970s” (p. 2). “By the end of the [20th] century”, Gassin continues, “Māori rates of mental illness were increasingly

recognised as a significant concern and, by 1998, were being described as a crisis of ‘unprecedented proportions’” (p. 2).

In particular, during this period rates of Māori psychiatric hospitalisation, suicide, and self-harm all rose (Gassin, 2019). Durie notes there is no simple or single explanation for this: “For the most part mental health problems amongst young Māori reflect social, economic and cultural trends and any comprehensive solutions must be similarly broad” (Durie, 2003, as cited in Gassin, 2019, p. 16). In other words, the wellbeing dimensions are linked. Similarly, Pōmare and de Boer write, “social, economic and cultural issues associated with [urbanisation] are immense and are at the root of the unequal health experience of the Māori people in New Zealand society today” (Pōmare & de Boer, 1988, as cited in Cram et al., 2019, p. 109). They continue, explaining that the “distressing social and economic disadvantage and progressive acculturation experienced by Maori people”, as well as the “loss of self-esteem and mana from unemployment, racial discrimination and cultural denigration”, help explain the increasing disparities in mental health (Pōmare & de Boer, 1988, as cited in Gassin, 2019, p.17). Likewise, on social wellbeing, Cram et al. (2019) explain that “during the 1980s and into the 1990s Māori remained overrepresented in many measures including crime, health and housing” (p. 106).

Economically, neoliberalism saw “a two-punch combo land on Māori ... The first blow was the restructuring of the economy; the second was the retrenchment of the welfare safety net just as a recession [caused by the first blow] hit” (Rout, 2022, p. 60). Māori were vulnerable because urbanisation had seen them concentrated “disproportionately in a narrow range of lowskilled secondary-sector occupations, including manufacturing, construction, public utility and state-sector industries”, which were all hit hard by economic restructuring (Humpage, 2010, p. 542). The once stable, often ‘lifelong’, jobs became increasingly precarious as the government removed the barriers and protections, and either sold or commercialised its state-owned enterprises. Māori unemployment had begun to increase during the 1970s, and by 1981, “12 percent of Māori males and 17 percent of females were unemployed, several times higher than the unemployment rates of non-Māori” (Coleman, 2005, p. 15).

From 1988 to 1992, the Māori unemployment rate rose from 13.5% to 27.3% (Poata-Smith, 2013). All up, a fifth of the Māori working-age population lost their jobs between 1987 and 1989, about four times higher than for the non-Māori population (Humpage, 2010). “During the 1980s,” Houkamau (2019) summarises, “economic recessions, policy reforms and structural changes in the New Zealand economy led to widespread unemployment among Māori, many of whom are now in a cycle of benefit dependency” (p. 212). By 1990 the average income for Māori was

20% lower than for New Zealand households as a whole (Cram et al., 2019). Rather than catalyse growth, under these economic reforms:

the New Zealand economy stagnated for seven years in terms of real per-capita income. The incomes of the bottom three-quarters of the country fell ... [and] left the burden of adjustment to be carried by those at the bottom of the income distribution – who were disproportionately Māori. (Easton, 2018, p. x)

That said, even as neoliberalism saw Māori economic wellbeing negatively impacted, during this period positive changes in terms of what would come to be called the 'Māori economy' were also emerging, largely due to the Waitangi Tribunal. As Houkamau (2019) explains:

From the 1990s Māori leaders have worked consistently to advance Māori economic development and this drive continues through Māori organizations throughout New Zealand. There are a number of 'post Treaty-settlement' government entities, Tribal Trust Boards and other mandated tribal organizations which exist to manage Māori assets and deliver social, health and other services to their tribal constituents. (p. 212)

Māori have also been driving economic development, with this period seeing many initiatives and programmes put in place. In 1984, a Hui Taumata (Māori Economic Development Summit, attended by Māori leaders throughout New Zealand) was held. The hui placed emphasis on Māori economic self-determination, or tino rangatiratanga: 'Māori control of all things Māori'. Out of the hui the Māori Economic Development Commission was created to give practical effect to this aspiration (Houkamau, 2019).

While in certain proxy measures Māori social wellbeing was suffering during this period, this has to be countered by what has been termed the 'Māori renaissance', which really took off in the 1980s. This renaissance emerged out of the Māori activism of the 1960s and 1970s and was bolstered by the creation of the Waitangi Tribunal in the 1970s and its expanded mandate in the 1980s, amongst many other driving factors. It has seen a significant resurgence in Māori cultural practices and identity. "Māori", as Houkamau (2011) explains, "have reaffirmed the value of their culture and identity among their own people and gained substantial recognition of their political rights to equality with Pākehā" (p. 294). The decline of te reo Māori (the Māori language) was a central concern during the early stages of the renaissance. Through initiatives like kōhanga reo (Māori language preschools), kura kaupapa Māori (Māori immersion schools), and Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (the Māori Language Commission), the movement has revitalised te reo Māori (Houkamau, 2011). Along with the language, the Māori renaissance sparked a broader cultural revival. Traditional practices such as kapa haka (performing arts),

marae (community meeting places), and tikanga (customary practices) have experienced a resurgence. These cultural expressions have reinforced a sense of identity and belonging for many Māori, strengthening social cohesion within iwi and hapū.

While many Māori have reconnected with their culture, whakapapa, and traditions, this process has not been equally accessible to all. While some have successfully reconnected – or were never as dislocated from their roots as others – and have gained both psychological and material benefits, others have struggled with reconnection or have no desire to pursue it. Those who have reconnected not only find personal solace in reconnecting with their culture but also gain access to new roles within iwi (tribal) or state institutions that emerged during the cultural revival. In contrast, those who lack the same fluency in Māoritanga (Māori culture) have missed out on both these personal and material benefits, and in some cases, have become further marginalised and alienated. This is partly because the Māori cultural resurgence has been narrowly defined, focusing on markers like language, whakapapa (genealogy), and tikanga (customary practices). As a result, it has created an exclusive ingroup centred on ‘traditional Māoriness’ (Houkamau, 2011; Houkamau & Sibley, 2014).

As Houkamau (2011) explains, the widespread affirmation of the inherent value of traditional Māori identity has fostered the view that being authentically Māori is best expressed through speaking te reo Māori, participating in traditional practices, and maintaining connections with whānau, hapū, and iwi, yet this is not a set of abilities that all Māori have. In fact, “only 23.7% of all Māori can speak Māori, and 20% ... know their own tribal affiliations” (Houkamau, 2011, p. 294). Thus, while for some the Māori renaissance has boosted mental and social wellbeing, this is not equal for all Māori. For some, it has left them isolated. As van Meijl (2006) notes, for “mainly urban Maori youngsters ... participation in a *marae*-based Maori training centre made them realize that they belonged neither in European domains nor in typical Maori domains of New Zealand society”, concluding that not being able to “identify in terms of the model for a Maori identity that was dominant on the marae was therefore alienating and also painful” (p. 918).

The cosmological level has not seen as many significant changes during this period as in others, though the most important transition has been the reconnection with whenua, alongside that of whakapapa. Today only remnants of the Māori land that once formed the cosmological, social, and individual foundation are still held by Māori. Furthermore, these blocks are held in Māori collective tenure and are subject to bilateral succession, which has resulted in land being owned by significant and increasing numbers of owners, with often contentious imposed governance and shareholding structures that have caused alienation and anger (Rout et al., 2020).

The resources offered by Māori land are too small, economically marginal, and shackled by complex colonial legacy tenure arrangements to be any sort of vehicle for whānau and hapū political and economic self-determination (Poata-Smith, 2013). Whenua has been the locus of a reconnection with identity (Hoskins, 2007; Reweti, 2022, Riki Tuakiritetangata & Ibarra-Lemay, 2021). “Whenua is an anchor for whānau identity”, Reweti (2022) explains, “and a tangible expression of whakapapa” (p. 378). That said, while Māori do not ‘own’ anywhere near the land holdings they once had mana over, in recent decades starting with the Resource Management Act in 1991, they have gained a degree of control back over their traditional rohe, which might help explain some of the dynamics underpinning reconnection.

This does raise an interesting conundrum, however. Expressing a common sentiment, Durie (1997) writes that the “alienation of people from their land and their culture subjects them to a fragmentation of identity” (p. 32). However, Hill (2012) describes how “possession of land is the major defining characteristic of indigeneity”, yet, despite Māori losing most of their land, “the apparent discrepancy between this profound resource loss on the one hand and the demographic, cultural and political revival of Maori in the twentieth century on the other has remained virtually unscrutinized” (p. 26). As Hill (2012) continues:

How is it that Maori are asserting themselves proactively and successfully, and their culture is thriving, despite their landlessness? These questions have seldom been asked, let alone answered. One useful line of enquiry, it is contended, involves looking beyond land to another Maori discourse, one which is people based ... While Maori almost universally affirm that land is central to their identity, their *whakapapa*/genealogy, or their consciousness of belonging to an enduring collectivity of people, is *also* central. (p. 31, emphasis in original)

Before the 1980s the key defining marker of being ‘Māori’ was genealogy, but from the 1980s the importance of cultural markers such as knowledge of Māori language, culture, and practices has grown. As Hill (2012) suggests, part of the strength of Māori culture comes from the strength of the shared identity, or in Anderson’s (2016) phrasing, belonging to an ‘imagined community’. In other words, even the concept of identity became more prominent, fluid, and self-reflexive than it had been from the 1980s onwards. This is not to deny the role of whenua in Māori identity, or health and wellbeing, but rather to note that there is a growing fluidity and flexibility in the ways that Māori connect to their identity in positive ways.

Māori wellbeing today

Māori wellbeing today is complex. In many ways it is the best it has been in decades, but simultaneously there are also a number of Māori – increasingly called the precariat – who find themselves struggling across numerous domains.

Māori remain overly represented in negative statistics across physical and mental wellbeing indicators. It is quite common to read an article, report, or thesis that starts out with a long list of negative indicators in which Māori are overly represented. For example, at the start of her doctoral dissertation, Kukutai (2010) notes: “Māori lead shorter and less healthy lives; are more likely to leave high school without [*sic*] little or no formal attainment; have poorer labor market outcomes; and experience higher rates of child abuse, suicide, and incarceration” (p. 2). Similarly, Sibley et al. (2011) explain at the outset of their article:

Māori are substantially overrepresented in a wide range of negative social and economic statistics. These include higher levels of unemployment, lower life expectancy, lower median income, and increased rates of incarceration. In regards to income, data from Statistics NZ indicates that Māori had a median hourly income of \$NZ 17.50 in the June 2009 quarter, whereas NZ Europeans earn on average \$NZ 20.00 per hour. Similarly, research prepared by the NZ Ministry of Health indicates that there is a massive difference in health outcomes and deprivation experienced by Māori relative to NZ Europeans ... For instance, roughly 65% of all Māori live in the 30% most deprived areas of NZ. In contrast, only 22% of NZ Europeans live in the 30% most deprived areas in NZ. (p. 104)

Likewise, a large survey of Māori by the Ministry of Health in 2015 found that “Māori remain over-represented in activities associated with increased health risk and poor health outcomes”, and that “Māori continue to experience persistent health and social inequities when compared to others living in Aotearoa New Zealand” (Wilson et al., 2019, p. 73). Similarly, Te Puni Kōkiri starts its 2018 report on Māori wellbeing for Treasury by noting that 51% of prison inmates are Māori, 61% of children in care are Māori, and in 2016, 66.5% of Māori school leavers attained at least Level 2 National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA), compared with 83.7% of European school leavers, and 20% of Māori aged 16–25 are not in employment, education, or training, compared with 9% of non-Māori. Regarding physical wellbeing specifically:

Considerable inequities in health status and outcomes for Māori are well-documented, with non-Māori experiencing lower incidence, prevalence, and mortality from chronic disease. In 2017–2019, life expectancy at birth for non-Māori males was 80.9 (relative to 73.4 years for Māori males) and 84.4 for non-Māori females (relative to 77.1 years for Māori females). The most recent Ministry of Health statistics report that the cardiovascular disease mortality rate for Māori was twice as high compared to non-Māori, diabetes prevalence was almost double, younger Māori (5–34 years) were almost twice as likely to be hospitalised for asthma, and Māori aged ≥ 25 years had significantly higher cancer registration

rates with cancer mortality more than 1.5 times higher for Māori. (Sullivan et al., 2023, p. 2117)

In terms of mental wellbeing:

Rangatahi Māori – Māori youth – experience higher rates of mental health distress and addictions compared to young Pākehā – New Zealanders of European descent. There are growing numbers of rangatahi Māori who report depressive symptoms (28% in 2019 vs 14% in 2012). Māori are more likely to be hospitalised for intentional self-harm and more likely to use substances than non-Māori. (Theodore et al., 2022, p. 79)

That said, this data needs to be contrasted by another study done by the Health Promotion Agency from 2015 to 2016, which found:

- **Most Māori feel positive about their lives.** The majority (86%) of Māori respondents reported that the things they did in their lives were worthwhile, 84% indicated that they felt able to cope with everyday stresses of life, and 77% reported feeling satisfied or very satisfied with life as a whole these days.
- **Despite the positivity, many Māori also experience significant difficulties in their daily lives.** More than a third (38%) of all Māori respondents reported that the last 12 months had been among the most difficult in their lives – a significantly higher proportion than non-Māori (27%).
- **Rangatahi Māori who experience more difficult times also find it harder to cope.** Almost one quarter (24%) of Māori respondents who reported that the last year had been particularly tough also indicated they were not coping with the everyday stresses of life, and rangatahi Māori (aged 15 to 24 years) were significantly more likely to report feeling this way.
- **Being socially isolated or excluded is not uncommon for Māori.** At least two in five (42%) Māori respondents indicated some degree of recent social isolation (also considered as loneliness) and exclusion. Those who reported current or previous experience of mental distress were significantly more likely than those without such experience to report social isolation (69% versus 36%) or exclusion (45% versus 26%).
- **Māori have a higher burden of depression, anxiety and psychological distress than non-Māori.** Compared with non-Māori, Māori respondents were more likely to experience symptoms of depression (34% versus 24%), anxiety (36% versus 22%), or psychological distress (34% versus 22%).
- **There is a positive relationship between individual and whānau wellbeing for Māori.** Māori respondents were significantly more likely to report higher levels of life satisfaction when they thought their whānau were

doing well and getting along with one another. Those who thought their whānau were doing well were also 35% more likely to be coping with the everyday stresses of life, compared with those who believed their whānau were not doing well. (Russell, 2018, p. 8)

This Health Promotion Agency data reinforces some of the other findings outlined above, particularly in terms of mental health. Although the findings relating to social isolation suggest there are problems with social wellbeing, the power of whānau as a way of increasing life satisfaction levels is also quite revealing. The first statistic – that the majority of Māori are satisfied with their lives – suggests that despite all the negative proxy indicators, Māori wellbeing in general is relatively strong.

Yet another survey, one that compared self-reported subjective wellbeing of Māori and Pākehā in both 2005 and 2009, found that while the Pākehā scores were near-identical across the two samples, “Māori, who were already lower than NZ Europeans on the PWI [Personal Wellbeing Index] in 2005, showed a further decrease in 2009” (Sibley et al., 2011, p. 103). Sibley et al. (2011) argue that:

This gap in wellbeing widened because material advantages experienced by NZ Europeans as a social group provides a systemic buffer which protects their personal wellbeing from the impact of economic privation. Māori, who had already experienced systemic disadvantage, were not privileged with this buffer, and thus, the effects of the 2007/2010 global financial crisis impacted their personal wellbeing to a greater extent. (p. 103)

In other words, this shows how central the economic basis of wellbeing is, and how despite other gains the issues caused by generations of impoverishment can still cause significant problems.

In the past several decades, Māori as a group have made both significant economic gains and have encountered significant economic difficulties. Many of the gains have been catalysed through the Treaty of Waitangi settlements and the resultant success of the ‘Māori economy’, while the setbacks have come from the increasing economic inequality within Māoridom and the growth in the so-called precariat, or socio-economically marginalised whānau who experience employment, income, and rights insecurity (Rua et al., 2019). The precariat are a “malleable concept” and “an emergent social class formation that occupies diverse socio-material spaces of adversity, and whose lives are characterized by various inequities in employment, human rights, housing, [dis]abilities, food, health and so forth” (Rua et al., 2023, p. 43). More specifically, the precariat are defined as having three dimensions:

1. Employment insecurity: People come to accept a pattern of unstable labour via 'flexible' labour contracts, temporary jobs and casual, part-time or intermittent work for labour/workforce agencies.
2. Income insecurity: People are reliant on money from wages without non-wage benefits such as paid holidays, redundancy, pensions and parental leave.
3. Rights insecurity: People have fewer civil, cultural, social, political and economic rights, and are often required to expend a vast amount of energy seeking jobs, frequently outside of their insecure paid jobs, and appealing the state, for example, by queuing, formfilling and budgeting. (p. 2)

When examining the data, they are measured as those with temporary jobs, the jobless, and beneficiaries. As Rua et al. (2019) explain, "in 2016, of the estimated 436,000 Māori aged 15–64 years (working-age population), 130,000 were in the precariat. This corresponds to just over one in four Māori (29.7%) being in the precariat, as compared with one in six non Māori" (p. 4). While Helen Clark's Labour Government attempted to 'close the gaps' between Māori and Pākehā, many of their policies were not directed at this precariat. As Poata-Smith (2013) explains, "The Ministry of Social Development's Social Report 2006 showed that Māori had fallen further behind Pākehā on a range of key measures, despite the 'closing the gaps' policies" (p. 153). He continues:

While the report showed that Māori had improved in absolute terms on all measures for which data were available, the relative gaps between Māori and Pākehā had widened in many cases. The only measure going back to 1986 that showed a very marginal closing of the gap was unemployment; according to the report, Māori unemployment was 3.3 times the Pākehā rate, compared to 3.4 times the rate in 1986. (p. 153)

Between 2013 and 2018 the gap between Māori and Pākehā weekly earnings increased by 30% (Marriott & Alinaghi, 2021). As of 2018, the Māori unemployment rate was 11%, compared with 4% for non-Māori; Māori household net worth was \$23,000, while European net household worth was valued at \$114,000; and only 28.2% of Māori owned their own home, compared with 56.8% of Europeans (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2018). That said, as well as inequalities between Māori and Pākehā, inequalities within Māoridom are growing. Poata-Smith (2013) notes:

One of the features of recent decades has been the growth of inequality and social polarisation within Māori communities. While Māori have been disproportionately represented in the bottom 60 per cent of households, household economic surveys from 1982 to 1996 show that Māori have also been consistently represented in the top 40 per cent. The growing social inequalities in New Zealand society have not affected all Māori equally: a minority have directly benefited from

the fiscal agenda that was implemented from 1984 onwards. The surveys reveal that households with Māori adults were more evenly spread across income groups in the 1980s than in later years. From the late 1980s to 1994, the proportion of households with Māori adults in the lowest fifth rose to 37 per cent (58,500 households). At the other end of the distribution, the proportion of households with a Māori adult in the top fifth dropped from 13 per cent in 1988 to 8 per cent in 1992, then rose to a high of 16 per cent in 1996, returning to 13 per cent in 1998. (p. 153)

It is a similar story with wealth, with a significant division between Māori growing in recent years, with a small segment of the Māori populace growing in wealth during the last few decades as a larger segment have become much poorer, relatively speaking (Poata-Smith, 2013). In many ways this is a manifestation of the neoliberal system, but it is also related to the ways in which the Māori economy is constituted. Generally speaking, there exists a significant, and oversized, proportion of the Māori populace whose economic wellbeing is poor. “According to recent government reports,” Houkama (2019) explains, “if trends in Māori poverty continue, they have the potential to create significant social and economic problems in New Zealand’s future” (p. 212).

Rather than examine the cosmological level, which is relatively similar to the last section, it is useful here to detail the current political context, as this sees the project, and Māori, at somewhat of an inflection point.

Te horopaki tōrangapū o te wā nei **Current political context**

This project has found itself at a historical hinge, a point where there is both a contraction in Māori potentiality and an expansion. Following the election of the National-led coalition government in November 2023, Māori around the motu (islands, more colloquially ‘the country’) became concerned about the Government’s signals to “reverse, remove, dismiss, dissemble, and unravel years of hard work surrounding Māori cultural recognition and wellbeing” (Hui Taumata, n.d., para. 3).

Momentum towards tino rangatiratanga has grown considerably since the election of what has been labelled an ‘anti-Māori’ government and what has been described as their ‘attack’ on Māoridom and Māoritanga (Duff, 2023; Watson, 2023). A Hui-ā-Motu (national meeting), hosted by Kīngi Tūheitia, was held in January 2024, at Tūrangawaewae Marae, Ngāruawāhia. An estimated 10,000 people from around Aotearoa attended, with a key message emerging that Māori, alongside non-Māori allies, need to work collectively to have more impact.

The mahi (work) continued at Rātana Pā just four days after the Hui-ā-Motu, attracting about 7,000 people, and at Waitangi on 6 February 2024. The National Iwi

Chairs Forum met for a Rangatiratanga Wānanga in late February, holding a tino rangatiratanga session to discuss how to support whānau, hapū, and iwi to further collectivise the knowledge base and encourage efforts in the kotahitanga (unity) space. On 31 May 2024, the Hui Taumata was held, bringing together Māoridom's thought leaders from around the motu to discuss kotahitanga.

Ngā whakaaro whakatepe

Concluding thoughts

This chapter has shown that Māori wellbeing is holistically understood, but there are also distinguishable elements of that wellbeing, from those that could be understood to be more individually located, like physical and mental wellbeing, to those that are broader but also impact and interact with physical and mental wellbeing, such as economic and kinship wellbeing, and spiritual and ecological wellbeing. These aspects are somewhat entwined while also having aspects of separation. As the chronology makes clear, these different aspects of wellbeing have been impacted differently during different periods:

- Before European contact, Māori experienced relatively high levels of health and wellbeing across physical, economic, mental, and kinship dimensions.
- Māori lived within te ao Māori, a cognitive framework well-suited to meeting needs and supporting overall health and wellbeing.
- In the early period of contact and colonisation, Māori physical and economic health declined first, due to introduced diseases and land loss, while mental and kinship wellbeing appeared more resilient.
- After the Land Wars, Māori retreated to their kāinga, where poverty and illness persisted, but the protective nature of community life helped buffer mental health and kinship wellbeing from severe shocks.
- Urbanisation led to improved physical and economic outcomes for Māori but weakened mental and kinship wellbeing, as well as cosmological connections to whenua, due to integration into Pākehā-dominated environments.
- The 1980s and 1990s saw neoliberalism and the Māori renaissance unfolding simultaneously, often in opposition.
- Neoliberal policies negatively impacted Māori economic health and wellbeing.

The Māori renaissance provided opportunities for those able to connect or reconnect with their culture, enhancing mental and kinship wellbeing and strengthening

cosmological ties. However, those unable to establish this connection faced fewer positive outcomes.

Ngā tohutoro

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Upoko 7: Te whanaketanga o te whakaaro oranga

Chapter 7: The evolution of wellbeing thinking

– Matthew Rout

The concept of a wellbeing economy has gained significant traction globally and here in Aotearoa in recent years. The evolution of wellbeing economic thinking represents a significant shift in how economists, bureaucrats, and policy makers assess and promote societal prosperity. Traditionally anchored in metrics like gross domestic product (GDP), discourse has increasingly acknowledged that these measures fail to capture the true quality of life. While this is generally a welcome shift, as there is no denying that the current neoclassical-neoliberal system is fundamentally broken, particularly from Māori experience, there are some issues with wellbeing economics as it stands, particularly from an Indigenous perspective. This section outlines the history of wellbeing thinking while also critiquing some of the major issues with both the concept and the practice; namely, that in some cases wellbeing economic approaches can be abstract, Eurocentric, scientific, technocratic, reinvented, and utopian. Several caveats first, however.

While this is a critique, it starts with the premise that generally speaking, wellbeing economics is a positive force which has been the subject of well thought out analysis and exploration. Furthermore, there are many scholars, groups, and organisations working on wellbeing in practical, multicultural, social, participatory, and grounded ways, which this chapter does not focus on. The reason it does not is that while these are all good and important, the reality is that the dominant neoclassical economic perspective is just that, dominant, and these wellbeing endeavours are, for now at least, a sideshow.

The core aim here is to try to tease out how and why the dominant economic school continues to influence wellbeing so that this influence can be better identified and, hopefully, neutered. Thus, while this chapter is called 'The evolution of wellbeing thinking' it could equally be called 'A critique of how neoclassical economic thinking continues to impact and influence wellbeing economics'. This critique comes from an

Indigenous perspective, though it can be more generally applicable. These are high-level criticisms, and in some cases they work synergistically – the abstract nature of much of the work on wellbeing enables utopianism, as an example – while in other cases they represent antagonistic forces within the field – such as the tension between abstract theorising and scientific positivist approaches. It should also be noted that while the main focus is on wellbeing economics, there is an inevitable blending with adjacent concepts, particularly happiness, and overlap with related academic disciplines, particularly psychology. As Bache et al. (2016) note, “The terms ‘happiness’ and ‘wellbeing’ are often used loosely and interchangeably” (p. 893), and wellbeing as a concept has been the focus of other fields outside of economics, most particularly psychology, where the emphasis on subjective wellbeing in positive psychology has had significant impact on wellbeing economics (Bourne, 2010; Fudge et al., 2021).

Ngā takenga o te mātai ōhanga, ā, he tirohanga poto ki te mātai ōhanga oranga

Origins of economics, and, to a much lesser degree, wellbeing economics

The origins of wellbeing economics are generally traced back to classical economists such as Adam Smith as well as philosophers like Jeremy Bentham, who were working around the same time as James Cook was voyaging across the Pacific. This is, in many ways, no coincidence as the same imperatives drove both the cognitive and geographic explorations. Just as Cook was making contact with varying Indigenous peoples whose wellbeing and happiness would be severely negatively impacted by this contact, these topics, particularly happiness, were of increasing interest to European intellectuals. As Stoll (2014) notes:

This new view of wellbeing as a topic of scientific research was reflected in a sudden increase of works on happiness in the last two decades of the seventeenth century. By the middle of the eighteenth century there was a huge explosion in studies, reflections, treatises, discourses, sketches, and essays on happiness from France, Britain, the Low Countries, Germany, Italy, and America. Amongst them, Voltaire in 1734, and Diderot in 1749 both wrote about happiness and religion, criticizing the Christian argument that earthly life was wretched and true happiness was only achievable, if at all, in the afterlife. (p. 17)

Smith in particular is held up by many as the original wellbeing or happiness economist (Bruni, 2020; Dalziel & Saunders, 2015; Den Uyl & Rasmussen, 2010; Fleischacker, 2004; Sen, 1987). In his first book, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, published in 1759, Smith wrote that “all constitutions of government ... are valued only in proportion as they tend to promote the happiness of those who live under them. This is their sole use and end” (Smith, 1759, as cited in Den Uyl &

Rasmussen, 2010, p. 34). His book *The Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776, emphasised economic growth and prosperity, and while it is commonly cited as the founding text of modern orthodox (classical and neoclassical) economics, it can also be seen as providing early insights into the importance of wellbeing as an outcome of an economic system.

While the common metric of modern economics – gross domestic production – is entirely focused on the productive input of the system, Smith notes that “the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer” (Smith, 1776, as cited in Dalziel & Saunders, 2015, p. 2). Even while Smith is lauded by the most doctrinaire neoclassical economists, his work also remains influential on wellbeing economics. And in a way, this is itself problematic. Smith’s work has been criticised for a number of reasons. In particular, like many economists who would follow him, Smith’s work is built on simplistic assumptions of human behaviour, particularly the belief in rational self-interest, and the consequent deification of markets (McCraw, 1992; Sen, 1987; Werhane, 2019). It is built on an abstract and simplistic rather than grounded and nuanced characterisation of humanity that sees every person – no matter their culture, ethnicity, nationality, gender, stage of life, or endowment with talent and intelligence – as monolithically rational actors focused on maximising their own outcomes (McCraw, 1992).

Due to the portrayal of rational self-interest, Smith more than anyone is responsible for the current global economic system built on free trade, deregulation, and privatisation. While Smith only included several explicit mathematical calculations in *The Wealth of Nations*, his rational actor theory was the catalyst for the mathematisation of economics, seeing the field becoming what many economists consider a ‘science’ – discussed further below (Reyes, 2018; Zafirovski, 2003).

Jeremy Bentham’s utilitarian philosophy, as articulated in *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, published in 1789, advocated for the principle of “the greatest happiness for the greatest number” (Bentham, 1789, as cited in Veenhoven, 2010, p. 606). Bentham’s utilitarianism introduced the concept of utility, a measure of pleasure or happiness, as the ultimate goal of human action and policy. It was, therefore, more explicitly concerned with the wellbeing of individuals than Smith’s work, proposing that societal welfare could be enhanced by maximising overall happiness and minimising suffering.

Bentham’s notion of utility laid the groundwork for later developments in wellbeing economics, influencing subsequent thinkers who sought to incorporate measures of happiness and satisfaction into economic analysis. However, Bentham’s utilitarian framework faced significant challenges, particularly that the focus on aggregate

happiness can lead to ethical dilemmas, such as the potential justification of actions that harm minorities if they increase overall happiness, as embodied by the infamous ‘trolley problem’. More to the point here, the abstract nature of utility, often defined as subjective experiences of pleasure and pain, posed difficulties in measurement and practical application. It has become, like many complex academic topics, an endless merry-go-round of intellectual debate with little to no real-world impact.

Ko tā te whakapāngarau he whakawhiti i te mātai ōhanga mai i te wāhanga aronui ki te wāhanga pūtaiao **Mathematisation converts economics from an art to a science**

From the late 19th to the mid-20th century, economists came to ignore wellbeing or any other unquantifiable phenomena, purging the discipline of anything but objective ‘facts’, even though Smith and other early economists in the classical school had always understood that fuzzy qualities like happiness and wellbeing were a fundamental outcome of economies (Rojas, 2019). The study of the impact of economics on wellbeing was considered outside the domain of economics due to the methodological hostility of orthodox economists towards incorporating ‘subjective’ and ‘psychological’ variables (Drakopoulos, 2023).

Rather, economists worked on the mathematisation of their field, which had started proper when Menger – who “pushed for abstraction and deduction” in economics – ‘won’ the Methodenstreit (‘method dispute’) in the late 19th century (Reyes, 2018, p. 10). While Smith is often held up as the founder of modern economics, Bentham was also highly influential as Menger and the other “deduction-loving, Benthamite utilitarian marginalists”, including Jevons and Walras, helped create the neoclassical school of economics that still dominates to this day (Reyes, 2018, p. 12). These so-called ‘marginalists’ of the neoclassical school would come to see the concept of ‘utility’ refer to an individual’s mental state of satisfaction, with the understanding that levels of satisfaction or utility cannot be compared across individuals. It is a concept that, as Stanton (2007) notes:

is simultaneously too broad and too narrow. Almost anything can be seen to have and give utility, albeit with diminishing returns. While its reach is broad, the usefulness of the ‘utility’ concept as deployed in neo-classical thought suffers from some severe limitations. (p. 3)

It is, put simply, too abstract a concept. The marginalists “preserved the basic precepts of Utilitarianism, but used new mathematical tools to make their arguments” (Stanton, 2007, p. 5). Unsurprisingly, the mathematisation of economics occurred as physics was making incredible progress using equations and

calculations and biology was making significant mistakes by analogising animals as machines (Reyes, 2018). The inspiration that economics got from physics was accompanied by the interest economists had in following the methods of the 'hard sciences':

A scientific approach was introduced into economics and economists started thinking in terms of theories, hypotheses and corroborations. However, physics and engineering are disciplines that focus on the study of objects rather than persons, and their methodology relies on using indicators of objects – the so-called objective indicators – rather than on indicators of the experiences people have – which are considered as subjective. (Rojas, 2019, p. 10)

As Reyes (2018) notes, "The economic edifice was built on sand rather than rock, with the orthodoxy aberrantly reduced to its own echo chamber of assumptions" (p. 15). The marginalists largely succeeded, converting economics from an art to a science while simultaneously disconnecting it from the messy subjective socio-ecological systems upon which it was supposedly modelling. Even as the neoclassical school began to convert economics into a science with a strict focus on utility, there was still an understanding, even if often implicit, that the final objective was happiness. As Rojas (2019) writes, "When the economists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century embarked on the study of prices, quantities, and markets they knew that, in the end, they were addressing a deeper and more relevant issue: human happiness" (p. 8). However, as he continues:

It was during the first decades of the twentieth century that economics abandoned its interest in happiness in order to focus on the study of choice ... Economic growth models acquired greater relevance during the following decades. By neglecting the study of happiness, economists were basing their policy recommendations on a major presumption: that people's well-being increases with the expansion of the consumption possibilities; unfortunately, there was no interest in corroborating this presumption. It was really astonishing for a discipline so proud of adopting the scientific method to be so weak in scientifically addressing one of its foundational premises: Is it really true that happiness increases with the expansion of income? (p. 4)

Economists essentially stopped examining happiness all together and focused solely on choice, as understood via marginal utility (Rojas, 2019). Around 1900, Wilfredo Pareto argued that the conception of a utility function with happiness substance was not necessary to develop a framework explaining choice. Rather, he believed it was sufficient to assume a utility function that allowed for the ordering of options. Thus, the meaning of utility as an indicator of people's happiness ceased to be relevant, and the concept of utility lost its happiness foundation to become no more than a simple device to order options (Rojas, 2019). By the 20th century, economics had

fully established its highly mathematised technical toolbox, transitioning from the study of how to create wealth and happiness to the 'science of choice' (Reyes, 2018). At this point it was ready to start attempting the colonisation of other social sciences.

Te aronga o te mātai hinengaro ki te oranga me te harikoa

Psychology's interest in wellbeing and happiness

Up until the 1970s, the discipline most interested in wellbeing and, in particular, hedonic happiness, in which subjective wellbeing is the dominant construct, was psychology (Lomas et al., 2021). Not only has the discipline of psychology been particularly important in the re-emergence of the idea of wellbeing but it remains "a powerful influence over the way that the concept is currently developing" (Joseph & McGregor, 2020, p. 15). The research, which started in the 1930s, was, looking back from our current vantage point, fairly simplistic and dominated by Western conceptions (Lomas et al., 2021). Take Warner Wilson's 1967 well-respected, broad review of subjective wellbeing research, titled 'Correlates of Avowed Happiness'. Here Wilson summarised the findings of the field by noting that the "happy person emerges as a young, healthy, well-educated, well-paid, extroverted, optimistic, worry-free, religious, married person with high self-esteem, high job morale, modest aspirations, of either sex and of a wide range of intelligence" (p. 294).

Aside from being an ill-considered mix of both inputs to and outcomes of happiness, this list is clearly a product of its specific context in the Christian, capitalist west of the post-World War Two golden era rather than some universal discovery of happiness. Making it even worse, Wilson presents this list as a scientific certainty rather than as an odd collection of traits, statuses, positions, and demographics. While economics was not yet willing to dip its toes into the subjective waters of wellbeing, psychology – to some degree colonised by the same drive to be a hard science as economics – was ready to apply scientific 'rigor' to this domain. As Wilson (1967) writes, "It is already established that avowed happiness can be determined reliably", reporting that the 16 dichotomous items he used "yielded a split-half reliability of .87" (p. 294). The confident nomenclature with which Wilson presents his research belies the disconnection to reality of his findings.

Ka hoki te hunga mātai ōhanga ki te aro atu ki te oranga...anō

Economists begin to show interest in wellbeing ... again

In the common narrative, it was Richard Easterlin who was one of the first economists to go beyond the econometric parameters when he began to challenge the adequacy of GDP as a sole indicator of societal progress in the 1970s

(MacCulloch, 2021; Rojas, 2019; Weijers & Morrison, 2018). This was, to be fair, part of a broader move to go 'beyond GDP'. As Hoekstra (2020) explains, "This movement really took off in the 1970s, when many alternatives were proposed that measured phenomena that GDP did not adequately account for: wellbeing, household work, volunteering, environmental damages and inequality to name a few" (p. 6). Nevertheless, it was Easterlin whose name has become associated with this shift. As wellbeing economist Robert MacCulloch (2021) notes, "Easterlin can be called the father of the 'happiness approach' to economics" (Macroeconomics of Happiness section, para. 9). The Easterlin paradox, first articulated in Easterlin's (1974) seminal paper 'Does Economic Growth Improve the Human Lot', highlighted a crucial if contentious insight: Increases in income do not necessarily translate to increases in happiness. He and other early wellbeing economists did not have any methodological hesitation to utilise input from psychology (Drakopoulos, 2023). This observation marked a significant turning point in economic thought, emphasising subjective wellbeing as an essential component of economic analysis. The Easterlin paradox was based on findings that, while within a given country at a given point in time richer individuals reported higher levels of happiness than poorer individuals, over time, average happiness levels did not increase as countries grew wealthier (Easterlin, 1974). This suggested that beyond a certain threshold, additional income had diminishing returns on subjective wellbeing.

Up until this point, economics as a discipline "assumed that income was enormously important for people's well-being, that their relationship was plain and straightforward, and that this was so evident that there was no need of corroboration" (Rojas, 2019, p. 15). Easterlin's work challenged the long-held assumption that economic growth was synonymous with improved societal welfare and prompted economists to explore other dimensions of wellbeing. However, his work has been criticised for issues with the datasets used, including the self-reporting used in gathering the information, and the interpretations of the data (Diener et al., 2013; Stevenson, & Wolfers, 2008; Veenhoven & Vergunst, 2014). As an example of how flimsy the data is, one of his main datasets is from a survey that asked people how happy they were, with three answers: very happy, fairly happy, and not very happy (Easterlin, 1974).

Easterlin notes that people are their own best judge of their happiness and that unlike other concepts it is easy to translate, which he interprets to mean it "is an idea that transcends individual cultures" (Easterlin, 1974, p. 93). This sets wellbeing economics on very abstract foundations, as it both assumes happiness is so obvious it does not require operationalisation and that it is universally the same across all people. Despite these flaws, Easterlin has made a long-lasting impression as one of the first economists to start exploring 'subjective', or hedonic, wellbeing – that is, people's subjective evaluations of their lives (Western & Tomaszewski, 2016).

Te oranga taparoto e tū ana i te papa tūretireti

Subjective wellbeing built on shaky ground

The economic conception of subjective wellbeing is highly abstract, built on a range of specious assumptions. Take the work of Richard Layard, an economist who has been made a life peer in the House of Lords for his work. Burns (2019) identifies five assumptions that Layard and fellow subjective wellbeing economists base their work on: the first of these is a commitment to monism, that there is only one value which really matters; the second is that this unitary value is happiness, hence happiness is all that matters; the third is that happiness is entirely a subjective affair; the fourth is that there is no significant difference between 'happiness' and 'wellbeing'; and the fifth assumption is that, just like happiness, wellbeing is also entirely a subjective affair.

These assumptions are highly problematic; not only are they disconnected from reality but they collapse the diversity of lived experience into a singular, false model. The palpable issue with this approach can be seen in Layard's definition of happiness: "Happiness is feeling good and misery is feeling bad" (Layard, 2005, as cited in Dalal, 2023, p. 25). On the face of it this seems doubly tautological. "Happiness", as Ahmed (2020) notes, "might even function as philosophy's foundational tautology: what is good is happy and what is happy is good" (p. 202). Even more problematic is examining this definition within its broader text:

Happiness is feeling good, and misery is feeling bad ... that feeling can now be measured by asking people or by monitoring their brains ... Scientific breakthroughs ... have transformed the way we think about happiness. Until recently, if people said they were happy, sceptics would hold that this was just a subjective statement ... But now we know that what people say about how they feel corresponds closely to the actual levels of activity in different parts of the brain, which can be measured in standard scientific ways ... psychology and brain science are beginning to give us the tools to arrive at precise answers. (Layard, 2005, as cited in Dalal, 2023, p. 25)

This measurement is, as Dalal (2023) makes clear, a correlation:

Each and every one of these statements is either exaggeration or untruth ... All we can do with the help of brain scans is to notice a correlation between an experience and electrical activity in a particular part of the brain. Correlation is not measurement – nor is there anything precise about it. (pp. 25–26)

Layard's attempt to overlay scientific certainty onto his vague, tautological conception of happiness is not just problematic but also symptomatic of broader issues in economics.

Psychologist Ed Diener's 1984 article 'Subjective Well-Being' has almost 25,000 citations, making it one of the most influential pieces in the broader wellbeing field (Weijers & Morrison, 2018). The article starts by quoting Wilson's list of 'happiness advantages', and while he does note that in the intervening years some of the demographic factors, including age and health, have been called into question, he does seem to give this list a general stamp of approval. Diener's (1984) article is broadly a review of the field, though he also develops his own outline of subjective wellbeing. This definition views wellbeing as including people's emotional responses, domain satisfactions, and global judgements of life satisfaction, arguing that wellbeing is a multifaceted construct, encompassing both cognitive evaluations (life satisfaction) and affective experiences (the presence of positive emotions and the absence of negative emotions). He suggests that understanding subjective wellbeing has important implications for public policy, and argues that enhancing wellbeing should be a goal for societies.

Diener and Easterlin would enter a decades-long academic battle over the latter's paradox and the role of income in wellbeing generally (Diener et al., 1993; Diener et al., 2013; Easterlin, 2005, 2013). Much like Easterlin, Diener has been criticised for his reliance on self-reported measures (Schwarz & Strack, 1999). Likewise, Diener and the broader field have been criticised for not taking cultural variation into account, presenting a Eurocentric view of wellbeing (Oishi & Diener, 2001). Later, he and others would work to rectify the issues around cultural difference (Suh & Koo, 2008). More generally, work on wellbeing in the 1980s and 1990s was generally focused on subjective, largely Western, forms of wellbeing by psychologists as well as an increasing number of economists. As Stoll (2014) explains:

In about 1990 there began to be a small upsurge in economic research on subjective wellbeing. Considerable credit for this has been given to the work of British economist Andrew Oswald and colleagues, as well as to Bruno Frey, a Swiss academic in economic psychology. By contrast, the 1990s witnessed an explosion in psychological research. Hundreds of studies which focused on one or more aspects of subjective wellbeing were conducted and published annually and towards the end of the decade positive psychology – the psychology of positive human functioning – emerged as its own field. (p. 25)

Nevertheless, the growing body of scholarship around wellbeing, from both psychologists and to a lesser extent economists, saw more and more economists persuaded of its usefulness. As Graham and MacLennan (2020) explain:

Most economists were initially skeptical that well-being research could be trusted, but many changed their views when a growing body of academic work based on large surveys uncovered remarkably consistent patterns across individuals,

countries, and time. Psychological and biological measures of well-being also validated the survey responses. (p. 3)

Those patterns, as they explain, show that:

in general, income, age, employment status, health, position in the social hierarchy, and various other characteristics affect the well-being of most people in similar ways, regardless of, say, where people live or what religion they follow. For instance, household income has by far the greatest positive influence on life satisfaction, and people 45–54 years old report less satisfaction than do people 15–24 years old. (p. 3)

Many of the findings align with standard economic assumptions. For example, findings around how increases in income have a greater impact on reported quality of life for those with lower incomes than for those with higher incomes align well with the law of diminishing marginal utility. However, there are a number of findings that do not fit into standard economic theorising – for example, the finding that after someone has reached a certain level of income, their wellbeing depends more on whether their pay is in line with or greater than last year's pay than on the absolute level of income (Graham & MacLennan, 2020).

Ka puta mai te oranga tapatahi hei wero i te oranga taparoto

Objective wellbeing emerges to challenge subjective wellbeing

To address the challenges posed by subjective wellbeing, subsequent research sought to develop more robust indicators and refine measurement techniques, seeing wellbeing expanded to include objective measures of wellbeing. Objective "indicators have been described as 'universal' or 'comparative' measures, and commonly fall into six dimensions: health, employment, education, housing, social participation and financial" (Cram, 2014, p. 20). Objective wellbeing research is said to have originated with economist Amartya Sen's work in welfare economics and his capabilities approach, which he began developing in the late 1970s (Western & Tomaszewski, 2016). With regard to the neoclassical approach, "moving the discussion away from utility and towards 'capabilities' allowed Sen ... to distinguish means (like money) from ends (like well-being or freedom)" (Stanton, 2007, p. 9). Sen's capabilities approach is commonly regarded as a critique of the happiness approach to development ethics – he argued that freedom was equally as important as happiness (Burns, 2019). Sen (1999, 2001) sees freedom as both the primary end and the principal means of development, arguing that development can be seen as a process of expanding the 'capabilities' enjoyed by people, which are the substantive freedoms available to individuals to lead the kind of lives they value.

The capabilities approach has been hugely influential. As Fine (2004) notes, “The issue of ethics and economics, especially in the context of development and in exerting influence upon economists, has been dominated by Amartya Sen, almost to the extent of being a one-man show with supporting acts” (p. 97). Sen has also been criticised. Gasper argues that “viewed from outside economics, the [capability approach] seems primitive in some ways, insufficient as a theory of well-being, and hardly a theory of the human development” (Gasper, 2002, as cited in Balamouné-Lutz, 2004, p. 4).

In Sen’s framework, wellbeing is assessed by looking at the range of capabilities an individual has, rather than merely the resources or commodities they possess. Sen (2001) outlined five specific categories of freedom – political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees, and protective security – though the list of specific capabilities within each of these can and does vary. Somewhat ironically, Sen has refused to specifically provide the capabilities as he believes that an exact list with weightings would be too difficult to define and they should be done for specific contexts (Nussbaum, 2011). Others, including Nussbaum and Anand, have operationalised the capabilities approach (Anand et al., 2005; Anand et al., 2009). For example, Nussbaum (2011) provides a list of core capabilities she thinks should be supported by all democracies: (1) life; (2) bodily health; (3) bodily integrity; (4) senses, imagination, and thought; (5) emotions; (6) practical reason; (7) affiliation; (8) other species; (9) play; and (10) control over one’s environment.

In recent decades even more efforts have been made to complement self-reported happiness data with objective measures, such as health outcomes, educational attainment, and employment rates (Benjamin et al., 2020; Voukelatou et al., 2021). These multidimensional approaches aim to provide a more comprehensive understanding of wellbeing that can better inform policy decisions. The emphasis on subjective wellbeing also led to the development of new indexes. In fact, one of the most significant impacts Sen’s approach has had is in the shaping of the UN’s Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI was developed in 1990 by Mahbub ul Haq, who drew heavily from Sen’s work (Stanton, 2007). Sen, who was one of the principal consultants in 1990, “wrote that at first he did not see the point of a crude composite index like the HDI, especially against the backdrop of the wealth of information that the UNDP [United Nations Development Programme] was planning to include in the report” (Stanton, 2007, p. 14).

Ultimately, the HDI was formulated to measure human development using three proxies for important human capabilities: health, education, and a decent standard of living. As well as the HDI, a number of other indexes have been developed, including the World Happiness Report, the Happy Planet Index, the Social Progress

Index, the Sustainable Society Index, the Quality of Life Index, and the OECD's Better Life Index, as well as numerous country-specific ones such as New Zealand's Living Standards Framework and Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Index. "In the past few decades," Hoekstra (2020) notes, "hundreds of different measurement initiatives have emerged" (p. 6). The indexes incorporate a range of indicators beyond income to assess quality of life. As Joseph and McGregor (2020) explain:

There have been two basic approaches to developing multidimensional wellbeing frameworks. In a top-down way, some frameworks are derived from particular philosophical positions, conceptual frameworks, or ideologies, while 'bottom-up' strategies have sought to build 'lists' of what is required for wellbeing from observation or research engagement with the people whose wellbeing the study is concerned to understand. The desire for 'universality' in policy spheres creates a bias in favour of having reasoned 'lists' and most of the currently prominent multidimensional frameworks arise from particular theoretical or philosophical positions. (p. 16)

These indexes reflect a broader perspective on societal progress, recognising that economic growth alone is insufficient to capture the complexities of human wellbeing. There is no denying this quantification is useful, but one of the inevitable outcomes is that it delineates a centralised, top-down, and ultimately technocratic approach to wellbeing (Frey, 2020). Jenkins (2016), with a focus on development of the Global South, warns against hope that "by swapping one technocratic and reductionist measurement programme for another, differently reductionist, one, new ways of acting will become possible", arguing that "reconceptualisation of 'well-being' as a technocratic tool merely recasts existing logics of economic development in a new language" (p. 109). Cram (2014) notes:

There is cynicism among Indigenous peoples about the relevancy of comparative analyses on universal indicators, both because of the failure of universal indicators to fully account for Indigenous wellbeing and because the documenting of Indigenous disparities does not necessarily result in any redress. (p. 20)

These indexes alone are not likely to drastically change economic decision making, as Cram makes clear, and are often just another tool that reinforces centralised decision making. The fact that "despite 50 years of developing Beyond-GDP metrics and hundreds of initiatives, GDP is still the most influential indicator in society and none of the alternatives come close to its influence" itself signals that these frameworks are not enough on their own (Hoekstra, 2020, p. 8). As Hoekstra (2020) notes, "The Wellbeing Economy community should recognize that creating more measurement systems with different terminology is not helping to move this agenda forward" (p. 11). The issues, he argues, are that GDP has a stronger narrative – that growth is 'good', is able to provide better policy recommendations, and is well

harmonised internationally. In other words, the profusion of frameworks is actually part of the problem, with a cacophony of different indicators, versus the singular metric of GDP.

Te anga ōhanga orange punanga me te pūhore o te anga ōhanga ōkawa hōu

Hidden wellbeing economics and the failure of neoclassical economics

It is interesting that during the mid-20th century, which the different histories and timelines of wellbeing economics describe as lacking in any wellbeing or happiness analysis, saw one of the most profuse expansions of the welfare state ever (Drakopoulos, 2023; MacCulloch, 2021; Rojas, 2019; Weijers & Morrison, 2018). Between 1930 and 1960, most developed states instigated a wide range of different services, including universal healthcare; public health programmes; subsidised or free tertiary education; universal benefits and pensions; parental leave; and public housing programmes. While some of the driving force for the rollout of the 'cradle-to-grave' safety net in developed countries was driven by Christian and socialist forces within these states and fears of communist forces beyond these states, it largely occurred under and was facilitated by the Keynesian consensus.

John Maynard Keynes's seminal work *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*, published in 1936, challenged the prevailing neoclassical economic thought that markets always clear (i.e. supply always equals demand) and introduced the concept of aggregate demand as the primary driver of economic performance. His ideas fundamentally changed the theory and practice of macroeconomics and the economic policies of governments right up until the 1970s. Keynes's advocacy for government intervention helped lay the groundwork for the development of the welfare state (Backhouse & Bateman, 2012). His ideas influenced the creation of social safety nets and public services designed to stabilise the economy and ensure a minimum standard of living for all citizens. Yet Keynes is virtually ignored in wellbeing literature even though tangible and widespread wellbeing rose significantly during the period where countries' economies operated according to the Keynesian consensus (Carabelli & Cedrini, 2011). In one of the few oblique references to Keynes and wellbeing and happiness, Rojas (2019) writes:

Economic growth and other income-related concepts came to be the major preoccupation of international organizations, development agencies, national governments and most economists; however, it is important to recognize that doubts about its capacity to generate well-being were always present. For example, John Maynard Keynes believed that income was just a necessity but not something of major value. For Keynes, the value of income does not go as far as

having the material means to survive; once the economic problem is solved human beings will have more important issues to focus on. (pp. 11–12)

This is not to deny that Easterlin's work constituted "the first empirical study on the relationship between economic growth and happiness" (Rojas, 2019, p. 3). But to essentially overlook Keynes's influence in real-world wellbeing due to the massive growth in the welfare state during this period seems unusual. This, it is believed, might be because of the broader sweep of economics during the same period as the renewed interest in wellbeing, from the 1970s onwards. Keynes was, in many ways, opposed to the neoclassical school. Keynes believed fiscal and monetary policy in the long run should be devoted to increasing potential GDP while neoclassical economists believe that the economy is self-correcting, and attempting to fine-tune the economy through monetary and fiscal policies will only make problems worse. Neoclassical thinking got a significant shot in the arm from the 1970s onwards with the rise of neoliberalism, which, with its emphasis on free markets, deregulation, privatisation, and reduction in government intervention, provided fertile ground for neoclassical economic principles to flourish.

As citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand know only too well, neoliberalism – which is as much a political as an economic approach – took hold and amongst other outcomes saw the rollback of the welfare state and the dramatic drop in wellbeing of many citizens. It is no accident that the 2009 report on wellbeing by Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen, and Jean Paul Fitoussi for French President Nicholas Sarkozy – which marked the 'apotheosis' of wellbeing thinking to date – was commissioned in the wake of the most catastrophic failure of neoliberalism, the 2007–2008 global financial crisis (Joseph & McGregor, 2020). The rise in interest in wellbeing has been driven largely by the broad and deep crisis for people and planet that neoliberalism has facilitated. But at the same time, it seems that in this new, or renewed, interest in wellbeing, some of the historical antecedents – the welfare state and Keynes – have been forgotten. This may be partly due to the constant need for reinvention, but also potentially there is some related but slightly different issue that wellbeing economics is being used by some as a proxy for neoclassical economics to maintain its dominance. As Joseph and McGregor (2020) explain regarding differing versions of the concept:

In some formulations, the idea and ideology of 'the individual' is promoted, and in this form, the concept of wellbeing is being used as a vehicle to reshape the hegemony of neoclassical economics. This is a notion bearing similarities to the other elements of the trinity – AngloSaxon, individualist and neoliberal. (p. 14)

This is always a risk with the status quo. This co-optation has happened with the 'green' and 'blue' sustainable economies amongst many other challengers to the supreme regime of neoliberalism.

Te waihanga anō i te oranga

The reinvention of wellbeing

Wellbeing economics has become something of a cause célèbre. As Stoll (2014) notes, much like the focus on wellbeing from psychologists in the 1990s, “since the turn of the twenty-first century, the study of wellbeing economics has experienced a similar growth” (p. 26). Writing in 2020, Joseph and McGregor note that the “idea of wellbeing has long been used and abused in major political and policy statements” (p. 12). There is no shortage of different ways of conceiving and measuring wellbeing, as the profusion of different indexes indicates. Joseph and McGregor specifically tie this to Stiglitz et al.’s 2009 report, writing that “since the publication of that report, there has been an effusion of wellbeing measuring initiatives at local, national and global level” (p. 14), though as should be clear it goes back further than this admittedly influential report.

While there is no doubt that the last few decades have seen increased focus on looking beyond GDP to examine broader conceptions of wellbeing, there are also the conjoined issues of revision and reinvention within the broader field of economics. A lot is made of how GDP was until recently the only metric used to evaluate economic success, but as Srinivasan reminded readers way back in 1994, some early post-war monographs on economic development divided statistical indexes of development into two groups, with the first encompassing the quality and texture of life as the ‘end product’, incorporating measures such as life expectancy, health, and food intake, and the second measuring economic performance.

This is not to say that these early post-war economists had the same conceptualisations of wellbeing as have been developed more recently, but rather the field is often subject to a combined process of amnesia then discovery. As Rijpma et al. note, somewhat ironically, even the creator of GDP, Simon Kuznets, was aware of its limitations, warning that the “welfare of a nation [can] scarcely be inferred from a measurement of national income” (Kuznets, 1934, as cited in Rijpma et al., 2024, p. 2). In fact, as Rijpma et al. continue, “the warnings for the use of GDP per capita as a measure for success went forgotten after World War II but were rediscovered multiple times” (p. 2).

Yet Stiglitz et al. famously wrote in their 2009 report that “the time is ripe for our measurement system to *shift emphasis from measuring economic production to measuring people’s wellbeing*”, as if this was a new revelation (p. 12, emphasis in original). This is probably partly due to the way academia functions, with its never-ending need for newness, which can often become the recycling of creation. And this also explains why in this latest round of wellbeing mania there are so many different definitions, indexes, and programmes. As will be examined in Chapter 8, this goes beyond just ‘wellbeing economics’ as there are numerous competing ‘alternative

economic models' that all have considerable overlap with wellbeing economics and have a range of their own competing definitions.

Ngā take e toe mai ana, arā, te tūrehurehutanga me te arotahi pū ki Ūropi

Remaining issues of abstraction and Eurocentrism

Just as wellbeing economics is somewhat a reinvented concept, the same or similar issues around its abstract, or simplistic, conceptions (including of humanity) and its ongoing Eurocentrism continue to plague it. In their review of five different alternative economic models, Crisp et al. (2024) note that wellbeing economics remains more abstract than the other approaches, placing more focus on the ends rather than the specificity of the means for travelling towards and arriving at its desired future. Likewise, Yates et al. (2023) make a similar point:

Other kinds of governance tools and frameworks [beyond GDP] have emerged over the last few decades, many of which offer more nuanced ways of making decisions based on wellbeing. Many of these governance tools and frameworks have embedded Eurocentric and universalist assumptions. (p. 271)

As Jayawickreme et al. (2012) write, the "study of well-being is hampered by the multiplicity of approaches" (p. 327). "There is often ambiguity about which conception of wellbeing is used", Joseph and McGregor (2020) explain, noting that "there are disputes about what metrics can and should be used to assess it; and there are deeper, more ideological debates about the implications of different forms of the wellbeing agenda" (p. 26). Diversity of view is not a bad thing, as this diversity could be seen as a useful reflection of the diversity in real life; however, rather than building on a diversity of cultures, worldviews, and perspectives, they generally come from the same array of academics, bureaucrats, and politicians in the Global North who are looking to get their name attached to a theory, paradox, or consensus. Even where there is a diversity of stakeholders, there are issues:

There is something of an 'alliance of expediency' in the Post-Stiglitz wellbeing movement that brings many of the different camps together – from Buddhist monks clad in colourful red and yellow robes, to grey-suited, number-crunching economists, to white coated neuroscientists – to present themselves as one movement. This conceals a number of major faultlines which when explored can be seen to have great significance for direction in which our current systems of governance are moving. (Joseph & McGregor, 2020, p. 26)

Likewise, while there has been much progress in terms of a broader and more well-rounded understanding of the central node in the whole schema – humanity – it still remains somewhat simplistic. Joseph and McGregor (2020) note that:

despite the wellbeing movement claiming an enthusiasm to develop a more holistic approach to understand the challenges that we face in the twenty-first century, in the neo-utilitarian/hedonic [subjective] conceptions of wellbeing this holism is not applied to the notion of person ... The person at the heart of the new economics and psychology of wellbeing remains a thin and calculating asocial agent akin to *homo economicus*. Will Davies dubs him *homo psycho-economicus*. (p. 27)

Layard is a good example of this. Even as his *Happiness: Lessons from A New Science* champions wellbeing, he appears to be unwilling to consider how this can challenge the underlying individualistic tenets of orthodox economics. And make no mistake, the individual still remains at the centre of most wellbeing economic analysis. As Atkinson and Joyce (2011) note in their summary of the different operationalisations of wellbeing, the “endeavours share a common understanding of well-being as a quality that inheres to the individual” (p. 134).

Ngā mutunga houkura o te orange The utopian ends of wellbeing

As noted, in recent years there has been an explosion in wellbeing economic thinking. Again, while this is generally a good thing, there are some issues with the ways in which a wellbeing economy is described; in particular, that it is sometimes portrayed in idealistic, normative, and even utopian ways. This can be seen in one definition by a Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll) member in the *Stanford Social Innovations Review*: “A well-being economy recognizes that people need to restore a harmonious relationship between society and nature, enjoy a fair distribution of resources, and live in healthy and resilient communities” (Chrysopoulou, 2020, para. 6). Similarly, the Gross National Happiness Centre Bhutan (n.d.) defines Gross National Happiness as a “multidimensional development approach seeking to achieve a harmonious balance between material well-being and the spiritual, emotional and cultural needs of society” (para. 4). Both of these portray a utopian vision of harmony and balance, of equality and justice. The term ‘harmony’ and its lexemes appear in many definitions of a wellbeing economy. So too does the term ‘flourish’. Harvard University (n.d.) has a Human Flourishing Program, where they “collectively reimagine an economics of wellbeing centred around sustainable human flourishing” (para. 1). Coscieme et al. (2019) defined a wellbeing economy as having the “fundamental goal of delivering good human mental and physical health, greater equality and fairness, good social relationships, and a flourishing natural environment” (p. 10). The UN Sustainable Development Goals, which Joseph and McGregor (2020) note is founded on the current wave of wellbeing thinking, is almost the apotheosis of this idealistic, utopian envisioning and is worth quoting in full:

We envisage a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want, where all life can thrive. We envisage a world free of fear and violence. A world with universal literacy. A world with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels, to health care and social protection, where physical, mental and social well-being are assured. A world where we reaffirm our commitments regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and where there is improved hygiene; and where food is sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious. A world where human habitats are safe, resilient and sustainable and where there is universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy.

We envisage a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of human potential and contributing to shared prosperity. A world which invests in its children and in which every child grows up free from violence and exploitation. A world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed. A just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

We envisage a world in which every country enjoys sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all. A world in which consumption and production patterns and use of all natural resources – from air to land, from rivers, lakes and aquifers to oceans and seas – are sustainable. One in which democracy, good governance and the rule of law as well as an enabling environment at national and international levels, are essential for sustainable development, including sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty and hunger. One in which development and the application of technology are climate-sensitive, respect biodiversity and are resilient. One in which humanity lives in harmony with nature and in which wildlife and other living species are protected. (United Nations, 2015, pp. 3–4)

This is described as a ‘supremely ambitious and transformational vision’. While such fantastical portrayals can provide normative outcome for any project or initiative, there is also a danger that such a portrayal sets the endeavour up for failure as they are impossible to achieve. Just as Smith was lambasted earlier for his unrealistic assumptions about human behaviour, these definitions and visions of wellbeing are also based on a rather naïve view of the human condition. Linked claims by Fiormonti et al. (2022) further reveal some of the issues that come with such impossible utopian visions. They claim that “the concept of wellbeing is generally perceived as post-ideological”, continuing that it “has no boundaries and requires no disclaimers: it resonates the world over, in all languages and cultures” (pp. 3–4).

Marx laughably claimed communism was free from ideological distortion as it was based on a true understanding of history (Mullins, 1972). ‘Ideology’ is generally used in a pejorative sense, as both Fiormonti et al. and Marx have done, to describe misconceptions or distortions.

It could be said that based on its promotion of ‘harmony’ and ‘flourishing’, wellbeing economics has distortions, though whether it ranks alongside communism is a different matter. Even using more technical definitions of ideology sees wellbeing economics classified as an ideology. These definitions focus on questions such as whether it has normative content or vision, an internal and logical coherence, an ability to inspire or persuade thought and action, and a capacity to serve as a guide or roadmap (Minar, 1961; Mullins, 1972). On all those counts, both communism and wellbeing economics are ideological.

Likewise, the idea that the concept of wellbeing has no boundaries is problematic. Even if it was argued that the ends of wellbeing may be somewhat universal, in that most humans would agree they want some form of ‘wellbeing’, the ways and means are most certainly not, and when the ends are often impossibly utopian and thus ultimately unachievable then the ways and means are really all that matter. Even at a more prosaic level, the focus on ends rather than means, or on final outcomes rather than progress, is fairly well baked into wellbeing economic thinking. In their review of different wellbeing frameworks, Brandt et al. (2022) note that “in the spirit of expanding people’s freedoms and capabilities, [the frameworks] consider final outcomes, rather than intermediary inputs, as the ultimate, intrinsically valuable ends of progress” (p. 5). In other words, the frameworks are usually oriented towards the end goal rather than on the progress towards that goal.

Nā, he aha kē tēnei mea te ōhanga orange, ā, me pēwhea tōna whakamahinga i tēnei tūāhua? **So what is wellbeing economics, and how can we use it here?**

All of this might suggest that there is no point to wellbeing economics. However, what the above is seeking to outline is that the bones of a wellbeing economy need to be based on the opposite of much of the critiques made, for Māori at least. It was argued that in some cases the field has been plagued by being abstract, Eurocentric, scientific, technocratic, reinvented, and utopian. However, within this body of work there is also much that can be harnessed and utilised, as will be shown in coming chapters. But what does this chapter tell us?

It tells us Māori economies of wellbeing need to be, first and foremost, grounded in te ao Māori (the Māori worldview) and led by Māori. There are numerous studies from a range of different disciplines that show that positive outcomes for Indigenous

peoples are most likely when whatever initiative in whatever domain is built around and instigated using Indigenous identity, culture, knowledge, and institutions and is led by Indigenous peoples (Cornell & Kalt, 2000, 2010; Dockery, 2012; Gall et al., 2021; Haslam et al., 2009; Houkamau et al., 2021; Wexler, 2009). While there is some irony in citing studies here grounded in the same scientific approach that has been lambasted above, unfortunately these are pretty much all we have, though a lot of the cited research has been conducted by Indigenous peoples.

Second, any project needs to focus on being bottom up and led by those who will be the key actors in the economy. This fits in with the first point, as any Māori economy of wellbeing needs to be built by and for Māori at whānau (extended family but also group with shared values) and community levels. This might mean the whole project is less neat and linear, but it will mean that it is more likely to be viewed as legitimate and is more likely to succeed. Economies of wellbeing need to be built through localised rather than centralised processes.

There also needs to be a focus on practical, applied, and realistic solutions. This means detaching the processes from the highly abstracted understandings and analyses of economics and economies that dominate, turning instead to solutions that have been implemented and proven to be successful. There are, however, useful insights that can be gleaned from both the neoclassical and wellbeing economics disciplines, but these need to be incorporated with a far broader set of approaches. The abstract and Eurocentric nature of mainstream thinking to date does not provide the types of grounded solutions that Māori need to usher in their wellbeing economy.

Likewise, while there is some need for metrics and monitoring, the key guides to a Māori economies of wellbeing project should be alignment with traditional Māori identity, culture, mātauranga (knowledge), and kaupapa (principles, but also institutions). Attempting to create a comprehensive index with rigorously measured metrics, or delineating key progress indicators, for the project is highly problematic as it will not work for all the different participants, and these types of pursuits can become the tail that wags the dog. Quantified approaches are not discounted, but they should always be in service of the project rather than dictating what happens.

Furthermore, the project needs to be focused on the journey rather than any particular destination, and this journey needs to be realistic. While some inspirational language and vision is useful, this needs to be utilised carefully and judiciously. Importantly, then, for a 'journey rather than a destination' focus, the various steps required are the critical point. This means that detailing some broad parameters about the different possible solutions, as well as the people and groups

who might implement them, is a vital element. Each of these steps will need to be practical, but also flexible.

Finally, while the use of inspirational language can help motivate, it is also important to ground the endeavour by focusing on achievable goals along the way. Therefore, it is felt that much of the language used to describe and delineate Māori economies of wellbeing is realistic in terms of the vision it portrays and the chances of building that vision. To restate these points, the development of Māori economies of wellbeing needs to be:

- Māori-led;
- based on Māori identity, culture, mātauranga, and kaupapa;
- decentralised and diverse;
- practical and applied;
- supported by but not led by Western science, monitoring, and metrics;
- focused on the journey rather than a destination; and
- framed using realistic language.

With this in mind, there are several key next elements that need to be outlined here. The first is to explore the importance of self-determination and cultural match. Next is examining the kaupapa of the traditional Māori economy, as this provides the foundation for the project, effectively providing the baseline parameters for the project. After this, the next two chapters deal with what are called alternative economic models and economic networking theories, respectively, as a way of determining the steps, strategies, structures, policies, processes, and principles needed to help guide the development of Māori economies of wellbeing.

Ngā whakaaro whakatepe: Te mana motuhake me te hāngaitanga ki te ahurea

Concluding thoughts: Self-determination and cultural match

Self-determination and cultural match in economic development are crucial concepts emphasised in the works of Stephen Cornell and Joseph P. Kalt from the Harvard Project (Cornell & Kalt, 1992, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2005). Their studies, primarily focusing on Native American tribes, reveal that self-determination and the incorporation of traditional governance structures significantly contribute to successful economic outcomes. They argue that economic development initiatives are more effective when they resonate with the cultural context of the community, with their research underscoring that economic development strategies must align with the cultural values, norms, and institutions of the communities they intend to serve.

As they note, the economic development situation in Native American reservations presents a puzzle. These reservations are often perceived as impoverished, and many of them indeed are (Cornell & Kalt, 1998). Across Native American reservations, unemployment rates are exceedingly high, average household incomes are significantly below the poverty level, there is extensive reliance on welfare and other transfer payments, and there are high indexes of ill health and other poverty indicators. However, as striking as the degree of poverty is, there are exceptions to this pattern. Some tribes are well known for their economic success, particularly those that have generated substantial revenues through niche gaming markets and have garnered significant media attention as a result. Less well known, but much more intriguing, are those tribes that have diverged from the prevailing pattern without relying on gaming as their primary revenue stream or source of employment. Take these two contrasting examples, of which Cornell and Kalt (2000) provide many:

- The Crow tribe of Montana has a rich natural resource endowment, with some of the world's largest coal reserves, extensive timber, fertile wheat-growing land, and arguably the best grazing land in the western United States. Despite significant capital infusions from federal programmes and large monetary claims settlements, and high school graduation rates well above the national reservation average, official unemployment is nearly 60%, with real unemployment likely higher. The return on Crow wealth – what the tribe and its people earn from their vast resource endowment – is minimal. These resources have neither generated wealth nor created a viable economy.
- In contrast, the Mississippi Choctaws do not possess abundant natural resources, and their development began before recent improvements in their educational system. They are one of the largest employers in the state of Mississippi, to the point that several thousand non-Indians come onto the reservation every day to work in the Choctaws' manufacturing, service, and public sector enterprises. The Choctaws are importing labour because there are not enough Choctaws to fill all the jobs they've created. Choctaw unemployment has fallen dramatically. Neither natural resources nor education were the key to the Choctaws' success.

This leads to the conclusion that simply having resources – whether natural, human, or financial – does not explain the achievements of relatively successful tribes. While it would be expected that the relatively successful tribes are those that have good natural resources or high rates of educational attainment, or the ones that have been able to get their hands on the most financial capital, the extensive work by

Cornell and Kalt, studying hundreds of different reservations, shows that rather it is those communities that have stronger levels of self-determination and cultural match.

Self-determination refers to the capacity of a community to govern itself and make autonomous decisions regarding its social, economic, and political affairs. For Indigenous communities, self-determination is a fundamental right that enables them to pursue development on their own terms. Cornell and Kalt argue that self-determination involves Indigenous communities having control over their governance structures. This control allows them to create and implement policies that reflect their unique cultural values and priorities.

As the Harvard Project (n.d.) explains, “When Native nations make their own decisions about what development approaches to take, they consistently outperform external decision makers – on matters as diverse as governmental form, natural resource management, economic development, health care and social service provision” (para. 1). They also refer to economic self-determination, which means that Indigenous communities manage their own economic resources and enterprises. This management ensures that economic activities align with the community’s long-term goals and cultural practices. Self-determination fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility within the community. When communities have the authority to make decisions, they are more invested in the outcomes, leading to more effective and sustainable development.

Cultural match refers to the alignment of development initiatives with the cultural values, norms, and institutions of the community. This alignment enhances the legitimacy and effectiveness of development efforts, as they resonate more deeply with the community’s identity and practices. Development strategies that match the cultural context of the community are more likely to be accepted and supported by its members. This legitimacy is crucial for the successful implementation of development projects. Successful Indigenous economic development requires an institutional and organisational ‘cultural match’.

Like its generic international counterpart, Indigenous economic development projects have generally struggled to deliver meaningful outcomes. Across Cornell and Kalt’s rigorous quantitative surveys comparing different reservations, they have determined that the degree of match between traditional and contemporary institutions and organisations determines the success or failure of economic development (Cornell & Kalt, 1995, 1998, 2000). They have argued that “to be effective and productive of economic progress, formal institutions of government require [a] widely shared extra-constitutional agreement” that is culturally grounded (1995, p. 405). They explain that “cultural norms form the glue that holds a

society's formal and informal institutions of social control and organization together" (2000, p. 453). Therefore, achieving economic development outcomes requires that institutions and organisational structures are not only pragmatically efficient and effective (i.e. possible) but they must also be perceived as culturally congruent (i.e. proper).

Cornell and Kalt's work illustrates that self-determination and cultural match are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. Self-determination provides the autonomy needed for communities to pursue culturally matched development strategies, while cultural match ensures that these strategies are effective and sustainable. Self-determination empowers communities to design and implement development initiatives that are culturally matched. This empowerment leads to more effective and sustainable outcomes.

Traditional governance structures, which are a key aspect of cultural match, provide a solid foundation for self-determination. These structures are often more effective because they are rooted in the community's history and identity. When self-determination and cultural match are combined, they create a powerful framework for sustainable development. Communities can leverage their cultural strengths and governance autonomy to address economic challenges in a holistic and integrated manner. In terms of culturally matched authority, Cornell and Kalt (1995) outline four primary dimensions:

- **Structure of authority:** The division of powers and responsibilities across such tasks as dispute resolution and enforcement (judicial affairs), law and rulemaking (legislative affairs), administration and implementation of policies (executive and bureaucratic functions), and external political, economic and military affairs (international relations).
- **Scope of authority:** The range of powers and responsibilities wielded by the government over the foregoing areas of authority. For example, do the society's informal norms support or abhor governmental ownership of businesses?; is it seen to be the proper role of government to enforce contracts?
- **Location of authority:** The level of social organisation – family, local community, affinal 'band' organisation, the tribe or nation – in which political power and responsibility are appropriately vested, according to a society's cultural norms.
- **Source of authority:** The mechanisms by which individuals who assume governmental roles and control over means of coercion acquire legitimate authority. (pp. 405–406)

Successful Māori economies of wellbeing will rely on the cultural match of the solutions and will need to be Māori led.

Ngā tohutoro

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Upoko 8: Ngā tauira ōhanga arokē

Chapter 8: Alternative economic models

– Matthew Rout

This chapter explores the international literature to extract a set of strategies, structures, policies, and practices – solutions – for future Māori economies of wellbeing. The aim is to focus on practical solutions that align with te ao Māori (the Māori worldview), and in particular the economic kaupapa (principles/beliefs) outlined previously. While the primary focus of the project is on a 'wellbeing economy', there are a number of alternative economic models (AEMs) that align with this concept and which will be examined in this chapter with the aim of extracting solutions. The reason for this is that the wellbeing economy is a relatively new concept and has had limited practical application, and these other alternatives can help complement and supplement wellbeing economics. Many of these AEMs have decades of implementation behind them, with a range of applied solutions in place. These AEMs were selected not just because they all share a focus on social and environmental wellbeing, but also because they are practically focused models and have to varying degrees seen implementation at scales similar to those the Māori wellbeing project aims to work at as well. Many are referenced in the wellbeing economics literature as being wellbeing 'strategies'. For example, the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll, 2021) identifies the following AEMs as "examples of wellbeing economy strategies":

Circular economy – Transform production and consumption processes to reuse resources, design waste and pollution out of the cycle, and regenerate the natural world. The primary ways to do this are recycling waste for new production or using waste for conversion to energy.

Community wealth building – Identifies 'anchor' economic institutions with strong linkages to the local economy, to foster 'bottom-up' and inclusive development.

Regenerative economy – Focuses on building an economy that mimics nature by regenerating the social and ecological assets needed for wellbeing. ...

Common good economy [also referred to as the economy for the common good] – Evaluates business success not by profits, but rather by their contribution to the ‘common good’ and alignment with values of Dignity, Social Justice, Environmental Sustainability, and Transparency.

Solidarity economy – Promotes the expansion of economic activities and behaviours that are based on principles of reciprocity, cooperation, and solidarity.

Doughnut economics – Supports the design of economic systems that ensure necessary social foundations, while respecting planetary limits. (p. 21)

Likewise, in his article on wellbeing economics, Fioramonti (2024) examines three different AEMs: steady state economy, degrowth economy, and wellbeing economy. As he notes:

All these approaches have many similarities, common origins, and objectives, some of them focus mostly on balancing social needs and environmental limits, thus striving to achieve a long-term equilibrium between contrasting demands (these strands of work are grouped under the label ‘steady-state economy’), others criticise the concept of growth head-on and believe that only a more convivial society can reconcile social development and ecological boundaries (these strands are grouped under the label ‘degrowth’), while for other approaches the key is to reinvent the concept of growth itself, by replacing GDP [gross domestic product] and its focus on consumption and production with human and ecological well-being (this is the strand labelled ‘well-being economy’). (p. 3)

There are many similarities then, but also some differences – the wellbeing economy is focused on and geared towards increasing wellbeing. With many of the AEMs, as with wellbeing economics, the goal or key objective of the model is found in the name, viz the solidarity economy is premised on growing solidarity, the regenerative economy on increasing regeneration, and the steady state economy on maintaining a steady economic state. These differences will become clear throughout the chapter, which also serves as a literature review of sorts. The aim is to outline each AEM, then determine various solutions grouped into various categories as derived from the AEMs.

Te ōhanga orange Wellbeing economy

The concept of a ‘wellbeing economy’ is complex and has many variations. Probably the most generally agreed upon definition is that a wellbeing economy shifts the central goal from economic growth to the generation of human wellbeing in ecologically sustainable ways (Hayden & Dasilva, 2022). That, however, leaves a lot of space between inputs and outcome. As with the other AEMs, the aim here is to

examine wellbeing economics in a way that provides practical insights for the creation of Māori economies of wellbeing, rather than more broadly. Therefore, the focus is largely applied and pragmatic. First, a brief overview of the aims, goals, or principles of wellbeing economics.

Costanza et al. (2018) list five goals: stay within planetary biophysical boundaries; meet all fundamental human needs; create and maintain a fair distribution of resources, income, and wealth; have an efficient allocation of resources to allow inclusive prosperity, human development, and human flourishing; and create governance systems that are fair, responsive, just, and accountable. In its 'Beyond GDP' framing, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) outlines three key principles:

- '*Beyond the market*' to consider the multi-dimensional nature of well-being;
- '*Beyond averages*' to take account of the distribution of income and other well-being outcomes throughout society; and
- '*Beyond the here and now*' to better understand the impact of economic growth on environmental sustainability, on the cohesion of society and the long-term potential and resilience of the economy. (Llena-Nozal et al., 2019, p. 12)

The OECD then details four core aspects of a wellbeing economy, defining it as an economy that:

1. expands the opportunities available to people for upward social mobility and for improving their lives along the dimensions that matter most to them;
2. ensures that these opportunities translate into well-being outcomes for all segments of the population, including those at the bottom of the distribution;
3. reduces inequalities; and
4. fosters environmental and social sustainability. (Llena-Nozal et al., 2019, p. 8)

Unsurprisingly for an institution focused on economics, the OECD views the concept of an economy of wellbeing requiring the leveraging of the two-way relation between key wellbeing outcomes and economic growth – in other words, growth is a critical component of its conceptualisation (Llena-Nozal et al., 2019). Dalziel and Saunders (2015) provide five key principles of a wellbeing economy:

Principle 1: The purpose of economic activity is to promote the wellbeing of persons.

Principle 2: The wellbeing of persons is related to their capabilities to lead the kinds of lives they value and have reason to value.

Principle 3: Economic policies should expand the substantive freedom of persons to lead the kinds of lives they value and have reason to value.

Principle 4: Wellbeing is created through persons making time-use choices they judge will contribute to their leading the kinds of lives they value.

Principle 5: Market production should enable persons to add value to the kinds of lives they value. (p. 5)

Fioramonti et al. (2022) provide multidimensional wellbeing goals:

- Personal: work–life balance, psycho-physical health, empowerment;
- Social: cohesion, equality, community engagement;
- Economic: customisation, localised production, prosumer approach, total cost and benefit accounting; and
- Natural: healthy ecosystem functions, urban–rural–wild balance.

The OECD was the first international organisation to launch a social monitoring programme in the 1970s. Since then, systematic efforts have been pursued by various OECD expert groups, committees, and directorates to broaden the scope of social monitoring and increase its policy relevance.

In practice, wellbeing economics requires giving wellbeing priority in decision making (Birkjær et al., 2021). Furthermore, while theoretically a wellbeing economy is built on metrics able to measure wellbeing as Stiglitz et al. (2009) outlined, the complexity of the concept and the status quo’s focus on economic growth mean that in practice ‘wellbeing’ needs to be operationalised and proactive measures need to be implemented to improve this detailed understanding of wellbeing, with requisite metrics used to monitor, prioritise, and guide policy (Birkjær et al., 2021). Joffe (2024) notes that for a wellbeing economy a “proposed criterion of success is that the economy should, as far as possible, meet the basic needs of all residents” (p. 1).

Te ōhanga tūwhena Steady state economy

The steady state economy is a relatively venerable concept, being traced back to John Stuart Mill, who introduced the idea in 1848 in his book *Principles of Political Economy* (Daly, 1977). It has been popularised in recent decades by ecological economist Herman Daly, who published his book by the same name in 1977. At its most basic, the concept describes “an economy of stable or mildly fluctuating size” (Center for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy, n.d., para. 1). More specifically, as Daly (2008) defines it, it is an economy with a “constant population and constant stock of capital, maintained by a low rate of throughput that is within the regenerative and assimilative capacities of the ecosystem” (p. 2). This is based

on the very basic but often overlooked realisation that the Earth itself is a steady state system. As Daly (2008) notes:

The Earth as a whole is approximately a steady state. Neither the surface nor the mass of the earth is growing or shrinking; the inflow of radiant energy to the Earth is equal to the outflow; and material imports from space are roughly equal to exports (both negligible). None of this means that the earth is static – a great deal of qualitative change can happen inside a steady state, and certainly has happened on Earth. (p. 1)

The most important change, Daly (2008) explains, has been:

the enormous growth of one subsystem of the Earth, namely the economy, relative to the total system, the ecosphere ... The closer the economy approaches the scale of the whole Earth the more it will have to conform to the physical behavior mode of the Earth. That behavior mode is a steady state – a system that permits qualitative development but not aggregate quantitative growth. (p. 1)

The steady state concept is premised on the ecological wellbeing of the Earth.

One of the key aims of the steady state economy is constant (low) throughput – the energy and materials used to produce goods and services – with population and capital stock able to adjust to any size that can be maintained by the constant throughput beginning with depletion and ending with pollution. The best way to reduce throughput is by focusing on depletion, effectively raising resource prices. To restrict poverty, Daly promotes redistribution through the creation of both a minimum and maximum income, providing the human wellbeing component of the steady state economy. While the steady state economy is physically non-growing, it is a qualitatively improving system (Lawn, 2010).

Daly (2018) notes that “growth all the way to the very limit of carrying capacity has an unrecognized political cost as well” (p. 23). Having excess carrying capacity is a critical condition for democracy, he notes, providing the comparison to submarines and spaceships, which operate at the limit of their capacities and must have strict hierarchical authority structures in place to ensure the limits are not exceeded. “If we want democracy,” Daly continues, “we should not grow up to the limit of carrying capacity – better to leave some slack – some margin of tolerance for the errors that freedom entails” (p. 23). Some critics believe that in practice the measures required to move to a steady state economy are so radical and drastic that only an authoritarian government could implement them, and in a democratic society interest groups would block them (Luban, 1998). These are not really arguments against the alignment between democracy and the steady state economy but are more a reflection of what is wrong with the current system.

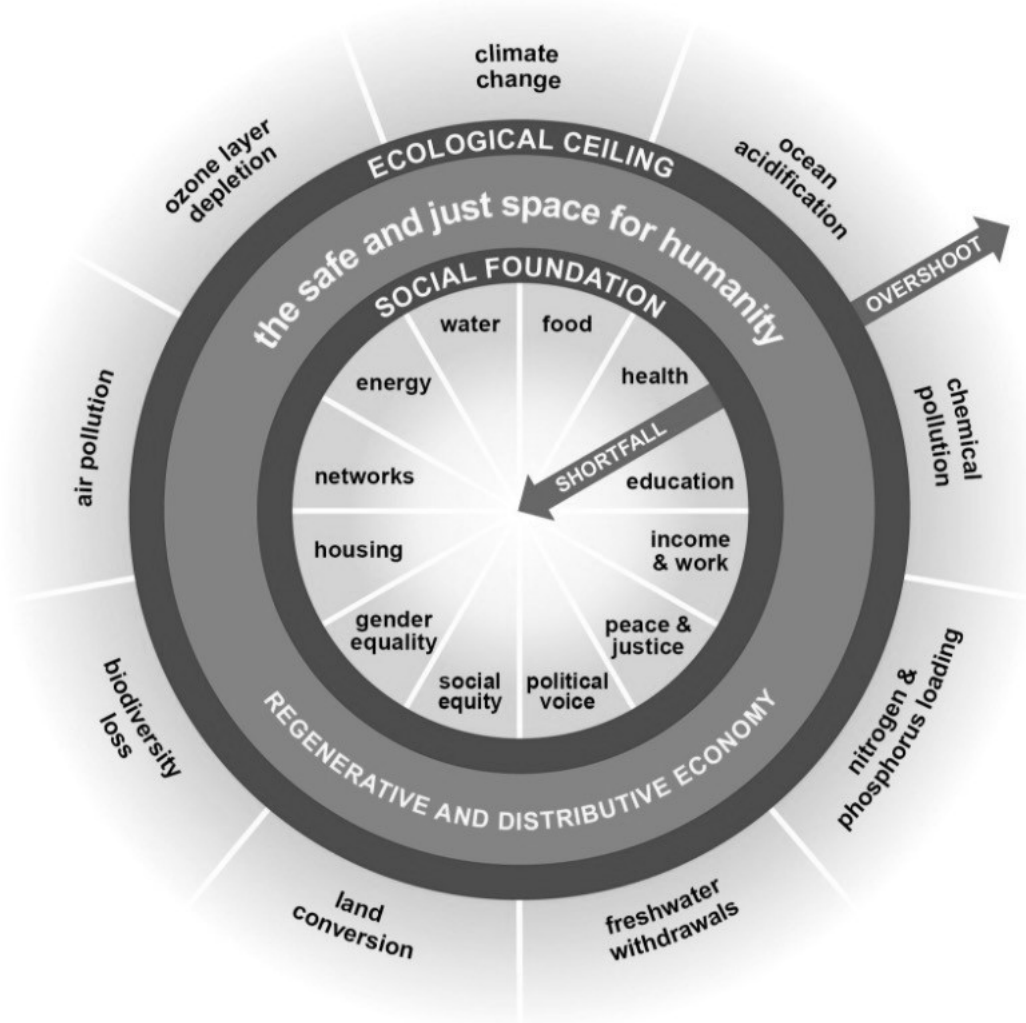
Daly (2018) also argues against a borderless world, noting the importance of boundaries biologically and logically. As he notes, these boundaries – using the analogy of skin – should not be totally impermeable but rather have the right degree of permeability to allow movement while also enabling control. While he is not arguing for a total decentralisation of the economy, he is noting that total centralisation is not an ideal outcome and that a steady state economy would need different barriers in place to function.

In terms of social embeddedness, Booth (1994) notes that “the issue of declining resource flows and ecosystem destruction is ultimately a moral one. To limit such flows today in order to prevent their decline in the future will be primarily of benefit to future generations” (p. 4). Booth suggests that increased constraint in the use of natural resources will not significantly impact those who implement these measures but rather will be more substantive for successive generations, making the steady state economy a morally bound system.

Te ōhanga tōnati Doughnut economy

Doughnut economics was developed by Kate Raworth in 2017, with the metaphoric doughnut representing the ‘safe zone’ in between maintaining social foundations – essentially the Sustainable Development Goals – and avoiding ecological ceilings – a set of planetary boundaries developed by Earth-system scientists. Doughnut economics aims to “create local to global economies that ensure that no one falls short on life’s essentials ... while safeguarding Earth’s life-giving systems” (Raworth, 2017, p. 220). In many respects, the key innovation of doughnut economics is the graphic representation of both social foundations and environmental boundaries in a single striking visualisation, as shown in Figure 8.1. This is not to downplay the contribution, as this graphic provides a powerful and heuristic way of communicating the dilemmas faced. As Acosta (2022) writes, “In a single graphic, DE [doughnut economics] users can easily distinguish if citizens are short in crucial human needs or exceeding the planetary boundaries in a particular area or context” (p. 2). Czech (2021) is even more complementary: “People brainstorm and come up with brilliant ideas, some more than others (must I add, in terms of the people *and* the ideas). Kate Raworth came up with a winner in the doughnut” (para. 4).

Figure 8.1. Doughnut economic model (reprinted from Raworth, 2017, p. 38).



Doughnut economics is built on a set of seven insights about how the field of economics needs to change:

- shifting from GDP to a more holistic bottom line;
- re-embedding the economy in society;
- changing from the belief in 'rational' calculating humans to a more emotional and reciprocal view of human nature;
- understanding economics is not like a physical science;
- putting distribution at the core of an economy;
- ensuring an economy is regenerative by design; and
- becoming agnostic about growth (Raworth, 2017).

As Brian Czech (2021), the head of the Center for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy, argues, the main problem with the doughnut is the last insight about being agnostic towards growth. He believes that to maintain the sweet spot in

between the social foundations and environmental boundaries requires a steady state approach to growth. As Turner and Wills (2022) explain, doughnut economics:

may offer the possibility for new approaches because of its integration of social and environmental domains that promotes a holistic rather than siloed approach; incorporation of the ecological imperative of staying within planetary boundaries and social imperative of meeting human needs; and underpinning vision that challenges the dominant paradigm of economic growth. (p. 1)

Te ōhanga whakatōnui Generative economy

The concept of the generative economy comes from Marjorie Kelly (2012), which she defines as “a living economy that is designed to generate the conditions for life to thrive, an economy with a built-in tendency to be socially fair and ecologically sustainable” (p. 20). It is built on the belief that ownership is at the heart of both the problems that beset the world and the solutions that might mitigate and solve these. This was built on many years of experience studying alternative models of ownership, including employee ownership, tribal ownership, municipal ownership, commons ownership, social enterprise, and community land trusts. These “emerging ownership models are new members of an older family of designs that include cooperatives, employee-owned firms, and government-sponsored enterprises” (p. 18). “[Extractive corporate] ownership”, Kelly explains, “is the gravitational field that holds our economy in its orbit, locking us all into behaviors that lead to financial excess and ecological overshoot” (p. 18).

At the heart of the generative economy is a redefinition of ownership and governance structures. Generative enterprises have five key qualities:

- **Living purpose:** At the core of a generative enterprise lies its living purpose – that is, adopting a mission beyond financial returns, that of being of service to the community. This is in contrast to the extractive financial purpose of maximising profits.
- **Rooted membership:** Rooted membership is ownership in living hands – that is, the hands of stakeholders closely related to the workings of the enterprise, rather than absent members disconnected from the life of the enterprise. In contrast, corporations today have absentee membership, with owners disconnected from the life of the enterprise.
- **Mission-controlled governance:** In a generative enterprise, governing control is kept in the hands of those concerned with its mission. They govern with a long-term view, ensuring the company’s legacy and mission are not for sale with new rounds of owners or managers. Extractive

ownership involves governance by markets, with control by capital markets on autopilot.

- **Stakeholder finance:** A generative finance design implies re-rooting capital in human hands rather than distant investors. Extractive investments involve casino finance, where capital is the master.
- **Ethical networks:** Ethical networks represent a design pattern outside the company itself; they are made up of the social and ecological communities that the firm belongs to. In contrast, extractive enterprises have commodity networks, where goods are traded based solely on price (Preluca, 2021).

The generative economy also emphasises regenerative practices – particularly those that restore ecosystems and communities (Kelly, 2012). In agriculture, for instance, regenerative farming techniques not only produce food but also improve soil health, increase biodiversity, and sequester carbon. These practices exemplify how economic activity can be designed to give back more than it takes. Another key feature of the generative economy is its attention to systemic interdependence. The model moves beyond linear thinking to embrace circular and networked approaches, emphasising reuse, recycling, and waste minimisation. Thus, the generative economy is often considered a subset of, or complementary to, circular/regenerative economics.

Te ōhanga angatuatupu Degrowth economy

Degrowth economics has emerged as a critical paradigm in response to the ecological and social limitations of continuous economic growth. Rooted in the belief that the relentless pursuit of growth is inherently unsustainable, degrowth economics advocates for a fundamental shift towards economies that prioritise ecological balance, social equity, and human wellbeing over GDP expansion (Kallis, 2011). Kallis describes it as a “socially sustainable and equitable reduction (and eventually stabilisation) of society’s throughput” (p. 874). This movement critiques the traditional growth model for exacerbating environmental degradation, social inequality, and economic instability, arguing instead for a reduction in material and energy throughput as a pathway to sustainability (Schneider et al., 2010). Van den Bergh (2011, as cited in O’Neill, 2012, p. 221) identifies five main interpretations of degrowth within the literature: “(1) GDP degrowth, (2) consumption degrowth, (3) work-time degrowth, (4) radical degrowth, and (5) physical degrowth”. Kallis et al. (2012) explain that “growth above a level that satisfies basic needs does not improve psychological wellbeing” (p. 172).

With its focus on throughput and stabilisation, the degrowth economy has a lot in common with the steady state economy, with Kallis (2011) referring to the 'de-grown steady state'. However, as Kallis (2011) notes, sustainable degrowth goes further:

First, there is a concern whether the descent to a steady-state can be achieved primarily by economic reforms, such as cap-and-trade mechanisms, the preferred policy instrument in steady-state economics ... Second, beyond investments in natural capital, degrowth opens up the discussion of selective downscaling of man-made capital. It seems intuitive that if as a society we are to stay within ecological limits we will have to do with less high-speed transport infrastructures, space missions for tourists, new airports, or factories producing unnecessary gadgets, faster cars or better televisions. We may still need more renewable energy infrastructures, better social (education, and health) services, more public squares or theatres, and localised organic food production and retailing centres. We need therefore a 'selective degrowth', redistributing resources between public and private consumption and within and between generations ... The third, and most important, extension of the steady-state argument is the recognition that there is a possible incompatibility between foundational institutions of market economies and the goal of degrowth to a steady-state. (p. 875)

Put another way, Kerschner sees the two concepts as complementary. O'Neill (2012) explains Kerschner's argument that "degrowth in the global North provides a way to achieve the goal of a globally equitable steady state economy, by providing the environmental space needed for a certain amount of economic growth in the global South." At its core, degrowth is not merely about reducing economic activity but is an advocacy for a systemic transformation of society's values and goals. Compared to steady state economics, degrowth economics goes beyond economic solutions into making value-based decisions, and even questions whether those same economic solutions can remain in place. In fact, Kallis (2011) argues that despite the core limitation of degrowth – specifically what a post-capitalist institutional framework would look like – the diagnosis that the current capitalist framework is the root of our problems does not change or waiver.

The principles of degrowth are centred around promoting wellbeing, social justice, and ecological resilience. It emphasises the importance of downscaling production and consumption in wealthy nations to achieve global ecological sustainability and social equity (D'Alisa et al., 2015). Degrowth also calls for a reorientation of economic activities to fulfil genuine human needs rather than the accumulation of capital. This involves a shift towards local economies, the redistribution of wealth and resources, and the democratisation of decision-making processes (Kallis et al., 2012).

Strategies for implementing degrowth vary widely and include policies such as work-time reduction, promoting the commons, fostering cooperative and sharing economies, and instituting a universal basic income or maximum income caps (Latouche, 2009). They span everything from the radical “exit from the economy” alternatives (e.g. eco-villages, cohousing and urban squats, consumer-producer cooperatives, permaculture and subsistence organic farming, and alternative non-monetary exchange)” through to “proposals about a different type of associated, multi-level confederal direct democracy” (Kallis, 2011, p. 876).

Kallis (2011) provides a list of concrete policies: shorter working week; universal basic income; redistributive tax; labour policies that discourage productivity in favour of human interaction; tax on international capital transfers; and controlling tax havens. By focusing on reducing wasteful and harmful economic activities, such as those contributing to environmental degradation and social inequities, degrowth seeks to create a more sustainable and equitable economic model. Additionally, degrowth advocates for a cultural shift towards valuing sufficiency, simplicity, and sustainability over consumerism and material excess.

Degrowth represents a profound rethinking of economic priorities, challenging the hegemony of growth as a societal objective. It offers a framework for navigating the ecological and social crises of our time by emphasising a transition to economies that are equitable, sustainable, and capable of ensuring a high quality of life for all. As the impacts of climate change and resource depletion become increasingly evident, degrowth provides a critical lens for reimagining a sustainable future.

Te ōhanga kiritōpū Solidarity economy

The ‘solidarity economy’ was used as an economic organising concept as early as 1937, when Felipe Alaiz advocated for the construction of an *economía solidaria* between worker collectives during the Spanish Civil War (Miller, 2010). The solidarity economy (also often referred to as the social and solidarity economy):

encompasses enterprises, organizations and other entities that are engaged in economic, social, and environmental activities to serve the collective and/or general interest, which are based on the principles of voluntary cooperation and mutual aid, democratic and/or participatory governance, autonomy and independence, and the primacy of people and social purpose over capital in the distribution and use of surpluses and/or profits as well as assets. (International Labour Organization, n.d., para. 2)

Economic solidarity incorporates “cooperation, collective sharing and action, while putting the human being at the centre of economic and social development” (Dacheux & Goujon, 2011, p. 206). Miller (2010) outlines six key values

underpinning a solidarity economy: cooperation and mutuality; individual and collective wellbeing; economic and social justice; ecological health; robust democracy; and diversity and pluralism. These are fairly common across the literature (Marier-Bienvenue et al., 2017; Salustri, 2021). The solidarity economy, Dash (2014) explains:

refers to an umbrella for a loose federation of diverse concepts and practices (alternative money, community currencies, social finance, microfinance, fair trade, self-help groups (SHGs), cooperatives, associations, mutuelles [mutual insurance companies], collectively owned and managed social enterprises, time banks, services de proximité, local exchange trading schemes (LETS) and so on). (p. 6)

Critically, as this extant loose federation suggests, the solidarity economy is a diverse, localised, bottom-up approach with a number of already present components. Miller (2010) explains:

Our task is not to invent a new economic blueprint from scratch and then convince the world to adopt it, but rather to participate together in ongoing work to strengthen, connect and build upon the many economic practices of cooperation and solidarity that already exist. (pp. 25–26)

Solidarity economics also acknowledges that alongside the market other mechanisms of exchange exist, including redistribution and reciprocity (Dacheux & Goujon, 2011). In terms of process, as Miller (2010) explains:

A solidarity economy approach seeks to make existing and emerging alternatives visible and to link them in mutually-supportive ways. The core idea is simple: alternatives are everywhere and our task is to identify them and connect them in ways that build a coherent and powerful social movement for another economy. In this way, solidarity economy is not so much a model of economic organization as it is a process of economic organizing; it is not a vision, but an active process of collective visioning. (p. 28)

He examines the supply chain, from creation to production to exchange to consumption to surplus, seeking to identify existing processes that align with the core values, turning a value chain into a *values chain* (Miller, 2010). In terms of implementation, then, the solidarity economy seeks to identify and connect current practices that fit its core values, building networks between cooperative, democratic, localised sectors of the values chain. Figure 8.2 illustrates this values chain, with examples of strategies, structures, policies, and practices that are useful in informing steps towards Māori wellbeing economies.

Figure 8.2. Solidarity economy values chain (adapted from art.coop, n.d.)



Miller (2010) provides insights for reframing the values chain at every link:

- **Creation:** Ecological creation involves earth processes (e.g. birth, growth, photosynthesis, respiration, geological and chemical transformation, etc.) that are the original points of production and sustain and generate all life and culture. Likewise, cultural creation offers resources such as language, stories, music, ideas, and skills. Generated and transformed over millions of years by collective creativity, imagination, intuition, observation, and experimentation, they are gifts passed down from our ancestors and should be shared and held in common trust.
- **Production:** Structures include worker cooperatives, democratic non-profit organisations, grassroots producer cooperatives, forms of household production, self-employment and self-provision (hunting, fishing, gardening, scavenging and 'do-it-yourself' projects), and family or community care provision.

- **Transfer and exchange:** Forms of solidarity exchange include community currencies, barter networks, fair trade, 'solidarity markets', and the use of sliding-scale pricing. Transfer also occurs through one-directional movements such as progressive/redistributive taxation and Robin Hood-style re-appropriation (known by those whose excessive resources are being appropriated as 'theft'). Gift economies, in which reciprocity is established through giving without expectation of return, are also powerful and widespread means of transferring resources.
- **Consumption or use:** Cooperative structures include consumer cooperatives, housing cooperatives, collective self-provisioning, community-supported agriculture initiatives, and institutions of participatory, democratic municipal and state citizenship (e.g. participatory budgeting, neighbourhood councils). There are also various forms of 'ethical consumption' that animate local, ecological, and fair trade purchasing practices and institutional 'socially responsible' purchasing policies.
- **Surplus allocation:** This includes institutions of solidarity savings financing such as credit unions, cooperative loan funds, rotating savings and credit associations, and gifting and sharing practices, as well as activities of composting and recycling (also forms of investment) that involve the return of material surplus back into the human productive system and the larger life system.

Miller (2010) also emphasises the importance of making connections in a solidarity economy, specifically "developing identities and mutual recognition around shared values" (p. 34). There is "substantial work in building concrete relationships, both social and economic between and among solidarity economy initiatives that embody these values and increase the conditions of possibility for these values to flourish more broadly" (pp. 34–35). This is "the work of building actual economies – developing real and substantial relationships of economic support and exchange throughout networks of solidarity economy actors" (p. 35).

Te ōhanga mō te painga o te katoa Economy for the common good

The economy for the common good (ECG) "emerges out of a holistic worldview and is based on 'sovereign democracy'" (Felber & Hagelberg, 2017, p. 1). The ECG model is an organisational framework created in 2010 in Austria by economics professor and social activist Christian Felber (Talavera & Sanchis, 2020). It has five core goals:

- encourage business decisions that promote human rights, justice, and sustainability;
- transition to an economic system that defines serving the 'common good' as its principal goal;
- shift to a business system that measures success according to values rather than profits;
- set economic legal framework democratically; and
- close the gaps between feeling and thinking, technology and nature, economy and ethics, and science and spirituality (Felber & Hagelberg, 2017).

According to Felber and Hagelberg (2017) this economic model is "being practiced in hundreds of businesses, universities, municipalities, and local chapters across Europe and South America" (p. 1). A study from 2019 noted that 657 businesses adhere to the ECG across 12 European countries, with most of these organisations being small (59% employ up to 10 employees) and often performing economic activities within the service sector (Felber & Hagelberg, 2017). Often it has been encouraged at a local or regional level, where two main changes are expected to occur: "The governments will require Common Good Balances [*sic*] sheets from the participating organisations and regional citizen assemblies will be set up" (Ollé-Espluga et al., 2021, p. 4). The ECG is a part of the 'social economy' movement, which also includes the solidarity economy, but what "sets the ECG apart are the different evolving tools that have been designed to assess and quantify the contribution of organisations to the ECG" (p. 5).

In terms of implementation, it is an applied economic alternative, with the Common Good Balance Sheet providing a robust and applied mechanism for auditing businesses. The ECG seeks to foster change of the value system at the business and political level through a bottom-up process as guided by the balance sheet, which is also referred to as the common good matrix (Ollé-Espluga et al., 2021). The Common Good Matrix 5.0 (Table 8.1) depicts five groups of stakeholders and specifies the cross-values that drive the stakeholders' management (Ejarque & Campos, 2020). To measure the degree of accomplishment, every one of its cells proposes indicators, which provide a useful guide to the practical strategies, structures, policies, and practices that are needed to implement Māori economies of wellbeing.

Table 8.1. The Common Good Matrix 5.0 (reprinted from Ejarque & Campos, 2020, p. 5).

COMMON GOOD MATRIX 5.0

VALUE	HUMAN DIGNITY	SOLIDARITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE	ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	TRANSPARENCY AND CO-DETERMINATION
STAKEHOLDER				
A: SUPPLIERS	A1 Human dignity in the supply chain	A2 Solidarity and social justice in the supply chain	A3 Environmental sustainability in the supply chain	A4 Transparency and co-determination in the supply chain
B: OWNERS, EQUITY- AND FINANCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS	B1 Ethical position in relation to financial resources	B2 Social position in relation to financial resources	B3 Use of funds in relation to social and environmental impacts	B4 Ownership and co-determination
C: EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING CO-WORKING EMPLOYERS	C1 Human dignity in the workplace and working environment	C2 Self-determined working arrangements	C3 Environmentally-friendly behaviour of staff	C4 Co-determination and transparency within the organisation
D: CUSTOMERS AND OTHER COMPANIES	D1 Ethical customer relations	D2 Cooperation and solidarity with other companies	D3 Impact on the environment of the use and disposal of products and services	D4 Customer participation and product transparency
E: SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT	E1 Purpose of products and services and their effects on society	E2 Contribution to the community	E3 Reduction of environmental impact	E4 Social co-determination and transparency

As Ollé-Espluga et al. (2021) explain:

The assessment of an organisation’s contribution to the common good includes both positive aspects (i.e. the goal an organisation is expected to follow) and negative aspects (what it should not do). In the Common Good Matrix, the intersection of every value of the ECG (columns) and every stakeholder (rows) results in 20 criteria/themes to be evaluated. The Common Good Reports need to cover these 20 themes, and the ECG movement offers workbooks and templates for producing such Common Good Reports. These workbooks also include details on how the common good criteria are understood and how organisations should be rated. The assessment itself consists of a qualitative and a quantitative part. (p. 5)

Felber and Hagelberg (2017) notes that the cornerstone of capitalism is the idea of competition between businesses. He argues that cooperation, not competition, is much more effective in terms of motivating workers, and motivated employees lead to innovation and efficiency. Capitalism, Felber and Hagelberg (2017) argue, motivates using fear rather than cooperation. As Felber and Hagelberg (2017) continue, in the ECG:

Competition would not be eliminated. Negative behavior resulting from some types of competition, however, would reflect poorly in a company’s Common Good Balance Sheet. Aggressive behavior against competitors, such as hostile

takeovers, price dumping, advertising via mass media, or enclosure of intellectual property, would reflect negatively on their ethical scorecard and harm their chances of succeeding in the market. The more cooperative their conduct was, and the more helpful they were with customers and competitors – for example, being transparent and sharing know-how, resources, and means of production – the better their common good score would be. The current win-lose paradigm would be replaced by a win-win paradigm. (p. 11)

Te whakapiki ake i te whairawa hapori

Community wealth building

As Dubb (2016) explains, the idea behind community wealth building (CWB) is simple: “People join together through some type of public-, community-, or employee-owned business to meet local needs and thereby regain a measure of local economic democracy and control” (p. 141). It is based on the values of democratisation of wealth, community empowerment, and decentralisation (Dubb, 2016). Guinan and O’Neill (2019) expand on this, explaining it is “a local economic development strategy focused on building collaborative, inclusive, sustainable and democratically controlled local economies” (p. 385). It advocates the de-globalisation of capital by improving how wealth (re)circulates where it is produced (Dennis & Stanley, 2023).

CWB is focused on combining the economic power of both local government and anchor institutions to turn individual citizens into active participants in their economic future (Guinan & O’Neill, 2019). At the heart of CWB is the need to take democracy seriously. As Guinan and O’Neill (2019) state, “If we want to live in democratic societies, then we need to have democratic institutions that allow communities to shape their local economies, and to exert real control over the way in which those local economies develop over time” (p. 386). In particular, there is a need to re-embed the economy in society by taking ownership and control of enterprises at the local level through democratic methods. Alongside the key principle of democracy is equality; the aspiration of CWB is not just that communities take democratic control of their local economies, but that they use that control to shape their economy in a more egalitarian direction. There are a number of ways in which democratic collective ownership might manifest. As Guinan and O’Neill (2019) explain, CWB:

supports democratic collective ownership of the economy through a range of models. These include worker cooperatives, community land trusts, community development financial institutions, so-called ‘anchor’ procurement strategies, municipal and local public enterprise, and – as it is hoped will increasingly become the case – public and community banking. (p. 386)

CWB has no single prescriptive policy set; rather, it should be seen as a set of guiding principles that are adaptable to local circumstances through a range of potential strategies. These principles focus on avoiding extractive models of investment and finance through local, broad-based ownership that recirculates capital locally in a virtuous circle. Several strategies that are commonly found in the literature are:

- **Leveraging existing capital flows** – such as the spending and investment of place-based public and non-profit ‘anchor’ institutions, like local government, universities, hospitals and non-profits;
- **Anchoring these flows** – by designing businesses that can meet the needs of these institutions, and where viable embed those businesses in collective ownership structures;
- **Making procurement progressive** – by adding ethical and social clauses in contracts;
- **Focusing on collective ownership structures** – including socially productive use of land and property through community land trusts and ‘commoning’;
- **Utilising participatory budgeting** – where a proportion of a municipality’s budget is ringfenced and local people collectively decide how it is spent;
- **Creating localised banking** – such as credit unions and local banking; and
- **Offering employee stock ownership plans** – where workers collectively own all or part of the company through a trust, from which they cash out when they retire or leave the firm (Dennis & Stanley, 2023; Dubb, 2016).

Te ōhanga porowhita me te ōhanga whakahaumanu Circular economy and regenerative economy

The AEMs of circular economy and regenerative economy share many similarities and will be covered together here, though it is felt that the regenerative economy has a greater alignment with Māori economies of wellbeing. As Morsetletto (2020) notes, “The most recognized definition of the circular economy is that it is a restorative and regenerative economy” (p. 763). In many ways, a circular economy is a regenerative economy, and vice versa. The concept of the regenerative economy was introduced by Herman Daly back in the 1970s, while the circular economy was introduced in 2012 by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, though the cognitive origins of both can be traced back to Boulding’s 1966 book *The Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth*, where he claimed that circular systems within the

global economy are unavoidable in order to guarantee human life on Earth (Geisendorf & Pietrulla, 2018). The Ellen MacArthur Foundation (n.d.) defines the circular economy as:

a system where materials never become waste and nature is regenerated. In a circular economy, products and materials are kept in circulation through processes like maintenance, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, recycling, and composting. The circular economy tackles climate change and other global challenges, like biodiversity loss, waste, and pollution, by decoupling economic activity from the consumption of finite resources. (para. 1)

In our current economy, we take materials from the Earth, make products from them, and eventually throw them away as waste – the process is linear. In a circular economy, by contrast, we stop waste being produced in the first place. (para. 4)

On the other hand, a regenerative economy goes beyond sustainability by seeking to actively restore and renew natural, social, and economic systems. Rooted in ecological principles, it draws inspiration from how ecosystems function to enhance the vitality and health of systems it interacts with, aiming for an economy that nurtures life and regenerates communities and environments rather than merely sustaining them (Fullerton, 2015). While very similar, there is a key difference: The circular economy focuses on maintaining material use within the system by reusing and recycling, aiming to minimise waste but not necessarily restore or improve ecosystems.

The regenerative economy prioritises the restoration of ecosystems and community wellbeing, actively seeking to repair damage done by human activity, moving beyond sustainability to enhancement. Scharmer (2010) outlines seven requirements to move towards a regenerative economy:

1. **Coordination mechanisms:** Upgrade the economic operating system from one driven by competition and special-interest-group-led legislation ('ego-system awareness') to one that operates from shared seeing and common will (driven by an intentional 'eco-system awareness').
2. **Nature:** Design all production and consumption cycles completely earth-to-earth (without the need for landfills and in co-evolution with the natural ecosystem).
3. **Labour:** Create economic human rights (such as basic income, access to health, education, entrepreneurial opportunity) in order to enable all people to actualize their full creativity for shared wealth generation and social wellbeing.

4. **Capital:** Redesign and redirect money and capital flows to serve all sectors of the economic system (and develop commons-based property rights in support of it).
5. **Technology:** Build communities of creation to generate breakthrough technologies in areas that matter most to societal needs and aspirations.
6. **Leadership:** Reinvent leadership learning to facilitate 'learning from the emerging future' rather than reproducing the patterns of the past.
7. **Public Awareness and Conversation:** Create infrastructure innovations that allow all citizens to become aware of their real power in co-creating the intentional ecosystem economy and in deepening our democracy. (p. 2)

Similarly, Fullerton and Lovins (2009) outline eight principles of a regenerative economy:

1. Right Relationship: It holds the continuation of life sacred and recognizes that the human economy is embedded in human culture and the biosphere.
2. Entrepreneurialism: A Regenerative Economy draws on the innate ability of human beings to innovate and 'create anew' across all sectors of society.
3. Wealth Viewed Holistically: True wealth is defined in terms of the well-being of the 'whole,' achieved through the enhancement of the multiple forms of capital.
4. Shared Prosperity: Wealth is equitably (although not necessarily equally) distributed in the context of an expanded view of true wealth.
5. Real Economy Circularity: The economy strives continually to minimize energy, material, and resource throughput radically at all phases of the production cycle, that products are remanufactured, recycled and composted, with natural outputs are safely returning to the biological world and that minerals and human made substances returning to the industrial cycle [*sic*].
6. 'Edge Effect' Abundance: Creative collaborations increase the possibility of value-adding wealth creation through relationship, exchanges, and resiliency.
7. Resiliency: The whole system develops the long run ability to adapt and learn from shocks; adaptability to change is valued over current brittle concentrations of power and hyper-efficiency.
8. Honors Place: A Regenerative Economy operates to nurture healthy, stable communities and regions, both real and virtual, in a connected mosaic of place-centered economies. (pp. 2–3)

While both these lists incorporate social elements, the second one also reaches further into territory familiar to te ao Māori, particularly the ideas of holistic understandings of value as well as the importance of place-centred economies.

Ngā rautaki pitomata, ngā hanganga, ngā kaupapa here me ngā tikanga

Potential strategies, structures, policies, and practices

A number of different strategies, structures, policies, and practices are mentioned by various AEMs. The following is a synthesis of these, and while the focus is on those that can be directly enacted by Māori economies of wellbeing, some that are beyond its current authority or capacity are also referenced at the end, in part because they are elements that can be indirectly influenced but also because they may be useful in the future. The following is far from exhaustive as the analysis of each of the AEMs only touched on the broader literature of each and much more could be gathered from a deeper analysis.

Governance structures

The role of governance is frequently mentioned in the AEMs, with the majority of references directed at the importance of ensuring all, or at least most, decision making is participatory as this enables stakeholders to meaningfully engage and contribute throughout the design, development, and operational processes. There are many levels at which governance is important, with the overarching governance of whatever entity is overseeing and guiding the development of the wellbeing economy, as well as the governance of the various nodes and networks also requiring the same participatory, inclusive, and transparent nature.

Creating governance systems that are fair, responsive, just, and accountable is a critical component to creating a wellbeing economy. WEAll (2021) notes the role of participation in wellbeing economies as a way of creating a climate of openness, sharing power and delegating to get optimal results, and harnessing collective intelligence. Likewise, the solidarity economy is built on democratic, participatory governance (Miller, 2010).

The generative economy also makes reference to mission-controlled governance, where governing control is kept in the hands of those concerned with the organisation's mission and who have a mandate to govern with a long-term view (Preluca, 2021). This connects with the cooperatives, particularly the worker or multistakeholder cooperatives, where those directly involved with the business are managing and directing it. There is a degree of overlap between participatory governance and mission-controlled governance, though they are not necessarily the

same, with participatory governance having a great degree of possible variation in terms of who gets a say, how they can say it, and what they can say.

The solidarity economy outlines that different entities will have different degrees of participation. While some organisations may weight members' votes, not only to reflect the different degrees of activity of the group's members but also to acknowledge the differences among them in terms of rank and file membership numbers, others will have a less hierarchical structure, and others still will provide fewer comprehensive forms of broad engagement (Fonteneau et al., 2010; Miller, 2010). The solidarity economy outlines two insightful forms of management: self-management and collective management, with the former seeing all members involved in decision making while the latter has increased delegation or specialisation, seeing some representative forms of decision making occurring (Fonteneau et al., 2010).

Business structures

There are many different forms of business structures outlined across the AEMs, though it needs to be emphasised that fundamentally the key here is that they all have a much broader conception of what a 'business' is, with clear emphasis on social, cultural, and environmental objectives being equal to, if not more important than, profit maximisation. The most common business structure in the literature is the cooperative, with four key types of cooperatives outlined:

- consumer cooperatives, owned and operated by the customers who use the goods and services provided;
- producer cooperatives, owned by producers or suppliers of goods and services;
- worker cooperatives, where the employees own and manage the business, with workers engaged in decision making and sharing profits; and
- multistakeholder cooperatives, where a mix of workers, consumers, producers, and community members own the business (Kelly, 2012; Lewis & Conaty, 2012; Miller, 2010).

The multistakeholder (producer–consumer) cooperative, outlined by the steady state economy, shows how these structures can deliver both efficiencies and wellbeing outcomes simultaneously, including reduced costs and emissions by effectively cutting out several links in the supply chain, all facilitated by participatory governance structures and manifested through bottom-up, localised autonomy (Lewis & Conaty, 2012). The generative economy also refers to several different business structures, including:

- cooperatives and benefit corporations, which are for-profit corporate entities whose goals include making a positive impact on society;
- community interest corporations, which are social enterprises; and
- low-profit, limited liability companies, which fuse aspects of for- and non-profit businesses (Kelly, 2012; Preluca, 2021).

The solidarity economy outlines collectively owned and managed social enterprises, which are hybrid organisations that have a primary social purpose but operate in a financially sustainable manner, with a realistic prospect of generating sufficient income to exceed costs and of having a significant proportion of their income from earnings (Fonteneau et al., 2010). They are accountable to their stakeholders and have an appropriate mechanism to ensure accountability to beneficiaries and to measure and demonstrate their social impact. A number of other 'business' structures, in the broadest sense, are outlined earlier in the 'Solidarity economy' section of this chapter, including associations and mutuelles. Community wealth building mentions several different types of business structure – such as community development finance institutions, community development corporations, social enterprises, municipal enterprises, and hybrid enterprises – which provide a range of possible structures for a variety of different types of actors across Māori economies of wellbeing (Dubb, 2016).

Ownership structures

A number of different AEMs reference alternative forms of ownership, or user rights. There is a high degree of overlap between these ownership structures and cooperative business structures. Ownership is at the heart of the generative economy, with Kelly (2012) referencing the concept of rooted membership, where ownership is in the hands of stakeholders closely related to the workings of the enterprise, rather than absent members disconnected from the life of the enterprise. She lists a range of alternative ownership structures, including community land trusts (CLTs), wind guilds, and catch shares, as well as conservation easements, that are all in practice in various places around the world. As she notes, these new forms are joining older ownership structures like cooperatives, employee-owned firms, and government-sponsored enterprises.

One of the most commonly referenced ownership structures is CLT, where individual families own their homes and another entity, such as a community non-profit organisation, owns the land beneath a group of homes. The aim is to separate the two cost elements – the market price of the land and the price of the house itself – helping to make housing more affordable. CLTs are non-profit, offer flexible forms of tenure and ownership, reduce the cost of housing and land leasing, and have participatory governance structures. Another commonly

discussed alternative to ownership is the collaborative consumption models, where rather than owning something outright consumers are encouraged to share, swap, barter, trade, or rent access to products. The common good economy stresses the need to have limitations and conditions placed on all forms of ownership, and also stresses that natural resources should only have user rather than ownership rights (Felber & Hagelberg, 2017).

Leadership

Leadership is identified as important by several AEMs, including the wellbeing economy, circular economy, and regenerative economy. WEAll (2021) emphasises the importance of participatory leadership as a way of creating a climate of openness, sharing power and delegating to get optimal results, and harnessing collective intelligence in wellbeing economies. It also notes that in some cases leadership may be distributed across as many stakeholders as possible, creating a shared buy in. The wellbeing economy literature also emphasises the importance of leadership being participatory, involving empathy and compassion, incorporating long-term vision and responsibility, having an equity and justice orientation, showing resilience and adaptability, involving systemic thinking, and focusing on cultural competence and inclusivity (Fioramonti, 2017; García-Vidal et al., 2024; Morgan et al., 2024; Pitt et al., 2022; Trebeck & Williams, 2022). The circular economy and regenerative economy literature also covers leadership, noting that leaders need to:

- be aware and knowledgeable;
- be focused on translating this awareness into real world outcomes;
- be actively engaged in their own personal journey of inner transformation;
- be focused on regenerating human connections;
- have an eco-systemic vision;
- encourage collaboration; and
- have drive (Aoustin, 2023).

The circular economy and regenerative economy literature notes that there is a need to reinvent leadership by learning from the emerging future rather than reproducing the patterns of the past (Aoustin, 2023).

Alternative exchange mediums and currencies

Many of the AEMs reference the need for alternative exchange mediums and currencies. The circular and regenerative economic models propose that rather than a singular hegemonic monetary system, there is a need for an ecology of currencies that are tied to energy and are able to not only account for the impacts of money on

the environment but are also able to change the way we think about value. Alves et al. (2022) discuss this 'regenerative money', which goes beyond the environmental footprint of money or its strategically designed goals. This sphere includes the overall design of the system as a whole, its players, flows, relationships, and key assumptions. Rather than focusing on incremental improvements (sphere one), or reconfigurations within the existing regime (sphere two), it seeks to build a different consciousness that informs a radical redesign and re-conceptualisation of the whole (sphere three).

While this is a radical proposition, it is considered useful as it provides an ontological core around which Māori economies of wellbeing can grow, with the use of bottom-up currencies developed locally as a way of re-embedding finance in place. One of these, referenced in by the solidarity economy, is local exchange trading systems (LETS). These are effectively a localised currency, which can only be used in a prescribed area and effectively help keep wealth in that location (Bindewald et al., 2019). Degrowth economy theory, Kallis et al. (2012) note, details the need for new forms of money, including non-debt and regional currencies, as well as the circulation of locally based complementary currencies that keep wealth within the communities.

Time banks are a solution mentioned by the circular economy and the regenerative economy as well as the solidarity economy, functioning as a way of trading skills in a community (Alves et al., 2022; Dash, 2014). A time bank uses time, rather than money, as the measurement tool. Members of a time bank share their skills with other members within the community and are given time credits for the work they do. With credits they gain, each member can 'buy' someone else's time and get the service they need. Time banks build social capital.

Resource management

Resource management is a fundamental component of many AEMs, as they view economics as being environmentally substantiated. The overriding aim of most AEMs regarding resource management is to reduce usage, with the ultimate goal of achieving some form of sustainability or even the restoration or regeneration of ecosystems, as promoted by wellbeing economics, steady state economics, and doughnut economics in particular.

As the Doughnut Economics Action Lab (DEAL, 2020) states, the aim should be to work with and within the cycles of the living world. Key to this is internalising externalities such as toxic pollution, packaging waste or end of-produce-life disposal – that is, taking responsibility for them and embracing different strategies for avoiding, reducing, or paying for harm. Many AEMs reference the need for some form of resource management, with a number indicating the importance of

encouraging circularity, as well as recommending adopting a commons approach to natural resources. Regarding circularity, according to wellbeing economics, this follows three core principles: design out waste and pollution, reduce material and energy throughput, and regenerate natural systems (Fioramonti et al., 2022; WEAll, 2021).

Of course, many of the recommendations also promote the use of frameworks and monitoring to keep track of resource use. Many solutions connect with cap-and-trade systems to promote equitable and efficient resource use as well as the use of incentive structures as a way of taxing 'bads' such as resource depletion and pollution, thus reducing waste. Kallis et al. (2012), discussing degrowth economics, note the need for resource and CO₂ caps as well as extraction limits. Steady state economy literature even details solutions where the producer–consumer cooperative can help reduce resource use by cutting out links of the chain and through coordination and minimisation strategies (Lawn, 2010).

Employees

There are a number of different approaches to the treatment of employees outlined in the AEMs. Wellbeing economy literature notes that wellbeing-oriented businesses view their employees as an asset, rather than a cost, and prioritise dignifying work and ethical work conditions (Iqbal et al., 2019; Kowalski & Loretto, 2017; Lu et al., 2023; Schulte & Vainio, 2010; Tonkin et al., 2018). This means not only providing a decent salary and ensuring health and safety at the workplace, but also giving employees a voice within the company and empowering them to participate in decision making and knowledge sharing. It also has a number of suggestions around employee wellbeing, including flexible work, investing in mental and physical health, fostering purpose and meaning in work, enhancing social capital and workplace relationships, providing workplace autonomy and empowerment, offering fair compensation and security, giving professional development and growth opportunities, and encouraging a workplace culture of gratitude and recognition.

On wellbeing economics, the OECD (Llena-Nozal et al., 2019) outlines a number of policy recommendations for employees, including a short working week, extended parental leave, decent pay, autonomy, home office, and a better work–life balance. The solidarity economy discusses self-management, which in some cases sees workers accorded the right to participate in the governance and management of the organisation by voting on issues requiring decisions (Fonteneau et al., 2010). This connects with governance structures, but has a significant implication for the wellbeing of workers.

The economy for the common good AEM has four goals for employees: human dignity in the workplace, self-determined working arrangement, environmentally

friendly behaviour of staff, and co-determination and transparency in the organisation (Ollé-Espluga et al., 2021). In community wealth building, the employee stock ownership plan is outlined as a powerful way of growing the wellbeing of employees (Dennis & Stanley, 2023; Dubb, 2016).

Degrowth highlights employee approaches, including new social security guarantees and work sharing to reduce work hours, as well as a shorter working week and labour policies that discourage productivity in favour of human interaction (Kallis et al., 2012).

Connecting with both business and ownership structures, the generative economy literature recommends raising capital from workers as a way of making more positive connections and keeping interests and shareholders aligned (Kelly, 2012).

The circular economy and the regenerative economy encourage the creation of economic human rights (such as basic income and access to health, education, and entrepreneurial opportunity) in order to enable all people to actualise their full creativity for shared wealth generation and social wellbeing (Scharmer, 2010). Labour reforms are also referenced, though they are outside the power of Māori economies of wellbeing, in terms of legislative changes. Still, this connects with the step where the understanding of what an economy is needs to be expanded, and while this cannot be directly changed by whānau or Māori authorities, they can both take influence from this and lobby to change the laws. Here the need is to have an all-encompassing definition of work that includes not only formal economic activities but also a variety of wellbeing-enhancing services rendered to society. This could be connected to the concept of different exchange mechanisms and currencies, where the value of these broader forms of labour might be captured.

Frameworks

Developing a framework, or an overarching theoretical and operational map that provides guidance and insight into the scope and direction of a wellbeing economy, is critical according to many of the AEMs. The framework needs to be holistic in its orientation – it must seek to capture the depth and breadth of what a wellbeing economy means, in terms of not only what might be considered the material-epistemological scope and direction but also the underpinning metaphysical and ontological purpose and grounding (Spence et al., 2011). That said, as many different AEMs note, including the solidarity economy, this should not be a monolithic and totalising tool but rather a flexible armature that enables local variation and bottom-up innovation (Miller, 2010).

The framework is essential but should not be hegemonising in its operation. There are, of course, many frameworks already developed, and while using an 'off-the-shelf' framework is not advised, these can be built on, with a particular focus on

finding successful frameworks that have reliable indicators and metrics. The Common Good Matrix provides an interesting framework with indicators that shows how Māori economies of wellbeing could be monitored and measured (Ejarque & Campos, 2020).

Monitoring, indicators, and dashboard

Monitoring a number of indicators is frequently highlighted as an important process of building a wellbeing economy. As emphasised by several AEMs, key to this is to measure progress more holistically. Just as with the framework from which these indicators should be derived, however, it is also vital that these are not viewed to be a complete, accurate, or singular insight into wellbeing but rather are used as one of many tools to guide development. There will be a sizeable gap to bridge between the wellbeing indicators and identifying or revising the solutions needed, so the dashboard should be complemented by other mechanisms such as feedback and knowledge-sharing capacities.

As the OECD (Llena-Nozal et al., 2019) notes on wellbeing economics, the dashboard of indicators can be used to guide decision making, helping to expand the focus from the economic domain to incorporate social, cultural, and environmental domains as well. As noted by some working on doughnut economics, there needs to be consideration between global, national, and local indicators as these will all play different roles (Hausdorf & Timm, 2023; Turner & Wills, 2022). It is vital not to let the global or even national indicators dominate. For the nodes, these measures might be more specific and tailored to their business and location, while for the networks and broader project they will need to have nested levels of indicators.

Strategic planning

While much emphasis is made on the use of monitoring and indicators across the wellbeing literature and in some AEMs, probably just as important but not as often mentioned is the need for long-term strategic planning. The OECD (Llena-Nozal et al., 2019) notes that wellbeing economy frameworks should be used to guide strategic development planning and vision setting. Similarly, WEAll (2021) discusses the importance of vision. Māori economies of wellbeing need to be iterative and monitored and inspired by an overarching yet flexible vision. They also need to be guided by strategic planning. This is where specific priorities for progress in the medium and long term are discussed and developed. The strategic planning should be conducted, or at least facilitated, by the central project authority, though it also needs the input of the broader stakeholders. Whether the strategic planning comes with specific metrics and indicators, or benchmarks and goals, is up to the broader project, but some degree of monitoring, measurement, and targeting is recommended.

Finance

Virtually all the AEMs reference some form of alternative finance. The solidarity economy explains the way mainstream finance functions is deleterious to long-term investment, and thus it is vital for a wellbeing-oriented operation to be able to access non-mainstream forms of finance. Miller (2010) frames finance as 'surplus allocation' in the solidarity economy, noting that as well as institutions of solidarity savings and financing (such as credit unions, cooperative loan funds, and rotating savings and credit associations) he includes activities such as composting and recycling (also forms of investment) that involve the return of material surplus back into the human productive system and the larger life system. The steady state economy suggests interest-free lending, providing the example of a cooperative bank that is consumer owned and democratically governed, with loans underwritten by the collective members' savings, only charging fees rather than interest (Lewis & Conaty, 2012).

There are, then, strong connections between finance and business structures and governance, with the cooperative and participatory governance empowering better finance outcomes. The generative economy notes the very similar idea of stakeholder finance, where labour employs capital, rather than the other way round (i.e. raising capital from the community or from people who are aligned with the mission of the firm) (Kelly, 2012). Kelly (2012), writing from a generative economy perspective, also lists community development financial institutions as another alternative finance option. Other similar solutions offered are credit unions, microfinance, social finance, cooperative loan funds, and rotating savings and credit associations (Kelly, 2012; Lewis & Conaty, 2012; Miller, 2010).

Budgeting, expenditure, and procurement

The need to ensure that wellbeing is at the core of budgeting, expenditure, and procurement decision making and processes is stressed in several AEMs. Of course, these are generally referring to the national or municipal budget, which is only indirectly relevant to this project. However, the same insights can be applied to a range of other stakeholders, including the various whānau nodes, but particularly the various Māori authorities involved in Māori economies of wellbeing.

With regard to the national budget, there are opportunities here, in that there is the possibility for Māori to lobby or otherwise influence the government to dedicate certain expenditure to wellbeing-oriented or adjacent projects, but also for this to be a deeper focus that seeks to capture some of the expenditure that comes with the devolution and decentralisation that is characteristic of neoliberal governance. Either way, wellbeing needs to be placed at the core of all budgeting and expenditure decision making, whether this is internal decisions made at node, network, or

anchor organisation level or whether it is external decisions made by local and central government (Fioramonti et al., 2022; Llana-Nozal et al., 2019).

Key to this is ensuring that this is guided by the core vision informing the wellbeing endeavour, informed by the framework as well as the indicators. As the OECD (Llana-Nozal et al., 2019) notes, this includes monitoring a dashboard of wellbeing indicators as a way of framing (*ex ante*) budget discussions, and as a way of complementing the standard economic and fiscal reporting that typically accompanies a budget. Incorporating wellbeing into budgeting and expenditure decisions will involve an expansive range of indicators. A number of AEMs also reference procurement. Community wealth building notes the importance of making procurement progressive by adding ethical and social clauses in contracts as well as fragmenting procurement contracts into smaller, more manageable lots for local providers, simplifying procurement documentation, offering training, and better publicising procurement opportunities for local organisations (Guinan & O'Neill, 2019).

Capacity building

Ensuring that those tasked with building a wellbeing economy have the appropriate skills and knowledge is vital. Often in the AEM literature, capacity building focuses on public servants, but obviously it needs to be directed at both the whānau nodes themselves and the various organisations tasked with guiding this process, including Māori authorities and the public sector. Durand and Exton (2019), working for the OECD on wellbeing economics, discuss the importance of capacity building, focusing on the many different types of skills, knowledge, and abilities – as well as other aspects, including infrastructure, networks, and tools – necessary for a wellbeing economy to flourish. The solidarity economy notes that connections based on shared values and strong collaborative relationships can build collective capacity (Miller, 2010). Furthermore, as Miller (2010) notes, the main aim of the social and solidarity economy is to grow networks from the ground up:

This is the construction of 'political economies of scale': groups can link together and scale-up their capacity to engage in transformative activities such as education, knowledge and skill-sharing, the development of solidarity markets, the provision of services, financing, and policy advocacy and governance change. (p. 35)

Capacity building should be informed by the local context scan conducted during development. Capacity building can be directed not only where deficits are identified but also as a way of facilitating and amplifying the positive attributes already in existence.

Business strategies and models

Many different AEMs stress the need for business strategies and models that focus on wellbeing, or broader social, cultural, and environmental outcomes, as well as building networks of like-minded operations, and collapsing the divide between producer and consumer. At the core, as WEAll (2021) outlines, businesses need to shift from a profit-maximisation focus to being driven by purpose. They need to develop a long-term mindset, focusing on long-term sustainability by considering multiple factors. They also need to view their employees as assets rather than costs, prioritising ethical work conditions and fair pay. They need to emphasise circular production where possible, internalise externalities, localise production, operate in a transparent and accountable manner, and embrace diversity. WEAll (2020) also notes that wellbeing-oriented businesses will encourage corporate culture with collective values, that they will have dignity and fairness for all stakeholders at the heart of their model, that nature will be considered throughout decision making and operations, and that they will be participatory. WEAll (2021) recommends building products that last, creating space for innovation, offering services rather than products – even if the services are built on a product – and focusing on circularity.

More specifically, Fioramonti et al. (2022) note the importance of innovative product design, which includes modular product design that enables part replacement; a focus on end-of-life design; waste-as-a-resource business models; and collaborative consumption models that focus on sharing, swapping, bartering, trading, or renting access to products rather than owning them. DEAL (2020) stresses the importance of businesses assessing their purpose and focusing on the broader outcomes, and of making and joining multiple networks with different stakeholders to help deliver these outcomes. Likewise, the generative economy focuses on the importance of businesses having a living purpose, which means adopting a mission beyond financial returns – that of being of service to the community – as well as the need for companies to build ethical networks that are made up of social and ecological communities the firm operates in (Kelly, 2012).

The importance of collapsing the divide between producer and consumer is a common theme in the AEMs, with many referring to this as 'prosumerism' (Fioramonti et al., 2019). A wellbeing economy needs to look at ways it can turn consumers into producers, with a focus on certain key domains such as electricity generation, transportation, food production, and 3D printing. This move to prosumerism is not a universal strategy; rather, it needs to focus on those areas that deliver the best return on investment. Prosumerism is a more flexible view of the traditional division of production and consumption, with the aim of fostering the diffusion of low-impact lifestyles because it reduces waste, transport, and many other inefficiencies.

Networks

A number of AEMs also note the benefits of acting in concert with other like-minded businesses. Proponents of the generative economy recommend building ethical networks, which represent a design pattern outside the company itself and are made up of the social and ecological communities that the firm belongs to. Solidarity economy experts note the utility that large networks of solidarity organisations gain through using their collective resources across realms such as insurance, financial services, legal services, communications and facilitation, technical support, and research and development (Miller, 2010). Networks create 'external economies', enabling aggregations of the financial power of many small enterprises into networks that can leverage economic power at scales of efficiency similar to that of larger companies.

The community wealth building AEM focuses on building local networks of businesses working with other stakeholders to keep capital in the region and boost equality of outcome (Dubb, 2016; Guinan & O'Neill, 2019). Similarly, the economy for the common good AEM emphasises the need for cooperation between businesses, with this being a central component of the Common Good Balance Sheet. The aim is to create a mutually beneficial rather than zero-sum situation (Felber & Hagelberg, 2017). As Talavera and Sanchis (2020) show, the Common Good Matrix can be used to guide the creation of strategic alliances across the supply chain as well as within the business.

Ngā whakaaro whakatepe Concluding thoughts

These various solutions provide some insights into critical strategies, structures, policies, and practices that have been utilised by the AEMs; however, it is important that these are contextualised to ensure they align with te ao Māori, the traditional economic kaupapa, and the current institutional framework of Aotearoa New Zealand. While many already fit within these structures, there are some that could be seen as problematic. For example, alternative currencies offer a vast array of possibilities, and while many could fit with te ao Māori, some may not, and likewise, some may not even be legal in Aotearoa, or only legal in ways that incur significant costs.

Each of these strategies, structures, policies, and practices needs to be considered on its own merits, and needs to be fleshed out with further research into the possible negative potentials as well as positive benefits. Take the interest-free lending. The borrowers are the same people as the savers, and so interest-free lending works both ways: zero interest on savings and zero interest on borrowing. This is a special case, however, and it cannot be generalised to argue for interest-free lending more broadly where the borrowers and lenders are different people as

this policy could fuel lending to privileged borrowers for speculative land purchases. Nevertheless, these types of solutions are worth mentioning as they do have potential, but they also have risk.

Ngā tohutoro

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Upoko 9: Ngā ariā whatu ōhanga

Chapter 9: Economic networking theories

– Matthew Rout

The alternative economic models can be seen as providing general steps required for developing Māori economies of wellbeing as well as specific structures, strategies, policies, and processes needed to bring this economy to fruition. One area that needs more attention is the creation of networks based on whakapapa (genealogy) and kaupapa (principles/beliefs), as these are understood as critical to ensuring resilience and mana (prestige, authority) for Māori economies of wellbeing, as detailed earlier. They are also viewed as a foundational element of traditional Māori economies of wellbeing. While covered in brief by some of the alternative economic models, nothing of significance on network creation was found, and this, combined with the awareness of what are being referred to here as 'economic networking theories', it was felt a deep dive into these theories would be useful.

To be clear, the economic networking theories examined here are not necessarily focused on the 'network of economics' or 'network economics'.⁴ Rather, these economic networking theories have been gathered together because they describe ways in which unorthodox, decentralised, non-hierarchical types of networks develop.

The theories examined in this chapter are:

- decentralisation and regional/local economic development;
- community development, community action, and community economic development;
- collaboration;
- clusters and value chains;
- communities of practice;

⁴ 'Network of economics' is a discipline within economics and is primarily concerned with the understanding of economic phenomena by using network concepts and the tools of network science. 'Network economics' refers to business economics that benefit from the network effect, when the value of a good or service increases when other customers buy the same good or service or when improvement results from competition and networking within an industry.

- distributed economies; and
- diverse economies.

Aside from clusters and value chains, which are part of the broader economic orthodoxy but were included because of their insights, the rest of these theories are very much unorthodox, decentralised, non-hierarchical approaches to economics, aligning them well with future Māori economies of wellbeing. None of these are labelled 'economic networking theories', and in some cases they are not really focused on building a network at all, such as diverse economies, but nevertheless they provide useful insights into how whānau nodes, and broader stakeholders, might go about building whakapapa (and kaupapa) networks. However, before outlining these economic networking theories, it is useful to describe what might be called the original networking theory of te ao Māori (the Māori worldview) – whakapapa – and some of the core ways in which it shapes and informs te ao Māori as these presuppositions will be used to evaluate the various insights gained from the economic networking theories.

Whakapapa

Whakapapa has been detailed earlier, but a quick overview here is useful. While often translated as genealogy, it is one of the most foundational elements of te ao Māori, one that helps explain the core conceptualisations of the worldview: holistic, cyclical, relational, caring, balanced, and contextual. Whakapapa, according to Salmon (1991, as cited in Roberts, 2013), is "the central principle that ordered the universe" (p. 106). It outlines a shared genealogy that connects all animate and inanimate, as well as known and unknown, phenomena across the terrestrial and spiritual worlds (Taonui, 2011). For Māori, everything in existence is understood to be part of the same family (Kawharu, 2000). This shared ancestry is traced back to the atua, which is usually translated as 'god' or 'deity'. However, atua are best understood as "the progenitors and personifications of all known phenomena, both living and non-living" (Roberts et al., 2004, p. 3). Whakapapa not only looks back to the past, but also looks forward, binding a person to future generations, as well as past ones. Everything within the cosmos is ordered in both linear (descent-time) and lateral (kinship-space) layers (Kawharu, 2000).

Whakapapa identifies and classifies everything across time and space; it is a system of categorisation and comparison (Te Rito, 2007). Whakapapa is a 'taxonomic framework', as it is used to identify and classify (Roberts, 2013; Roberts et al., 2004; Taonui, 2011). Whakapapa provides a map of all nature as well as the relationships between and within the natural world, allowing Māori to see themselves as existing in a web of kinship. Whakapapa is the key cognitive tool for exploring and critically analysing new phenomena. It is "an analytical tool used to understand phenomena and their connections and relationships to other

phenomena, locating phenomena in space and time” (Shearer, 2018, p. 17). As Roberts (2012) explains:

In common with other oral societies, New Zealand Maori constructed mental maps by means of which they made sense of their phenomenological world. Their cognitive template, called whakapapa, consists of a genealogical framework upon which spiritual, spatial, temporal and biophysical information about a particular place is located. (p. 741)

Whakapapa has a clear analogue in phylogeny and taxonomy, and can be seen to express the shared DNA of all living things in a narrative form. Within this taxonomic framework, as Sadler (2007) explains:

a Rangahau approach is one of searching for connectiveness, Whanaungatanga looking for relationships that connect all phenomena whether animate or inanimate. Identifying its roots, finding out how it came into existence. Through this process it became much more palatable for Māori to be reconciled to and become one with all phenomena that they came in contact with. (p. 36)

The insights and information Māori gain by interpreting reality via whakapapa is generally codified in oral forms. Whakapapa also has a motivational element. Atua are both the personifications and the guardians of their respective natural realms. Because Māori trace their ancestry back to the atua, and through them to the rest of the natural world, Māori also have a responsibility to care for these realms too. There is also motivation to care for the natural world for the sake of future generations. The view of kinship that emerged out of whakapapa generated obligations on Māori to maintain the wellbeing of people, communities, and nature – to care for their family.

Ngā pūmāramarama ao Māori

Te ao Māori presuppositions

Holistic

Te ao Māori sees humanity as living within a broader non-human family that encompasses everything from moa to mountain to fern and forest, *a part of* rather than *apart from* nature (Reid & Rout, 2018). Furthermore, there is no separation between the material and spiritual worlds for Māori, though the former emerges from and is guided by the latter. Whakapapa is the core mental construct that shows how all phenomena – animals, plants, ecosystems, and their respective atua – across the material and spiritual realms are related. All whakapapa is traced back to the atua, who are best understood as the supernatural primordial ancestors that are both progenitors and personifications of all known phenomena (Roberts, 2013).

Cyclical

Time is understood as cycling continuously from the beginning to an end and back, as symbolised by the spiral. Spiller and Stockdale (2012) explain:

The puna, spring, with its spiral dynamic is a reflection of this movement forward and returning to our core. Māori words bear testimony to the puna – tūpuna refers to the ancestors and mokopuna are the grandchildren. Thus we are each a reflection of our past and our future is a reflection of us – it is the unified flow of creation. (p. 156)

Whakapapa measures time through this constant unfolding and refolding of generations. This cyclical nature of time means the past and future is ever present, and this was and is equally true for their ancestors and progeny, meaning that decision making must be guided by past and future considerations.

Relational

Whakapapa provides a highly sophisticated, relational model of reality that views this non-human family as active subjects (Reid & Rout, 2018). It functions as a taxonomic framework, mapping all of reality, providing important information on the relational dynamics among people as well as the natural world and thus offering practical knowledge about flora, fauna, and ecosystems (Reid & Rout, 2018). Thus, Māori view existence as dynamic, focused on the process of ever-changing interactions, and they see themselves as embedded in a network of mutually shaping and constantly changing relationships.

Caring

Maintaining and growing positive relationships between people and with the broader non-human family are therefore understood as critical (Reid & Rout, 2018). This is encapsulated by the concepts of whanaungatanga and kaitiakitanga, which are the ethics to maintain and grow mutually beneficial relationships with people and nature, respectively (Spiller & Stockdale, 2012). There is then a focus on caring for human and non-human kin. This also generates an ancillary ethic of kotahitanga – the importance of solidarity, unity, and collective actions and outcomes.

Inquisitive

The web of whakapapa, with its ever-changing array of relationships, generates an inquisitive disposition. There is a need to classify and categorise every emergent phenomena in relation to all others (Roberts, 2013). Insight and knowledge come from examining the connections and interactions between phenomena, rather than examining the phenomena in isolation. In te ao Māori the process of knowledge acquisition has three dimensions: te korekore, the realm of potential; te pō, the realm of becoming; and te ao mārama, the realm of being (Rameka, 2021).

Balanced

As everything is connected through whakapapa, Māori believe balance and harmony in these relationships is important (Rout et al., 2021). There is an importance placed on utu – reciprocal exchanges that are intended to create balance and promote harmony. Balance is a guiding principle, but because of the complexities and diversities of relationships it is understood as contingent and fleeting. Thus, even while balance is the goal the reality is usually about dynamic equilibrium. Thus, te ao Māori is also a dynamic cognitive orientation, one focused on the process over the substance, on unfolding interactions instead of the material substances.

Contextual

Finally, the relational focus of whakapapa means that certain locations are central, as they are the nexus of these relationships. Māori share whakapapa with the place in which they were born and live, and with the other human and non-human entities that share that place. This is also a particular emotional connection to the spiritual-material place within which they have unfolded. This is captured in the concept of tūrangawaewae – places where people feel especially empowered and connected and that serve as a foundational place. This external location is a reflection of an inner sense of security and foundation, and the natural features such as mountains and forests to which one can claim a relationship also express this internal sense of foundation.

Ngā ariā tūhonohono ōhanga Economic networking theories

Decentralisation and regional/local economic development

This section will cover decentralisation as well as both regional and local economic development, with the latter two often referred to as a subset of the former (Ascani et al., 2012). These are the most venerable of the various approaches outlined here, providing a good starting point. Generally speaking, decentralisation describes the general approach of shifting political, fiscal, and/or administrative power to lower levels of government, while regional and local development describe the scale or locus of development focus that can occur under decentralisation. The focus on decentralisation as well as regional and local development has been driven by the trend for specific regions and local actors to drive growth for whole countries, often motivated by the somewhat paradoxical forces of globalisation and failures by central governments, particularly in developing countries (Ascani et al., 2012; Scott, 2009).

Decentralisation to regional and local levels has been promoted as an alternative to top-down centralised economic development since the 1960s, emerging as a strategy for the developing world and aimed at overcoming the inefficiencies of

central authorities (Rondinelli, 1981). The benefits of decentralisation and regionalised and localised economies have been touted as increasing public sector efficiency, harnessing localised knowledge and business contacts, creating a more conducive business environment, encouraging job growth, increasing equality and inclusivity, enhancing participation, boosting transparency and accountability, enhancing local distinctiveness and diversity, and, of course, empowering economic development (Ascani et al., 2012; Leach, 2013; Scott, 2009; Tselios et al., 2012).

Geographical proximity is critical to regional and local development, for obvious and less obvious reasons. The obvious reason is that these are both geographical descriptors, but the less obvious reason is that, as Morgan (2001) notes, the tacit knowledge that is so important in commercial outcomes, “being person-embodied and context dependent, is locationally ‘sticky’, a characteristic which helps to explain the clustering of knowledge-intensive activities” (p. 8). Crossing over with Morgan’s tacit knowledge, Ascani et al. (2012) note that while geographical proximity is important, there are four forms of socio-institutional proximity that are equally important:

- cognitive proximity, having similar knowledge bases;
- organisational proximity, having formal arrangements in place;
- social proximity, having socially embedded relations; and
- institutional proximity, operating in the same legal and regulatory system and having similar informal cultural norms and habits.

As Ascani et al. (2012) explain, “Successful innovation and economic performance is facilitated by solid institutional arrangements and common cultural norms which crucially lubricate market mechanisms” (p. 8). Echoing this, British economist Alfred Marshall emphasised the importance of strong communication flows across socially dense economic environments because it “facilitated the exchange and diffusion of knowledge and new ideas through non-market relations that, in turn, supported novel forms of production” (Lagendijk & Oinas, 2017, pp. 2–3). Marshall also identified “(1) positive externalities deriving from specialization and (2) the development of a pool of specialized labour” as critical to localised economic development (Lagendijk & Oinas, 2017, p. 3).

There are a number of guiding principles outlined in the literature intended to facilitate decentralisation as well as regional and local economic development. Several of the most germane are outlined below.

- **Place-based/community planning** develops bottom-up strategies and approaches, ensuring they match with local ambitions and capacities while building community cohesion.

- **Capacity building/local skills development** ensures education and training programmes fit the needs of the local economy so that residents have the skills required by local employers.
- **Smart specialisation** is a place-based, bottom-up approach that focuses on identifying and prioritising key areas or sectors where a region or locality has competitive advantages or potential for growth and targeting resources to develop this potential.
- **Incubators** provide structured mentoring with associated support and services designed to guide businesses through growth phases over many years as well as acting as a way of creating business networks (Ascani et al., 2012; Atherton & Hannon, 2006; Bevilacqua et al., 2019; Rodríguez-Pose & Wilkie, 2017).

Community development

This section combines three different closely related concepts that all centre around the community: community development, community action, and community economic development. These related concepts can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s, emerging as part of the broader cultural milieu of that period. Community development itself is relatively broad, referring to any process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. Community action is described as “a strategy for creating community-based change towards social and environmental policy objectives” (Greenaway & Witten, 2006, p. 143). Community economic development is “economic development led by the community and based on local knowledge and action, with the aim of creating economic opportunities and better social conditions locally” (Leach, 2013, p. 929). Essentially, all are focused on enabling communities to improve themselves across a variety of different domains, particularly social and economic.

The key benefits of community development include localised empowerment, equality, community vitality and sense of community, stakeholder participation, and targeted outcomes (Greenaway & Witten, 2006). There are also a number of guiding principles that can be determined from the literature that align with developing networks:

- **Skilled leadership:** Build a shared vision of a thriving community, focus on relationships, partnerships, and networks, empower local business leaders, involve community in planning.
- **Ecosystem framing:** Identify priorities based on seeing the economy as an ecosystem that needs a balance of sectors, business types, and functioning networks that all interact with each other, and create and

strengthen organisations that help develop or enhance ecosystem connections and outputs.

- **Asset-based community development:** Focus on leveraging the existing assets and strengths of a community, with an emphasis on building strong, mutually beneficial relationships among community members, local institutions, and external stakeholders. Key to this is changing the focus from a negative needs-based one to a positive asset-oriented approach. Mapping the assets is often an important first step.
- **Entrepreneurial development:** Support local entrepreneurs through business incubators, provide access to capital through local banks or microfinance institutions, and offer mentorship and networking opportunities.
- **Alternative finance:** Facilitate or provide microfinance, community loan funds, and cooperative banking systems to address capital constraints that local entrepreneurs often face. These localised financial ecosystems ensure that resources are reinvested in the community.
- **Local workforce development:** Invest in education and vocational training tailored to the needs of the local economy so that residents have the skills required by employers, and develop connections between local employees and employers.
- **Partnerships and collaboration:** Build strong partnerships between public, private, and non-profit sectors, and create and strengthen organisations that help develop supply and demand chains and horizontal social capital (Greenway & Witten, 2006; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; Rahayu & Adi, 2017; Temali, 2002).

Collaboration

Collaboration, often referred to as inter-organisational collaboration, is also a well-aligned concept for this project. Gazley (2016, as cited in Mika et al., 2021) notes that “organisational collaboration describes dynamic relationships involving coordinated activity based on mutual goals” (p. 11). Brown et al. (2018) define it as when “two or more parties interact closely, sharing rules, norms and structures to achieve mutually beneficial and improved outcomes over what is achievable singularly” (p. 174). These “intentional, interorganizational collaboratives (i.e., strategic alliances) articulate the collaborative effort as the primary method for achieving ideal short and/or long-term goals that would not otherwise be attainable as entities working independently” (Gadja, 2004, p. 65). The benefits of collaboration include pooling resources, minimising duplication of effort, and increasing information flow (Gadja, 2004).

Different levels of collaboration can be identified. At the lowest end is cooperation, marked by shared information and mutual support; next is coordination, which has common tasks and compatible goals; followed by collaboration, which involves integrated strategies and collective purpose; and finally, coadunation, where collaborative partners have a unified structure and combined cultures (Gadja, 2004). As Majava et al. (2013) explain, participants in a network of collaborative businesses do not all need to have the same degree of relationship, and it is likely that within a network there will be various levels of integration. Still, there must be a relatively high degree of integration to be considered collaboration, as collaboration “requires durable and pervasive relationships. Risks, resources, responsibilities and rewards (and losses) are shared by partners” (Duragbo, 2016, p. 3751).

Alongside these four levels of integration are four stages of collaborative development: form, storm, norm, and perform (Pugalis & Bentley, 2013). The form stage involves gathering information and growing relationships between members as well as developing shared goals, priorities, practices, and processes. The storm stage sees members address issues “such as the deeper problems that they seek to solve; how they will function collectively, independently and in hybrid ways; and their preferred style of leadership mode” (Pugalis & Bentley, 2013, p. 867). The norm stage sees the collaborative network work towards achieving a common goal and agree on a mutual plan for action. Finally, the perform stage sees the members achieve “relatively settled and durable relationships, shared expectations and collective experience” (Pugalis & Bentley, 2013, p. 867). As Gadja (2004) notes, while these stages are seen as somewhat idealistic by some, at the core of this model “is the accepted principle that *groups will pass through predictable stages prior to effective performance*” (p. 70, emphasis in original).

There are also a number of useful guiding principles that help guide network development in the literature:

- **Clear objectives and shared vision:** Establish goal congruence.
- **Defined roles and responsibilities:** Clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of each organisation.
- **Effective communication:** Create open, transparent, and regular communication channels among all partners.
- **Trust building:** Foster trust among collaborating organisations through reliability, transparency, and consistent communication.
- **Resource sharing:** Agree on a model for sharing resources, including finances, personnel, information, and technology.

- **Cultural compatibility:** Acknowledge and respect the different organisational cultures involved.
- **Joint planning and strategy development:** Develop and align shared strategy.
- **Performance monitoring and evaluation:** Establish metrics and processes for monitoring and evaluating performance.
- **Knowledge sharing and learning:** Encourage information flows between organisations (Brown et al., 2018; Cao & Zhang, 2011; Casey, 2008).

Clusters and value chains

The cluster and value chain concepts, which were developed by Michael Porter in the 1980s, share many similarities. The value chain considers the development of goods or services from input suppliers to market buyers, examining the flow of development with the aim of determining how value can be added (United States Agency for International Development (USAID), 2008). Clusters, on the other hand, can be defined as groups of companies and institutions located in a specific area and linked by interdependencies in providing a related group of goods or services (Ketels & Memedovic, 2008, p. 378). The cluster concept is also somewhat more closely aligned with the project for two reasons: (a) the cluster has a geographic focus that a value chain does not (with links in the chain able to be found nationally and even globally) and (b) the cluster includes stakeholders beyond the commercially focused value chain, including research and education sectors (USAID, 2008).

The benefits of a value chain are that it increases information flow, reduces transaction costs, and aligns and integrates different companies together in ways focused on increasing value (Saunders et al., 2016). According to Walters and Lancaster (2000), the success of a value chain is premised on three key functions: relationship management, competitive advantage, and information communication. Hastings et al. (2016) note that trust, commitment, and transparency are critical for building strong relationships along the chain. Establishing and developing long-term relationships is influenced by variables such as experience, uncertainty, distance (not just geographical but also social, cultural, technical, and time), commitment, and adaptation (Hastings et al., 2016). Communication of information along the chain is also critical, with the integrity, content, and amount vital to the ongoing orientation and function of the value chain (Walters & Lancaster, 2000). There are six steps in creating a value chain: engaging the chain; understanding the market; mapping the flow; identifying opportunities and challenges; implementing strategy; and gathering feedback for improvement (Hastings et al., 2016). Related to these steps are the levels of integration of different chains. Value chains can be categorised by their degree of integration, with fragmented at the lowest end,

followed by cooperative, then coordinated, and finally collaborative at the most integrated end (Saunders et al., 2016).

Clusters can be typed by:

- sector and specific product or service, as well as specialisation at a particular stage of their field's value chain;
- the locational dynamics they are subject to (resource- or population-oriented or free to choose any location); and
- their level of development and integration internally and externally (Ketels, 2003).

The benefits of clusters are greater efficiency, increased innovation, improved access to resources and labour, increased information exchange, business structure resilience, and risk reduction (Ketels, 2003; Porter, 2000). While Ketels and Memedovic (2008) believe most clusters have developed in an ad hoc manner, usually around a specific resource (e.g. fish) or institution (e.g. university), they note they "can be fostered through a mix of networking, collaboration and competition" (p. 378).

The following guiding principles from the cluster and value chain literature are useful here.

- **Leadership:** Leaders need to have vision and entrepreneurial energy, as well as an understanding of how the cluster or chain works.
- **Social infrastructure:** Connections within a cluster or along a chain as well as 'institutions for collaboration' that facilitate collaboration are critical.
- **Factor conditions:** The quality of physical infrastructure, skills and knowledge of stakeholders is critical.
- **Demand conditions:** An understanding of the demand for the product or service being produced is vital, as is how to communicate to the consumer.
- **Employee focus:** Specialised training across the cluster or chain is critical to growth, as is broader human resource development.
- **Wraparound support:** While value chains can form on their own, a cluster will often require support beyond the cluster participants, with regulatory targeting and incentive alignments from local and central and government optimal (Ketels, 2003; Rosenfold, 1997; Wolman & Hincapie, 2015).

Communities of practice

The concept of communities of practice (CoPs) came out of learning theory but has come to be applied to numerous other domains, including doughnut economics (Wenger, 1998). CoPs can be defined as “groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (Wenger, 2011, as cited in Aljuwaiber, 2016, p. 732). CoPs can be seen as an economic networking theory as they focus on the ways in which they “facilitate interpersonal knowledge sharing resulting in improvements in work practices and complementing explicit knowledge-sharing approaches” (Jørgensen et al., 2019, p. 321). In other words, CoPs build networks of knowledge to facilitate, among other things, growth and development within and between businesses. CoPs harness the power of collectives to act “as reservoirs of learning and change” (Gross, 2020, p. 3).

While the initial conceptions of CoPs viewed them as self-organising, more recently as it has expanded others assert that CoPs can be developed on purpose to enhance organisational knowledge sharing and collaboration (Jørgensen et al., 2019). Recent research has found that intentionally developed CoPs impact positively on knowledge sharing and practice development, with key benefits being that past experience is re-used, knowledge is shared among practitioners, and tasks are standardised (Jørgensen et al., 2019).

Gross (2020) uses the concept of CoPs to analyse doughnut economics, noting that:

CoPs include three structural elements: they describe a connected group of people (*community*) who share common ground in terms of a problem, purpose, or value (*domain*) and interact regularly to learn from each other, thereby drawing on and developing common ideas, frameworks, tools, and documents (*practice*). (p. 3)

Wenger (1998, cited in Aljuwaiber, 2016), one of the originators of the concept, provides three similar but slightly different dimensions:

Mutual engagement refers to the extent to which members interact with one another and form their own relationships and culture. *Joint enterprise* refers to the common purpose that binds people together and builds relationships that enable them to work on a specific interest. *Shared repertoire* refers to the continual development of the community, through which members produce sources over time through participation. (p. 732)

Seven principles underpin CoP:

1. Design the community to evolve naturally
2. Invite different levels of participation
3. Open a dialogue between inside and outside perspectives

- 4. Develop both public and private community spaces
- 5. Focus on the value of the community
- 6. Combine familiarity and excitement
- 7. Find and nurture a rhythm for the community. (Gross, 2020, p. 3)

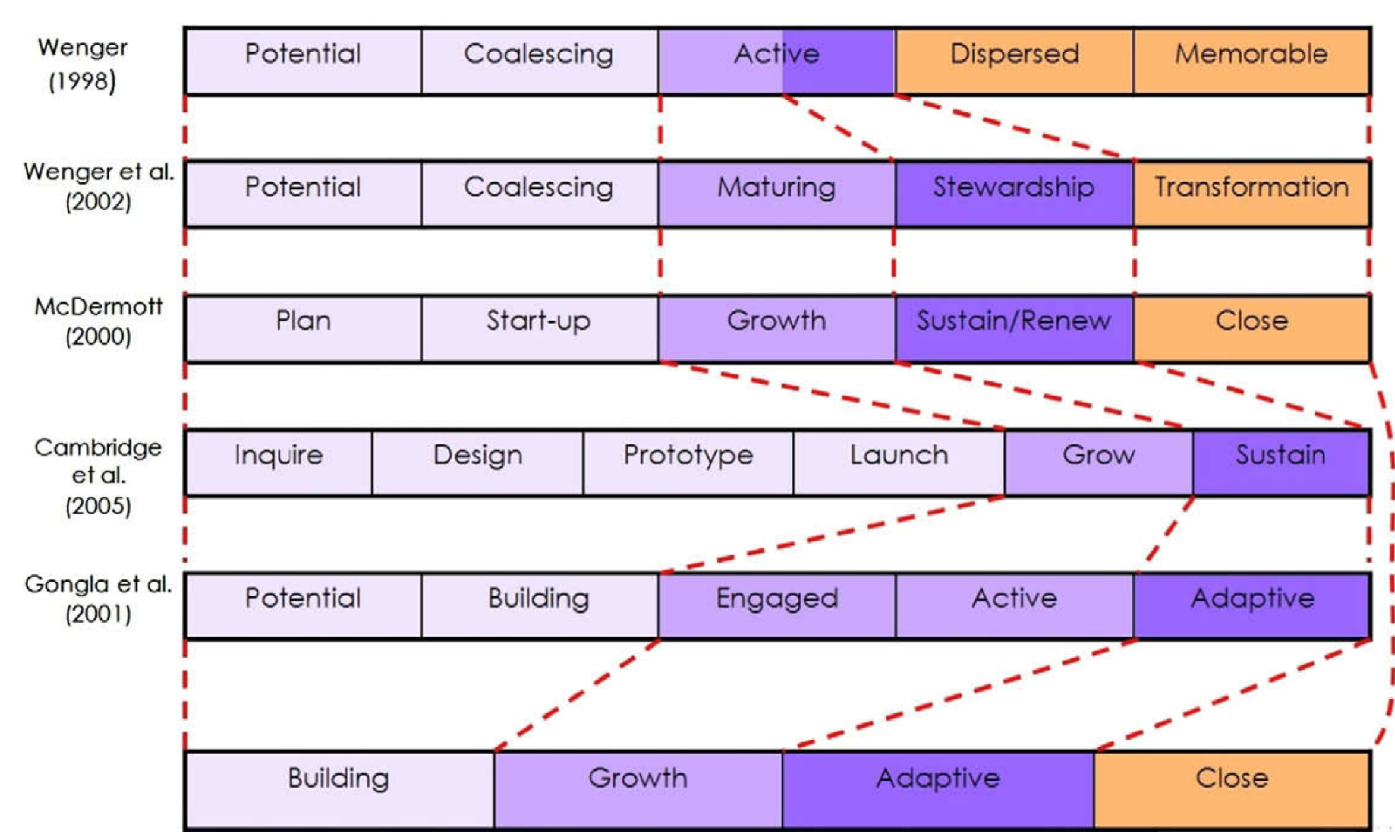
As well as these seven principles, the literature outlines five maturity stages that describe how CoPs form, grow, and evolve over time. There are many different versions with different terms used, a few of which will be outlined here. Commonly used terms include potential, coalescing/building, maturing/engaged, stewardship/active, and transformation/adaptive (Gross, 2020; Jørgensen et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2010). Lee et al. (2010) provide a summary table of the different versions (Table 9.1).

Table 9.1. CoPs development models (reprinted from Lee et al., 2010, p. 2673).

Authors	Development stages					
Wenger (1998)	Potential	Coalescing	Active	Dispersed	Memorable	
Wenger et al. (2002)	Potential	Coalescing	Maturing	Stewardship	Transformation	
Bettoni et al. (2002)	Formation (Potential + Coalescing)	Integration (Maturing + Stewardship)	Transformation			
McDermott (2000)	Plan	Start-up	Growth	Sustain/ renew	Close	
Cambridge et al. (2005)	Inquire	Design	Prototype	Launch	Grow	Sustain
Gongla and Rizzuto (2001)	Potential	Building	Engaged	Active	Adaptive	

They also provide a chart showing how they fit together (Figure 9.1).

Figure 9.1. The CoPs maturity stages model (reprinted from Lee et al., 2010, p. 2674).

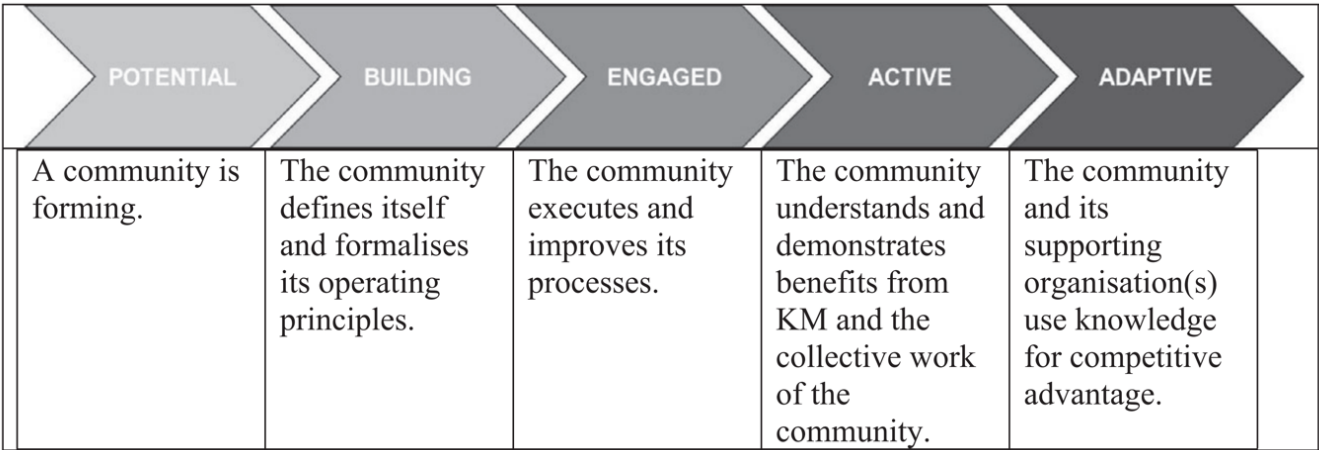


Wenger (1998, as cited in Lee et al., 2010) identifies the five maturity stages as potential, coalescing, active, dispersed, and memorable.

In the potential stage, people face similar situations without the benefit of a shared practice. Typical activities at this stage is [sic] finding each other, and discovering commonalities. In [the] coalescing stage, members come together and recognize their potential. And also, they explore connectedness, define joint enterprise, and negotiate community. In [the] active stage, members engage in developing a practice, engage in joint activities, create artifacts, adapt to changing circumstances, and renew interest, commitment and relationships. And in [the] dispersed stage, members no longer engage very intensely, but the community is still alive as a force and a center of knowledge. They typically keep staying in touch, communicating, holding reunions, and calling for advice. Finally, in [the] memorable stage, the community is no longer central, but people still remember it as a significant part of their identities. They show tendencies to tell stories, preserve artifacts, and collect memorabilia. (Lee et al., 2010, p. 2672)

Gongla and Rizzuto’s (2001) version of the five stages – potential, building, engaged, active, and adapted – is shown in Figure 9.2.

Figure 9.2. Community evolution model definition (reprinted from Jørgensen et al., 2019, p. 323).



Note: KM = knowledge management.

Jørgensen et al. (2019) explain the five stages as follows.

In the potential stage, a nucleus forms comprising individuals with a shared interest, but the individuals have yet to fully realise the commonality. Connection is the primary activity as the individuals locate one another, communicate, and form relationships. In the building stage, a community starts to take shape and define itself in terms of “what the community is going to be and how it is going to build and declare its existence” (Gongla & Rizzuto, 2001, p. 847) and also develops supportive processes and structures. The community members build a common “understanding of what the community is and what it is not, why it is

forming, and how it will function” (Gongla & Rizzuto, 2001, p. 847). In the engaged stage, the community functions with a common purpose. The community grows in size and complexity, and the structure and processes come into action. Access between community members and access to group knowledge are key functions. “The community really begins building its capability to leverage its explicit and tacit knowledge” (Gongla & Rizzuto, 2001, p. 847). In the active stage, a community reflects, analyses and begins to comprehend, define and assess the value for the members and the organisation, and “further extends its membership and builds relationships to other communities.” In this stage, the biggest challenge is to sustain momentum. The community draws on its collective knowledge and collaboratively brings benefits to the organisation. Members define and share the value they bring to the larger organisation. ... In the adaptive stage, the community adjusts continuously to create knowledge and to establish the new structures and processes it needs to leverage its knowledge. The community innovates and generates, creating “new solutions, new offerings, new methods, new processes, and new groups. The community identifies, influences, and even creates trends in its area of expertise” (Gongla & Rizzuto, 2001, p. 847). (Jørgensen et al., 2019, pp. 322–323)

Based on the review and synthesis of the previous five-stage models, Lee et al. (2010) developed a four-stage model defined as a CoP maturity model. Jørgensen et al. (2019) describe the model as follows.

The four stages are: building, growth, adaptive and close. Each stage is linked to several enablers called critical success factors (CSFs) which must be converted into initiatives taken by the organisation for the CoP to move between stages (i.e., increase maturity). The first stage, *building*, is when “members come together and recognize their potential, discovering people who already network around the topic, the strength of those relationships, the problems, and the potential of the community for growth” (Lee et al., 2010, p. 2673). The building stage is linked with three CSFs: creating initiative, organising structure and making a rhythm. In the second stage, *growth*, the “community is growing up in perspectives scale and internal quality” and the “community expands new ideas and perspectives and increases the exposure of members” (Lee et al., 2010, p. 2673). This stage is linked with four CSFs: activating knowledge creation, strengthening individual capacity, consolidating membership and becoming a legitimate influential community. In the third stage, *adaptive*, “Members’ knowledge and best practices are well shared, the knowledge is well adapted in real works, and moreover innovation based on the knowledge is made” (Lee et al., 2010, p. 2674). The adaptive stage is linked with two CSFs: extending human networks and focussing innovation. In the fourth stage, *close*, the CoP can either decline by members leaving, or it can become a social club and become invalid or

transform if the CoP becomes an actual department. (Jørgensen et al., 2019, p. 323)

In a certain respect, Lee et al. have merged the maturity stages from previous models with what they call 'critical success factors' (CSFs), which are also called 'enablers' in the literature. As Jørgensen et al. (2019) explain, each stage is matched with enablers, meaning that CoP strategies need to align with the stage. Jørgensen et al. then note that the enablers have been categorised into behaviours (individual, group, and organisational behaviour), processes (defined roles and activities for people to perform), and technology (the application of science and ICT to fashion tools, practice knowledge arts, and extract data and information). Lee et al. (2010) outline a number of CSFs for the different stages, as shown in Table 9.2.

Table 9.2. Critical success factors (CSFs) and activity check list (reprinted from Lee et al., 2010, p. 2676).

Stages	CSF	Activity check list
Building	Creating initiative	• Establish visions and objectives of the community • Define the domain and engaging issues
	Organizing structure	• Form a core group and leaders • Get appropriate number of members
	Making a rhythm for community	• Create a code for action and membership • Have frequent regular meetings • Engage senior managers
Growth	Activating knowledge creation	• Standardize work process • Build knowledge repository • Make best practices
	Strengthening individual Capacity	• Apply knowledge to real problems • Exchange tacit knowledge
	Consolidating membership	• Make a mentorship program • Have a novice learning program
	Becoming legitimate, Influential community	• Have systematic communication system • Confirm community's role in the organization • Measure the value of the community
Adaptive	Extending human network	• Look for core successors regularly • Have relationships outside the community • Use experts
	Focusing innovation	• Sponsor new communities • Identify new technology • Create Innovative knowledge • Adapt improvements to real work
Close	Declining	• Lose members • Turn into a social club
	Transforming	• Split into distinct communities or merge others • Become institutionalized or actual departments

CoPs provide useful insights into the ways in which knowledge sharing can be harnessed to grow networks.

Distributed economies

Distributed economies can be understood as a more radical and dispersed version of decentralisation where the emphasis is on not just extreme economic localisation but also collapsing the difference between producers and consumers (Johansson et al., 2005). Johansson et al. (2005) describe them as "a vision by which different innovative development strategies can be pursued in different regions. Similar or complementary schemes can be brought together into networks to provide the advantage of scale without the drawbacks of inflexibility" (p. 974). There is, then, some overlap with regional economic development as well as decentralisation. Dos Santos et al. (2021) contrast the concept with decentralisation, explaining that

where a decentralised economy is characterised by small-scale production units that distribute goods and services directly to consumers, a distributed economy:

involves (very) small-scale production units of goods (physical and/or knowledge based artefacts) located near or at the same place of the end-users (who become the producers, i.e. prosumers) that have control over essential activities, whether individuals, entrepreneurs or organizations/institutions. They could be stand-alone or peer-to-peer connected to each other to share various forms of goods and services. (p. 27, emphasis in original)

The concept also has a strong focus on the potential of new technologies – including the internet, the internet of things, artificial intelligence, 3D printing, and drones – and how they might enable distributed economic development (dos Santos et al., 2021). The benefits of distributed economies include increased resilience to economic shocks, more equitable distribution of wealth and resources, more autonomy and resilience, greater innovation and creativity, and reduced environmental impact (Johansson et al., 2005; Lepre & Castillo, 2019). A number of relevant guiding principles can be found in the literature:

- **Decentralised governance:** Distribute decision making among a wide network of participants, rather than relying on centralised authorities.
- **Flexible structure:** Acknowledge where more centralised structures might be more optimal than distributed structures.
- **Blockchain:** Create transparent, secure, and decentralised systems for recording transactions, managing assets, and enforcing contracts.
- **Peer-to-peer networks:** Build peer-to-peer networks that allow individuals and businesses to directly exchange goods, services, and information without intermediaries.
- **Digital platforms:** Enable decentralised marketplaces, crowdfunding, and collaborative consumption, facilitating direct interactions between producers and consumers.
- **Cryptocurrencies:** Use cryptocurrencies for exchange, allowing for secure, borderless transactions outside traditional banking systems.
- **Community ownership:** Encourage community ownership of resources, businesses, and infrastructure, ensuring that economic benefits are distributed more evenly among participants.
- **Collaborative ecosystems:** Build collaborative ecosystems of businesses, consumers, public, and third sector groups that work together.
- **Intersectoral cross-fertilisation:** Focus on generating synergies between different sectors and actors through engagement.

- **Symbiotic relationships:** Encourage both competitive and non-competitive relationships, ensuring all parties benefit (dos Santos et al., 2021; Johansson et al., 2005; Moragues-Faus et al., 2020).

Diverse economies

The concept of diverse economies examines the alternative or non-capitalist economic forms rendered invisible by capitalism. Often referred to as 'hidden' or 'hybrid' economies, they are the production or work that is not 'counted' by the standard economic metrics (Bargh, 2011; Gibson-Graham, 2008). As with distributed economies, there is also a connection between diverse economies and regional development. "Taking a diverse economies frame", Amoamo et al. (2020) explain, "encourages a reimagining of regional economies" (p. 6). At the core of a diverse economies view is the idea of an economy that aligns with forms of social organisation derived from context-specific, socio-historical culturally constituted frameworks (Amoamo et al., 2020).

The diverse economies framework views the economy as being made up of "(1) diverse labor arrangements, (2) multiple forms of governing the use of and access to resources, (3) different forms of enterprises, and (4) diverse markets" (Moragues-Faus et al., 2020, p. 223). Gibson-Graham (2008) provide a range of examples of these alternative or non-capitalist economic transactions (e.g. co-op exchange, barter, gift giving, hunting, gathering, and fishing), labour practices (e.g. in-kind, reciprocal, cooperative, housework, volunteering), and economic organisations (e.g. non-profit, state-owned, communal).

The benefits of the diverse economies approach are that it focuses on social contribution, emphasises diverse types of value creation, is context and location specific, and overcomes the traditional narrow view of production as framed by the capitalist economy (Amoamo et al., 2020). While the concept is largely focused on acknowledging existing diverse economies, rather than creating them, there are several guiding principles that are of use:

- **Look beyond the 'economy':** All labour and exchanges can be considered economic. Recognising and understanding how these interact is critical to mapping diverse economies.
- **Build on context:** Focus on building an economy contextualised by local society, culture, and history.
- **Incentivise diverse labour and exchanges:** Develop a system that rewards labour and exchanges that exist outside the traditional financial realm.

- **Support local small businesses, cooperatives, and non-profits:**
Focus on proximate economic organisations. Grow networks locally.
- **Networking and mentoring:** Provide platforms that foster networking and mentoring among local diverse economies (Amoamo et al., 2020; Gibson-Graham, 2008; Karduri, 2023).

Ngā mātāpono ārahi

Guiding principles

This section seeks to outline a set of guiding principles extracted from the above descriptions of the economic networking theories that can help Māori develop a networked wellbeing economy. As well as describing the guiding principles, the following will also show how they align with the te ao Māori presuppositions outlined earlier in the chapter. Table 9.3 below outlines the alignments between te ao Māori presuppositions and the various economic networking principles that will be detailed in the following section. These alignments are considered useful for ensuring the match between the theories that have been detailed and the foundational guiding and framing role of whakapapa in the Māori world.

Table 9.3. Alignment between te ao Māori presuppositions and economic networking theory principles

Principle	Economic networking theory						
	Decentralisation	Community development	Collaboration	Clusters & value chains	Communities of practice	Distributed economies	Diverse economies
Visionary			YES				
Guided		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	
Localised	YES	YES		YES			YES
Specialised	YES		YES	YES	YES		
Adaptive						YES	
Proximate	YES						
Informational	YES						
Mutualistic		YES	YES	YES		YES	YES
Nurturing	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES		YES
Integrated		YES	YES		YES		YES

Visionary

The developmental path for these networks needs to be visionary. While each network’s vision will be different, depending on the local contexts, there are some commonalities. The vision must outline what networked economies of wellbeing will look like, and do so in a way that generates collective cohesion and goal congruence yet has enough nuance and flexibility to enable variation across the different nodes in the network. It must also be a pragmatic and iterative vision, able to build and grow, and be developed through consensus-focused leadership. From a te ao Māori perspective, the concept of vision fits with the cyclical nature of existence. Vision shows a path into the future, built on insights from the past, motivated by care, and guided by the relational understanding of reality.

Guided

The development of these networks needs to be guided rather than led. This guidance is a collective rather than individual endeavour. There needs to be an emphasis on task and speciality guidance rather than having a single leader. It also needs to be localised to each network as this provides resilience, legitimacy, and diversity of opinion and expertise. Guidance needs to be focused on building relationships, which is its key connection with te ao Māori. This means not only individuals building these relationships but creating institutions and practices that will facilitate this relational development. In keeping with te ao Māori, it must also be built on caring for and nurturing relationships, yet also balanced in its approach.

Localised

The networks must be grounded in their location. It is important that their development is guided by bottom-up strategies and approaches and that these match with local visions and capacities while also building community cohesion. Also, they should build on the assets that are already in place, including natural resources, human capacities, and any other location-specific qualities. The context in which these networks operate must be at the core of their purpose. This aligns with the relational and contextual aspects of te ao Māori.

Specialised

The networks need to be specialised, though this can have several meanings. In one sense, it can mean that they are similar to a chain or cluster, working together to produce a final product or service. Another meaning is that within each node and network each individual has a clear and well-defined role, though there also needs to be some adaptability to this role. However, it can also mean that they are built on an existing advantage or asset that the network or location has and leveraging that existing head start. This requires an understanding of the broader market and context, as well as the local attributes. Here the aspects of te ao Māori are apparent, with the importance of a contextual focus that grows a set of relationships able to produce a specific product or service.

Adaptive

Just as te ao Māori understands experience is dynamic, emerging from ever-changing relationships, these networks need to be adaptive – able to mutate and evolve for both internal and external changing circumstances. This mutability needs to be built into the networks from the outset, with an emphasis on iterative adaptation, driven by ongoing performance monitoring and evaluation. They also need to be open to utilising technology, particularly technology that can enable the vital functions of these networks, including technology that facilitates communication, enables decentralisation, and enhances or unlocks local attributes.

This mirrors the dynamic nature of te ao Māori, though this needs to be tempered with the need to protect and conserve relationships and consider the whole.

Proximate

The concept of proximity is critical to identifying existing networks and creating new ones. Proximity provides a practical set of components to search for and encourage in nodes, from pragmatic elements like operating in similar sectors in close proximity through to more emotive aspects like common work cultures. Networks need to be built on proximity, though this proximity likely needs to involve geographic as well as at least one of cognitive, organisational, social, or institutional proximity. Of course, proximity can be increased, so as well as looking to build networks on existing proximity, focus should also be on how to increase the various forms of proximity as well as which provide the best return on investment. The obvious connections here with te ao Māori is the importance of context, but equally important is the need for balanced relationships in operations.

Informational

The networks need to be information rich, facilitating both communication and education. Communication is core to relationship building, knowledge creation and dissemination, network alignment, and leadership. Education needs to be tied to the needs and requirements of the network and broader area, aligning learning with employer needs. This should be built on the view that the people who make up the nodes and networks are a core asset, and their development is both a means to an end and an end in itself.

The education areas should also align with the localised domains of specialisation, thus ensuring that the skills and knowledge being developed in the nodes will boost the network. The alignment with te ao Māori may not be as obvious here, but the emphasis on information fits well with the relational network of localised, dynamic, and caring interactions, as these relationships are really premised on the mutual exchange of information in that each entity shapes the other, as the context informs these interactions and they in turn build knowledge and empathy.

Mutualistic

The networked economy needs to be viewed as an ecosystem, where diverse actors – including public, private, social/non-profit/third sectors – all work to build mutually beneficial relationships. There still needs to be some degree of competition, but a mutualistic approach has a broader focus on collective outcomes. It also recognises that there are different relationships between each and every actor, that every actor has its own defined role, and that actors evolve and change depending on niche conditions.

Depending on the nodes and networks, a mutualistic network might focus on collapsing the divide between producers and consumers. The mutualistic view is an inherently localised view as well, one that includes not just physical locality but also the cultural and social overlays, and the more specific nature and histories of the actors involved in developing the networks. This aligns with the holistic, relational, and contextual elements of te ao Māori, where the whole network of interactions an entity has within its domain of operations are important.

Nurturing

There needs to be a focus on mentoring and incubating between nodes, creating an ongoing web of support and learning. This covers numerous aspects, from the guidance and encouragement of leaders to the focus on upskilling staff, and from provision of localised alternative finance to the creation of broad support networks of diverse stakeholders. This has clear parallels with the relational and caring elements of te ao Māori. Less clear but just as important, this provides what might be understood as an emphasis on cyclical balance as successive generations care for the following generations. Nurturing provides a tested method of catalysing the development of a network and has a number of different guiding principles as well as strategies and structures that can inform this project, providing concrete insights into how to 'hothouse' relationships between the whānau nodes. Nurturing would need to be specific to the particular businesses involved, able to change over time to not just accommodate changes among ongoing members but also to add new members.

Integrated

A key focus is building stronger networks by increasing integration among different nodes, which strongly aligns with the holistic and relational aspects of te ao Māori as well as the importance of context. While each network will develop in its own particular way, and not every node needs the same degree of connection, the general thrust of this approach is similar.

1. Begin with information sharing and relationship building, with a focus on growing trust and aligning institutions, goals, and priorities.
2. Conduct market analysis and mapping of the broader local context, and identify strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats.
3. Develop a shared vision, common goal, and defined boundaries that are able to inspire and guide.
4. Determine the operational connections between nodes – examine the practices and processes and decide how they could function.
5. Establish and build institutional supports and mentorship that encourage and facilitate collaboration.

Nodes should then be in durable relationships where collective approaches are prioritised and optimal patterns of integrated operation are established.

Ngā whakaaro whakatepe

Concluding thoughts

The various economic networking theories provide insights into how whakapapa and kaupapa networks could be built and strengthened. Not only do these various economic networking theories have a lot in common, but they also align well with the presuppositions of te ao Māori. This is no doubt because of the underlying nature of networks and the fact that the general principles that join and hold these together are similar no matter the context.

That they need some form of shared vision as well as collaborative type of leadership is to be expected, as these provide the pathway and destination, as well as the motivating factors that can encourage and facilitate the journey. Good leadership and sensible planning are vital for most endeavours, and are understood as critical to the development of the networks necessary for Māori economies of wellbeing to grow.

Networks also need to be grounded in their locality, built on the natural, built, human, and social capital that is already in place. Likewise, they need to be built on a range of shared aspects such as values, institutions, and culture, which also aligns with the need for them to be specialised, focused on harnessing the localised advantages towards a specific purpose and outcome, and it also fits with their need to be adaptive, able to handle changing contexts or new possibilities. While no two networks will be the same, it is important that each one is built on some commonalities, though this should also see some complementary aspects as well so that each member of the network is bringing something the others need. The networks will need to be grounded in place but they also need to be able to astutely determine what their main advantages or benefits are across their natural, built, human, and social capital and how these can best be leveraged into a business opportunity.

The networks also need to encourage and facilitate informational flows, which is part of the richer, broader need for them to be mutualistic in all of their interactions. Information and other beneficial aspects need to flow in all directions across the network to maximise outcomes. This will help ensure they are nurturing and integrated as well, which are both vital elements. These networks need to be focused on growing and supporting nodes, on bringing them together in ways that are mutually beneficial.

It should be noted that these are all general suggestions and some networks may need to ignore some of these, depending on their context. Nevertheless, they are

understood as important aspects in creating and growing networks built around whānau nodes. Much more could be gleaned from the economic networking theories, as this chapter has only really scratched the surface of the literature.

Ngā tohutoro

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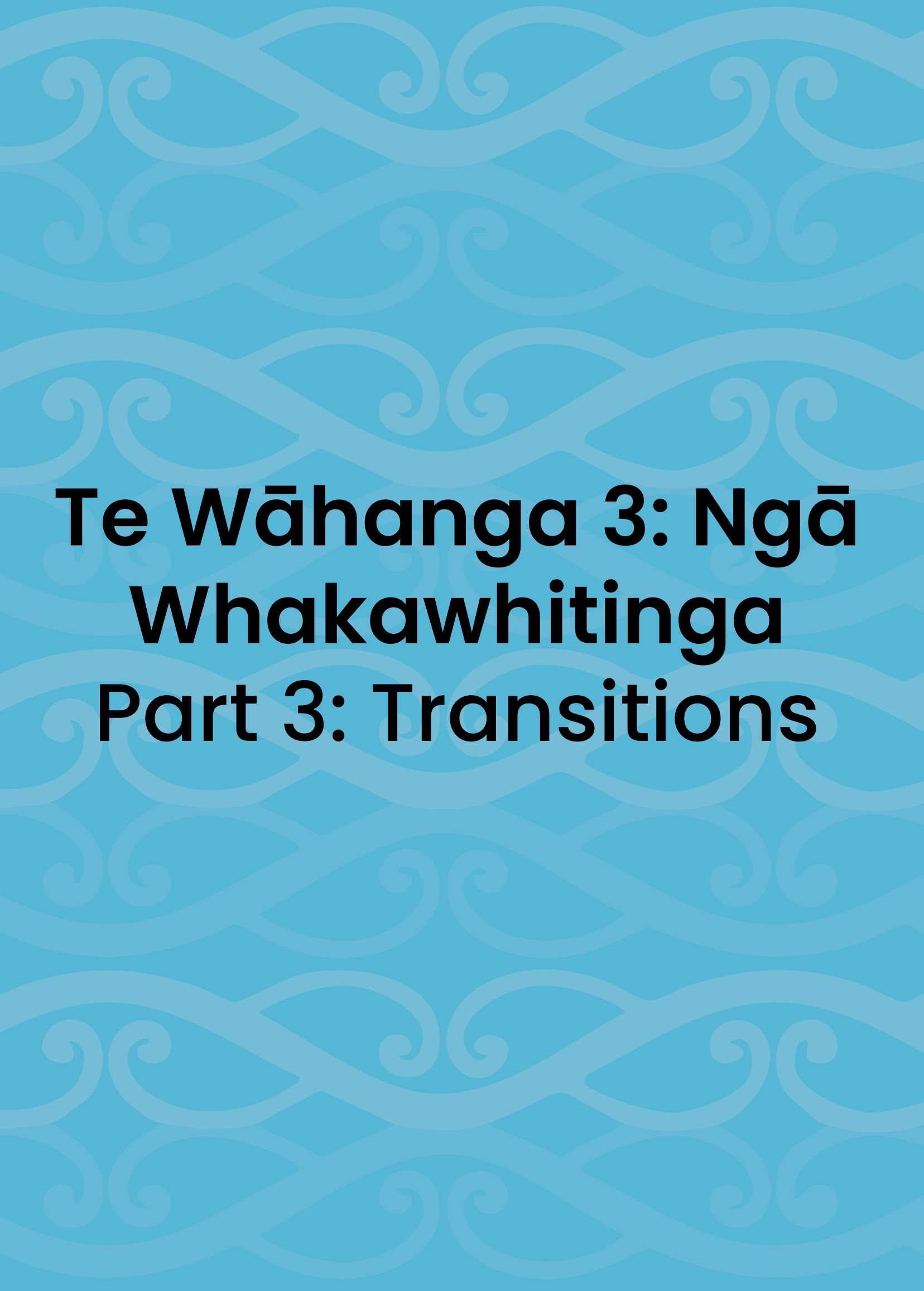
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The background of the slide is a solid light blue color. Overlaid on this background is a repeating pattern of darker blue, stylized wave or scroll motifs. These motifs are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with each motif consisting of a central diamond shape with flowing, curved lines extending from its sides and top/bottom.

Te Wāhanga 3: Ngā Whakawhitinga Part 3: Transitions

Upoko 10: Te whaihua o tētehi papakupu

The value of another dictionary.

– Tāne Karamaina

Te tīmatanga The beginning

This chapter explores the creation and development of *He Rauhi Kupu*, a dictionary of te reo Māori⁵ terminologies related to livelihood and wellbeing, produced as part of the ‘He oranga whānau: mahi ngātahi – Whānau livelihoods within the context of work and Māori economies of wellbeing’ research project. At its heart, this chapter considers the role of te reo Māori not only as a language of cultural identity, but as a tool for business, wellbeing, and future-oriented thinking. It draws from personal experience and professional practice to examine the process of creating a practical, culturally grounded resource that bridges traditional Māori knowledge and modern communication contexts.

The chapter is guided by five core questions:

1. How has my personal and professional journey with te reo Māori shaped the creation of *He Rauhi Kupu*, and why is such a resource needed today?
2. What is the significance of focusing this dictionary on business and wellbeing, and how were its contents sourced and structured?
3. How have revitalisation movements and historical efforts made space for tools like *He Rauhi Kupu*, and what lessons can be drawn from that history?
4. In what ways does te reo Māori enable the development of cognitive frameworks and networks, and how can it shape future economies of wellbeing?
5. How do generational tensions, fluency gaps, and perceptions of authenticity affect the use and reception of new vocabulary in te reo Māori, and what responsibilities do translators and practitioners carry?

⁵ The Māori language.

Each section of the chapter engages with one or more of these questions:

- **Te tūnga** explores my personal and professional positioning within the kaupapa⁶.
- **Te Tūāpapa**, **Te puna kupu**, and **Te āhua o te waihanga** respond to questions about the rationale for *He Rauhi Kupu*, its structure, and the sources it draws on.
- **Te huri** addresses the historical and political context that underpins language revitalisation today.
- **Te anga me te wāhi**, **Te taiao**, and **Te tohe** examine how te reo Māori operates within and across frameworks, networks, and generational dynamics.
- **Te whakatepe** draws these threads together to reflect on the future potential of *He Rauhi Kupu* and te reo Māori more broadly.

Through these questions and section themes, the chapter investigates how te reo Māori can influence not only how we communicate, but how we build relationships, navigate the economy, and sustain intergenerational knowledge. It is situated within wider revitalisation movements and reflects broader issues such as generational fluency gaps, lexical innovation, tokenism, and 'reo privilege.' It explores how the language continues to adapt across domains of use – from whānau⁷ kitchens and kura kaupapa⁸ to legal statutes and media newsrooms – while remaining rooted in mātauranga Māori⁹.

In this chapter, I position myself as both a speaker and practitioner of te reo Māori. My journey, as someone shaped by the dual influences of Māori and Australian heritage, informs the lens through which this project was undertaken. Ultimately, this chapter is an exploration of how a dictionary becomes more than a repository of words – it becomes a site of connection, contention, and possibility.

Te tūnga The standpoint

I grew up in the Australian diaspora and was fortunate to have a father who impressed upon me the importance of knowing how to speak te reo Māori. I self-identify as a highly proficient speaker of te reo and English. I grew up in a family where literacy was highly valued in both spoken and written forms. On my taha

⁶ Initiative, programme, event, medium.

⁷ Extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to a number of people – the primary economic unit of traditional Māori society.

⁸ Primary school operating under Māori custom and using Māori as the medium of instruction.

⁹ Māori knowledge – the body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including the Māori world view and perspectives, Māori creativity and cultural practices.

Māori¹⁰, my nanny and grandfather were a kaikaranga¹¹ and tumu kōrero¹², respectively. Several of their children and their grandchildren have followed in their footsteps. On my taha Ahitereiriana¹³, my grandfather valued education, and my granny is a respected children's author and a former English as a second language (ESL) teacher who used Studio Ghibli's *Porco Rosso* to teach English as a second language.

"I don't understand the reo spoken by Scotty Morrison!"¹⁴ These words ring in my mind as a younger speaker of te reo Māori. From personal experience, they have been said quite acrimoniously to me by several members of my whānau¹⁵ and other people I have met. Usually, the consternation is around the simultaneous use of obscure and brand new words. Phrases such as mārō hītararī¹⁶ and hui taumata¹⁷ raise eyebrows among experienced native speakers of te reo. It's often quickly followed up with "I don't understand the reo spoken by rangatahi¹⁸!" and is often directed at tamariki and mokopuna¹⁹ who speak te reo on TV or radio. However, this could apply to a very wide range of ages. While mainstream understanding of young adults extends from teenagers (13 years old) to adults (up to 40 years old), for a lot of kaumātua²⁰ I've interacted with, rangatahi can refer to any individual younger than them. Their uniting factor is that they are younger than the elder in question and they speak te reo in a way that the kaumātua disagrees with.

Having worked as a language consultant and captioner for *Pūkana* and *Te Karere*, as well as having experience as a freelance captioner and translator, I have come across a multitude of second-language speakers whom those kaumātua I have interacted with may have been referring to. Reflecting on the speech profiles of people I have translated I can make the following generalisations: These 'rangatahi' speakers speak with a mix of obscure or new words, use their own invented slang,

¹⁰ Māori side.

¹¹ Ceremonial caller. The role of the kaikaranga in a whakatau (informal welcome ceremony) or a pōwhiri (formal welcome ceremony) is to create a space by which welcoming rituals and formalities can take place.

¹² Orator.

¹³ Australian side.

¹⁴ For those not in the know, Scotty Morrison is the presenter of the largest Māori news programme in Aotearoa New Zealand, *Te Karere*. From personal experience, Scotty Morrison has become somewhat of a whipping boy by some for the programme's subjectively perceived weaknesses in te reo.

¹⁵ Extended family.

¹⁶ Very stiff.

¹⁷ Summit conference.

¹⁸ Teenager, young people, young adult.

¹⁹ Tamariki and mokopuna mean children and grandchildren, respectively. They have also been loaned into New Zealand English.

²⁰ Elders. From personal experience, kaumātua are often held in high reverence. The term is non-gendered.

and use any dialectal language they've picked up. An example of incorrect usage was spoken by the late Labour Party MP Parekura Horomia in an interview on *Te Karere*, where he said "He huarahi tērā mō ngā rōia e whawhai ai", which was translated in the captions as "That's something the lawyers are going to have to fight" (Morrison & Horomia, 2010, 00:27). There are several things going on here, his response being prompted by a question Scotty Morrison asked him.²¹ The first thing is that the captioned translation does not convey what Horomia said. My own translation and understanding of what was said is "It's an avenue for lawyers so that they can fight". It's hard to determine what Horomia is trying to say when he said "mō ngā rōia e whawhai ai". The e...ai sentence structure is often used to mean 'so that, in order that'.

Returning to the captions that are burnt into the video, it would appear the captioners themselves did not know what Horomia had meant either and so did a very loose translation with a very educated guess. Uncertainty aside, if the captioners are unsure of what Horomia meant because of his grammar and his choice of words, then it's very likely native speakers and highly proficient learners would have also struggled to make sense of what was being said without the captions on the screen.

Keegan et al. (2009) provide valuable data on generational changes in the pronunciation of te reo Māori, highlighting how younger speakers increasingly exhibit features influenced by New Zealand English. For instance, younger speakers demonstrate greater aspiration of plosives (e.g. /p/, /t/, /k/) compared to kaumātua, which can lead to perceptions of a divergence from traditional mita or rhythm. This aligns with observations from the MAONZE (Māori and New Zealand English) project, which found significant shifts in vowel quality and duration, as well as a trend towards diphthong mergers (Keegan et al., 2009). Such changes reflect broader intergenerational tensions in language use, where older speakers may struggle to connect with these modern variations.

These findings underline the importance of recognising te reo Māori as a living language that evolves with its speakers while also striving to maintain its cultural integrity. By understanding these dynamics, language practitioners can better address the concerns of kaumātua while fostering inclusivity for rangatahi who are shaping the future of te reo Māori.

²¹ Morrison said, "Hei tāu kāore he hua o tēnei kawenata ki te iwi Māori, engari, hei tā te mātanga ture a Mai Chen, mā tēnei kawenata e whai mana anō ai te iwi Māori ki te whakapūmau i ōna tika. Tō whakautu ki a ia?" This was translated in the captions as "You think there is no benefit in the declaration for Maori [*sic*], yet law expert Mai Chen disagrees. She says it could further enshrine Maori [*sic*] rights. Your response?" (Morrison & Horomia, 2010, 00:12)

This is not too dissimilar to the experience of the revitalisation of `Ōlelo Hawai`i, a sister Eastern Polynesian language to te reo Māori. Throughout this chapter, I refer to Keao NeSmith's (2002) master's thesis *Tūtū's Hawaiian and the Emergence of a Neo-Hawaiian Language*. It's a groundbreaking work in Indigenous Pacific studies analysing the difference between the spoken language of traditional Hawaiian language speakers and new language speakers (second-language learners) of Hawaiian. In it he examines the differences in grammar structures and word choices – which, while beyond the scope of this chapter, are nonetheless insightful to what I suspect is happening within te reo Māori as the number of new language speakers increases.

NeSmith's (2002) concept of Neo-Hawaiian provides a useful parallel for understanding what some kaumātua might perceive as a divergence in modern te reo Māori usage. He identifies Neo-Hawaiian as a form of the language shaped primarily by second-language speakers, featuring characteristics like non-traditional pronunciation, simplified grammatical structures, and the use of invented or adapted terms. This evolution, while necessary for the language's survival, creates a gap between native and second-language speakers, with native speakers often feeling alienated from these changes. Similarly, in my experiences as a translator and captioner, I have observed how some kaumātua struggle to connect with newer forms of te reo that incorporate slang, dialectal variations, or linguistic errors.

By examining Neo-Hawaiian, it becomes clear that these frustrations are not unique to te reo Māori. They reflect a broader trend in Indigenous language revitalisation, where languages adapt to meet the needs of contemporary speakers while inadvertently creating generational divides. This underscores the importance of finding ways to bridge these gaps through inclusive dialogue and mutual respect for both traditional and modern language forms.

To further contextualise these divides, it is essential to acknowledge the unique pressures faced by kaumātua in preserving te reo. Many native speakers perceive themselves as custodians of the language's authenticity, and their concerns about younger generations' innovations highlight the tension between preservation and evolution. This underscores the need for dialogue that respects kaumātua perspectives while embracing the vitality of contemporary language use. However, in my role as a translator and captioner I have no choice but to analyse and navigate my way through their language use. Those `rangatahi' speakers have been guests on TV shows like *Te Karere* and *Pūkana* as reporters/presenters themselves. From my position as a licensed translator and interpreter translating bidirectionally with Māori and English, navigating my translations around this kind of language use has given me an appreciation of the frustration native speakers and near native speakers have with the language they hear being used. Personally, it's quite

complex attempting to decode what is being said and communicate it meaningfully in English. I have the benefit of time and pay to do this, whereas a regular native speaker does not (they might rewind the video they're watching, but if they have to do that more than once, it would be understandable if they decided to give up and not watch). It's in my interests to decode and encode, but for the regular speaker it's easier to simply switch off and not engage.

This brings me to an important reflection: My chapter is an exploration of self as both practitioner and learner. These experiences I share are informed by both practice and theory, which are wedded together. As I reflect on my personal journey, it has made me acutely aware of the issues that speakers – native and otherwise – face, as well as their opinions on language fluency and usage. These views may not always be academically informed, but they stem from perceptions and lived realities. This means there are potential enquiries to explore for future research.

After having been encouraged in speaking and using te reo Māori, I occupy a level of 'reo privilege'. This privilege manifests itself through being able to speak Māori whenever and wherever I want in any domain. I can interact in a hui²² setting and voice an opinion in te reo and engage in a wide variety of conversations. Those who speak te reo also have the privilege of not necessarily feeling language trauma in the sense of language loss, or a sense of exclusion of not knowing. Te reo speakers have mobility and inclusion in important Māori cultural events and rituals as well as the freedom to use te reo in very mundane settings such as chatting about what's on TV or bantering away while making breakfast for dinner.

NeSmith's (2002) reflections on language privilege in Hawaiian revitalisation movements add a valuable dimension to my discussion of 'reo privilege'. He highlights how second-language learners often benefit from institutional support, such as access to immersion schools, university courses, and other educational resources, while native speakers – particularly elders – are frequently excluded from these processes. This dynamic can inadvertently prioritise the needs of second-language learners over those of native speakers, creating a form of privilege that shapes who has the most influence within the revitalisation movement.

Similarly, I recognise that my ability to navigate a wide range of domains using te reo Māori stems from my access to resources like Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori's materials and supportive whānau.²³ While this privilege enables me to participate fully in cultural and professional contexts, it also calls for an awareness of how

²² Meeting.

²³ Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori is a government agency charged with Māori language revitalisation. Its efforts are described in greater detail later in the chapter.

institutional structures can favour certain groups of speakers. NeSmith’s critique serves as a reminder to advocate for revitalisation strategies that include and elevate native speakers, ensuring that their voices remain central to the movement.

Keegan et al. (2009) highlight the challenges learners face in acquiring accurate pronunciation, particularly given the increasing variability in modern te reo Māori. For second-language speakers, the shifting nature of pronunciation – such as vowel mergers and altered diphthongs – adds complexity to achieving fluency. This is compounded by the limited availability of high-quality resources that reflect traditional pronunciation models. While some tools, like CD-ROMs and online platforms, offer examples of older speakers, their accessibility and effectiveness remain inconsistent (Keegan et al., 2009).

These insights deepen the discussion on ‘reo privilege’ by emphasising how access to resources shapes learning outcomes. Second-language learners often benefit from structured tools and institutional support, but these may not always reflect the diversity of native speaker models. This highlights the need for equitable approaches that respect both traditional and contemporary linguistic forms.

The privilege I occupy is one born from having a supportive whānau, the proliferation of te reo materials that I can engage with, and living in a world where Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori has always existed. I am fortunate to have been positioned to learn new words to talk about modern concepts and technologies but still old enough to have experienced and listened to elders who speak te reo (outside of my own whānau). I have been made aware of my own language proficiency when various elders have commented that I speak like they do, but in a way that they recognise as modern.

For those who remember a time before the advent of these services and programmes, they recall a dark era for te reo where its usage was severely restricted in terms of domain and, more importantly, to whom. Anecdotes shared with me suggest there was a period when the intrinsic value of the language was unrecognised, an old relic from an irrelevant world and era. These views, I was told, were commonly held by non-Māori and some Māori alike. In my own experience, I have met other Māori who see limited value in the language, intrinsic or extrinsic. In particular, in my own experience, I have had people who say the only te reo they need is enough to say hello and deliver a pepeha²⁴, and anything further is strongly discouraged. It is not for me to impinge on their personal choices or views, nor to impose my own, as they are exercising their mana motuhake²⁵. As noted in Te

²⁴ Tribal saying, often used as an identity marker. They most commonly list landmarks.

²⁵ Sovereignty.

Mātāwai's²⁶ literature review on language trauma, trauma can have a serious impact on a person's inclination to learn and use te reo (Roa & Roa, 2024). This trauma can also be transmitted intergenerationally – that is, it can be the gift that keeps giving.

Whether this is a response born of language trauma would need further inquiry.

It's also a world where kaupapa like *Te Karere* and celebratory events like Te Wiki o te Reo Māori are so commonplace that I can't imagine a world without any of those things in it. These are all things that I have used to reinforce and encourage language use beyond speaking te reo with my whānau for myself. This background I have written about myself helps provide the space from which I'm able to write this chapter.

Te tūāpapa The foundation

He Rauhi Kupu is an output of the 'He oranga whānau: mahi ngātahi – Whānau livelihoods within the context of work and Māori economies of wellbeing' project, and there are three purposes for its existence. First is to provide a single source of terminology related to finance, business, and wellbeing. Currently, there are several dictionaries where these terminologies are scattered across. A single dictionary housing all the terms provides a convenient resource for native speakers, highly proficient speakers, second-language learners, and translators.

The second reason (related to the first) is to list all variations of a translation of a term where possible. For example, both 'huamoni' and 'monihua' are listed as headwords for 'profit'. Why there are two variations for the one concept is uncertain, but there are two possible reasons I suspect. First, this may be a product of people working in silos. Second, it could be that originally one translation was used but a second person or group (or even the same person or group) has decided the original term doesn't work and has created a new translation in replacement. For example, *Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori* (2021) used 'mairoa' and 'maipoto' for 'barbell' and 'dumbbell', respectively, on its list of workout terminology published in December 2021, but in its multifunctional fitness language domain, published July 2023, those terms were replaced by the loanwords 'tamapere' and 'pāpere', respectively, less than two years later (*Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori*, 2023).²⁷ This is quite an extraordinary development considering that when *He Pātaka Kupu* (*Te Taura Whiri i*

²⁶ Established in 2016, Te Mātāwai is an independent statutory entity responsible for promoting and revitalising te reo Māori.

²⁷ I was involved in the creation of the 2023 domain and had drawn to the attention of my colleagues the existence of the 2021 list. It should be noted that the responsibility of lexicon creation and standardisation had changed teams by 2023.

te Reo Māori, 2008) went online in 2018, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori at the time remarked:

Ko ētahi o ngā kupu i tangohia mai i ētahi atu reo kāore i whakaurua mai mehemea he kupu Māori taketake ka taea te whāwhā atu, heoi, tērā tonu ētahi i whakaurua mai, pēnei i ‘mīere’, mai i te reo Wīwī, me te kupu whakamutunga rawa o te papakupu, arā, te ‘whutupōro’, mai i te kupu reo Ingarihi ‘football’. [Some words taken from other languages were not included if there was an original Māori word that could be used; however, there are still some that have been included, like ‘mīere’, which is from French, and the final word in the dictionary, ‘whutupōro’, which comes from the English word ‘football’.] (Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, 2018, para. 9)

The third reason for *He Rauhi Kupu* is to create another monolingual dictionary where every headword is defined in te reo Māori. This follows in the footsteps of the dictionaries *Tirohia Kimihia* (Ministry of Education, 2006) and *He Pātaka Kupu* (Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, 2008). The *raison d’être* for developing *Tirohia Kimihia* was “mā koutou katoa kei te tipu, kei te ako i roto i tō tātou reo rangatira [for you all growing up in and learning our chiefly language]” (Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 3), while *He Muka*, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori’s periodical, noted the following purpose for *He Pātaka Kupu*:

Te hunga waihangā, ngā whītiki o te kī, ngā puna o te māramatanga, e puta nei tēnei puia ki te wheiao ki te ao mārama, hei rauhi mā tātou ā, haere ake nei. Kei ō tātou ringaringa inaianei, ā, kua pūnaunau te noho. Kei whatungarongaro ngā oro taketake i takea mai ai i ngā atua o te ao Māori, tau mai ana ki a tātou i te ao nei ... tēnā wherahia! [The creators, the orators, retainers of understanding, bringing forth this bubbling hot spring into the dawn, into the world of light, for us to collect for ourselves, going forward. It’s in our hands now and it’s satisfying. Lest the original sounds that came from the gods of te ao Māori²⁸ which is now with us in this world are lost ... please, read it!] (Papa, 2008, p. 1)²⁹

The reason for *He Rauhi Kupu* doing this is fairly similar; it’s for the benefit of those growing up in and learning the language. It’s also for language maintenance, which Pānia Papa (2008) spoke to through her use of metaphor referring to the Māori gods in her piece on the launch of *He Pātaka Kupu*.

²⁸ The Māori world, also known as Māoridom.

²⁹ This approach, in my experience, is totally consistent with the branding of Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori at the time when loan words were essentially out, and neologisms were in.

Te puna kupu

The source of words

The lexicon for these words was sourced from:

- *He Pātaka Kupu* (Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, 2008);
- *A Dictionary of Māori Language* (Williams, 1971);
- *Taking Care of Business: Business Terms in Aotearoa: He Papakupu Pakihi: English-Māori Business Dictionary* (Smyth & Ikin, 2005);
- *Paekupu* (He Kupenga Hao i te Reo, n.d.);
- *He Reo Whai Rawa* (Reserve Bank of New Zealand, 2022);
- *Te Reo Hāpai* (Te Pou, 2020);
- *Toi Te Kupu* (Heart Foundation, 2020);
- *Te Karere*;
- *Te Ao Māori News*;
- *Waatea*; and
- in-person interviews with whānau carried out by the He Oranga Whānau research team.

These were used because they were either authoritative or had a specific focus on business, finance, or health terminologies. The news services *Te Karere*, *Te Ao Māori News*, and *Waatea* were added because they reflect the use of language by speakers in the media.

With the exception of *He Pātaka Kupu* and *A Dictionary of the Māori Language*, all of the dictionaries are bilingual and present the headwords with their translation. However, *Paekupu* is quite exhaustive with information on the types of suffixes that can be used with each headword, along with the word class for each entry. Some entries include a definition in te reo and an example sentence. The next most exhaustive is *He Reo Whairawa*, which provides example sentences in te reo and English. Of the remaining dictionaries, *Taking Care of Business: Business Terms in Aotearoa: He Papakupu Pakihi: English-Māori Business Dictionary* (Smyth & Ikin, 2005) deserves a special note here where its vocabulary definitions are actually in English.

Te āhua o te waihanga

The creation method

In the beginning, an Excel spreadsheet and Google Docs were created. As the number of words grew, it was decided to store the words in an Access Database. In the Access Database a separate table for each dictionary was created, with a singular master table pooling all the words into one table. This made it easier to keep track as to which words had been defined, as several words were used across

several of the dictionaries. Being able to sort by alphabetical order proved to be useful in identifying duplicates in the case where dictionaries had listed the same headwords, but it also became useful for identifying any synonyms in the translations column.

The data structure of the table is as follows: ID, Word, English Word (translation), Defined, Puna, Etymology Paekupu, Etymology Williams, Word Class, Nominalisation Suffix, Passive Suffix, Synonym, Alteration.

The data put into these fields informed the metainformation put into *He Rauhi Kupu*. These are a mix of short text and long text fields, with 'Defined' as a simple yes/no field. The ID field is an auto number field, which was used to help keep a count of the number of headwords placed into a dictionary.

Collecting this metadata will help with a future expansion of *He Rauhi Kupu* if it is revisited.

Te huri The change

To understand how te reo can help inspire and motivate future action, it's useful to look at its most recent past to understand how it can achieve social change. Throughout the latter half of the 20th century te reo Māori acted as a catalyst for change and transformation, particularly from the 1970s onwards. The New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) Sociolinguistic Survey of Māori Language Use (a.k.a. the 'Benton Report'), conducted from 1973 to 1978, revealed the drop in numbers of children speaking te reo Māori. In 1972, Ngā Tamatoa and the Te Reo Māori Society presented a 30,000-signature petition, known as 'Te Petihana', to Parliament calling for the introduction of te reo Māori and culture education into schools. By 1975 the predecessor of Māori Language Week – Māori Language Day – was established. In the same year the Waitangi Tribunal was founded.

In 1982 the first kōhanga reo³⁰ in Pukeatua was established, and *Te Karere* broadcast for the first time. 1985 would see the establishment of the first kura kaupapa Māori³¹ established on Hoani Waititi Marae in West Auckland, with the Waitangi Tribunal producing a report in 1986 concluding te reo is a taonga³². The report advised the Government that te reo should be made an official language and that a language commission should be set up. This would lead to the Māori Language Act 1987 being passed, officialising te reo and leading to the

³⁰ Māori-language preschool — literally, a "language nest."

³¹ Māori-medium school.

³² Treasure.

establishment of Te Kōmihana mō te Reo Māori, which would later be rebranded as Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori.

In 1993 Te Māngai Pāho, the Māori Broadcasting Commission, was established and became the primary funder of Māori language programming on TV and radio. Within the space of 20 years from the commencement of the Benton Report, action on and around te reo led to major social shifts throughout wider Aotearoa society. From being a minority language with no status in its own country, activity around the perilous state of te reo led to it becoming an official language, being used in schools from early childhood to high school, and being broadcast in a news format for daily news.

There are several notable milestones for te reo Māori in the 1990s, kicking off with Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori publishing *Ngā Kupu Hou*, a dictionary of 2,500 neologisms coined by Te Taura Whiri over three years. In 1998 the Government set aside \$15 million for the Mā Te Reo Community Language Fund, which would provide financial assistance to whānau, hapū³³, iwi³⁴, and Māori communities to achieve three main objectives. As the late former Māori Affairs Minister Parekura Horomia noted, “First, we must increase the number of Māori who know the Māori language. Second, we must improve proficiency levels of Māori in the Māori language and thirdly, we must increase the opportunities for Māori to use the language” (New Zealand Government, 2002, para. 6).

This would lead to the creation of kura reo, a popular language learning format for people to improve their fluency in te reo Māori through using te reo. This style of programming continues under the auspices of Te Mātāwai.

The next major milestone is the launch of Māori Television (now Whakaata Māori) in 2004 and its TV channel, followed by the launch of the Te Reo channel four years later in 2008.

In 2016, Te Ture mō Te Reo Māori 2016 replaced the Māori Language Act 1987. That led to the amendment of the Broadcast Act 1989 and the Māori Television Service (Te Aratuku Whakaata Irirangi Māori) Act 2003, and established Te Mātāwai, redefining the role of Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori. This paved the way for the launch of Te Whare o te Reo Mauriora³⁵ in 2019, introducing a national language revitalisation strategy, itself based on a report of the same name sent to the

³³ Subtribes.

³⁴ Tribes.

³⁵ ‘Te Whare o te Reo Mauriora’ means ‘The House of the Living Language’. The name uses the meetinghouse as a metaphor as a meeting place for Māori and others. Meeting houses are often named after an ancestor and are seen as a metaphoric and physical representation of the named ancestor.

Minister of Māori Development in 2015. Te Mātāwai took responsibility for Te Maihi Māori³⁶, the Government’s strategy focused on te reo revitalisation within Māori communities, while Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori took responsibility for Te Maihi Karauna³⁷, the Government’s strategy aimed at enhancing te reo use across public sector agencies and the wider New Zealand public.

These efforts to revitalise and institutionalise te reo Māori build upon its long-standing role as a cultural cornerstone for Māori identity. On the marae³⁸, te reo is the primary language used during formal ceremonies like karanga³⁹, whai kōrero⁴⁰, and karakia⁴¹, and it remains the language of choice for introductions through pepeha⁴², which connect individuals to tribal landmarks and ancestors. The emotional significance of Māori words such as manaaki⁴³, manaakitanga⁴⁴, whanaunga⁴⁵, and whakawhanaungatanga⁴⁶ further reinforces the intrinsic bond Māori have with their language. This connection between cultural practices and formal language revitalisation strategies demonstrates how te reo Māori continues to be both a living language and a critical marker of identity.

NeSmith’s (2002) work on Neo-Hawaiian and Hawaiian revitalisation offers critical insights that align closely with the themes of this chapter. His exploration of generational divides, language privilege, and cultural grounding provides a valuable lens for understanding similar dynamics in te reo Māori. By drawing on these parallels, I hope to contribute to a broader dialogue on how Indigenous languages can navigate the challenges of revitalisation while honouring their cultural integrity.

Te reo use already exists in the whairawa⁴⁷, pakihi⁴⁸, and wellbeing space, both as a language of branding in business and as the language of the home of varying fluency and use levels within whānau. This can be seen as mirroring the anthropology concepts of ‘Big C Culture’ and ‘Little c culture’. The language’s commercial use in branding is Big C Culture, with brand names such as Tuhi

³⁶ Drawing upon the metaphor of Te Whare o te Reo Mauriora, ‘maihi’ means bargeboard. There are usually two maihi for every meetinghouse, and they represent hospitality and connection.

³⁷ ‘Maihi Karauna’ literally means ‘Crown bargeboard’.

³⁸ Enclosed area directly in front of a meeting house.

³⁹ Call, ceremonial call, to call.

⁴⁰ Formal oratory, speech, to make a speech, to talk.

⁴¹ Chant. Co-opted by Christianity to also mean prayer, although some language experts decry this.

⁴² Tribal aphorism, tribal saying. Pepeha in Māori society are used as a means for making connections between tribes and form a critical part to belonging.

⁴³ To bless, to look after.

⁴⁴ Nominalised form of manaaki. Used to mean hospitality usually, can also mean ‘blessing’, especially in the Bible.

⁴⁵ Relation, cousin.

⁴⁶ To make connections, to make familial connections, to build rapport.

⁴⁷ To be rich, to accrue wealth. Literally to pursue resource.

⁴⁸ Business.

Stationery Ltd⁴⁹ and Awhi Company⁵⁰ describes the kaupapa of their respective businesses. In contrast, whānau use of the language in informal interactions is emblematic of Little c culture with the use of words like whenua⁵¹, karakia, and hāhi⁵².

This does raise the issues of co-option, commodification, and misappropriation of the language by commercial interests. While these concepts are related, each deserves some unpacking.

Co-option refers to the superficial adoption of te reo Māori elements – such as names, phrases, or motifs – without genuine engagement with their cultural significance or the communities they originate from. Linda Smith (2012) speaks to co-option more broadly through the academic West's appropriation of Indigenous knowledge, culture, and language on a global scale. In *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* she presents the Indigenous Research Agenda, a model through which decolonisation, transformation, mobilisation, and healing are the keys to achieving self-determination in the research space. These same principles can apply, to a lesser degree, with Te Mātāwai supporting whānau, hāpori⁵³, and hapū at micro level to be at the centre of te reo Māori revitalisation on a local scale while the other te reo Māori agencies such as Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori continue to lead at a macro level at encouraging te reo in both public and private entities.

Commodification occurs when te reo Māori is treated as a marketable asset, valued primarily for its branding potential rather than its cultural or linguistic integrity. This can be seen across sectors such as tourism, broadcasting, and consumer goods, where te reo is often used to signal authenticity or bicultural commitment. Roskrug et al. (2017) define the economic value of te reo Māori as follows:

The Māori language and culture economy comprises of any good or service which makes use of Te Reo Māori as a direct input [e.g. education, Huia publications], or where the cultural capital of Te Reo Māori is required to facilitate production [e.g. toi Māori⁵⁴]. (p. vi)

For them the Māori language and cultural economy is not 100% synonymous with the Māori economy itself. They further explain that for an activity to qualify as

⁴⁹ 'Tuhi' means to write, to point. An apt name for a stationery company which sells items such as diaries and planners.

⁵⁰ 'Awhi' means to embrace, to cuddle. Appropriate, as the company sells blankets that wrap around and 'embrace' the body.

⁵¹ Land.

⁵² Church.

⁵³ Community.

⁵⁴ Māori art.

contributing to the Māori language economy, it must either use te reo Māori as a direct input into production or draw on te reo Māori to conduct production or business activities as an indirect input (Roskrug et al., 2017). However, that doesn't mean that language and cultural authenticity isn't precluded from the Māori economy such as in tourism if it's not a direct input or used for business activity. Ash Puriri and Alison McIntosh (2019) note that "tourism, according to Kaumātua, is a vehicle that can provide Rangatahi with Reo Māori (Māori language), knowledge and history along with a sense of finding their identity (Puriri, 2017)" (p. 101). Here participation in an economic activity by reo speaking rangatahi Māori provides an opportunity for them to earn a livelihood while also learning more about their culture and whakapapa⁵⁵.

Misappropriation involves more than just the casual or incorrect use of te reo Māori. It refers to the ways in which the language is lifted from its cultural and spiritual context, repurposed without tikanga⁵⁶, and often used to serve commercial, political, or institutional agendas that do not benefit Māori. These acts can distort the original meaning and intent of the language, decontextualising kupu⁵⁷ from their whakapapa and mātauranga⁵⁸, and reducing te reo to a stylistic or symbolic tool. In doing so, such misuse reinforces existing power imbalances – where dominant groups retain control over how Māori identity is represented – and perpetuates stereotypes by oversimplifying or romanticising Māori culture. This is particularly harmful when te reo is employed in public, media, or branding spaces with no meaningful engagement with the communities from which it originates.

Carl Mika (2022) speaks to this in an *E-Tangata* article where he laments and questions the use of te reo by public servants where single kupu are divorced of their cultural context. However, as a salve perhaps, and a bitter one at that, as part of the coalition agreement between the New Zealand National Party and New Zealand First (2023), Government departments and agencies have been directed to use their English name primarily (unless they relate specifically to Māori) and to use English in their communications. In the same agreement, the parties also agreed to make English an official language by law.

Sometimes despite the best of intentions misuse can occur. For example, in 2020, *Stuff* reporter Susan Edmunds reported on a Wellington business that tried to embrace te reo by naming their store 'Huruhuru', a Māori word for 'fur' and 'bird feather'. Unbeknownst to the business owners, however, huruhuru also means 'body hair' and 'pubic hair'. The store wasn't the only business to fall victim to the multiple

⁵⁵ Genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent.

⁵⁶ Māori protocol and culture.

⁵⁷ Words.

⁵⁸ Knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill.

meanings of huruhuru. Hell's Basement, a beer brewer, also used the word huruhuru for a line of beers. As owner Mike Patriquin explained, their "intended interpretation of the term was feather – meaning the beer itself was light as a feather – and that the full name of the beer is 'Huruhuru (the Feather) New Zealand Hopped Pale Ale'" (Radio New Zealand, 2020, para. 3). Edmunds spoke to Auckland University of Technology (AUT) lecturer Hēmi Kelly for her article, who advised businesses to engage a consultant to receive cultural and language advice. In defence of the Wellington store that branded itself Huruhuru, a spokesperson reported that they had consulted the Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand (IPONZ)⁵⁹, and in particular the Māori Trade Marks Advisory Committee of IPONZ, where the use of huruhuru was not flagged as problematic (Edmunds, 2020, para. 11). These aren't the only cases where Big C Culture has gone awry; however, they do exist as precautionary tales of engaging with consultants to ensure the use of language is authentic and not inauthentic – that is, unwittingly tokenistic.

NeSmith's (2002) work emphasises the intrinsic connection between language and worldview, cautioning against teaching the Hawaiian language without grounding it in traditional cultural practices. He argues that language carries a cultural essence that risks being diluted when taught in isolation from its historical and spiritual contexts. This insight resonates with my discussion of Big C Culture and Little c culture in te reo Māori.

In Big C Culture, commercial uses of te reo often risk tokenism or commodification, as seen in examples like the 'Huruhuru' incident. NeSmith's perspective reinforces the importance of consulting cultural experts to ensure that such uses of language remain authentic and grounded. Meanwhile, Little c culture – the everyday use of te reo in informal whānau settings – parallels the traditional Hawaiian practices NeSmith describes, where language is a living expression of identity and relationships.

By integrating NeSmith's ideas, I underscore the need to protect te reo Māori from exploitation while nurturing its authentic growth. This involves not only safeguarding its traditional roots but also fostering its evolution in a way that respects its cultural and spiritual essence. Moreover, tokenism in Big C Culture, if left unchecked, risks undermining public trust in the authenticity and integrity of te reo. As seen in previous examples, poorly executed commercial efforts can alienate communities, highlighting the need for meaningful engagement and consultation.

In contrast, perhaps a more recent public example of a business doing Big C Culture and Little c culture, and doing it well, is Whittaker's Chocolate New Zealand. From 2020 to 2023 Whittaker's used te reo translations for its Creamy Milk packaging

⁵⁹ A government entity that registers and grants intellectual property rights in New Zealand.

(which were revised by Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori), which it labelled as a special edition. In addition to this, translations of its recipes into te reo by Naomi Toilalo were produced, te reo lessons were given to staff, and donations were made to Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust⁶⁰ (Whittaker’s Chocolate New Zealand, 2023). Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust is the national organisation in charge of the distribution of funding to kōhanga reo⁶¹ around the country. The kōhanga reo are Māori-led, kaupapa Māori⁶² early childhood centres where te reo is used as the language of learning and play for children under the age of five. The movement first began in 1982 with the opening of its first centre in Wainuiomata. In 2024, Whittaker’s opted to not produce the special edition packaging and instead wanted to encourage people to find ways to celebrate Te Wiki o te Reo Māori (Armah, 2024).

But the concerns of tokenism in Big C Culture and Little c culture don’t lay just in the area of business. They are also applicable to other language domains such as law and policy, which have also drawn some critiques with how te reo vocabulary is used in largely monolingual English texts. Carl Mika (2022) proposes that when it comes to legal and government contexts where te reo words are used in isolation and divorced from a te ao Māori context, Māori/te reo speakers should insist English words are just fine. His argument also extends into the untranslatability between te reo and English because the worldviews that inform both languages are different. In his critique on the use of te reo Māori in policy documents and laws, he notes that words in te reo have both a tangible and intangible aspect. Mika remarks, “But with the language now being so widely deployed in previously unforeseen ways and contexts, it’s also timely to think about how the spiritual reality of te reo should be preserved against these colonising backdrops” (para. 16).

With normalisation of te reo continuing, translators and interpreters working in Parliament and in the courts are already navigating this issue with the translation and interpretation of laws into te reo Māori. They are contributing to a growing literature which can be found in places like the New Zealand Legislation website.⁶³ Another veritable source of legal terms is *A Dictionary of Māori Legal Terms*.⁶⁴ These terminologies allow for the use of te reo in legal contexts so speakers of te reo do

⁶⁰ I was involved in the revision of the translations. The most significant change I made was changing ‘winika’ to ‘wanira’ (‘vinegar’ to ‘vanilla’)! The use of ‘winika’ in the original packaging I believe was picked up by AI and used by other translators to mean ‘vanilla’ when using AI or Computer Assisted Translation tools. AI and Computer Assisted Translation tools cross-match translations that exist online. I’ve had to correct several translations using winika for ‘vanilla’ to ‘wanira’.

⁶¹ Language nest. The movement has inspired similar movements for other Polynesian languages and cultures, such as pūnana leo for Hawaiian and pūnanga reo for Cook Islands Māori.

⁶² Kaupapa Māori refers to a Māori-centred approach to thinking and being. It often centres on whanaungatanga (relationships), manaakitanga (hospitality) and tino rangatiratanga (self-determination).

⁶³ www.legislation.govt.nz

⁶⁴ www.legalmaori.net/dictionary

not have to switch to English to be able to talk about the law. It remains to be seen whether these resources will influence the use of te reo in largely English texts.

As te reo is used already in terms of Big C Culture and Little c culture, the lexicon of the language is a source of terminologies that can be used to provide one-word translations for principles. Critical awareness of language can also help provide an alternative vocabulary to address exploitation concerns around specific lexicon use. This is especially important for culturally important terminologies like manaakitanga where there is a sense of need for protection of these terms as intellectual property for all of te ao Māori. It's this need for protection from misuse that sits at the heart of the WAI 262 claim (Wai 262 Taumata Whakapūmau, n.d.), which covers flora, fauna, and intellectual property⁶⁵. In terms of current legal protections, sections 177–180 of the Trade Marks Act 2002 relate to an advisory committee that can provide advice on te ao Māori and tikanga Māori. Section 179 of the Act states:

A person must not be appointed as a member of the advisory committee unless, in the opinion of the Commissioner, the person is qualified for appointment, having regard to that person's knowledge of te ao Māori (Māori worldview) and tikanga Māori (Māori protocol and culture).

According to the overview of the Act:

Part 5 contains provisions about the Commissioner, the register of trade marks, and an advisory committee that has the function of advising the Commissioner whether the proposed registration of a trade mark that is, or appears to be, derivative of a Māori sign, including imagery and text, is offensive to Māori (Trade Marks Act 2002, s. 4).

However, the Act does not specifically protect te reo Māori, nor does it require that advisory committee members be fluent in te reo Māori — only that they have knowledge of te ao Māori and tikanga Māori. This absence of language-specific protection represents a notable gap in the legislation.

Despite the lack of explicit protection, businesses can take proactive steps when using te reo in a Big C Culture way by consulting Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori licensed translators, who are not only licensed to provide translations, but are also licensed to provide advice on te reo spelling and use. Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori

⁶⁵ Wai 262, commonly known as the Fauna, Flora and Intellectual Property Rights claim, sought the protection of taonga Māori by tāngata Māori. This included the protection, conservation, management, treatment, propagation, sale, dispersal, utilisation, and restriction on the use and transmission of knowledge relating to New Zealand's Indigenous flora and fauna and their associated resources.

provides a pool of translators on its website who can be contacted for work and language advice.

Te anga me te wāhi

The framework and setting

Te reo Māori is no stranger to being used as a foundation for cognitive frameworks across a range of areas. These include epistemology (mātauranga Māori), education (kaupapa Māori) and health (Te Whare Tapa Whā⁶⁶). These frameworks have been established as a response to a need or desire expressed by te ao Māori to engage with or be engaged by Pākehā⁶⁷. There is potential for using te reo to establish a cognitive framework for Māori economies of wellbeing.

Returning to the ideas of Big C Culture and Little c culture, understanding the way te reo is used is important to the establishment of a cognitive framework. From a Little c culture perspective the importance of whenua, wairuatanga⁶⁸, the fidelity of whānau relationships and the importance of whakapapa are likely to sit at its core, with perhaps whakapapa being the overarching theme that binds everything together. Historically and contemporarily, whakapapa is used to talk about the relationship uri Māori⁶⁹ have with whenua and papa kāinga⁷⁰, it is also the means by which the relationship between te ao Māori and ngā atua⁷¹ can be connected together. In juxtaposition, the Big C Culture aspect of the framework could tie in through the whakapapa component by acknowledging that from a te ao Māori worldview, everything has a whakapapa and therefore a hononga⁷², a connection not only to ngā atua, but to all things in existence from living beings to inanimate objects like rocks.

This sense of connection is lightly touched upon by Te Whare o te Reo Mauriora, in particular in Te Maihi Karauna, where the big audacious goals include developing and building a sense of ngāi Aotearoatanga, a sense of nationhood, through the normalisation of te reo Māori. By using te reo Māori at a Big C Culture level, such as in signage in a front shop or in a logo, and then encouraging genuine use of the language at a Little c culture level among staff to whānau and the wider public, Māori businesses can create opportunities not only for language normalisation but

⁶⁶ The four walled house. A health and wellbeing model introduced by Sir Mason Durie in 1984 and widely used in the education and health sectors.

⁶⁷ Non-Māori, often used to refer to specifically New Zealanders of European descent.

⁶⁸ Spirituality.

⁶⁹ Māori descendants, descendants of the Māori people

⁷⁰ Homestead, settlement. This is a compound term consisting of papa (place, site) and kāinga (home).

⁷¹ The gods.

⁷² Connection.

also create a sense of connection, value, and belonging between whānau and the business they are engaging with.

An example of te reo creating networks between different whānau nodes and likeminded businesses and organisations in practice is the way in which some kura kaupapa Māori and wharekura⁷³, such as Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Hoani Waititi Marae, operate on a volunteer basis with the parents of students. This volunteering basis via subcommittees enables the needs of kura to be met, such as a subcommittee in charge of kapa haka⁷⁴, another on facility maintenance, and another focused on sports. This volunteering provides opportunities for parents to socialise with each other, building inter-whānau bonds, as well as with the students. As part of the commitment to the kura this volunteering also requires parents who don't speak te reo to attend te reo classes at the marae (held weekly) as well as participate in monthly hui.

From a wellbeing context on the business side it can be as simple as supporting kaimahi⁷⁵ to learn te reo by structuring their shifts around required in-class learning times, engaging with the resources produced by Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori and Te Mātāwai, and making these resources available to staff so they have opportunities to learn and use te reo Māori.

Te taiao The environment

As people speak more te reo, the need that *He Rauhi Kupu* meets comes into sharp focus: vocabulary. Vocabulary is the means to express ideas and understand concepts not only from te ao tawhito⁷⁶, but from te ao hurihuri⁷⁷ as well. This is particularly pertinent as New Zealand English and te reo exist in a biglossic situation.⁷⁸ For language revitalisation to avoid a situation of High Language and Low Language relegation of English and te reo Māori, respectively, the need for a dictionary and continuous lexicon development in te reo is great. High Language refers to the use of language in formal situations such as government, education, literature, and religion, while Low Language refers to the use of language in casual conversations in the home, while shopping, and with friends. There is a danger that te reo Māori may end up being used for Low Language uses – that is, day-to-day communication and non-technical discussions – while English occupies High

⁷³ High schools (literally 'school houses')

⁷⁴ Concert party, haka group, Māori cultural group, Māori performing group (Moorfield, 2005).

⁷⁵ Workers, employees.

⁷⁶ Te ao tawhito literally means 'the ancient world'.

⁷⁷ Te ao hurihuri literally means 'the constantly changing world' and therefore 'the new world'.

⁷⁸ Biglossia is a form of diglossia. Diglossia is where two varieties of the same language co-exist; for example, a dialect and a standard variety (Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d.). Biglossia is where two different languages co-exist in the same space.

Language status wherein it is the language of higher education and technical jargon. It is this need for vocabulary in education, for example, that spurred Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori at the beginning of its life to create vocabulary for use in kura kaupapa Māori to ensure the language had the vocabulary to be able to be used as the language of instruction. This led to the creation of more than 2,000 lexical items needed to be able to provide an education in te reo Māori.

These lexical items, or neologisms, are brand new vocabulary in the language. There are a variety of different ways in which new vocabulary can be created in a language. Te reo Māori primarily uses borrowing, derivation, and calquing.

Borrowing (a.k.a. transliterating) creates words by using the closest corresponding letters of a different alphabet or script – for example, ‘moni’ from English ‘money’.

Derivation attaches affixes to create new words – for example, ‘tairaru’ for ‘crisis’, from ‘tai-’ (a prefix used to increase the force of the headword) and ‘raru’

(problem). *Calquing* is the process by which a word or phrase is translated from one language to another by directly translating its components, creating a compound word in the target language. This method preserves the meaning and syntactic structure of the original phrase but adapts it into the grammar of the target language (Nordquist, 2018). An example of a calque in te reo Māori is ‘rorohiko’ for ‘computer’. The word is a compound of roro (brain) and hiko (electricity, electric), literally ‘electric brain’. This calque comes from Chinese and semantic shift where the definition of a word is either broadened or narrowed – for example, ‘hiko’ meaning ‘lightning’ being expanded for ‘electricity, electric’.

But why even have neologisms/new vocabulary? New words are important for several reasons, including addressing modern cultural concepts, cultural continuity, youth engagement, functional expansion, and bridging generational gaps. While all speakers of a language have the capacity to create new words, by and large the responsibility for formally recognising te reo Māori words has fallen upon Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, as stated on its website: “[We] ensure te reo Māori remains a living language by developing new words so that it is used effectively in a changing world” (Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, n.d., “What we do” section). An example of this action was referred to earlier in the chapter with Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori creating vocabulary to enable kura kaupapa Māori to be able to use the language to provide an education. It’s a role that continues today, with the most recent example being the release of an Olympic Games dictionary ahead of the Paris 2024 Olympics. The dictionary contains more than 500 new words across the 30+ sports held at the Olympics.

However, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori is not the only creator of vocabulary. Daily Māori news programmes are also at the coal face of word creation. They report on a plethora of genre where nuanced vocabulary is required. For example, a news item

about interest rates and a capital gains tax in te reo Māori needs jargon to talk about real estate, banking, financing, micro-economics, and macro-economics. In lieu of vocabulary created by Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, journalists have several options available to them. They can borrow into Māori and ensure the borrowed word follows the phonetic rules of te reo Māori – that is, every syllable is open and English consonants are mapped appropriately from English to te reo Māori; for example, ‘interest’ as ‘itarete’. Alternatively, they can create their own derivation/compound word if they are feeling particularly competent. For example, Scotty Morrison translated ‘traffic light system’ as ‘pūnaha ramatoru’, literally meaning ‘three-light system’, with ramatoru for ‘traffic light’ in lieu of an actual te reo word for it. Journalists also have the choice of circumlocution where instead of translating the word into te reo they can talk around it.

Te tohe

The contention

If new words are important for ensuring cultural continuity and youth engagement, what, then, of native speakers and their engagement with te reo programming and new vocabulary? As discussed at the start of this chapter, there is a conflict between elderly te reo native speakers and the reo used in media and publications. This is not necessarily a conflict between generations, but rather a tension between traditional speakers and neo-speakers. Central to this tension is the role of neologisms — newly coined words often created by language planning bodies — which, while vital for modernising the language, can feel alien to those whose reo was inherited rather than learned.

This dynamic is not unique to Aotearoa. The Hawaiian language has undergone a similar revitalisation journey, marked by the establishment of Hawaiian-medium education, the formalisation of vocabulary creation, and the official recognition of the language by the state of Hawai‘i. As with te reo Māori, this revitalisation effort has produced a wealth of new terminology designed to enable the language to function in contemporary domains.

Keao Ne Smith’s (2002) *Tūtū’s Hawaiian and the Emergence of a Neo-Hawaiian Language* provides an in-depth exploration of the linguistic divide that can emerge between native (L1) and second-language (L2)⁷⁹ speakers. He highlights significant differences in vocabulary use between the two groups, alongside a troubling power imbalance that often privileges L2 speakers — those more likely to adopt institutional vocabulary and neologisms — over L1 speakers, whose forms of the language may be devalued or marginalised. These insights resonate strongly with

⁷⁹ L1 and L2 refer to native speakers and second-language speakers, respectively.

the current dynamics within te reo Māori, where new words can simultaneously signal cultural innovation and alienation.

This highlights a paradox: while native speaker norms are held up as the ideal, leadership and decision-making in revitalisation spaces are often in the hands of those who acquired te reo through formal education rather than intergenerational transmission. This observation is not a criticism but an acknowledgment of the immense dedication shown by these individuals, whose tireless efforts are directed toward reigniting intergenerational language transmission in ways that remain as authentic and faithful as possible to an unbroken chain of native speakers.

Te whakatepe The conclusion

This chapter reflects on the integral role te reo Māori plays in shaping cultural identity, supporting language revitalisation, and fostering connections. It is anchored in the work of developing a dictionary that focuses on the terminologies of business and wellbeing. Central to this discussion is the development of *He Rauhi Kupu* focusing on business and wellbeing terminologies – a resource designed to bridge traditional and modern contexts, making te reo more accessible and functional for a variety of speakers. *He Rauhi Kupu* serves as both a resource and a symbol of this journey, reflecting the dynamic relationship between language and culture while addressing modern communication needs.

Drawing on my own journey as both a speaker and practitioner of te reo, I explore how language fluency and generational differences shape our experiences and perceptions of te reo Māori. These personal reflections inform my approach to this project, highlighting the complexities of navigating te reo Māori in a society where it exists alongside English. This interplay between personal experience and professional practice underscores the importance of creating a resource that is both practical and culturally resonant.

Through my practice as a translator and captioner, I’ve witnessed the complexities of creating new vocabulary in a society where te reo and English exist side by side. These experiences are set against the backdrop of historical milestones in language revitalisation, from the efforts of Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori to the challenges of maintaining cultural authenticity amidst modern demands. *He Rauhi Kupu* is an extension of these revitalisation efforts, designed in response to questions about structure, purpose, and future use, and seeks to provide tools for both preserving traditional knowledge and fostering new domains of language use.

The findings of Keegan et al. (2009) offer critical insights into the evolving nature of te reo Māori pronunciation and its implications for language revitalisation. By addressing generational differences, resource accessibility, and the tensions

between standardisation and regional diversity, their work reinforces the need for balanced approaches that honour both traditional and modern expressions of the language. Incorporating these insights into teaching, media, and community initiatives can help ensure that te reo Māori remains a vibrant and inclusive language for future generations.

Each section of this chapter – from reflections on reo privilege and intergenerational fluency, to the technical structuring of a dictionary, to its grounding in mātauranga Māori – has responded to the guiding questions outlined at the outset. These include the significance of personal positioning, the importance of creating vocabulary for business and wellbeing, the influence of revitalisation history, the potential of te reo as a cognitive and relational framework, and the realities of generational tension and practitioner responsibility. Ultimately, this chapter is a call to critically engage with te reo Māori, to honour its richness, and to ensure it continues to thrive – not just as a language of cultural connection but also as a tool for navigating our modern world. As te reo continues to adapt to the evolving needs of its speakers, *He Rauhi Kupu* offers a foundation for building a sustainable linguistic future.

Ngā tohutoro

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Upoko 11: Ngā whakawhitinga me te ārahitanga

Chapter 11: Transitions and leadership – Chellie Spiller and Matthew Rout

Te whakawhiti ki te anamata Transitioning to the future

We are undergoing enormous change, and what we are dealing with might not be on the map, in the plan, or the future scenario. In exploring transitions to Māori economies of wellbeing, this chapter uses a Wayfinding Leadership approach (Spiller et al., 2015) as a segue to the recommendations set out in Chapter 12. The wayfinder's way is not about trying to defy change, keep it at bay, or reverse it. Change flows through wayfinders; it is a continuous process of assessment. They are change masters. We first scope Wayfinding Leadership principles and then discuss leadership in the context of an economy of mana.⁸⁰

Future uncertainty is a part of the human condition. However, in the coming decades, that uncertainty will be amplified as we face an array of potential intersecting and cascading crises, including declining resources, depleting energy, deteriorating international consensus, divisive economics, demographic upheavals, climate change, and the degrading environment (Rout et al., 2022).

Many believe that taking control is the best way to deal with change. People tend to respond to change by drawing on familiar beliefs and methods that previously held them in good stead. However, suppose we cling to what is most familiar. In that case, our mental models, habits, and routines can prevent us from seeing what is truly going on and responding effectively and powerfully to demanding situations. Today's generation deals with complex dynamics, responds to unpredictable and chaotic challenges, and creates meaning and purpose amid uncertainty.

Change for the wayfinder is about getting sea legs to learn and respond. Leaders need to be committed to building people who are fit for change, where learning

⁸⁰ English translations of te reo Māori words and phrases in this chapter are provided in the glossary on page 382.

becomes a way of life, and the learning generated from the collective is more potent than that of the individual.

Learning and responding becomes a day-to-day, moment-by-moment response-ability that emerges from action and participation.

According to Spiller et al. (2015), a Wayfinding Leadership approach enables leaders to be more responsive to subtle shifts and nuances:

Wayfinders go beyond the known, and journey on voyages of discovery to new horizons. Central to the wayfinding approach is seeing what is really going on – discerning the detail and seeing the whole. The wayfinder has a deep understanding of themselves, their crew, their waka and the environment. Drawing upon ancient wisdom, modern wayfinders hold insights that can make a big difference for leaders, their teams and organisations and for the future of society – for us all individually and collectively. (p. 3)

Wayfinders harness the collective's intelligence, intuition, insight, and the emergent properties of collaborative, collective, and consensus-based approaches to navigate complexity and uncertainty.

These voyagers use geophysical, oceanic, biological, and astronomical indicators to find their way across the massive expanse of Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, the Pacific Ocean. The sun, moon, and, in particular, stars, as well as other indicators like currents, swells, and trade winds, helped with general cardinal directions and in more specific directions (e.g. 'star paths' helped lead to known islands, swells helped with aspects like sideways drift calculation, and zenith stars helped indicate latitude), while other indicators like clouds, waves, swell refraction, fish, birds, and *te lapa* (light flashes that emanate from land) helped point towards landmasses (George, 2012). Individually, most of these indicators only gave a degree of directional certainty; when their inputs were combined, they provided precision guidance.

As Spiller et al. (2015, 2018) note based on their book and presented in a TEDx talk, the application of Wayfinding Leadership principles can bring tremendous benefits, including:

- deepening discernment about what is happening; being more responsive to change, subtle shifts, and nuances; and seeing the whole;
- developing integrative thinking and perceptiveness to solve problems, seeing connections between things that possibly others do not see, making sense of complexity;
- respecting and gaining strength from difference;

- fostering a shared sense of purpose;
- building more effective, collaborative teams;
- making better decisions;
- developing personal grit and courage and helping others build their grit;
- honing the ability to work with resistance;
- adapting more naturally to change and harnessing the potential of uncertainty, ambiguity, and the unknown; and
- experiencing greater relaxation, presence, and calm, especially in the face of adversity.

Contrast with a Western approach

To help us envision authentic pathways to Māori economies of wellbeing that put whānau at the centre, we frame up and contrast some key differences between a Wayfinding Leadership approach to a journey and a Western approach. Figure 11.1 shows a static approach where the navigator's maps and instruments tend to remove the explorer from their environment.

Figure 11.1. A static way places emphasis on the map and goal (reprinted from Spiller et al., 2018).



The captain/leader sets what seems to be the most efficient and direct route to the 'island' – the goal. As we are all used to, the idea is to mark off the milestones (or

the key performance indicators) as we track efficiently and directly towards the destination. It can be disastrous for such navigators and the organisations they serve to put themselves into an autopilot chart governed by the 'full steam ahead according to the plan' approach. Such planning tactics can make us highly dependent on tools and make us vulnerable if these tools fail. Staying focused on the plan, the chart, and the formulation can cause us to miss what is happening and fail to attune to our environment and the people in it. Take project team leaders: they invariably want to know precisely where the team is, where they have been, and where they are going. It may be considered good management, but is it optimal? Is a singular focus on certainty dealing with reality? Or could they be changing things fundamentally for the better by embracing the unknown, courting uncertainty, and finding the opportunity in adversity?

This tension between collective, 'non-expert' decision making versus hierarchical, top-down, 'expert' authority reflects a fundamental tension over how best to organise society to achieve effective and just governance. This debate traces to Plato's ship-of-state metaphor in his book *The Republic*, which captures this dichotomy. Plato's metaphor has resonated throughout history, providing a lens to analyse the enduring challenges of balancing collective input with centralised authority. That Plato would choose a ship to illustrate his argument against collective decision making, or more specifically democracy in his case, only deepens the practical utility of wayfinding, even as he argues against such forms of decision making. While Plato's 'philosopher-king' captains were hugging the coastline of the Mediterranean, scared even to lose sight of land, our tīpuna were confidently crossing the vast oceanic expanse.

Indeed, technology has augmented the capacity of Western approaches, with sextants helping mariners determine latitude and accurate clocks aiding the determination of longitude as cartographic techniques improved and ships got bigger. However, as discussed below, while these enabled actual Western ships (with Plato's metaphorical ship leading them) to cross oceans eventually, they also baked in some serious deficiencies that still hamper Western approaches today.

In contrast to the Polynesian wayfinder, Western navigation decision making and approaches are technocratic. Technocracy is a way of organising decision making in which experts with specialised knowledge, such as scientists, engineers, or economists, are in charge or critical in decision making. It relies on centralised decision making, where a small group of experts makes choices for all.

Technocracy is built on the assumption that measurable, quantifiable information helps optimise decisions. In turn, it expects that all the necessary data needed to guide that decision making can be gathered, analysed, and used to predict

outcomes. This focus on predictability means that technocrats aim to design systems and policies that work efficiently and minimise uncertainty.

While technocracy can be useful in situations where there is available data and there are no subjective or chaotic components, it can overlook local knowledge, different cultural values, and the meaning vested in human connections. It prioritises control and precision but may struggle to adapt when things do not go as planned.

Many ships have sunk because the captain was too reliant on faulty instruments, ignoring their crew's opinions and the cues outside that would help them determine that the readings their instruments were giving them were wrong. Take the wreck of the *Costa Concordia*; aside from the captain being reckless, the leading cause was that he was using the wrong charts for the area, meaning the rock he struck was not identified on his chart. He continued in confidence despite the rock being well known in the area.

Rigid maps versus changing oceans

Technocracy often relies on 'maps' – detailed models and plans informed by data – to guide decisions. While maps can be useful, they have several issues. They are static representations of a dynamic world; they are not ever totally accurate but rather a reduced, simplified symbol of reality, and as human creations, they can be wrong. While the wayfinder relies on various natural cues, such as stars, clouds, and currents, they make calculated assumptions synthesising this knowledge. A technocratic captain assumes that all relevant factors can be anticipated and accounted for, that the map is an accurate representation of reality and can even be used as a stand-in for real-world experience. A technocratic captain could theoretically sail a ship from a hermetically sealed control room, immune to virtually all the environmental signals aside from significant swell. However, oceans shift, storms arise, and conditions change unexpectedly. Similarly, technocratic models can fail when they do not account for social, cultural, or ecological complexities that are harder to measure and predict.

Centralised control and the helmsperson's blind spot

In a technocracy, decision making is hierarchical, informed by experts and guided by data. On the technocratic voyage, there is a single helmsperson steering the ship based largely on their readouts. While instruments provide crucial data, they do not capture the whole picture. The helmsperson may miss the feel of the wind, the sound of waves, or how these different signs combine to provide insight. Similarly, technocratic systems often overlook grassroots knowledge, local expertise, and the subtleties of human experience, which can be crucial for navigating real-world challenges. There is a reason most ships bring a pilot on board when they arrive at a new harbour: rather than let their normal helmsperson bring the boat in, they get a

local who knows that specific area. Here, the technocratic approach gives way to wayfinding to some degree; the global expert – the helmsperson – is replaced by the local expert – the pilot.

Predictable routes vs. adaptive sailing

Technocracy values predictability, preferring planned routes and stable conditions. It sets a fixed course and expects nothing to interrupt this. However, seas are unpredictable – storms, shifting winds, or unexpected hazards can force a change in course. Likewise, boats and their crew are unpredictable; there may be unknown damage to the hull or rigging, problems with the food stores, crew illness, or division. Adaptive capabilities, which involve sensing, responding, and collaborating, are vital skills. Technocracy's deterministic approach often struggles to adapt when faced with unforeseen disruptions, such as a storm or spoilt rations.

Overlooking the crew

While the captain is a vital team member, they are not the only one. The crew is fundamentally important to any vessel. Approaching leadership and decision making from a technocratic perspective might work for some crews some of the time, but this top-down, expert-led, and data-driven style of command will not always suit the situation, particularly if there are unexpected issues. A more inclusive approach that values the crew's input and treats them with respect is more likely to enable better outcomes across more diverse situations.

Overly relying on fixed methods that adhere to abstract planning, setting prescribed and highly defined objectives, and commanding and controlling the course of action can give rise to certain problems (Spiller et al., 2015, 2018):

- The goal is always in the future beyond us. The goal-conquering mode has many of us constantly striving to reach some point in the future, rushing to reach a predetermined destination, a fixed goal somewhere 'out there'.
- Taken too seriously, where the goal is more important than the journey, we may miss signals and opportunities beckoning us along the way.
- The trouble with standard maps, as with many business plans, is that they represent routes travelled before. While maps make sense for travelling in the known, they do not necessarily help us when we are in unknown territory. We may fail to adjust to a changing environment.

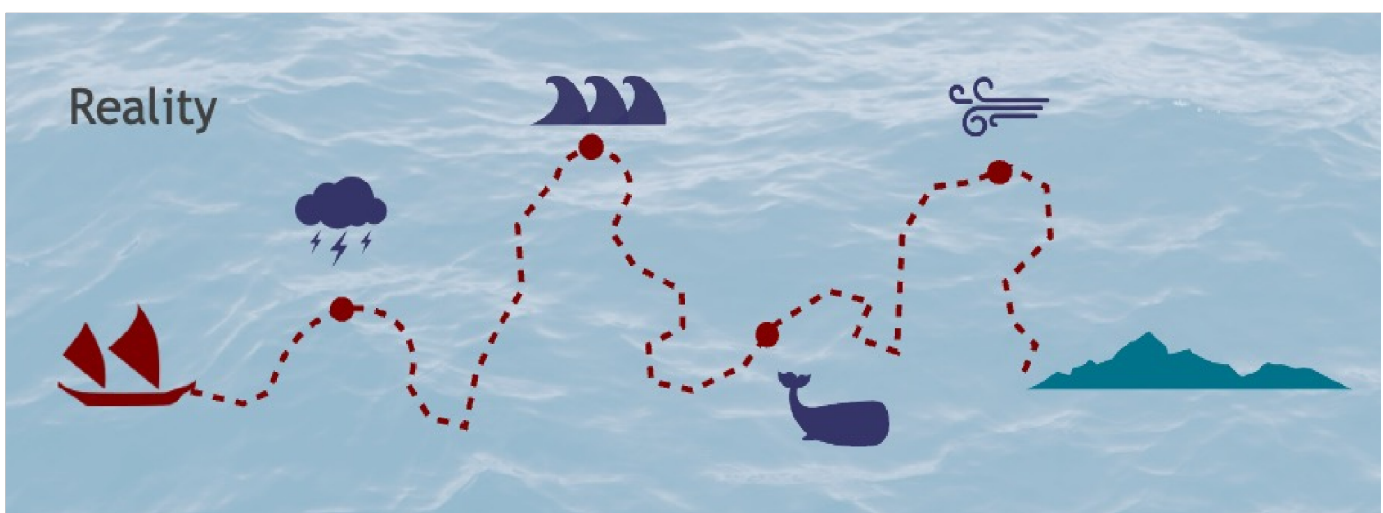
While setting and tracking goals has many merits, efficiently tracking to a linear path is not how reality works, and the theory of the goal-conquering mode is not as efficient and effective as one might be inclined to imagine. Organisations tend to adopt a strategic planning stance as if life is like the journey depicted in Figure 11.2.

Figure 11.2. Strategic planning method creates scenarios that often assume a direct, linear route (reprinted from Spiller et al., 2018).



However, we might be completely off track if we do not discern, pause, and read the signs – the seemingly most efficient and fastest route may not be the most effective. For example, it does not take account of storms or other environmental conditions. Life is usually more like the journey depicted in Figure 11.3.

Figure 11.3. In reality, we need to adjust to a changing environment, often with unexpected events occurring (reprinted from Spiller et al., 2018).



Wayfinding teaches us to expect that variables come at us from all angles, sometimes unseen, unexpected, and uninvited. So, when we are wayfinding and something out of left field occurs because it is out of sight, or when some variable pops up despite a highly rational and logical approach, we can respond well. It is a vital skill – on a waka or in any organisation.

Seeing the 'map as the territory' catastrophically collapses the gap between the sign and the realm it signifies. Wheeler (2010) details the failure of this collapse:

The Borges story 'On Exactitude in Science' demonstrates this point precisely. The cartographers of Borges' imaginary kingdom seek ever more perfect maps. In the end they produce a map which is so perfect that it is identical with the territory. This map is thus rendered entirely useless because it simply is the territory, and

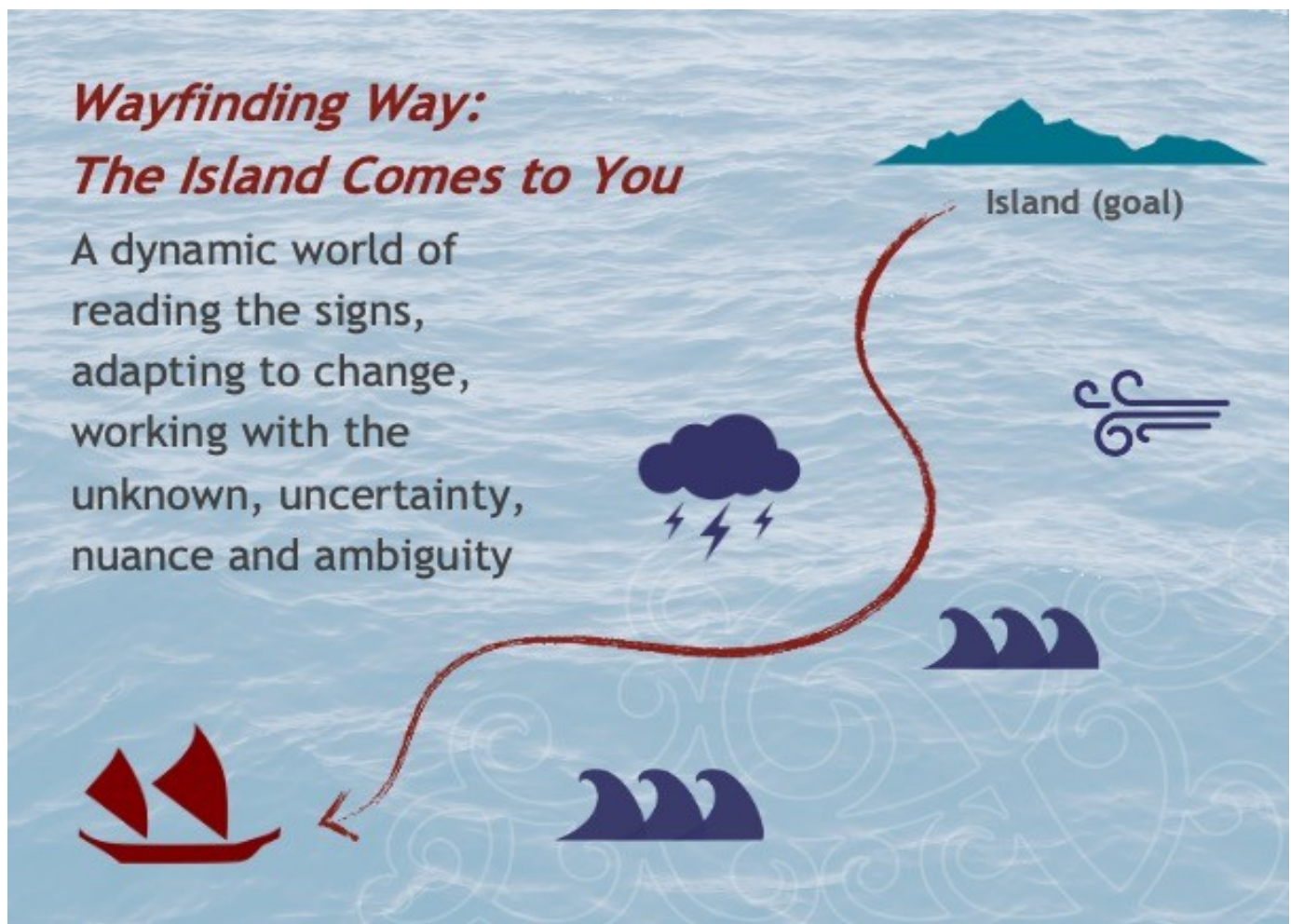
thus tells us nothing more than the territory itself does. As a sign for the territory it has failed. (p. 39)

It is not that we should not have strategies, goals, or plans; maps are helpful as guides. A question at the heart of our enquiry is 'How much ought these to fully dictate our path?' Overreliance on abstract ways of knowing may show that we are on target with the strategic plan, but we could be off course from realities around us. These approaches are helpful for the hard sciences, particularly physics. However, abstract knowledge is insufficient when navigating complex contexts. The wayfinder's way is a dynamic world of reading the signs; adapting to change, working with the unknown, uncertainty, and ambiguity; and using and fusing these to chart the best course.

Te karanga atu ki te motu
Calling the island

Imagine sitting on a train and looking out the carriage window. It can sometimes seem like the train is still, and the world is moving past. Wayfinding is similar. It is called the *etak* method. By staying still and adjusting to the signs, eventually the island comes to us. The experience of wayfinding and calling the island is not just about the stars, the sun, the clouds, the swells, or the winds – it is the whole interrelationship between these things. It is systems thinking, through making interconnections empowered by abductive reasoning, which enables emergent insight through patterns and connections. Our task is to be calm and respond well and adjust to essential signs in the world (Figure 11.4).

Figure 11.4. Wayfinding rests on having a clear picture of the island, staying grounded in the present and adjusting to the signs. In the etak method the island comes to the wayfinder (reprinted from Spiller et al., 2018).



Sphere intelligence

Wayfinding operates on what we call 'sphere intelligence', described in Spiller et al. (2015):

The sphere belongs to a multi-dimensional world – a world of interiority as well as exteriority. While two-dimensional 'square intelligence' dominates much of conventional leadership, wayfinding offers an expanded sphere intelligence approach that transforms the conventional approach. Inhabitants in the sphere's world have a far greater ability to see the whole and obtain a well-rounded perspective. The characteristics of sphere intelligence for wayfinding and leading include: recognition of multiple ways of knowing; roundedness and holism; appreciation of a process of unfolding and a cyclic approach, not just the linear; capacity to be with uncertainty, mystery and the unknown; attention to process; and understanding the relationships between things. The sphere is like a jewel with many facets and refractions of possibility, and an effective wayfinder will tap into multiple sources of knowledge and information. (p. 23)

In our framing, sphere intelligence is wisdom, while the square utilises data-based intelligence such as facts, figures, numbers, statistics, and cells in a spreadsheet as

a primary source of evidence with which to make decisions. One perspective is that intelligence is the task-oriented capacity of the brain to analyse and examine using approaches like the scientific method and deductive reasoning, often quantified by metrics such as IQ. Wisdom is a more holistic and qualitative quality, bringing together a variety of factors such as emotional intelligence, moral reasoning, lived experience, and collective dialogue. Where intelligence can be 'taught', wisdom must be 'lived'. Wisdom generally incorporates deeper understandings of the interconnectedness of systems, transcending the raw analytical skills that are associated with intelligence.

The lessons of wayfinding apply far beyond navigation. Wisdom is increasingly vital for addressing complex, interconnected challenges in leadership, environmental stewardship, and personal decision making. Data-informed intelligence may help identify problems and generate solutions, but wisdom ensures those solutions are sustainable, ethical, and aligned with broader systems of balance. Wayfinding reminds us that wisdom grows from lived experience, humility, and being attuned to the world's rhythms – qualities essential in navigating the open seas and the complexities of life itself.

Reading the signs

Today, we are each called to keenly observe and anticipate changing conditions, respond decisively, and, with fierce courage and wisdom, command critical moments (Spiller, 2022). Using all of our senses, we become observers of the world. This is not a detached state that seeks to be away from a distracting world; instead, it is about being engaged, integrating information, and allowing an intermingling with deep knowledge to form creative pathways.

Using multiple indicators in this fashion can be likened to abductive reasoning, which uses cognitive tools like pattern recognition, cybernetics, and 'differences that make a difference' to 'leap across the gap' between the various indicator inputs and the resulting emergent insight that informs decision making (Magnani, 2013; Wheeler, 2010). Abductive reasoning seeks intuitive insight through pattern recognition. Thus, abductive reasoning can provide insight into complex and dynamic systems by delivering understanding through emergent context.

Understanding how abductive reasoning works requires understanding semiotics, as its insights come from intuitively interpreting signs. As Magnani (2009) explains, from Peirce comes a "*semiotic* conception of inference as a form of sign activity" (p. 272, emphasis in original). There is a triadic form to abductive semiosis, from the 'object' to its representative 'sign' that must be 'interpreted'. In this third component, the interpretation gives abduction the ability to provide insight. For this interpretation to work, there must be a chasm between the sign itself and the realm

it signifies. As Neumann (2008, as cited in Wheeler, 2010) explains, “*Any sign must maintain an unbridgeable gap between itself and the realm it signifies*” (p. 39, emphasis in original); otherwise, it loses its capacity to signify. Abductive insight “is achieved by metaphor (abductive logic), in which identity is both asserted and at the same time changed by the different and supervenient context” (p. 40). New understanding comes from the interpretation of signs, where there is a fluidity from the metaphoric leap of insight.

What this means in practice for today’s wayfinders navigating the complex economic realities is that they need to be in tune, aware all the time of the various signs that are around them and how multiple changes – and particularly changing patterns – might imply the need for changes in decision making and action. This is sphere intelligence in action.

Tuning into the correct frequencies

Noise, the irregular fluctuations that accompany a signal and often obscure it, can distract us from what is important and necessary to stay focused on. We need to tune into the right frequencies and keep a steady line of sight to the higher purpose. While tuning in and tuning out may contradict the need to look at many signs in conjunction, the wayfinder must discern between the signals and the noise. Finding the right signs to go by is a critical skill that is a key part of reading the signs.

Wayfinding draws on the art of observation, engaging with a wide range of cues – waves, winds, stars, clouds, and even the flight paths of birds. These signals are rarely presented in neat, isolated packages. Instead, they emerge in complex, overlapping patterns. A skilled wayfinder is able to discern between various signals. Some signals provide critical guidance, while others might be distractions or misinterpretations. For example, a shift in wave patterns could indicate that an island lies just over the horizon while a sudden gust of wind might mean nothing more than a short, sudden change in pressure, or it could herald the first signs of a coming storm. The challenge for the wayfinder lies in realising which signals point to meaningful changes in the environment and which are ‘noise’, a sudden disturbance or change that has little to no consequence on the overall course or journey.

For wayfinders, ‘noise’ is the irrelevant, misleading, or inconsequential information that obscures what is really important. A wayfinder’s strength lies in their ability to filter out this clutter so they can focus on the patterns and cues that align with their accumulated knowledge and the broader context of their journey. This requires intuition honed by experience, the ability to prioritise, and a deep connection to the environment, boat, and crew.

Success is succession

In wayfinding, success is not measured just by reaching a destination. It is also generated by passing on the knowledge, skills, and wisdom required to navigate onto the next generation of tamariki and rangatahi. This concept – ‘success is succession’ – reflects a more profound purpose of the wayfinder: sustaining the ability of communities to chart their courses far into the future.

Wayfinding is not a static set of rules or techniques. It is dynamic, living knowledge that evolves through experience, observation, and adaptation that is actively shared, practised, and refined within the community. Wayfinding cannot be learned solely from books or instructions; it requires hands-on experience. Elders guide younger navigators through direct practice, encouraging them to engage with the environment – reading waves, feeling the wind, and observing the stars.

Knowledge passes down through mentorship, where experienced wayfinders gradually give their students more responsibility, allowing them to make decisions, learn from mistakes, and build confidence. Beyond the purely technical skills, young wayfinders are taught to develop a relationship with the ocean, the vessel, and the rest of their crew. This relational approach ensures these new wayfinders see navigation as a holistic, interconnected process rather than a purely mechanical task.

In wayfinding, a journey’s success is not just reaching the destination but ensuring the knowledge used to get there remains alive and vibrant for future generations. Several succession principles are helpful to highlight:

- **Sustainability of Knowledge:** A successful wayfinder does not hoard expertise but actively transfers it. If a navigator’s skills die with them, the lineage of knowledge can be lost, and future journeys jeopardised.
- **Empowering the Next Generation:** By teaching others, a wayfinder ensures that their community remains self-reliant and resilient. Younger navigators are not just following orders – they are prepared to take the helm and chart their own courses when the time comes.
- **Building Collective Capacity:** Each generation builds on the knowledge of the previous one. Teaching is not just about replication but also includes contextual discernment and innovation, as new challenges and environments demand fresh interpretations and adaptations.

We believe applying a wayfinding approach will help build better capabilities and help whānau adjust to a changing environment drawing on the deep wisdom of te ao Māori ways of seeing things in a holistic, sphere intelligence manner.

Te ōhanga o te mana

Economy of mana

The establishment of networked whānau economies of wellbeing and the flourishing livelihoods and vibrant ecosystems that they generate is the island the wayfinders call to them. The journey will differ for each whānau node, likened to a waka, in each network, involving different routes with unique challenges and changing dynamics.

This chapter looks to transitions from the perspective of wayfinding – a way of being, doing, and living that emerges from deep within the whakapapa DNA of the Pacific. As we have discussed, wayfinding offers whānau a way of navigating context and circumstance to bring economies of wellbeing to them. We premise this on a deep belief that when we make choices in favour of markers and signs that emerge from te ao Māori, we will create that reality in the present. The chapters in Part One testify to this living reality. Our interest in this book, tapping into the vast body of evidence generated by this research project and that of many others covered in this work and beyond, is to amplify these examples and expand whānau-centred livelihoods within Māori economies of wellbeing. This amplification and expansion is, we believe, an important part of the overall efforts. It is not the only pathway, as others are looking to build sovereign estates outside of the neoliberal, Western matrix. Our standpoint, as we have discussed, is to work at the nexus between and within the existing system to exert change.

For now, many whānau must navigate existing contexts. For example, they must tune into the correct frequencies of te ao Māori and foundational principles of an economy of mana, such as wairua, mana, hau, mauri, and tapu. Whānau must navigate the vagaries of political winds, or ideological seas, of taniwha that loom and rise up to tear apart their right to existence and livelihood as Māori. For this, they must tune into the correct frequencies, battle the storms and the taniwha, and tune out the noise to focus on the highest purpose and the island they are calling to them. They are charged with succession and making the next generation of wayfinders capable and confident, with the necessary prowess to use their sphere intelligence to make wise, smart choices.

Perhaps for some whānau they will hit the corridor of fair weather and have smooth sailing, but the reality is that for many, these will likely not be easy or quick journeys. However, even the journeys themselves will help manifest the destination, and forge the people, as these challenges and the trip will build the necessary resilience and connections to make these islands a reality. As the great master navigator Papa Mau Pialiug said, “Don’t pray for fair weather, pray for courage” (Spiller et al., 2018). As noted in Chapter 2 ‘Whānau Livelihoods’, resilience is built

into te ao Māori, and tapping into this knowledge system builds the capacities to move forward under the most testing of conditions.

To successfully complete these journeys:

- Everyone on board the waka needs to work together to develop an understanding of the destination and a loose plan of how to get there, with some integration between, and alignment with, the various waka in the fleet.
- Everyone on the waka will need to have a specific role, skills, and capacities.
- It will have to be a collective effort, with leadership shown by many on the waka in different situations and contexts.
- The people on the waka and the plan to get to the island will need to be flexible and adaptive to new circumstances.
- It will need to be a journey where the outcomes benefit all on the waka as well as the other waka making similar trips.
- The various waka of the fleet will need to ensure that they remain relatively proximate to one another, not just physically but also cognitively, organisationally, socially, and institutionally.
- There will need to be ongoing flows of information on and between the waka, as well as nurturing relationships.
- The waka that make up the fleet will need to work together, particularly when faced with significant issues.

While each island that whānau call to them will be different, as economies of mana, they will also share several commonalities that:

- emanate from a Māori worldview, premised on whakapapa, informed by the cosmic forces, and shaped by core kaupapa and tikanga;
- inspire a holistic understanding of wellbeing that incorporates spiritual, environmental, cultural/kinship, and economic domains;
- be embedded in the ecological system that sustains them, respecting and caring for their supporting environment; and
- manifest in reciprocity, where all exchanges aim to ensure mutually beneficial outcomes.

Within these parameters – an economic regulatory framework based on te ao Māori principles – there remains a high degree of freedom and opportunity. There are no prescriptions on the types of products or services produced by these islands, nor on the structures of their operations or the ways in which they operate, beyond the

need to be mutually beneficial, to humans and the environment. Relationships are focused on growing holistic wellbeing emanating from and shaped by te ao Māori.

The ocean, understood as a set of connective relationships and interactions, provides powerful signals for navigating this transition. The tides, currents, and waves that push and pull in different directions mirror those political and economic forces whānau will experience, from those within the whānau and between whānau to those of national and international relations and markets. Examining these different forces, particularly in connection to other forces, can provide critical insight into the best course of action. The 'luminaries' – the sun, moon, and stars – are what we align to as the 'perpetual present' – the abiding taonga tuku iho of Māori economies of wellbeing.

Te ārahitanga Leadership

We need a radical re-envisioning of leadership that comes from within whānau and ripples out. Much leadership scholarship looks to outstanding individuals who hold positional authority, power, and status. In our view of transitions as wayfinding, leaders are wayfinders who have developed the capabilities we have identified above, such as developing sphere intelligence, cultivating abductive reasoning, tuning in to the correct frequencies, adjusting to markers in te ao Māori that build healthy, equitable societies with whānau at the centre, and committing to succession and sharing knowledge.

In *Wayfinding Leadership*, Spiller et al. (2015) describe 'rangatira', a term synonymous with leadership in te ao Māori, as made up of raranga, meaning to weave, and tira, meaning a group. Rangatira therefore means to weave a group together. Every person is a thread in the whole fabric of a community – each lending their own specialness, expertise, and effort. The work of the rangatira involves the leader weaving the group together into a unified whole around a common purpose. In leadership as a weaving process, people come forward as needed to provide leadership and move back at other times. Therefore, we need leaders who are humble, who create the conditions for others to shine and express their leadership, and who understand that everyone, including tamariki, are part of this interweaving. Every person is a thread in the whole fabric of a community – each lending their own specialness, expertise, and effort.

Weaving is also about working with tensions and finding balance. Strength lies in people weaving together into a state of belonging, where we feel 'I belong, therefore I am' and part of something bigger than ourselves. This is a view of leadership that is bigger than just the 'now' people – we are part of a movement through time.

Renowned Tūhoe leader Rose Pere offers another description. She breaks the word *rangatira* into three parts: *rā-ngāti rā* – meaning ‘*rā*’ (light) and ‘*ngāti*’ (to belong). *Rā ngāti rā* is to belong to light. We are all *rā ngāti rā*. Leading in this way cultivates the *rangatira*, or personal sovereignty, of each person, where all are equal in terms of human dignity as inhabitants of *te ao mārama* – people who dwell in the world of light (R. Pere, personal communication, 2016).

Rangatira embodies a far richer world of relational authority and togetherness than its glossed renderings of ‘chieftainship’ or ‘leadership’. The example of *rangatira* reminds us that a single kupu can contain whole universes of meaning, dimensions that vanish when pressed into the flatness of translation. The ‘Interlude’ section of this book speaks to this process of ‘presence’ and ‘absence’. Te reo Māori is a living, breathing language, unfolding and evolving with the needs of the present. The previous chapter by Tāne addresses the important role of te reo Māori in developing Māori economies of wellbeing. Tuning into lived experiences is an essential part of this development. For example, in the whānau interviews conducted by Chellie (see Chapter 2), the whānau shared their views of leadership. In the Wainohu whānau, the parents noted:

In terms of leadership, everyone is a leader within our whānau. Each of them is brought up to be a leader. We distribute leadership throughout our whānau in different roles and ways. And I think that’s part of succession planning, with everybody having an opportunity to be a leader in whatever they like. I think that everybody covers all the different viewpoints.

They identified different leadership qualities coming through each child’s map of a good life. For example, for young Kahira (age 9), his mum Fleur noted that:

it was Kohupatiki, his marae and the spiritual nourishment he gets there, and being with Mikaere. He has got a big cross there as well, that’s had an impact on his life in terms of what he thinks about spirituality and being Māori. It’s his spirituality, whānau, and his marae. Those are important things for him because I thought, okay, he’s going to do a picture about basketball, and we’re going to see all of his friends, and maybe he’s getting an award, but that wasn’t what he wanted to show.

Fleur, also the mother of Philippa (age 12) noted that her map is “the most structured and organised, where I could see how she has sectioned it all”. She unpacked Philippa’s map further from the perspective of leadership:

She was making a statement about ‘these things that I can control; this is within my world, these are important to me’, so she’s very focused that way, which is another leadership style. It was good to see that coming through. She was very

orderly. We have got a big whānau, so she is trying to solve all the problems as well as making sure that everybody's catered for.

The Moana whānau gathered at the end of the map storytelling and spent time acknowledging each other for the leadership qualities they see. We hear of a keen eye for precision, systems thinking, sociability, communication, organising, and talent for songwriting, music, and creativity. We also hear of how some in the whānau lead from the front as communicators and others lead from behind. Echoing the raranga tira weaving approach to leadership where people step forward and back expressing leadership at different times, dad Teariki says:

I think it's a matter of giving and taking, in the sense of listening, which is a real key to any form of leadership – knowing when to be up front and when to be back, and having that fluidity to reposition oneself for the betterment of the whole as opposed to perhaps getting stuck in one placement. There are examples of those who do push out in their own area, but everyone equally has to pull back to provide that moment of leadership.

Similarly, daughter Keira (age 25) summarises the whānau kōrero on leadership and highlights that sense of everyone contributing to the whole, expressing leadership in different ways. She says:

A whakataukī that I love from te ao Māori that talks about leadership is 'Ko te amorangi ki mua, ko te hāpai [ō] ki muri' ['The leader at the front and the workers behind the scenes']. That would summarise it all for me: You had the leaders out front leading, but the leaders out front would be nothing or could do nothing without the ones out the back. It's beautiful because of the leadership of both levels and the ones that do lead out there, the kōkiri, the kōrero communicators if you like, but they couldn't do any of their mahi if they didn't have the backbone support or the pou. And so that whakataukī, I think that's where we all sit as a whānau. We all have our different roles at the front and the back. And together, that's what leadership is. I'm in a place myself where I do feel quite confident in that space of leadership. For me, leadership comes from a place of within. Where you are in yourself, and when you can stand on your own two feet and feel comfortable in your tuakiri in your own toolkit into your identity, you can really step out into other spaces quite confidently.

In the Manawa whānau, Kauri (age 29) reflects that:

more leaders have come out of struggle than privilege. Those people go through these experiences, but from these experiences, they become greater leaders, acknowledging and understanding the mistakes through life and stuff. You know, even in my life, I've made mistakes I cannot change, but I can slowly learn from the struggles and become a better leader, not just for myself and my whānau but

also for other rangatahi tāne and wāhine. Leaders are not just privileged and have good things in life – they have struggled through.

In an earlier Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga research project on collective Māori leadership, Spiller et al. (2020) identified five key leadership pillars:

- 1. Kia hauora – Be healthy
- 2. Kia hono – Be connected
- 3. Kia pūrangiaho – Be clear
- 4. Kia tau – Be grounded
- 5. Kia mārama – Be informed

We tested these pillars further in a 2024 quantitative survey that attracted 343 respondents. The most important characteristic of whānau leadership was being healthy (80%), which includes making good decisions, growing others, being a role model, and having emotional intelligence. This was followed closely by being grounded (78%), whereby leaders live their values and are humble, respectful, and trustworthy. In terms of personal leadership development, Māori, especially females, would like to most develop their cultural knowledge and language (62%). This has interesting implications for our project on growing whānau-centred Māori economies of wellbeing. We see a lot of potential for investing into leadership across the five pillars mentioned above, and also into cultural knowledge and language. This is essential for ensuring that the economy of mana orientations are understood and practised meaningfully and appropriately.

Whānau are the building blocks of Māori economies of wellbeing. Ensuring healthy, robust, and capable whānau is vital for the journey ahead. As the research has shown, the whānau is where people turn to in times of need, rather than wealth. The survey showed strong agreement (84%) that their whānau is a source of help in times of need. Māori are most likely to depend on themselves (94%) or their whānau (64%) in times of personal crisis; also friends (35%) but to a lesser extent. Whānau, past experiences, and personal strength are key traits in building resilience in the face of adversity with ‘building back better’ (68%) being a key personal resilience trait.

Respondents to the survey identified a range of traits they felt were most important for leadership, which suggests to us that taking a raranga tira approach and weaving personal leadership aspirations, and traits, is an important part of growing whānau livelihoods in the context of Māori economies of wellbeing.

Ngā tohu mana

Mana touchstones

In the 'Introduction' section of this book we set out eight mana touchstones that have been drawn from this work. Orienting to these touchstones will help support whānau. In *Wayfinding Leadership*, Spiller et al. (2015) say, "The gift of the wayfinder's journey is not arrival at a destination; it is who we become along the way as we fulfil our potential" (p. 166). We repeat the mana touchstones here and encourage people to use them as ways of bringing practical manifestation of whānau livelihoods into lived experience of an economy of mana.

- **Mana touchstone 1:** *Whakapapa* is the gift from our ancestors, our taonga tuku iho. True wealth is in relationships within and between whānau, between all tāngata, and between all aspects of creation. Whakapapa honoured is a life well lived.
- **Mana touchstone 2:** The life principle of *ira tangata* is the gift of being born into this world in an embodied Māori context. Whether we are a wahine, a tāne, or identify differently, *ira tangata* endows us with the responsibilities, accountabilities, and joys of being human. *Ira tangata* is an intrinsic part of whānau livelihoods where we express whakapapa in multifaceted ways. We have the life throb of the ages pulsating in our genes, and cultivating what it means to be Māori is that pulsation.
- **Mana touchstone 3:** *Tipu* refers to our pito mata and releasing our unique life potential in this world. It speaks to the right to grow as Māori and receive the nurturance and sustenance to live a truly abundant and satisfying life in the unfolding of the potential of whānau and each of those who identify as belonging to that whānau.
- **Mana touchstone 4:** *Mana whenua* and *mana moana*. As kaitiaki, Māori always consider the wellbeing of the land and waterways. Māori stand proud when the places they have loved for centuries are thriving. Even in urban settings, Māori can find expressions and practices of kaitiakitanga.
- **Mana touchstone 5:** *Mana motuhake* refers to freedom and agency. Whānau are autonomous entities who can make their choices, do things their way, and are respected for their whakapapa. For those struggling and entirely off track, it is still part of mana motuhake that they can turn to others for support during crises. We do not know what the future holds, and maybe a whānau will pay it forward to our own someday. The point is that we all deserve hope, respect, and commitment to the welfare of all.
- **Mana touchstone 6:** *Mana hau* is about reciprocity in all things. For example, it might be expressed as giving gratitude when collecting pipi. It may be

expressed as generosity in relationships as a guiding ethic, not transnationalism, which expects something in return. Mana hau brings responsibility, leadership, accountability, and duties to balance this world for now and for the future.

- **Mana touchstone 7:** *Mana atua* are the spiritual sources that endow life on Earth with dignity, respect, and sovereign authority vested in the whānau. The interrelated sources of tapu, mauri, wairua, hau, and mana are key to an economy of mana and, thereby, whānau livelihoods. The abundances we receive that provide our economic wellbeing is a gift. Mana atua also refers to the different domains that call us to be respectful, such as the domains of Tangaroa, Tāne Mahuta, and Tāwhirimātea, and our ultimate lived reality in the world of te ao mārama between Papatūānuku and Ranginui.
- **Mana touchstone 8:** *Mana mahi* refers to the meaningful work that we do to support our deepest aspirations. It is to see whānau flourish and have financial independence, certainly enough to live well on, and perhaps more if they want.

In the next chapter, we set these mana touchstones, along with other crucial ideas to emerge from our research, into a practical suite of things that can be done to support the journey deeper into an economy of mana that truly puts whānau livelihoods and wellbeing at the centre.

Mana Touchstones

01

Whakapapa is the gift from our ancestors, our taonga tuku iho. True wealth is in relationships within and between whānau, between all tāngata, and between all aspects of creation.

04

Mana whenua and **mana moana**. As kaitiaki, Māori always consider the wellbeing of the land and waterways.

05

Mana motuhake refers to freedom and agency. Whānau are autonomous entities who can make their own choices, do things their way, and are respected for their whakapapa.

03

Tipu refers to our pito mata and releasing our unique life potential in this world.

08

Mana mahi refers to the meaningful work that we do to support our deepest aspirations.

07

Mana atua are the spiritual sources that endow life on Earth with dignity, respect, and sovereign authority vested in the whānau.

06

Mana hau is about reciprocity in all things. It manifests through exchanges that strengthen enduring relationships of mutuality and respect.

02

The life principle of **ira tangata** is the gift of being born into this world in an embodied Māori context.

Ngā tohutoro

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Upoko 12: Ngā tūtohunga me te kupu whakatepe

Chapter 12: Recommendations and conclusion

– Chellie Spiller, Matthew Rout, and Jarrod Haar

In this final chapter, we pull together recommendations from the preceding chapters and the two quantitative surveys conducted as part of this research (for commentary and details on the surveys, refer to Appendix 2). While whānau⁸¹ is a core support system, strengthening whānau connections could enhance overall wellbeing. Providing further external support during times of crisis is essential. Rangatahi and wāhine face distinct challenges, including stress, financial insecurity, and professional concerns. Tailored programmes are necessary to address these needs. Programmes that nurture cultural connection and belonging, te reo Māori fluency, and cultural expression enhance Māori identity and overall wellbeing. Financial stress is a critical issue; addressing it requires systemic interventions in financial management, pay injustice, and job security.

These recommendations are built around three core assumptions that should be apparent from the preceding chapters. The first is that Māori economies of wellbeing will be built around whānau, both whakapapa and kaupapa based – called whānau nodes here because they have the potential to be built into networks. The second assumption is that these economies of wellbeing will be built up into distributed networks, starting with several whānau nodes, with scale emerging over time. The third assumption is that these Māori economies of wellbeing will be aided by what might be termed ‘supporting organisations’, including Māori authorities, community groups, and policymakers, as well as any other ‘external’ or non-whānau actors who could be engaged in or otherwise aid the development of Māori economies of wellbeing. Therefore, where relevant, the following recommendations have been

⁸¹ English translations of te reo Māori words and phrases in this chapter are provided in the glossary on page 382.

tailored for whānau and for supporting organisations, with the aim of providing practical guidance to both groupings.

Ngā tūtohunga Recommendations

1. Identify key whānau nodes

- Find whānau that are growing wellbeing and are guided by traditional kaupapa and tikanga – these are the foundation for future economies of wellbeing, the nodes upon which the networks can be built.
- For whānau themselves, this might involve seeking other whānau they would like to emulate and learn from, be it a whānau they know who has become self-sufficient on their whenua or a business they admire and want to work with.
- For the supporting organisations, this might be more systematic, with a more rigorous and ordered approach, though it might also be as grounded as the whānau-based approach.
- Any criteria should centre around how well these whānau nodes enact and embody mātauranga, kaupapa, and tikanga – aligning with the principles of an economy of mana.

2. Co-create a shared vision

- Develop a collective, participatory vision of future Māori economies of wellbeing.
- It should align with te ao Māori, mātauranga, kaupapa, and tikanga.
- The vision needs to be pragmatic and achievable but also inspirational.
- It must also be flexible to accommodate local variation and encourage broad stakeholder buy-in.
- It must be consensus-based, and participation must be as broad as possible.
- The development must bring together the whānau and the various supporting organisations involved in transitioning to Māori economies of wellbeing.
- It should be whānau led, with the supporting organisations facilitating and helping.
- Use stories, narratives, and cultural framing to communicate the vision effectively.
- Outline short- and long-term strategies linked to achievable goals, which should be seen as a journey as much as a destination.
- Prepare to alter the vision according to changing circumstances.

3. Help whānau build their ōhanga livelihood nest

- Leverage insights presented in this work to help whānau build an ōhanga livelihood nest that centres whakapapa as loving interrelationships guided by responsibility and reciprocity.
- Support whānau to live a life emanating from a wairua centre.
- Cultivate relationships within and between whānau, iwi, hapū, hapori, and hoa. These are the connective tissue of whānau-centred livelihoods.
- Support whānau to generate meaningful, sustainable forms of income that support all whānau members.
- Where relevant, provide mechanisms and support for whānau to achieve self-sufficiency, including healthy thriving whenua, awa, and moana.
- Focus on achieving house ownership and papa kāinga where wanted.
- Help whānau be strong and enabled to be the primary source of help in times of need.
- Deliver education pathways for whānau that support good livelihoods as identified by the whānau. These education pathways also include starting whānau enterprises.

4. Develop lateral, grassroots leadership

Use existing whānau as models, emphasising grassroots leadership and applied solutions.

Identify the personal leadership characteristics members of whānau would like to cultivate and support them in developing these characteristics.

Highlight leadership models prioritising Māori values, wellbeing, connectedness, and cultural identity. Encourage wayfinding and situational leadership.

Provide leadership development to whānau emphasising:

1. Kia hauora – Be healthy
2. Kia hono – Be connected
3. Kia pūrangiaho – Be clear
4. Kia tau – Be grounded
5. Kia mārama – Be informed.

Cultivate the eight mana touchstones:

- Mana touchstone 1: Whakapapa
- Mana touchstone 2: Ira tangata
- Mana touchstone 3: Tipu

- Mana touchstone 4: Mana whenua and mana moana
- Mana touchstone 5: Mana motuhake
- Mana touchstone 6: Mana hau
- Mana touchstone 7: Mana atua
- Mana touchstone 8: Mana mahi.

5. Assess local context

- Ground solutions in local realities, focusing on strengths and opportunities.
- The local contexts need to inform how the vision and the steps to achieving it are manifested.
- For whānau, this means taking stock of the skills, resources, and capacities of their whānau and the local community, infrastructure, and environment.
- For whānau businesses, determining the broader local context might also mean finding like-minded businesses with which they could cluster or complementary businesses with which they could form a chain.
- For the supporting organisations, they might play a role in matching up different whānau nodes from various locations with complementary situations – for example, one who runs a mussel farm and an agricultural operation that could use their waste as fertiliser. The supporting organisations can also help put plans in place to improve local contexts where needed – for example, through training programmes that upskill or provide capital that facilitates utilisation.

6. Expand the definition of 'economy'

- Incorporate non-traditional economic activities like barter, household production, and cultural contributions.
- Recognise the interconnected roles of households, commons, markets, and the state in fostering wellbeing.
- For whānau, this means understanding that the focus is on what maintains and grows the life forces rather than narrow monetary economic parameters. While money is essential, it should be seen as a facilitator rather than a goal.
- For whānau businesses, this means incorporating a quadruple bottom line and viewing the broader economy outside 'the market' and other firms.
- For the supporting organisations, this requires expanding the ways in which 'economic' actors are identified. This means they must recognise far more than just for-profit private enterprises as economic actors.

7. Foster experimental, evidence-based approaches

- Test innovative strategies using pilot projects and learn from global examples.
- Adapt proven methods to the local context, ensuring scalability and relevance.
- Focus on building networks that support both horizontal and vertical value creation.
- The supporting organisations have a vital role in providing the necessary support, including catalysing pilot projects and identifying global examples that can be contextualised to specific situations.

8. Use iterative, co-creative processes

- Employ monitoring and feedback mechanisms to refine policies and practices.
- Facilitate peer learning and adaptive strategies that evolve with stakeholder input.
- Celebrate small wins and ensure frameworks accommodate long-term growth.
- For whānau businesses, this means not only tracking operations and recording critical metrics but also understanding which things to track and the relative importance of these different elements. It also means experimenting with different strategies and approaches, which again can be mitigated by collective action.
- The supporting organisations must provide the necessary support and resources to help implement and evaluate various strategies and approaches.

9. Build networks

- The focus should be on building networks of whānau nodes.
- These networks need to be grounded in their location, built on and around the assets (natural, human, cultural, etc.) that are already in place.
- The networks should be specialised, either focusing on a specific good or service or clustering around a sector, though they also can lie outside the standard 'economic' model.
- The networks need to be premised around mutually beneficial outcomes, with limited but existing competition.
- The networks need to be highly adaptive, able to change to suit circumstances.

- The networks need to be built around not just geographic proximity but also cognitive, organisational, social, or institutional proximity.
- The networks need to be information rich, facilitating communication and education.
- The networks need to focus on mentoring and incubating between nodes, creating an ongoing web of support and learning.

10. Emphasise decentralised, locally driven solutions.

- Empower stakeholders to develop tailored, context-specific solutions.
- Build regional and national networks from the ground up, fostering connections between nodes.
- Focus on a federated system of diverse, interconnected Māori economies of wellbeing.
- For whānau, this means taking leadership of their destiny, planning the different steps, and adapting to new circumstances.
- For the supporting organisations, this means stepping back and letting the whānau nodes take leadership while providing the necessary support and resources to help them.

11. Support decentralisation with centralised structures.

- Implement central governance for coordination, economies of scale, and advocacy.
- Ensure these structures are participatory and accountable to local nodes and networks.
- Maintain a balance between localised operations and cohesive oversight.
- For whānau, there will need to be some trust in these centralised structures, though this needs to be earned rather than taken as a given.
- For the supporting organisations, centralised approaches must be implemented carefully, focusing on nurturing and supporting rather than leading or taking control.

12. Uphold mana wāhine

- Support whānau and community engagement. Encourage initiatives that enhance cohesion, connectedness, and wealth within whānau, especially targeting wāhine Māori, as it seems they may be experiencing more stress than men when it comes to whānau cohesion.
- Implement targeted financial literacy and support programmes for wāhine, focusing on the 78% who are worried about their financial future.

- Advocate for governmental and workplace policy changes to address income disparities, promote equitable pay and job security and improve workplace satisfaction.
- Promote professional and educational growth. Develop tailored educational support programmes focusing on wāhine. Address concerns about professional futures by offering mentorship, career development, and upskilling programmes.
- Strengthen leadership and spiritual connection. Provide training programmes for wāhine that focus on leadership traits such as being healthy, grounded, clear, and connected.
- Foster environments that prioritise spiritual and social connectedness for wāhine.
- Expand opportunities in community and health sectors. Increase pathways for wāhine into fulfilling roles in community work and health sectors, which are desirable career options.
- Increase access to jobs that enable collaboration with whānau and foster a sense of belonging.
- Actively provide support for cultural knowledge and language development. Support initiatives that promote wāhine cultural knowledge and fluency in te reo Māori, addressing their desire to deepen their cultural connection and growth.
- Provide support to help wāhine balance their work and life: Develop networks to support wāhine managing this balance, including possible childcare options and greater flexibility around work.
- Understand wāhine face additional unemployment challenges – they are more likely to be unemployed. Bridging this – or acknowledging the importance of whānau-related business or whānau care – may provide strong support.

13. Wrap around rangatahi

- Boost mental services for rangatahi to address higher stress levels.
- Encourage physical activity programmes grounded in te ao Māori that build resilience and stress management skills.
- Implement job training and placement programmes to help rangatahi transition into meaningful employment and reduce stress.
- Unemployment challenges rangatahi. They need to be reminded that employment is a 'long-term strategy' and that any form of work – even unpaid community work (e.g. at a marae) can provide them with greater skills to aid employability.

14. Prioritise secure employment

- Prioritise employment initiatives that focus on transitioning unemployed Māori into skilled roles.
- Partner with employers to create community-focused work opportunities that offer meaning, purpose, and connection.
- Provide support networks to bolster mental and emotional resilience.
- Higher unemployment amongst Māori is an unfair long-term reality in the New Zealand job market. Encourage Māori businesses to hire Māori and partner with employers seeking to hire and bolster local Māori economies with paid labour.

15. Develop healthy workplaces

- Implement policies that address pay inequities and job insecurity, and improve workplace satisfaction.
- Adopt flexible policies that reduce the impact of work pressures on home life.
- Develop workplace leadership and management capabilities that reflect te ao Māori.
- Support workers to access te reo Māori education.
- With Māori representing over 14% of the workforce, expectations around the proportion in leadership roles need to be examined by employers. Create mentoring programmes and pick talent to shape and grow into leaders.

Te whakaaro whakatepe Conclusion

This book is positioned from a te ao Māori standpoint; it sits at the interface of the broader economy, which is shaped by neoliberal principles. Within this broader economy, there are pockets of endeavour advocating for sustainable, holistic, regenerative, and relational ways of building economies that serve multi-dimensional wellbeing. We look forward to the day these approaches are amplified and become the economic norm. For us, we are dedicated to centring whānau livelihoods.

Straddling this interface presents challenges – it is not clear-cut. It requires discernment, adaptability, and at times, resistance. The interface is like a hinge, opening the door to a better way. In this sense, we hope we are witnessing a sea-change towards genuine economies of wellbeing, where whānau are at the centre.

The strength and resilience of whānau who build their own economies from the ground up give Māori economies of wellbeing their vitality and endurance. This is a wellspring of hope that thrives best with a high degree of mana motuhake – self-determination. It is vital that supporting organisations provide encouragement and resources, particularly as the broader politico-economic framework is often not conducive – and in many cases, actively obstructive – to these economic models. Institutional barriers, restrictive policies, and systemic inequities pose real challenges to their success.

These whānau and their developing networks will need allies – individuals and groups who will champion their efforts, provide guidance, and help them navigate the many hurdles ahead. While each whānau will chart its own unique course, many waka will travel alongside them, forging a collective movement towards economic transformation.

Ngā kōrero mō ngā mahi toi

Comments on artwork

– Te Ata-a-rua Hansen-Cribb

The illustrations in this book are more than visual accessories; each element and placement forms a thread as a means to convey storytelling and kaupapa of *Te Ahunga atu ki ngā Ōhanga Oranga Māori: Towards Māori Economies of Wellbeing*. As I began researching, I sat down with Chellie and Matthew to discuss their visions and objectives for the visual identity. I came to a conclusion: such illustrations would not only be consistent with, but would also support and enrich, the research and values this book presents. Through this segment, I will reflect on the artwork featured throughout and explore how visual elements can communicate complex ideas.

Te whārangi uwhi (*Te Poipoi i te Tōnui Māori*) Cover page (*Nurturing Māori Prosperity*)

To elaborate, when I began brainstorming, from previous conversations it was certain the cover would be set in a land environment, which led me to name keywords and visual symbols associated with them, such as the word harakeke.⁸² Harakeke can be a visual metaphor for whānau. Each layer represents members in a whānau, from the rito (inner shoot) being the baby to the other layers representing the extended whānau. However, after some thought and advice, we concluded it was not the approach we wanted to go with. I then found myself leaning towards pōhutukawa. From my knowledge, we can associate the Matariki cluster star pōhutukawa. The concept of connecting with those who have passed, and how it is a time to remember, reflect, and honour them. However, pōhutukawa can also associate with the moana. From a sign to gathering kina, to the story of Te Rerenga-wairua. The kōrero is that Cape Rēinga is the most spiritually significant place in Aotearoa, and alongside is a pōhutukawa tree and a lonely lighthouse that marks this place. When we pass, our spirits travel to this pōhutukawa, where we descend into the underworld, to which we travel to Ohaua before heading to Hawaiki-A-Nui. Considering all this, I felt that pōhutukawa would be the right fit. Pōhutukawa can represent and contribute themes such as intergenerational importance of whenua and moana in Māori economies, as well as the connection between whānau, past

⁸² English translations of te reo Māori words and phrases in this section are provided in the glossary on page 382.

and present. Additionally, a pōhutukawa can serve as a metaphor for resilience and a reflection on the past to which we can move forward to a flourishing future.

Subsequently, this led to the development of tangata Māori. My initial goal was to create a whānau enjoying their day out. However, upon discussion, I went back to the drawing board, to create a community-centred approach. Considering this approach, I needed to create a layout that was not overcrowding. I achieved this by sectioning tangata Māori: a kaumātua and tāne on the left; a kuia, pāpā, and tamāhine on the right; and a wahine and tamaiti in the centre. Moving forward I had to remind myself to keep consistent with colour selections. I achieved this by repurposing colours from the pōhutukawa tree, such as red and browns, as well as blues from the sky. I then went on to adding glimpses of traditional kākahu, such as heru and tāhei, with a range of designs, such as toki, pikorua, and manaia, as they can represent strength, love, and protection. The overall idea was to have people of all ages come together and participate in different activities with the intention to create an understanding of nurturing from tangata to tangata, to tangata to whenua.

I needed to figure out how to weave all of these elements together to create a final outcome. I began with the sky and land, then decided to incorporate a pattern. In te ao Māori, patterns are a way to show whakapapa and kōrero. This led me to learn about the pātiki pattern. Looking back now, it falls into place, as I had used elements such as a pōhutukawa, which are known to grow on the coast, so the idea of bringing in another element that could relate to Tangaroa seems fitting. However, that isn't the only reason for using this pattern. Pātiki patterns can vary, but from what I have learned, they are a symbol of generosity and hospitality. The pātiki itself was also a reliable source of nourishment to many. Moving down to the whenua, as I had already created key elements, I needed to create a simple design that would tie everything together. I decided to use two shades of green, which led to the final outcome.

Consequently, this led to the name *Nurturing Māori Prosperity*. This refers to fostering and supporting wellbeing and growth that lead to the success of Māori communities.

Whakairoiro pārongo (Ngā Tohu Mana) Infographic (Mana Touchstones)

The development of the infographic was, in fact, straightforward. I needed to create a visual layout that could quickly communicate and simply display the ideas of the mana touchstones. Thanks to Matthew and Chellie, I already had a visualisation of what the infographic may look like. Some key ideas included a backdrop of whakapapa, an atua surrounding everything, and the other mana touchstones

placed in the centre. Another idea was to create a life-course diagram. From these ideas and reading about the mana touchstones, my interpretation was to create a non-linear approach, and what better way than setting it in a marae/pā. From my experience we tend to have our selected roles; for example, when we are young, we tend to have that freedom of going and exploring the moana or just spending time with cousins.

However, as we start to grow, we take on more responsibility, which can lead us to help gather kai and look after the younger tamaiti. Furthermore, we begin to learn more about leadership roles and so on. In my experience this helped me learn about tikanga and values within the mana touchstones.

As I began developing how I wanted my marae/pā setting to look, I wanted it to continue the visual themes of the cover page. Because of this, I wanted to have a wharenuī that was situated next to the moana, as well as mountains to tie in the pōhutukawa. I also repurposed the colour scheme from the cover to create a cohesive background that was not overly busy, because if I started adding more elements and text, it would then be overcrowded.

As stated above, I wanted to create a non-linear approach to a life circle, which led me to develop tangata Māori by incorporating actions such as fishing, weaving, swimming, and gathering, with people of all ages. These actions represent different stages of life as well as touchstones that give a sense of continuity and growth. I then went back to figure out how I could elevate it even more, and one suggestion was about having an atua present. I decided to use the form of a tiki, as I felt it was the most apparent form to display an atua that could stand out from the tangata Māori. I furthermore wanted to tie in the cover by adding a pōhutukawa.

The last step was to add in the text. I used a simple grid layout to organise the placement of the text, and numbered each mana touchstone from 1 to 8. For the text font, I reused the text style from the book to help further enhance the visual identity. I also decided on the colour yellow for the text to help further improve its readability.

Ka whāngaia, ka whakatipu, ka puāwai.

That which is nurtured, grows, and blossoms.

Throughout this process, I have learned the act of visual storytelling that carries the core values within *Te Ahunga atu ki ngā Ōhanga Oranga Māori: Towards Māori Economies of Wellbeing*. Each decision was guided by whakaaro, and commitment to create illustrations that were both meaningful and enriching. Just as the Pōhutukawa roots itself in the whenua, each design decision is a visual narrative that grounds

itself in mātauranga. By nurturing these ideas, they can plant seeds that grow and flourish.

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Te papakupu whāiti

Glossary

Source: *Te Aka* (maoridictionary.co.nz).

ahi kā burning fires of occupation, continuous occupation

akoranga learning, subject, discipline, educational course, academic programme, teaching, services

aroha to love, feel pity, feel concern for, feel compassion, empathise

atamira stage, platform

atua ancestor with continuing influence, god, supernatural being

awa river

hāhi religion, church

haka performance of the haka, posture dance – vigorous dances with actions and rhythmically shouted words

hapori section of a kinship group, family, society, community

hapū kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe

harakeke New Zealand flax, *Phormium tenax*

hau vital essence, vitality, wind, breeze, breath

hauora health, vigour

Hawaiki ancient homeland – the places from which Māori migrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand

heihei hen, chook, fowl, chicken

heru comb

hoa friend, companion, mate, partner, spouse, ally

Io supreme being, creator of cosmos

ira tangata human genes, physical and spiritual endowment

ira whānau unique family 'DNA'

iwi tribe

kahu fabric

kai food

kai moana seafood

kaiako teacher

kaiāwhina helper, assistant, contributor, counsel, advocate

kaikaranga caller – the woman (or women) who has the role of making the ceremonial call to visitors onto a marae, or equivalent venue, at the start of a pōwhiri

kāinga home, address, residence, village, settlement, habitation, habitat, dwelling

kaitiaki trustee, minder, guard, custodian, guardian, caregiver, keeper, steward

kaitiakitanga guardianship, stewardship, trusteeship

kaiwaiata singer, vocalist

kaiwaiata tautoko backing vocalist

kākahu garment, clothes, cloak, apparel, clothing, costume

karakia prayer, grace, blessing

kaumātua adult, elder, elderly man, elderly woman, old man – a person of status within the whānau

kaupapa Māori Māori approach, Māori topic, Māori customary practice, Māori institution, Māori agenda, Māori principles, Māori ideology

kaupapa topic, policy, matter for discussion, plan, purpose, scheme, proposal, agenda, subject, programme, theme, issue, initiative

kawa marae protocol

kina sea egg, common sea urchin

kōhanga nest

kōhanga reo Māori language preschool

kōkiri to thrust forward, attack, call, charge, rush forward

kōrero speech, narrative, story, news, account, discussion, conversation, discourse, statement, information

koru to be folded, looped, coiled

kotahitanga unity, togetherness, solidarity, collective action

kōtiro girl, daughter

kuia elderly woman, grandmother

Kupe early navigator

kupu word, vocabulary, saying, talk, message, statement, utterance, lyric

kura school

mā te rongō using all of our senses

mahi work, job

mahi ngātahi cooperation, working together

mana prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma

mana atua sacred spiritual power from the atua, spiritual deities

mana hau in the context of this book, refers to deeply held relationships of respect and reciprocity in Māori economies of wellbeing

mana mahi in the context of this book, refers to the meaningful work that we do to support our deepest aspirations

mana moana power from sea, lakes, and waterways

mana motuhake freedom and agency, mana through self-determination and control over one's destiny

mana whenua power from the land

manaaki/manaakitanga to support, take care of, give hospitality to, protect, look out for – show respect, generosity and care for others

manaia stylised figure used in carving

manuhiri visitor, guest

Māoritanga Māori culture, Māori practices and beliefs, Māoriness, Māori way of life

māra kai food garden

marae courtyard – the open area in front of the wharenui, where formal greetings and discussions take place; often also used to include the complex of buildings around the marae

Matariki Pleiades, Messier 45

mātauranga knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill

maunga mountain, mount, peak

mauri life principle, life force, vital essence, special nature, a material symbol of a life principle, source of emotions – the essential quality and vitality of a being or entity

mauri ora conscious (associated with consciously created wellbeing)

mihi to greet, pay tribute, acknowledge, thank

moana sea, ocean, large lake

mōkai pet

mokemoke lonely, solitary

mokopuna grandchildren, grandchild

motu island, country, land, nation

ngā heihei the chickens

ngā hēki hoki and the eggs

Ngā Puhi tribal group of much of Northland

ngahere bush, forest

ngeru cat

ōhanga nest, economics, economy

oranga livelihood, welfare, health, living

pā fortified village, fort, stockade, screen, blockade, city (especially a fortified one)

Pākehā English, foreign, European, exotic

pakeke adult

pāpā father, uncle, dad

papa kāinga original home, home base, village, communal Māori land

papakupu dictionary

Papatūānuku Earth, Earth mother and wife of Ranginui

pātiki woven panel symbolising a source of food

pēpē baby

pikorua infinity symbol

pipi bivalve shellfish

pirihimana police officer

pito mata in the context of this book, refers to releasing our unique life potential in this world

pōhutukawa New Zealand Christmas tree

pono be true, valid, honest, genuine, sincere

pōtae cap, hat, beret, beanie, covering for the head

pou post, upright, support, pole, pillar

poutokomanawa the name of the leader who is a central support for the whānau

pukapuka books

punarua second family

rāhui prohibition as an act of conservation

rākau tree, stick, timber, wood, spar, mast, plant

rangatahi younger generation, youth

rangatira chiefly, leader; in this book we use *raranga* (weave) *tira* (group), meaning someone who weaves a group together as the basis of leadership

Rangiātea uppermost heaven

Ranginui sky father

raranga weave

rau leaf, frond, plume, spray, feather

rito centre shoot, young centre leaf of the harakeke

rongoā Māori Māori medicine

rūnanga council, tribal council, assembly, board, boardroom, iwi authority

tāhei necklace, neck ornament

tairongo senses

tama boy

tamāhine daughter

tamaiti/tamariki child/children

tamatāne son

tāne husband, male, man

Tāne Mahuta atua (ancestor) of the forest and all forest creatures

Tangaroa atua (ancestor) of the sea and fish

tangata/tāngata person/people

tangitangi cry, mourn, weep

taniwha water spirit, monster, dangerous water creature, powerful creature

taonga treasure, anything prized

taonga tuku iho heirloom, something handed down, cultural property, heritage

tapu be sacred, prohibited, restricted, set apart, forbidden, under atua protection

tautoko to support, prop up, verify, advocate, agree

Tāwhirimātea atua (ancestor) of the wind and storms

te ao Māori the Māori world

te ao mārama the world of light

te reo Māori language

Te Rerenga Wairua Cape Rēinga, Leaping Place of Spirits

tika to be correct, true, upright, right, just, fair, accurate, appropriate, lawful, proper, valid

tikanga correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, rule, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention, protocol

tiki carved figure, image, a neck ornament usually made of greenstone and carved in an abstract form of a human

tipu to grow, increase, spring, issue, begin, develop, sprout, prosper, originate

tipuna/tipuna ancestor/s

tira group, travelling party, troupe, choir, ray, beam

tohunga to be expert, proficient, adept

toki adze

tōku whare my house

toto blood

tuakiri person, personality, identity

tuarā back, ally, support, defender

tuitui to lace, sew, bind

tumuaki head, leader, president, principal, head (of an institution), chancellor, chief executive

tungāne brother (of a female), male cousin (of a female)

tupuna/tūpuna ancestor/s

ūkaipō origin, real home

urupā burial ground, cemetery, graveyard

wahine/wāhine woman/women

wahine toa woman who is brave, bold, victorious, experienced, accomplished, adept, competent, skilful, capable

wai water

wai māori freshwater, mineral water

waiata song, chant, psalm

waiora health, soundness

wairua spirit, soul, attitude, quintessence, feel, mood, feeling, nature, essence, atmosphere

wairuatanga spirituality

waka canoe, vehicle, conveyance

wero challenge

whaea kēkē aunt

whakaaro thought, opinion, plan, understanding, idea, intention, gift, conscience

whakapapa genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent

whakapono faith, creed, belief

whakatauki proverb

whakawhanaungatanga process of establishing relationships, relating well to others

whānau extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to a number of people

whānau hui family gathering

whānau kōrero/wānanga family gathering to meet and discuss, deliberate, consider

whanaungatanga relationship, kinship, sense of family connection

whāngai to feed, nourish, bring up, foster, adopt, raise, nurture, rear

whare house, building, residence, dwelling, shed, hut, habitation

whare pukapuka library

wharenuī meeting house, large house

whāriki floor covering, ground cover, floor mat, carpet, mat

whenua land, placenta

Te āpitihanga 1: Ngā Raraunga Inerahi Mā Te Tirohanga o te Upoko 2 – Ngā Whānau Tōnui, Manawaroa hoki

Appendix 1: Quantitative data through the lens of Chapter 2 – Whānau flourishing, self-determination, and resilience

This appendix presents a focused interpretation of the 2024 quantitative survey data as it relates specifically to the themes of **whānau flourishing**, **self-determination**, and **resilience** explored in Chapter 2. While a general summary of survey results is provided in Appendix 2, this appendix applies a kaupapa Māori lens to key findings relevant to whānau-based economic and social wellbeing.⁸³

1. Understanding whānau

Respondents expressed complex and layered understandings of whānau.

- **88%** saw whakapapa as the foundation of whānau.
- **54%** identified whānau as a source of responsibilities and obligations.
- **48%** saw it as a desirable way to live.
- **45%** described whānau as a source of resources and capability.
- Only **2%** viewed whānau as an undesirable way to live.
- **54%** believed shared kaupapa and collective interest could constitute whānau.

2. Flourishing: Capacities, capital, and cultural strength

When asked how whānau might flourish, respondents highlighted both tangible and intangible strengths.

⁸³ English translations of te reo Māori words and phrases in this appendix are provided in the glossary on page 382.

- **71%** said they had heritage (whakapapa connections, cultural skills, land links).
- **57%** had access to wealth (assets, income, hapū/iwi support).
- **71%** had social capital (relationships, networks).
- **69%** reported cohesion (traditions, leadership, collective identity).
- **57%** had connectedness through leisure, politics, and rights.
- **71%** believed capacities such as education, health, lifestyle, and employment were key to whānau flourishing.

Cultural indicators of flourishing included te reo Māori (54%) and expressions of identity through haka, waiata, karakia, and tikanga.

3. Financial stress and aspirations

While the chapter centres on non-financial values, material wellbeing remains a reality for many.

- **73%** worry about how they will cope financially in the future.
- **60%** have no income left at the end of the pay cycle.
- **52%** say their income is too low to make a living.
- **51%** cannot afford much beyond basics.

Despite this, **57%** felt they had whānau wealth. Aspirations for financial independence were often linked with collective and sustainable living models.

- **47%** found a collective papa kāinga lifestyle appealing (86% were open to it).
- **49%** found collective housing ownership appealing or very appealing (rising to 83% when including neutral responses).

4. Resilience and support networks

Resilience was framed as both personal and collective.

- **94%** reported they first rely on themselves during crisis.
- **64%** turn to whānau in personal crises.
- In wider emergencies, **77%** said they would turn to whānau, and **93%** would rely on themselves.
- Whānau was consistently seen as the most trusted and reliable support structure in both everyday and extreme situations.
- Survey commentary identified **healers, mental and physical wellbeing, and spiritual practices** (wairua, exercise, balance) as key to resilience.

Traits of resilient response included:

- 'building back better' (endorsed by **68%** of respondents);
- acceptance (48%);
- following ancestral wisdom (44%);
- healing (43%);
- fighting back (38%); and
- minimisation (13%).

5. Role of marae, hapū, and iwi

Respondents also identified ways that Māori institutions could support whānau wellbeing and resilience.

- **53%** valued te reo Māori.
- **50%** emphasised education and skills development.
- **43%** cited rongoā Māori and traditional healing.
- **36%** endorsed cultural and sporting events.
- **35%** wanted access to counselling.
- Leadership, advocacy, and mentorship were also valued.

6. Work, belonging, and economic preferences

Respondents expressed a desire for meaningful and collective work.

- **56%** thought working with whānau was desirable or highly desirable (59% of males, 47% of females).

Preferred sectors for Māori collective employment included:

- community work (57%);
- health (43%);
- education (39%); and
- environmental work (38%).

Employment preferences included:

- iwi (44%);
- hapū (41%); and
- for-profit Māori businesses (41%).

These preferences reflect not only economic aspirations but a deeper pursuit of **mana-enhancing, place-based, and values-aligned** livelihoods.

Te āpitihanga 2: Ngā pito kōrero e pā ana ki ngā uiui whānui inerahi me ngā taipitopito kōrero

Appendix 2: Quantitative surveys commentary and details

We conducted the first quantitative survey in 2022 and the second in 2024. The surveys reached 508 adult Māori participants in total. The first survey had 165 respondents, and the second had 343. The commentary here is on the results of the second survey, which asked questions that focused on:

- ideas of wellbeing;
- what a good life looks like;
- what gives resilience in the face of difficulties;
- where to go in a crisis; and
- what good leadership looks like.

Whānau at the core

The foundation of this project was built around whānau, reflecting its central role in the traditional economy and its enduring relevance today. Survey findings further reinforced this, showing strong agreement (84%) that whānau is a key source of help in times of need. Most respondents (64%) indicated they would rely on their whānau in a personal crisis more than friends (35%), hapū (12%), iwi (11%), or marae (10%).⁸⁴

Respondents highlighted the practical role of whānau in emergencies (84%) and routine matters (84%). However, while whānau remains central, 94% of respondents stated they rely on themselves during personal crises. This suggests opportunities to strengthen whānau bonds and enhance their capacity to provide support.

Whānau remain at the heart of wellbeing for most Māori. For 88% of respondents, whakapapa is the key pillar of whānau, followed by kaupapa (54%). Whānau

⁸⁴ English translations of te reo Māori words and phrases in this section are provided in the glossary on page 382.

relationships and capacities are perceived as strong (71% for both). Males were more likely than females to believe in greater whānau cohesion, connectedness, and wealth. Females, however, placed higher importance on spiritual and social connectedness within their whānau.

Money and work matters

This book emphasises broader non-financial motives and outcomes, reflecting te ao Māori and addressing modern overemphasis on economic measures. However, financial considerations remain significant for most Māori.

Survey findings revealed that 73% of respondents often think about how they will manage financially in the future. A majority (60%) reported that their income is depleted by the end of the pay cycle, and 50% noted their income is too low to cover basic living expenses. Financial stress is especially pronounced among females (78%) compared to males (64%), with those aged 31–45 feeling it most acutely.

Professional concerns also weighed heavily, with 50% of respondents worried about their career prospects. Females aged 31–45 expressed more significant concern than males over 46, and younger Māori were more apprehensive about their professional futures. Despite these challenges, 67% of respondents were satisfied with their jobs and found them meaningful, though only 40% were satisfied with their pay.

Working with whānau was deemed desirable or highly desirable by 56% of respondents (59% of males, 47% of females). Females expressed a preference for workplaces that foster belonging and inclusion. Community work and health sectors were identified as particularly appealing work.

Remaining resilient

The survey underscored the resilience of Māori in the face of work, financial, social, and political challenges. Most (69%) identified resilience in the fabric of their whānau. Additionally, 68% felt confident in their ability to handle workplace difficulties, with 66% attributing this resilience to overcoming previous life challenges. Older Māori (46+) were more likely to view life positively and balance work and family demands. In contrast, those aged 31–45 were likelier to report stress and negativity, potentially due to life stage or responsibilities.

Mental and physical health challenges were particularly pronounced among younger Māori and those who were unemployed. Financial stress was widespread, with 69% reporting it as a significant concern. Work pressures often impacted home life, especially for males, who were more likely to allow home challenges to affect their work. Employment was closely linked to happiness and stress management.

Aspects of identity

Survey respondents expressed their Māori identity in diverse ways. The most common expression was through te reo Māori (41%), followed by participation in traditional customs such as haka, waiata, karakia, and cultural events (21%). Nineteen percent described their identity as an intrinsic part of themselves, encompassing pride in heritage and integrating Māori values into daily life. Thirteen percent were unsure about how they expressed their identity or felt it did not apply to them.

While 92% of respondents had some knowledge of te reo Māori, only 14% considered themselves above average in fluency. Females strongly desired to improve their cultural knowledge and language proficiency, aligning with their belief in the importance of education support. Additionally, leadership traits valued by females included being healthy, grounded, clear, and connected.

Both surveys were administered by Cint NZ Ltd. The data results in the second survey were analysed by Insights Exchange. AI was also used to generate insights. Team members utilised the quantitative insights as relevant to their chapters and to develop the recommendations.

He tina ki runga, he tāmore ki raro
Contentment above, firmly rooted below.

This whakataki speaks to a central message in this book: those with a good family foundation and proper grounding in their own culture and heritage will find satisfaction and contentment in life.

