

PACIFIC WHĀNAU ORA CONFERENCE

Wednesday 25 November – Thursday 26 November 2015
James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor, Wellington

The Pasifika Futures conference brought together Whanau Ora commissioned providers and families from across core, innovation and small grants commissioning streams. Over 150 people attended the conference to share and connect on how to best support Pacific families to achieve their goals, aspirations and outcomes. This report outlines key themes and messages in the conference; a summary of speakers and key findings from the evaluation of the conference.

Key messages from the conference

1. The best solutions for our families will come from our families and our communities:

Solutions to challenges faced by our families lie with our families themselves, whanau ora is the opportunity to draw on what is already working for them. Family is the solution not the problem.

2. Providing the evidence about the progress of our families is critical in advocating for what works in supporting our families achieve their goals and aspirations:

Deputy Prime Minister Bill English and Minister Te Ururoa Flavell emphasised the importance of building evidence around the work we do with families to support them in advocating for our families.

3. Government will pay for impact and change

The government will pay what it takes to support our families do better– because it makes economic sense and has long term gains for everyone. We just need to demonstrate the difference we are making with the resource we have.

Key points from the Deputy Prime Minister, Hon Bill English:

The government is looking for better ways of supporting high needs communities

The Social Investment Approach is about prevention, partnership and changing the government system by calculating the payoff for where we spend the money. An important part of this is understanding the “customer” better. Traditionally the government has paid for services to the Pacific community through schools, hospitals and welfare system –this has worked for some, but not for everyone, and it works for some needs but not for all needs. The costs of failure is very high.

We have a view we can do better. When someone comes to us with a good idea about how we can do better, we have three questions:

Every new program or idea that claims they can do better should answer these 3 questions:

Which people where?

It is not good enough to say that you will be dealing with Pacific people. It is important to specify the regions you will focus on and how many in those regions. It is also important that the people you focus on are the people who actually need this support.

Who has the trusted relationship with them?

The key to doing a better job for our vulnerable populations is getting alongside them. Who is it that understands this family in this community? Who is it that respects them and has aspirations for them? If we don't understand them, it doesn't matter how many services provided – these groups won't get them.

Show us how you are going to make a difference – show us the feedback loop.

Most of the claims people make about their idea usually do not turn out to be the case. If the government is going to take money from other sectors, they expect it to be used and carefully and they expect to get results. So, if an organisation wants money they have got to show the feedback loop. If you have spent 6 months with a family – show us what has happened? In order to do our job properly we need to understand what we are doing and that is about impact for the fono not money for the social worker. **We are paying for impact and change, we are not paying for people to feel good.**

Pasifika Futures annual report as an exemplar

Minister Bill English highlighted the Pasifika Futures Annual Report as the best annual report he had seen. He said it tells us – what people where, who has the trusted relationships with Pacific families that government cannot form themselves, and shows us the impact – what difference are we making. Usually most large agency are unable to answers these questions.

Government will pay what it takes, we just need to show the impact for better outcomes.

There will be an opportunity for people like us to access the new budget just like any other government agency. The possibility of money being put at top of for example the education ministry and ending up in the households of is families is pretty small. So, the government will pay what it takes – because we can do the calculations that will show us the long term gains.

Summary of Conference Speakers

There were a range of speakers from various providers that spoke about the work they carry out with families in supporting them across the following domains: economic, health, education and culture/leadership and community. Across each of the domains we had the following speakers:

Economic:

- Vui Mark Gosche (CEO) – Vaka Tautua. Financial Lietreacy Programme
- Michael Ina (CEO) – Cook Island Development Agency. One Community Shed
- Andrew Lavulavu – Whare ora Trust
- Yvette Guttenbiel-Po'uhila – V.I.P Barbers Training School

Education:

- Aiolupotea Lili Tuioti (Chief Advisor Pasifika International & Policy) – NZQA
- Anthony Tu'itahi – Ocenaia Career Academy
- Makoni Pulu – Pacific Island Advirsory and Cultural Trust

Health:

- Moana Vaelua and Lesley Vainikolo – Otahuhu College
- Akarere Henry – South Waikato Pacific Islands Community Services

- Hamish Crooks – Pacific Homecare
- Rainer Wichman – Aere Tai Collective

Culture/Community and Leadership:

- Tuu’u Mary Autagavaia and Tanoa’l Michael Tanoa’l – Epiphany Trust – Aganu’u Fa’asamoa 101
- Phylesha Brown-Acton – Pasifika LGBTQI Support Services
- Sa Petaia Family – Vinepa Trust Wellington

Stories from Families

The speakers themselves included not only navigators, community workers, managers and executives but also families who had benefitted from the support of whanau ora.

Michelle Potoru was a recipient of whanau ora support through CIDANZ who supported her business endeavour. Michelle spoke about her struggles as a single mother trying to run a business as well as support her young children. Through the support of whanau ora from CIDANZ Michelle and her mother have been able to continue their catering business and access opportunities to upskill.

There were also stories shared by families through videos created by Pasifika Futures throughout the conference. The video’s showcased families from various regions of New Zealand from the Waikato Region to the South Island. In the videos families shared their previous struggles and how whanau ora has helped them overcome some of the challenges. From families living with disabilities, to young families struggling to pay for rent and food.

Conference Evaluation

This section of the report describes and interprets the results of the conference survey that was disseminated by email to all who attended the conference. A total of 33 participants responded to the survey resulting in a 34% response rate.

Quality of conference

Overall, 88% were satisfied with their overall experience of the conference. 88% were satisfied with the topics covered in the conference, 85% were satisfied with the quality of the speakers, and 88% were satisfied with the opportunity to network and interact with other participants.

Positive comments provided in this section included *“Overall, very enjoyable and valuable conference”, “very well worth experience...”, “everything was perfect”, “excellent conference, hosting was great and team were friendly” “Overall I found the conference enjoyable and inspirational...”*

Top three things found most valuable and enjoyable

1. Networking with other providers and learning about opportunities to collaborate within Whanau Ora was the most valuable part of the conference
2. Sharing of real stories and the opportunity to hear about the different work and projects happening with our Pacific families in Whanau Ora was the most valuable part of the conference
3. Key note speaker Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Bill English’s speech as the most valuable and enjoyable part of the conference