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Four initiatives  
supporting  
improved  
outcomes for  
Māori



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# Four initiatives supporting improved outcomes for Māori

Presented to the House of  
Representatives under section 20 of  
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# Auditor-General's overview

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā karangarangatanga maha o te motu, tēnā koutou.

The public sector has an important role in supporting a successful and effective relationship between Māori and the Crown and contributing to improved outcomes for Māori.

Supporting improved outcomes and well-being for Māori is a priority for the Government. In the first Wellbeing Budget in 2019, the Government made targeted support for Māori aspirations one of its top priorities. In subsequent Budgets, the Government made significant funding commitments for improving outcomes for Māori, including over \$900 million in 2020 and more than \$1 billion in both 2021 and 2022.

Previous work by my Office looking at Government spending has shown that it can be difficult to see how much has been spent on individual initiatives and what has been achieved with that spending.

I wanted to understand how public organisations are using funding that has been committed specifically to support improved outcomes for Māori, and what has been achieved as a result. I wanted to see what public organisations are doing well, understand the challenges they face in delivering these types of initiatives, and identify practices that could improve or be shared more broadly across the public sector.

My staff looked at three agencies and four initiatives that aim to support improved outcomes for Māori, and which have received new or increased funding in recent years. The four initiatives we selected are:

- He Poutama Rangatahi;
- The Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme (MABx);
- Te Ahu o te Reo Māori; and
- Whānau Engagement.

He Poutama Rangatahi is administered by the Ministry of Social Development and MABx is administered by the Ministry for Primary Industries. Both Te Ahu o te Reo Māori and Whānau Engagement are administered by the Ministry of Education.

## What we found

Although there is some room for improvement, overall the funding was spent as intended and there are elements of good practice that could be applied more widely in the public sector.

The public organisations administering these initiatives provided a strong rationale for why each initiative was needed and why the approach they proposed would work well. The organisations have also described the high-level outcomes they are seeking to achieve from the initiatives. They have specified more detailed outputs, impacts, and outcomes in funding agreements with individual iwi, the people contracted to provide services on the public organisations' behalf (service providers), and others connected to the initiatives.

A critical success factor that the initiatives had in common was the strength of relationships between public organisations and Māori involved in each initiative. The engagement between the parties demonstrated a strong sense of mutual trust. As a result, we heard positive feedback from Māori about what the initiatives are trying to achieve and the way public organisations engaged with them to design and deliver the initiatives.

The public organisations we spoke to had designed the initiatives with the aim of supporting the principle of rangatiratanga, or self-determination. All four initiatives are based on the idea that Māori know what works best for Māori. In practice, this has included supporting iwi, Māori landowners, and service providers to design and implement each initiative in a way that suits local communities and their needs.

Building effective and enduring relationships takes time. Public organisations should make sure they factor this time into their planning. Some of the public organisations we spoke with told us they needed longer than planned to build relationships for some of the initiatives and those initiatives were delayed as a result. Ministers and the public want, quite rightly, to see timely results for the investments being made. However, that expectation needs to be set against a realistic plan. In my experience, too many initiatives fail or are compromised because they do not factor in enough time to meaningfully and authentically engage with those they are looking to work with.

Public organisations have relied on staff with local knowledge and connections to build and strengthen relationships with Māori. Many of these staff are Māori and can face additional pressures compared to non-Māori colleagues. This can include tension between their iwi and the public organisation they work for. Some Māori staff could have a real or perceived conflict of interest that needs to be

appropriately managed. It can also include being expected to take on additional tasks that call on their knowledge of tikanga or te reo Māori. It is important that public organisations acknowledge these pressures and engage with their Māori staff to understand how best to support them. This might include employing dedicated staff to take on some of these responsibilities.

Engaging with public organisations can also put pressure on iwi and service providers. Some receive frequent requests for their input and involvement, but many have limited capacity. In the last few years their capacity has been stretched even more because they are supporting their communities with Covid-19-related issues. Public organisations can help to reduce the burden on iwi and service providers by improving co-ordination across their different areas of work to ensure that efforts are well aligned and reduce duplication (for example, by consolidating reporting requirements across all their contracts with each iwi or provider).

Although we have seen much that is encouraging in the work done to date, the ultimate test is whether the initiatives deliver the outcomes that were intended. I expect public organisations to hold themselves to account and be publicly accountable for the funding they administer and to provide evidence to Parliament and the public of the value obtained from that funding.

In my view, the public organisations involved in these initiatives are not yet doing enough to fulfil this expectation. Of the four initiatives we looked at, only one has had its budgeted and actual spending disclosed in public accountability documents.

We heard anecdotally that all four initiatives have made a positive difference, which is encouraging. We did not see this adequately reflected in reporting. Reporting has been focused on the progress that has been made in contracting providers and enrolling participants, and some anecdotal accounts of peoples' experiences. These are important, but are not enough to meet the fundamental requirement that Parliament and the public can understand what has been achieved and what value has been derived.

This concern is not unique to the initiatives discussed in this report. I have written extensively about my concerns that reporting on new initiatives is not currently adequate to provide Parliament and the public with the information needed to hold the Government to account for the spending of public money.

It is important to acknowledge that these initiatives are not representative of all the ways public organisations work with and for Māori. I encourage all public organisations to consider and apply the findings of this audit to the work they are doing to support improved outcomes for Māori. In particular, I would like to see

all public organisations building effective relationships so that iwi and Māori have better experiences with other Government initiatives.

During our audit, iwi, service providers, landowners, and the public organisations we engaged with were working under challenging circumstances, responding to outbreaks of Covid-19.

I acknowledge the additional effort needed to engage with my staff during this time, including the willingness of iwi, service providers, and landowners to speak with us online, and for openly sharing their experiences of working with public organisations to deliver these initiatives.

I also thank the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry for Primary Industries for their support and co-operation during this challenging time.

The Deputy Auditor-General, Andrew McConnell, was previously the Acting Deputy Director-General Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service, and prior to that was the Deputy Director-General Compliance and Governance and Director Māori Agribusiness at the Ministry for Primary Industries. He was appointed to the Deputy Auditor-General role after the fieldwork for this audit was completed and has not been involved with any aspect of this report.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JMR Ryan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Ryan  
Controller and Auditor-General | Tumuaki o te Mana Arotake

25 May 2023



# Our recommendations

We recommend that the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry for Primary Industries, and the Ministry of Education:

1. assess the need for additional capability and capacity to better support their Māori staff. This should include engaging with Māori staff to understand the additional demands they might face and working with them to provide appropriate support. In some cases, each Ministry might need additional dedicated staff to lead tikanga or provide expertise in te ao Māori;
2. assess how well all their work aimed at supporting improved outcomes for Māori is co-ordinated across the organisation and make any improvements needed to make it easier for iwi to engage with them, avoid duplication across initiatives, and be well placed to make informed decisions about where to invest funds; and
3. improve the way they measure and publicly report on these initiatives so there is:
  - better visibility of the outcomes sought and the progress being made; and
  - more effective public accountability through reporting about what has been spent and what has been achieved with that spending.

We have made these recommendations for the three public organisations covered by this performance audit. However, many of our findings are not unique to the initiatives we have looked at for this audit or to the responsible public organisations.

We encourage all public organisations to consider these recommendations and, where necessary, make improvements.

# 1

## Introduction

- 1.1 In this Part, we discuss:
- why we carried out this audit;
  - what we looked at;
  - what we did not look at;
  - how we carried out our work; and
  - the structure of this report.
- 1.2 Supporting improved outcomes for Māori is a priority for the Government. The Government has made changes in recent years to strengthen the public sector's ability to partner with Māori, along with a series of targeted initiatives and funding.
- 1.3 These changes include setting up Te Arawhiti | The Office for Māori Crown Relations in 2018. This new departmental agency was set up by the Government to support Māori Crown relationships and help build public sector capability to engage with Māori.
- 1.4 Then, in 2019, the Government set new expectations for Te Puni Kōkiri to better implement its core role of promoting increases in levels of Māori well-being. Equitable and effective public sector performance for Māori is now one of Te Puni Kōkiri's three strategic priorities. As part of this, Te Puni Kōkiri is increasing its use of data and analytics to monitor how well public services serve Māori as both citizens and whānau.
- 1.5 In its first Wellbeing Budget in 2019, the Government made targeted support for Māori aspirations one of its top priorities. The Government has made significant funding commitments for Māori in subsequent Budgets, including over \$900 million in 2020 and more than \$1 billion in both 2021 and 2022.
- 1.6 The Government's commitment to improving services and outcomes for Māori was recognised in the Public Service Act 2020. The Act places explicit responsibilities on public service leaders to develop and maintain the public service's capability to engage with Māori and understand Māori perspectives.

### Why we carried out this audit

- 1.7 We carried out this performance audit to provide more transparency for Government initiatives supporting improved outcomes for Māori. We also wanted to provide a better understanding of the results that are being achieved, including assurance that public organisations have spent the allocated funding and implemented initiatives in the way the Government intended.

- 1.8 We have seen from our previous work on specific areas of Government spending that it can be difficult to see where funding for individual initiatives has been allocated, how much has been spent, and what has been achieved with that spending.
- 1.9 We also wanted to highlight what public organisations are doing well, understand the challenges they face in delivering these types of initiatives, and identify practices that could improve.

## What we looked at

- 1.10 We looked at four initiatives that have received new or increased funding since 2018 and that are designed to be mainly or only for Māori. We were interested to know whether the public organisation administering each initiative was clear about the impacts and outcomes it was working to achieve. We also wanted to know what arrangements were in place to monitor and report whether those impacts and outcomes would be achieved over time.
- 1.11 The four initiatives we selected are:
- He Poutama Rangatahi, which is administered by the Ministry of Social Development;
  - the Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme (MABx), which is administered by the Ministry for Primary Industries;
  - Te Ahu o te Reo Māori; and
  - Whānau Engagement.
- 1.12 Both Te Ahu o te Reo Māori and Whānau Engagement are administered by the Ministry of Education.
- 1.13 We describe each initiative in Part 2.
- 1.14 Our audit question was: *“How effective are the arrangements that public organisations put in place to deliver initiatives aimed at supporting improved outcomes for Māori?”*. We identified three lines of inquiry:
- How effectively have public organisations planned and set up work to deliver priority initiatives aimed at supporting improved outcomes for Māori?
  - How well have public organisations used funding and other resources to deliver initiatives aimed at supporting improved outcomes for Māori?
  - How well positioned are public organisations to monitor expected results for initiatives aimed at supporting improved outcomes for Māori and what has been achieved to date?

## What we did not look at

- 1.15 We did not look at the procurement of service providers involved in the initiatives, nor the performance of those providers. We also did not examine the business cases, including any cost/benefit analysis for the initiatives.

## How we carried out this work

- 1.16 In carrying out our work, we spoke with:
- providers who were contracted to deliver services for each of the initiatives. These providers were based in the Waikato, Tairāwhiti, Hawke's Bay, Manawatū-Whanganui, Wellington, and Canterbury regions. Many providers were closely associated with iwi in those places;
  - staff from the public organisations administering the initiatives (the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry for Primary Industries, and the Ministry of Education), at both national and regional offices. We also spoke to staff from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment because it was responsible for establishing He Poutama Rangatahi; and
  - expert advisors and landowners (in the case of MABx).
- 1.17 We also analysed relevant documents including strategies, plans, briefings, and reports.
- 1.18 Covid-19 affected our audit fieldwork. Restrictions from Covid-19 alert levels meant that we were not able to visit iwi, Māori landowners, and providers in person and instead spoke with them online. We would like to thank all those we spoke to for their willingness to speak with us in this way and for openly sharing their experiences of working with public organisations to deliver these initiatives.

## Structure of this report

- 1.19 In Part 2 we describe the four initiatives that we looked at.
- 1.20 In Part 3 we discuss the purpose and design of the four initiatives.
- 1.21 In Part 4 we discuss how the funding for each initiative was used and the capability and capacity challenges that each initiative faced.
- 1.22 In Part 5 we discuss how well-placed public organisations are to monitor and report on what they have achieved with these initiatives.

# The initiatives we looked at

- 2.1 In this Part, we describe the four initiatives that we looked at:
- He Poutama Rangatahi;
  - the Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme (MABx);
  - Te Ahu o te Reo Māori; and
  - Whānau Engagement.
- 2.2 To select the initiatives, we looked at Budget data and Government announcements about new initiatives and funding from the last few years. From this information, we identified significant investments targeted at supporting improved outcomes for Māori. We looked for examples that targeted a mix of social and economic outcomes, sectors, and lead agencies, as well as addressing different domains from the Living Standards Framework.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.3 All of the initiatives we selected are significant in terms of the issues they are addressing and the potential impact they could have. However, these initiatives are small compared to the overall funding of the Votes they are part of and so might typically receive less Parliamentary scrutiny (such as through select committee examination in Annual Review and Estimates hearings) compared with areas of much higher funding.
- 2.4 We discuss the quality of performance measures and reporting in Part 5.

## He Poutama Rangatahi

- 2.5 He Poutama Rangatahi is aimed at supporting rangatahi (young people) aged between 15 and 24 who are most at risk of long-term unemployment. He Poutama Rangatahi provides funding for community organisations to run programmes to support those rangatahi into employment or onto a pathway towards employment. Each programme is different but typically includes a combination of practical, cultural, and employment skills and knowledge alongside wrap-around pastoral care. Many of the programmes support young people to get qualifications such as first aid certificates and driver licenses.
- 2.6 He Poutama Rangatahi was designed specifically for young people, and especially rangatahi Māori, who are at high risk of long-term unemployment, who have more complex needs, and for whom other interventions have not been successful. One feature that differentiates He Poutama Rangatahi from other initiatives is the wrap-around support to help rangatahi overcome the barriers that make other interventions less successful for them. For example, if someone finds it difficult to apply for jobs because they do not have any formal identity documents, providers can help them get the documents they need.

1 The Treasury (2021), *Living Standards Framework*, at [treasury.govt.nz](https://treasury.govt.nz).

- 2.7 He Poutama Rangatahi started in 2018 as a pilot programme in four regions where there were both large numbers of rangatahi not in education, employment, or training and a local workforce that would not be enough to support potential economic growth. The initiative later expanded to urban areas and is now available across the country.
- 2.8 The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment set up He Poutama Rangatahi and it was administered initially by Kānoa (previously called the Provincial Development Unit). A budget totalling about \$40 million over three years came from the Ministry and from the Provincial Growth Fund.
- 2.9 The Government allocated a further \$121 million of funding over four years from 2020/21 to 2023/24 as part of the Budget 2020 Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund so that He Poutama Rangatahi could continue in the regions and accelerate its establishment in urban areas. He Poutama Rangatahi now has an ongoing annual budget of \$34.5 million, including \$1.5 million for administrative costs.
- 2.10 In July 2021, the Government transferred He Poutama Rangatahi to the Ministry of Social Development, along with two other skills and employment initiatives: the *Māori Trades and Training Fund* and *Jobs and Skills Hubs*. This was to support a more co-ordinated delivery of employment and work readiness programmes.
- 2.11 We have not seen a statement of the overall intended outcomes or outputs for He Poutama Rangatahi. However, the rationale for He Poutama Rangatahi is clearly understood to be about reducing youth unemployment and supporting rangatahi into employment or training (we discuss this in Part 3). The Cabinet paper to establish the initiative notes intended outcomes such as improving employment opportunities for rangatahi and contributing towards wider social outcomes, like increased standards of living.
- 2.12 Budget 2021 introduced a new performance measure that further clarified the purpose of He Poutama Rangatahi. This measure, which was also included in Budget 2022, set a minimum target of 2000 rangatahi being supported into education, training, or employment pathways each year.

## The Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme

- 2.13 The Māori Agribusiness Extension<sup>2</sup> Programme (MABx) was set up to support the owners of Māori land and agribusinesses to realise their aspirations for their land. MABx provides funding to help groups of owners of Māori land come together to build capability, explore possibilities to work together, and improve the productivity and/or sustainability of their combined land. The groups of owners are referred to as “clusters”. The funding pays for facilitators, co-ordinators, and expert advisors to guide and inform each cluster.
- 2.14 Māori land ownership is complex and some land blocks can have hundreds of owners. Māori land has its own legislation (Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993) and its own rules about ownership and governance. This can make decision-making about Māori land more complex than other land. MABx was set up to accommodate those complexities.
- 2.15 Māori landowners come to MABx with ideas and aspirations. These will be different for each cluster based on what they already know and the types of land use they are interested in.
- 2.16 The Ministry for Primary Industries categorises clusters as either “phase one” or “phase two”. Phase one clusters are at an early discussion phase, exploring their options and whether they want to work together and, if they decide to, developing a work programme for phase two. Phase two clusters have a clear idea about land use that they want to progress and they explore in detail what the project requires, make decisions on options, and start to implement decisions. Phase one clusters take about 6-12 months to develop a work programme. Phase two clusters take about three years to complete the work funded by MABx.
- 2.17 The Ministry for Primary Industries’ Māori Agribusiness Directorate has responsibility for MABx. The directorate is part of the Agriculture and Investment Services business unit.
- 2.18 The Ministry for Primary Industries has clearly defined the short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes it is seeking to achieve through MABx (see Figure 1). Outcomes include individual clusters achieving what they had set out to do through to increased Māori employment in agribusiness ventures.

2 In an agricultural context, the term extension does not have a fixed definition but refers to approaches aimed at increasing land productivity by improving and sharing the knowledge of farmers and landowners.

**Figure 1**  
**Intended outcomes for the Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme**

Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes
<p>Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme (MABx) participants are more ready to make decisions about land use and opportunities.</p> <p>Growth in relationships that support clusters to make informed decisions about their land use.</p> <p>Growth in cluster capability and capacity including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participant comfort they are contributing to, and learning from, MABx; and</li> <li>• ability to work together beyond the programme.</li> </ul> <p>MABx participants have access to information and advice on how best to address sustainability and environmental issues when considering land use.</p> <p>Māori landowners view the MABx approach as a vehicle for achieving their aspirations.</p>	<p>Cluster participants are achieving their aspirations.</p> <p>Clusters are implementing decisions about land use and opportunities.</p> <p>Clusters/Māori agribusiness are sharing knowledge and resources on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Clusters are actively maintaining useful networks.</p> <p>Māori-owned land involved in MABx is more productive and diversified.</p> <p>Māori landowners involved in MABx employ more paid staff.</p> <p>Clusters have made a positive impact on the well-being of participants and others who work on the whenua.</p> <p>Māori agribusinesses are trialling or adopting sustainable land use practices.</p>	<p>Māori land is more productive, diversified, and sustainable.</p> <p>More Māori are employed by Māori land ventures.</p> <p>Māori own more agribusiness [brands/ventures].</p> <p>Māori land ventures are more resilient to changing environmental conditions.</p>

Source: Ministry for Primary Industries.

- 2.19 In its project initiation document, the Ministry for Primary Industries explains how MABx supports the Ministry’s broader strategic priorities and the Government’s priorities for Budget 2019. It also explains how MABx supports the outcomes sought by its two funding sources: the Productive and Sustainable Land Use fund and the Fit for a Better World action plan (which includes the Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures fund).
- 2.20 MABx was allocated \$12 million as part of the Sustainable Land Use package in Budget 2019. In 2021, the Ministry for Primary Industries allocated an additional \$10 million to MABx from its Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures funding. In 2022, the Government allocated a further \$10.6 million over four years to expand MABx. The Government expects the Ministry for Primary Industries to set up a minimum of six new clusters each year with this funding.



## Te Ahu o te Reo Māori

- 2.21 Te Ahu o te Reo Māori means the future pathway of te reo Māori. The Ministry of Education describes this initiative as “a pathway that seeks to inspire and aspire for improved te reo Māori proficiency, acquisition, and use across the education sector”. It also provides opportunities for te reo Māori to be normalised and Māori identity and culture to be shared and embraced.
- 2.22 The Ministry of Education has contracted language training providers to deliver Te Ahu o te Reo Māori to teachers and support staff from schools and early childhood centres.<sup>3</sup> It intends to increase the use of te reo Māori in schools and early childhood centres for all learners, improving the educational outcomes for ākonga Māori (Māori learners) by enabling their education to reflect their identity, culture, and language. The training has a local focus and is available at seven levels – from complete beginners to fluent speakers.
- 2.23 The overall intended outcome for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori is to grow and strengthen an education workforce that can bring te reo Māori back into the learning of all ākonga. The Ministry of Education has also set out some of the things participants are expected to be able to do after completing the training (these are shown in Figure 2). Outcomes include pronouncing students’ names correctly and integrating Māori words and phrases into everyday teaching activities.

**Figure 2**  
Intended outcomes for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori

Outcomes	<p>Accelerate use of te reo Māori teaching and learning in general-stream, te reo Māori and Māori medium.</p> <p>Improve kaiako and teacher te reo Māori proficiency and acquisition.</p> <p>Create an education system that acknowledges, appreciates and respects te reo Māori.</p> <p>Contribute to a system change that values and prioritises te reo Māori in education.</p>
The step change expected over time	<p>Normalisation of te reo Māori usage at school and home.</p> <p>Increase in the quality of te reo Māori used by teachers and students.</p> <p>Increase in ākonga uptake of te reo Māori learning at school and in the community.</p> <p>Increase in workforce accessing te reo Māori professional learning development opportunities.</p> <p>An attitude shift in the wider education community that te reo Māori is recognised as being for everyone.</p> <p>Critical awareness of te reo Māori is raised.</p>

<sup>3</sup> Te Ahu o te Reo Māori is open to teachers and other staff from both general stream (English medium) and Māori medium schools and early childhood centres, including kura kaupapa Māori, wharekura (secondary schools), kōhanga reo, and puna kōhungahunga (whānau-led playgroups).

In general-stream schools	<p>The workforce will confidently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pronounce children’s names and Māori place names correctly;</li> <li>• use simple greetings and acknowledgements to children every day;</li> <li>• recite simple karakia and teach simple waiata and know what they mean;</li> <li>• integrate Māori words/phrases into curriculum activities;</li> <li>• understand and appropriately use te reo Māori; and</li> <li>• promote te reo Māori.</li> </ul>
In Te Reo Māori & Māori Medium schools	<p>The workforce will confidently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• speak, write, and teach quality te reo Māori using local dialect language and references;</li> <li>• communicate with ease and spontaneity using a good command of grammar, vocabulary, and idiomatic language; and</li> <li>• champion, drive, and influence revitalisation strategies and standards in the wider educational community.</li> </ul>
School / Home / Community	<p>Ākonga using te reo Māori more every day at school, home and in the community.</p> <p>Workforce is using te reo Māori more naturally with each other in their everyday interactions.</p> <p>Whānau hearing their tamariki and the workforce using te reo Māori with each other more regularly.</p>

Source: Ministry of Education.

- 2.24 The project brief for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori shows how this initiative supports higher-level outcomes, and in particular the outcomes associated with Maihi Karauna (the Crown’s Strategy for Māori Language Revitalisation 2019-2023), Tau Mai Te Reo (the Māori language in Education Strategy), and Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia | The Māori Education Strategy.
- 2.25 Funding of about \$12.5 million over four years was allocated for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori in Budget 2018. The Government then decided to expand Te Ahu o te Reo Māori nationwide and in 2020 allocated \$108.3 million over four years as part of its *Supporting Māori Learners and Te Reo Māori Post COVID-19* initiative from its Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund. Te Ahu o te Reo Māori has been extended to run until 2030.
- 2.26 The Ministry of Education is expected to enrol 10,000 teachers and support staff in Te Ahu o te Reo Māori each year. In its first year, this number was reduced to 7000 because it took longer than expected to get started. The Ministry advised us that this was largely due to the impact of Covid-19.

## Whānau Engagement

- 2.27 Whānau Engagement was also part of the Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund initiative for *Supporting Māori Learners and Te Reo Māori Post COVID-19*. It was set up in response to reports that during the first lockdown some whānau had become disconnected or isolated from the education services their children were enrolled with.
- 2.28 The Ministry of Education's internal guidance document for using the Whānau Engagement fund sets out four goals for this initiative:
- Māori learners and whānau are aware of the range and scale of education and well-being services that are available to them (including skills training and employment pathways) and know how to request them.
  - Māori learners and whānau are supported to re-engage with local education services and access education and well-being support.
  - Local education services are prompted and supported to engage Māori learners and whānau and provide high-quality services to them.
  - There is a trouble-shooting facility in place if Māori learners and whānau are not able to access services and entitlements that they seek.
- 2.29 These goals are also included in the individual funding agreements with iwi.
- 2.30 The Ministry of Education received about \$31 million over four years to support iwi to help Māori learners and their whānau reconnect with education services. This funding has been used to fund new advisors based in the Ministry's regional offices and funding for iwi to work with whānau.<sup>4</sup> Performance measures and expectations are set locally with each iwi.
- 2.31 Each region has used the funding in different ways. The iwi involved have also taken different approaches, but all have the same overriding objectives about Māori learners and whānau being aware of, and engaging with, education and well-being services, and prompting local education services to engage with Māori learners and whānau.
- 2.32 Examples of what different iwi are doing include working directly with individual ākonga (learners) and whānau who are experiencing a specific barrier to engaging with education, contracting a service provider to work with disengaged ākonga, and carrying out research to better understand the barriers preventing whānau from engaging with education services.

4 The Ministry of Education allocated an additional \$20 million to support Māori educational organisations to provide facilitation and brokerage services.

# 3

## Purpose and design

- 3.1 In this Part, we discuss:
- the rationale for the initiatives;
  - how public organisations have involved iwi and Māori in designing and implementing the initiatives;
  - roles and responsibilities for the initiatives; and
  - challenges that public organisations experienced when expanding the initiatives from the pilot phase.
- 3.2 We wanted to understand how well public organisations planned for and set up the four initiatives. We expected that there would be a clear rationale for each initiative and effective engagement with Māori about the need for each initiative and the planned approach. We expected the roles and responsibilities for leading and implementing each initiative to be clear and understood, and the approaches taken by public organisations to implement the initiatives to be realistic and appropriate.
- 3.3 We also expected that public organisations would have planned the arrangements needed to monitor and report on each initiative. We report on this in Part 5.

### Summary of findings

- 3.4 Public organisations planned and set up the initiatives effectively. Business cases and other documentation had evidence and explanations about why each initiative was needed and why the approach taken would work well for Māori. All four initiatives are based on the idea that Māori know what works best for Māori and allowed providers flexibility in how they implemented the initiatives to best suit local communities and their needs.
- 3.5 Overall, we heard positive feedback from Māori about what each of the four initiatives is trying to achieve and the way public organisations engaged with them to design and deliver the initiatives. A strong sense of mutual trust was a common feature of the relationships between the public organisations and the iwi and providers we spoke to. Relationships can take time to build. In our view, the benefits of effective and trusting relationships can significantly outweigh the cost of investing time and resources in building them.
- 3.6 Roles and responsibilities were generally clear and well understood. Having clear roles and responsibilities helps each public organisation deliver the initiative more effectively and efficiently. For three of the initiatives, this included staff in regional offices.

- 3.7 Public organisations used pilot programmes for three of the initiatives to test the approach before expanding. Despite this, public organisations experienced delays and other problems when they expanded the initiatives beyond their pilot programmes. Although pilot programmes can be a useful way to test an approach on a smaller scale, public organisations still need to ensure that they have adequately planned for subsequent expansion before initiatives are rolled out more widely.

### **The initiatives were introduced to meet a clearly defined need**

- 3.8 All four initiatives had a strong rationale. Staff from each public organisation, iwi, providers, and landowners understood and supported the rationale. The rationale for each initiative was set out in business cases and other documentation that included evidence and explanations about why each initiative was needed, the outcomes being sought, and why the approach taken would work well for Māori.

### **He Poutama Rangatahi**

- 3.9 In a December 2017 Cabinet paper that recommended implementing He Poutama Rangatahi, the Minister for Employment noted that the Government saw addressing youth unemployment as a priority, particularly for Māori and Pasifika youth. The Minister further noted the connection of He Poutama Rangatahi to the Government's goals of lifting regional development and connecting young people to jobs.
- 3.10 The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment made a clear case for setting up He Poutama Rangatahi in the initial four regions because these regions had:
- particularly high numbers of Māori rangatahi not in education, employment, or training. Research at the time found that, at a national level, 12.2% of young people aged 15-24 were not in education, employment, or training but this rose to 19.7% for Māori;<sup>5</sup> and
  - potential labour shortages due to economic growth.
- 3.11 Providers we spoke to and staff from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and the Ministry of Social Development had a good understanding of why He Poutama Rangatahi was put in place and what it is trying to achieve. Providers and staff agreed that there was a clear need for an initiative like He Poutama Rangatahi based on their experiences of working with local communities and rangatahi in particular.

5 Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (2017), *Māori in the Labour Market*, page 38.

### The Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme

- 3.12 The Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme (MABx) was introduced as part of the Government's Productive and Sustainable Land Use package, which aimed to help landowners, businesses, and Māori decide the best way to improve both productivity on their land and the health of the environment.
- 3.13 The Ministry for Primary Industries made the case that improving the productivity of Māori land would bring economic benefits and help deliver Government priorities of:
- a productive, sustainable, and inclusive economy;
  - improved well-being of New Zealanders; and
  - unlocking the economic potential of New Zealand's regions.
- 3.14 Research commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in 2011<sup>6</sup> estimated that 80% of Māori freehold land was unutilised, under-utilised, or under-performing.
- 3.15 Many owners of Māori land do not live on that land, and many own shares in Māori land but are not closely involved with it. Often Māori landowners do not have the funds, the time, or the knowledge to consider possibilities for how they could use their land.
- 3.16 Through MABx, the Ministry for Primary Industries provides opportunities specifically for Māori Agribusinesses. Unlike other initiatives, the Ministry uses MABx to provide funding both for advice and feasibility studies and support for landowners to interpret and implement that advice.
- 3.17 MABx also involves groups of Māori landowners working together, referred to as clusters (see paragraph 2.13). Clusters can consider opportunities for their combined Māori land, which provides more options than working individually because there is more land to work with. Landowners also benefit from shared learning by working together.

6 Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (2011), *Māori Agribusiness in New Zealand: A Study of the Māori Freehold Land Resource*.

### Te Ahu o te Reo Māori

- 3.18 Te Ahu o te Reo Māori aims to provide the education workforce with the skills and confidence to integrate te reo Māori into the learning of all ākonga. One of the outcome domains for Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia | The Māori Education Strategy<sup>7</sup> is supported by evidence that ākonga Māori do much better when their education reflects and values their identity, language, and culture.
- 3.19 Providers we spoke to agreed that it is important for tamariki to see te reo Māori being used in their schools and that this can raise the mana of the language. Providers also supported the approach for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori because schools can have a big impact for tamariki.

### Whānau Engagement

- 3.20 Whānau Engagement was developed quickly as part of the Government's response to Covid-19 to meet a need, identified during the first lockdown,<sup>8</sup> to support whānau to reconnect with education services. We were told that Covid-19 meant more whānau became disconnected from education due to:
- whānau concerns about tamariki contracting Covid-19 at school;
  - whānau not having access to the technology required to engage remotely with schools;
  - financial hardship; and
  - re-location, including some whānau moving back to their ancestral whenua.
- 3.21 In most cases, disconnection meant that tamariki were not attending school nor accessing education in other ways, such as by remote learning during lockdown. Iwi and providers we spoke to agreed there was a need for the type of support offered by Whānau Engagement and told us they had seen many examples where whānau were disconnected from education services.

7 Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia | The Māori Education Strategy is a cross-agency strategy for the education sector. The agencies include the Ministry of Education, Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu, Education New Zealand, the Education Review Office, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, the Teaching Council Aotearoa New Zealand, the Tertiary Education Commission, and the New Zealand School Trustees Association. It sets out how these agencies will work with education services to achieve system shifts in education and support Māori learners and their whānau, hapū, and iwi to achieve excellent and equitable outcomes and provides an organising framework for the actions that will be taken.

8 New Zealand entered Alert Level 4 at 11.59pm on 25 March 2020, which meant all households had to self-isolate. Schools did not fully reopen until 14 May 2020. A timeline is available on the Unite against Covid-19 website: [covid19.govt.nz](https://covid19.govt.nz).

## Māori influenced the purpose, design, and implementation of the initiatives

- 3.22 All four initiatives are based on the principle that Māori know what works best for Māori. Public organisations put this into practice by engaging with Māori so that their views and ideas could influence the purpose and design of each initiative. Iwi, providers, and landowners also had flexibility in how they delivered the initiatives to get the best results for their communities.

### A local approach is key to He Poutama Rangatahi

- 3.23 The principle that communities know what is needed and what works for them is a key feature of He Poutama Rangatahi. A local approach can consider the needs of local people. Providers told us they like a flexible approach that allows them to design their own programme to meet local needs.
- 3.24 Most He Poutama Rangatahi providers are Māori, some are iwi providers, and one provider we spoke with has partnered with a local marae to deliver programmes. Advisors from the Ministry of Social Development work with providers to make sure that what they are proposing meets the criteria for He Poutama Rangatahi, such as including the right age group and offering the right types of skills and support. However, He Poutama Rangatahi has been set up to enable each provider to design their own approach to address the challenges that rangatahi face in their community. Advisors from the Ministry of Social Development also support them to complete a proposal for funding from He Poutama Rangatahi for their specific programme.
- 3.25 Reconnecting rangatahi with their cultural identity is a focus of He Poutama Rangatahi. Providers told us that many rangatahi Māori can feel disconnected from their marae and their iwi. Rangatahi are supported to connect with, and become confident in, their cultural identity through activities such as learning about their whakapapa, delivering their pepeha (personal introduction), and using karakia (prayer or blessing). Providers often support the wider whānau as well by including whānau members in some activities. Whānau members might themselves be dealing with issues like addiction or a lack of confidence or knowledge about how to access support for their rangatahi.



### **The Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme supports Māori landowners to set their own goals**

- 3.26 Through MABx, the Ministry for Primary Industries supports Māori landowners to determine what successful use of their land means to them and then support them through a process that will help those landowners to achieve that success. Each cluster of landowners drives the process, including deciding to participate and determining what they want to achieve and the approach they want to take.
- 3.27 The Ministry for Primary Industries designed MABx to work with the complexities of Māori land ownership and to create a working environment where Māori felt comfortable to engage. Ministry staff and others we spoke to told us that, based on their experiences, Māori landowners prefer to work in a kaupapa Māori environment and will be more engaged when they do. One of the ways that this happens with MABx is that extra time is set aside at the start for whakawhanaungatanga – where everyone involved in a cluster gets to know each other.
- 3.28 The Project Initiation Document for MABx notes that other agribusiness initiatives that were not designed specifically for Māori had a lower uptake and retention from Māori landowners.
- 3.29 MABx typically involves clusters starting with a series of facilitated wānanga where landowners build relationships with each other and with Ministry for Primary Industries staff. They then collectively set goals and develop a work programme.
- 3.30 This approach enables Māori to define their own measures of success. This differentiates MABx from most other land use initiatives, which typically use performance indicators based on productivity. Māori aspirations for their land can have different objectives. For example, some landowners that were part of a cluster exploring options to build a micro-abattoir wanted to provide a facility for local whānau to feed themselves and did not have a commercial goal.

### **Te Ahu o Te Reo Māori and Whānau Engagement value the expertise that resides in iwi**

- 3.31 The Ministry of Education has acknowledged that the successful delivery of its overall Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund package for supporting Māori learners, including Te Ahu o te Reo Māori and Whānau Engagement, requires the education sector to work differently, including valuing the expertise that resides in iwi.
- 3.32 Te Ahu o te Reo Māori is delivered by local experts who are given flexibility that allows them to design the programme for their local area. For example, one provider told us that they include walks around the local area so participants can learn both the names of local places and the meanings behind those names. A key feature of Te Ahu o te Reo Māori is learning local dialects and speech patterns, endorsed by local iwi.
- 3.33 Providers are expected to have engaged with local iwi and to have their support. Providers had to include evidence of this support in their proposal to the Ministry of Education, which gave it a 15% weighting when it evaluated the proposals from providers. Providers are expected to report to the Ministry on their ongoing relationship with iwi and any issues that arise.
- 3.34 The Ministry of Education recognises that iwi are best placed to locate and engage with whānau who are disconnected from education and to use the relationships iwi have with education providers to support those whānau to reconnect. Iwi representatives and others involved in Whānau Engagement told us they support the flexible approach because they know what is needed locally and where whānau are who need this support.
- 3.35 In practice, the Ministry of Education works with each of the iwi involved to draw up an individual funding agreement based on what they see as the purpose of the work they are planning to do to support whānau to reconnect with education providers.
- 3.36 In one example of a funding agreement, the iwi involved committed to use funding in two phases. In the first phase, the iwi would engage with whānau and education institutions to understand where the highest need was and identify potential community networks that could be used to support whānau. In the second phase, the iwi would work directly with whānau to help them identify and achieve their goals.

## Relationships built on mutual trust are vital for good engagement

- 3.37 The approach public organisations took to engaging with Māori about each of the four initiatives recognised rangatiratanga (self-determination) and helped to build mutual trust that is critical to strong relationships. This approach had a positive effect, which was evident in the way that iwi, providers, and landowners spoke about the public organisations involved. We heard a lot of support for the approach those public organisations took to engage with Māori.
- 3.38 The public organisations involved in these initiatives have well-established relationships with some iwi and Māori. These relationships have typically been built over time with regular engagement and positive experiences of working together. People have got to know each other and there is a level of trust between them.
- 3.39 Even when there is a strong relationship, public organisations were aware that they still need to work to maintain the relationship and that they will sometimes get things wrong. For example, the Ministry of Education is shifting how it works with iwi to improve its relationships. To support this, the Ministry has been providing training to its staff on both the Treaty of Waitangi and on diversity.
- 3.40 Not all relationships we heard about between public organisations and iwi were positive. Historically, public organisations have had strained relationships with some iwi and Māori organisations. Others have had little engagement in the past. Repairing relationships and building trust between parties takes time, and this can affect programme timelines.
- 3.41 For example, it took time for the Ministry of Education to sign agreements with some iwi and Māori organisations for Whānau Engagement. Despite this, the Ministry of Education had committed nearly all the allocated funding by the end of financial year 2020/21.
- 3.42 It also took the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment longer than expected to expand He Poutama Rangatahi into urban areas because of the time needed to build relationships with providers in these new locations (we discuss this further in paragraph 3.62). As a result, there was an underspend in 2020/21 and \$23 million was transferred to the following financial year, when the Ministry of Social Development took over He Poutama Rangatahi.
- 3.43 We acknowledge the importance of timelines and the pressure that public organisations experience to deliver in a timely way. However, the experience of the public organisations involved in this audit shows how the benefits of effective and trusting relationships can significantly outweigh the cost of investing time and resources in building them.

- 3.44 In Part 4 we discuss the important role that staff with local knowledge and connections play in building relationships with Māori. We also discuss the pressures that Māori staff who have worked on these initiatives can experience.

### **Roles and responsibilities are clear and understood**

- 3.45 Roles and responsibilities were generally clear and well understood, with a specific team or business unit responsible for each initiative. Although all staff have a role to play in building strong relationships with iwi and Māori, the public organisations involved in these initiatives also have roles with specific responsibilities for relationship-building. Each initiative had different arrangements, but for three of the initiatives staff in regional offices had a key role in developing new relationships and strengthening existing ones.

### **He Poutama Rangatahi**

- 3.46 He Poutama Rangatahi is administered by a specific team in the Ministry of Social Development's Employment Team.<sup>9</sup> The Employment Team is part of the Ministry's Service Delivery Group.
- 3.47 He Poutama Rangatahi team members help to find and sign up new providers and then manage the relationship with them, including managing contracts. Proposals from new providers are assessed against a range of criteria to ensure that the proposal is aligned to He Poutama Rangatahi's purpose, the funding sought is appropriate, the proposal is clear about what it will deliver, and that the organisation applying has the capacity and capability to manage a Government-funded programme.
- 3.48 Regional staff from the Ministry of Social Development have an active role in He Poutama Rangatahi. They promote the initiative through regular engagement with providers in their region and helping to ensure that He Poutama Rangatahi is aligned with other Ministry employment and training programmes. They also support the application process for new providers by collecting information about providers and the programmes they are running and sharing that information with the Ministry's He Poutama Rangatahi team. Regional staff also endorse applications from providers before they are approved.

<sup>9</sup> Before 1 July 2021, He Poutama Rangatahi was administered by Kānoa (which was previously the Provincial Development Unit) in the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

### **The Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme**

- 3.49 The Ministry for Primary Industries' Māori Agribusiness Directorate has responsibility for MABx. The directorate is part of the Ministry's Agriculture and Investment Services business unit.
- 3.50 There are clear roles and responsibilities within the Māori Agribusiness Directorate for different members of the directorate. One of the key roles is the Manager Māori Agribusiness Programmes, who is responsible for completing key programme documents and reporting, managing the budget and risk management. There is also a senior advisor for monitoring and evaluation who monitors and reports on the clusters' progress and ensures that evaluation information is collected.
- 3.51 The Māori Agribusiness Directorate also includes staff based in regional offices who have an important role in delivering MABx. Regional staff are expected to build relationships with Māori in their region, identify potential new clusters, and monitor and support clusters that are already in place.
- 3.52 Concepts for potential new clusters are initially assessed for viability by the relevant regional manager. After the concept has been developed into a proposal, a quality assurance panel (comprising members of the Māori Agribusiness Directorate) reviews the proposal to ensure that it meets the criteria. These criteria include the ownership and governance status of the land included in the proposed cluster and cluster members demonstrating a willingness to work collaboratively. Decisions to approve projects for funding are made by a separate panel of internal and external representatives.

### **Te Ahu o te Reo Māori**

- 3.53 In 2021/22, the Ministry of Education redesigned its organisational structure and operating model to help give better practical effect to te Tiriti o Waitangi and improve its working relationships with Māori. The new organisational structure includes a business unit called Te Mahau, which provides services and support for education staff and leaders, ākongā, and whānau.
- 3.54 The Ministry of Education's Te Uepū Reo Māori is responsible for oversight of Te Ahu o te Reo Māori as well as designing the initiative, running the procurement process to select providers, providing support to the selected providers, and managing the contracts with providers. Te Uepū Reo Māori sits within Te Poutāhū | Curriculum Centre, which is part of Te Mahau.

## Whānau Engagement

- 3.55 Te Pae Aronui | Operations and Integration is also part of Te Mahau and is responsible for the design and oversight of Whānau Engagement. This includes deciding how much of the funding is allocated to each region. Funding is allocated to regions based on the socioeconomic status of schools in each region, the number of ākongā Māori at those schools, and attendance rates.
- 3.56 Regional offices are responsible for implementing Whānau Engagement in their regions, including how to allocate funding to iwi. The regional offices are expected to build relationships with iwi and work alongside them to determine how each iwi will implement Whānau Engagement. The regional offices and iwi then sign a formal funding agreement. The regional offices manage these agreements to ensure that iwi are delivering what has been agreed.
- 3.57 To ensure that the regional offices are implementing Whānau Engagement consistently with its intentions and with each other, Te Pae Aronui | Operations and Integration provided guidance for regional offices. This guidance was about how to work with iwi through to finalising a Funding Agreement and who to involve at each step. The guidance is not detailed but includes the Ministry of Education's principles for partnering with iwi, and the types of data and other information about Māori learners in local schools, that need to be considered before agreeing with iwi where they should focus.

## The initiatives faced challenges when they expanded

- 3.58 Three of the initiatives were first trialled with pilot programmes. This allowed the public organisations to test their approach on a smaller scale before expanding. The Ministry of Education did not have a pilot for Whānau Engagement.

## Covid-19 lockdowns affected the expansion of He Poutama Rangatahi

- 3.59 He Poutama Rangatahi was initially piloted in 2018 in four regions (see paragraphs 2.7 and 3.10). It was later expanded to urban areas and it is now available across the country.
- 3.60 The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment commissioned two evaluations of the pilot programme for He Poutama Rangatahi in 2019. These evaluations found that He Poutama Rangatahi was reaching the rangatahi most at risk of long-term unemployment and having a positive impact. The second evaluation found that 69% of rangatahi who participated in He Poutama Rangatahi had moved into education, training, or employment.

- 3.61 The second evaluation found that providers liked the flexibility the programme provided to develop local solutions. Providers said that because He Poutama Rangatahi was adaptable to local and individual circumstances, it was much better at assisting rangatahi to stay on a path to sustained employment compared to other types of initiatives.
- 3.62 The Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment subsequently expanded He Poutama Rangatahi into more regions but found it took longer than expected to sign up new providers, particularly in Auckland. The main reason for this was that Auckland was subject to longer Covid-19 restrictions than other parts of the country. Ministry staff needed to spend time building new relationships with providers in Auckland but many were already busy supporting their communities.
- 3.63 Since taking over He Poutama Rangatahi, the Ministry of Social Development has made He Poutama Rangatahi available in more locations and for groups that have specific needs, such as single parents, people with disabilities, and rainbow communities.

### **Some applications to the Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme had to meet additional process steps**

- 3.64 The Ministry for Primary Industries did not use a formal pilot programme for MABx, but the first few clusters were treated as a pilot so that staff could see how well processes worked before expanding to more clusters.
- 3.65 The Ministry for Primary Industries carried out an internal review of MABx after six months. By that stage, three clusters were set up and running and three more were in the process of being set up. This review covered both internal systems and processes for supporting MABx and key success factors such as relationship management and engagement and capability building.
- 3.66 The internal review made 17 recommendations. Some of the recommendations were related to internal processes, such as improving document management processes, but also included improvements to reporting, time frames, and sharing what they had learned – for example, allowing more time to identify and contract a suitable facilitator when a cluster is being established. The Ministry for Primary Industries told us that it has made changes to its processes since this review.
- 3.67 The Ministry for Primary Industries found that demand for MABx was much higher than expected. The initial funding for MABx was not enough for all the new clusters so the Ministry decided to use one of its other funds (the Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures fund) for some clusters. This was possible because some MABx clusters also met the criteria for the Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures

fund. Unlike the MABx funding, this fund was not set up specifically for Māori Agribusinesses and clusters had to go through more steps to access funding. As a result, these clusters had to wait longer before they could start and the Ministry had to work hard to maintain trust over that time.

### **Procurement delays affected the expansion of Te Ahu o te Reo Māori**

- 3.68 Te Ahu o te Reo Māori was piloted in four regions before being rolled out. The pilot was in regions where the Māori population was expected to increase by at least 20% between 2013 and 2023.<sup>10</sup> Te Ahu o te Reo Māori is also now available to members of the education workforce anywhere in the country.
- 3.69 The Ministry of Education commissioned an evaluation of the pilot for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori. This focused mostly on the effectiveness of delivery by providers and what was achieved. This evaluation found that participants rated the course providers highly and had significantly increased their ability to use te reo Māori correctly and confidently in the classroom.
- 3.70 The Ministry of Education also experienced issues when it expanded Te Ahu o te Reo Māori into all regions. The Ministry took longer than planned to finalise agreements with the providers it had selected. Providers told us these delays caused problems for them. One provider told us the delays meant that they had less time to prepare to deliver the programme. Another told us they lost a key kaiako (teacher) who resigned due to the uncertainty of not having a signed contract.
- 3.71 Although the Ministry of Education ran an advertising campaign for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori, providers told us that a lack of publicity meant that initial numbers were lower than expected. One provider told us they did their own publicity but not all had the ability to do this. We also heard that some participants were initially unable to register for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori because they did not have access to the system the Ministry of Education was using for registrations. Te Ahu o te Reo Māori was also affected by Covid-19 lockdowns and, for a time, providers had to deliver training online.
- 3.72 Because of these delays and issues, the target number of participants was reduced from 10,000 to 7000 for the first year.



## Funding and resources

- 4.1 In this Part, we discuss:
- whether funding for the initiatives has been spent as intended;
  - the role of Māori staff and local staff;
  - capacity and capability challenges that public organisations faced;
  - how better co-ordination could reduce the burden on iwi and providers; and
  - how public organisations could provide more opportunities for sharing what they learn.
- 4.2 We wanted to understand how public organisations had used funding and other resources to deliver these initiatives. We expected that:
- funding would be allocated and spent as intended;
  - public organisations would have access to people with the right skills and experience to implement the initiatives, including having the capacity and capability to engage effectively with Māori; and
  - public organisations would work with iwi, providers, and other stakeholders to ensure access to other resources as required.

### Summary of findings

- 4.3 All four initiatives spent funding for the intended purpose and populations.
- 4.4 All the initiatives make use of the local knowledge and connections of regional staff, and we consider that this has been particularly effective. However, there can be additional pressures on Māori staff that public organisations need to recognise. Public organisations should engage with their Māori staff to understand what support is most appropriate to help manage those pressures. In some cases, this support might include employing dedicated staff.
- 4.5 Iwi and other providers experienced challenges securing the capability and capacity they needed. The relevant public organisations found different ways to address some of these challenges. For example, one public organisation has seconded an advisor to an iwi. We encourage public organisations to continue to find ways of supporting iwi and provider capacity and capability.

## Funding has been allocated and spent as intended

- 4.6 By the end of March 2022, 103 contracts had been approved for 76 different He Poutama Rangatahi programmes. Since 2018, about \$46.3 million of funding had been paid out to providers and an additional \$31.1 million was committed.
- 4.7 Of 7860 rangatahi enrolled in these programmes, 80% were Māori, 77% were not in employment, education, or training when they enrolled,<sup>11</sup> and 44% were women.
- 4.8 He Poutama Rangatahi has grown further since it was transferred to the Ministry of Social Development. The Ministry told us that it expects there will only be enough funding for around half of the providers who have currently expressed an interest in running a new programme or renewing an existing contract.
- 4.9 Demand for the Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme (MABx) was greater than expected, and the Ministry for Primary Industries has signed up more clusters than planned. Initially, the Ministry planned to expand MABx from three clusters to nine, but by 30 June 2021 MABx had expanded to 21 clusters. The scheme has since grown to 33 clusters and there are an additional 20 clusters being planned. At the time of writing, about \$9.5 million of funding has been committed to the programme.
- 4.10 The Ministry of Education has signed contracts with 13 providers to deliver Te Ahu o te Reo Māori. Each provider receives funding based on the number of participants attending their programmes. The Ministry set a target of 10,000 participants each year. For 2021/22, due to delays getting started, the target was reduced to 7000 participants. The actual number of participants in 2021/22 was 6190.
- 4.11 Whānau Engagement has been rolled out nationwide. Within a year, the Ministry of Education had signed agreements with 80 iwi and Māori organisations to support ākonga and their whānau to achieve their educational goals and aspirations through various pathways and initiatives. The funding has also been used to recruit eight new full-time employees in the Ministry's regional offices to support this work and, in some cases, work directly with whānau.

11 Some rangatahi who enrol in He Poutama Rangatahi might already be in education, employment, or training but are still at risk of long-term unemployment, for example if they do not have qualifications, are not attending school regularly, or their employment is unstable.

## Staff with local knowledge and connections play a key role

- 4.12 Public organisations have taken different approaches to ensuring that they have access to people with the right skills and experience to lead and implement these initiatives. One thing they have in common, and which in our view has been particularly effective, is making use of the local knowledge and connections of regional staff.
- 4.13 Regional staff are often well-placed to build relationships because of their local knowledge and connections. Local people understand local needs and opportunities. A local person can also visit providers or landowners more easily to see what progress is being made and help resolve issues quickly.
- 4.14 We considered this a strength of the initiatives we looked at. Each of the public organisations had regional staff with existing knowledge, connections, and relationships. In most cases, these staff are Māori. Many of those we spoke to told us that their shared language and whakapapa assisted in building trusting relationships.
- 4.15 Regional staff from the Ministry of Social Development (and previously staff from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment) have an important role for He Poutama Rangatahi. This includes drawing on their regional networks to identify potential new providers. In one example, a provider told us that they did not initially think He Poutama Rangatahi was a good fit, but through their relationship with the local advisor they were encouraged to apply and now run a successful programme.
- 4.16 The Ministry for Primary Industries has set up its Māori Agribusiness Directorate as a dedicated team to ensure that its Māori agribusiness programmes, including MABx, can meet the needs of Māori. Many of the directorate's staff are Māori, including its regional staff. The regional staff in particular play a key role in connecting with potential new clusters and managing the relationship between the Ministry and each cluster after they are set up.
- 4.17 The Ministry of Education's regional offices hold the relationships with their local iwi. A few years ago the Ministry introduced a Strategic Advisor Māori role in its regional offices to help strengthen relationships with iwi. There are 15 Strategic Advisors Māori across the Ministry's ten regions. The Strategic Advisors Māori already have strong connections to iwi that they can build on. In one case, an advisor has been seconded to an iwi on a part-time basis, which is helping to build trust and connections.

### **Māori staff experience additional demands**

- 4.18 Employing staff with existing connections to iwi, Māori, and local communities can add significant value. Without these connections the initiatives might not reach as many people. For example, one cluster found out about MABx when a local whānau member, who works for the Ministry for Primary Industries, came to speak to their hapū.
- 4.19 However, we were told that Māori staff can have extra demands placed on them compared with their non-Māori colleagues. This manifested in two ways. One is that Māori staff can experience pressure when there is tension between their iwi and the public organisation they work for. One person told us their employment as a public servant had led to difficult conversations with their whānau when the employee was representing their employer's views, which their whānau disagreed with.
- 4.20 In some cases, Māori staff could have a real or perceived conflict of interest that needs to be appropriately managed.
- 4.21 The other way that these demands can manifest is when a public organisation expects Māori staff to lead tikanga (cultural protocols) on its behalf, such as performing a karakia or opening a meeting, when it is not part of their role description. People can feel that they have to take on these tasks because it helps lift understanding and acceptance of tikanga. Māori staff we spoke with feel that if they do not get involved there is a chance that protocols will be done incorrectly or not at all.
- 4.22 Public organisations need to support their staff in managing tensions and to ensure that contributions are recognised. In some cases, the appropriate response will include employing dedicated staff to lead tikanga in the organisation.
- 4.23 We saw different ways that public organisations are supporting their Māori staff. For example, many staff in the Ministry for Primary Industries' Māori Agribusiness unit are Māori and the team has built tikanga into its day-to-day processes. We heard that this creates a culture that supports and values Māori staff and lifts the capability of all staff in the unit.
- 4.24 In another example, one Ministry of Education regional team supports its Māori staff by considering the potential for conflicts routinely, speaking openly as a team to identify where tensions might occur, and working with staff who might be affected.

- 4.25 The Ministry of Education has also strengthened Māori leadership by appointing Pou Ārahi to the leadership team in each of Te Mahau's business groups. Pou Ārahi give expert advice that is tailored to the specific responsibilities and functions of each group. They work with their respective Hautū (Deputy Secretary) to lift the Māori capability of their teams.
- 4.26 Each situation will be different. Public organisations should start by talking to their Māori staff to understand the pressures they are facing and what can be done to support them. A working environment where staff feel safe to raise potential issues is critical for this.

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**Recommendation 1**

We recommend that the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry for Primary Industries, and the Ministry of Education assess the need for additional capability and capacity to better support their Māori staff. This should include engaging with Māori staff to understand the additional demands they might face and working with them to provide appropriate support. In some cases, each Ministry might need additional dedicated staff to lead tikanga or provide expertise in te ao Māori.

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**All initiatives experienced capability and capacity challenges**

- 4.27 The four initiatives are delivered by people and organisations in the community, including iwi. However, iwi and providers have different capacities and capabilities. Some are set up to provide a range of services to their community and have experience contracting with public organisations. Others have limited resources and experience. Some iwi have jointly set up organisations to provide services on their behalf, whereas others use external contractors when needed.
- 4.28 As the public sector and others want to engage more with Māori, iwi and Māori organisations can receive frequent requests for their input and involvement in projects and programmes. This places pressure on their capacity. Public organisations typically have more capacity than iwi, which can create an imbalance in the timeliness, level, and quality of the input iwi are able to provide.

- 4.29 Covid-19 has also affected iwi and provider capacity because they have stepped up to support their communities on Covid-19-related issues, leaving limited capacity for other activities.
- 4.30 He Poutama Rangatahi providers range from small community organisations to much larger providers where supporting rangatahi with employment and other skills is just one part of what they do. Often these providers have limited capacity for additional tasks, including completing an expression of interest for He Poutama Rangatahi. Staff from the public organisations involved in He Poutama Rangatahi told us that some providers need support with this.
- 4.31 The Ministry for Primary Industries told us that there is a shortage of people with the skills to effectively facilitate Māori Agribusiness Extension clusters. A good facilitator is critical and needs to be someone who can bring out the aspirations of the landowners and not impose their own views. Facilitators do not necessarily need to be Māori but do need to be competent facilitating in a kaupapa Māori environment. They also need to have some agribusiness knowledge. There is a limited number of facilitators with this combination of skills.
- 4.32 To build facilitation capability in the community, the Ministry for Primary Industries is using some of the MABx funding to pay for a shadow facilitator role for each cluster. A shadow facilitator is a cluster member who receives training to be able to carry on facilitation work with the cluster and in their community after being part of MABx. Most people we spoke to saw the value in the Ministry investing in growing this capability in communities.
- 4.33 The Ministry of Education has identified provider capacity and capability as a constraint for delivering Te Ahu o te Reo Māori. Providers we spoke to agreed that there are limited numbers of qualified te reo Māori teachers. We were also told that Te Ahu o te Reo Māori risked taking this resource from other parts of the education system, and in particular from other parts of the system supporting ākonga Māori, such as Kura Kaupapa Māori.
- 4.34 The Ministry of Education consulted Māori to provide expertise to its selection of providers for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori. However, providers told us that the procurement process for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori could have been better set up for Māori providers, and in particular providers who are not used to public sector contracting. An internal review in February 2021 also found that the Ministry of Education could do more to modify procurement processes that are too onerous

and costly for smaller Māori providers. A simple improvement one provider suggested was for a hui at the start of the process so that the Ministry could explain their expectations and answer questions.

- 4.35 In our view, this highlights the importance of public organisations investing time in building relationships with Māori. We note that the Ministry of Social Development is jointly leading (with Oranga Tamariki) work across government agencies, including the Ministry of Education, to improve the commissioning of social services. This aims to put trusted relationships at the centre of social sector commissioning. There is a plan to implement changes by 2028.
- 4.36 Iwi involvement in Whānau Engagement has placed additional demands on iwi but has also brought benefits. Whānau Engagement has given iwi ways to engage more with local schools and education providers. This could create opportunities for iwi to have more influence over how schools engage with whānau, leading to improved educational outcomes for ākonga Māori.
- 4.37 The Ministry of Education's secondment of one of its Strategic Advisors Māori to an iwi is helping to build iwi capability as well as strengthen the Ministry's relationship with that iwi.

### **Short contract lengths can create additional challenges**

- 4.38 Contract length was a concern for some of the providers we spoke with. Initially, He Poutama Rangatahi contracts were for two years. Contracts for Whānau Engagement vary in length but most are for two years or under.
- 4.39 Uncertainty of funding being available over a longer period can make it harder for providers to recruit people to deliver initiatives, especially if those people would be moving from a more secure position. This issue is not specific to these initiatives, but could affect them more given the shortage of people with the skills needed to work with and deliver programmes to Māori.
- 4.40 To give providers more certainty, the Ministry of Social Development has recently started to introduce three-year contracts for He Poutama Rangatahi. The Ministry is also replacing its current approach of accepting expressions of interest for He Poutama Rangatahi at any time with a fixed annual funding round. This will help manage demand and will also give providers more certainty about timeframes for funding decisions. As part of this change, programmes will come up for renewal on average every three years and existing providers who have shown strong outcomes will be able to access a simpler application process if they wish to reapply.

### Participant capacity and capability can be a barrier

- 4.41 A lot of the land involved in MABx is owned through a Māori land trust. These trusts need effective governance to be able to make good decisions about their land. Some Māori trusts are better set up for this than others. We were told that there is a general need to build governance capacity for Māori landowners.
- 4.42 When a Māori land trust takes part in MABx, the trustees need to represent the trust. This can require time and commitment. Trustees also often have other unpaid leadership roles in their community that they carry out in addition to full-time employment.
- 4.43 The Ministry for Primary Industries helps with the burden on landowners by paying someone to provide administrative support. This person is usually one of the cluster members and is paid on a part-time basis. This is a cost Māori land trusts usually have to incur themselves.
- 4.44 There can also be a capacity issue when dealing with Government processes. One cluster member told us they could not have got the funding themselves without support from the Ministry for Primary Industries. They felt that for a lot of funding applications, the Government could make the application requirements more relevant to Māori land. For example, one landowner felt that the application forms wanted unnecessary details to describe their aspirations for their land. In their view, a short whakataukī (proverb) would have been enough, but they felt that Wellington staff would not have understood the meaning just from that. This perception highlights the differences in expectations and mutual understanding that can hinder effective engagement and efficient delivery.
- 4.45 For Te Ahu o te Reo Māori, teachers and other staff can find it difficult to attend all the training sessions. This can be a particular problem for staff in more remote schools, and also for early childhood teachers because they typically finish work late. Some funding is available to help support teachers and other staff attend Te Ahu o te Reo Māori. The funding is available to all participants who were registered and still participating at the halfway point of the course.



## Better co-ordination could reduce the burden on iwi and providers

- 4.46 One way that public organisations can reduce the burden on iwi and providers is to ensure that, where practicable, they co-ordinate all their work aimed at supporting improved outcomes for Māori. We heard that some iwi and providers have to manage multiple relationships and funding agreements with public organisations. One Ministry of Education region told us they try to reduce the burden on iwi by combining reporting for each iwi rather than separate reporting for each contract.
- 4.47 Better co-ordination, managed by effective governance, can ensure that different workstreams aimed at supporting improved outcomes for Māori are aligned and reduce any duplication of effort. Effective co-ordination can also provide decision-makers with better information about where funds need to be invested to make the most cost-effective investments.
- 4.48 An internal review in February 2021 by the Ministry of Education’s internal audit function recommended that the Ministry improve governance across key initiatives aimed at supporting improved outcomes for Māori to help monitor and prioritise investment more effectively. The Ministry does have some governance of its Māori-focused workstreams in place. This includes a programme board for all the initiatives in the Ministry’s Te Uepū Reo Māori, including Te Ahu o te Reo Māori and a governance board for Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia | The Māori Education Strategy.
- 4.49 We recognise that, for most public organisations, identifying all of their work to support improved outcomes for Māori will be challenging because much will be integrated in work that has a wider focus. However, we encourage all public organisations to consider how to improve their governance and co-ordination across this work with the intention of reducing the burden on iwi and providers and making informed decisions about where to invest funds.

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### Recommendation 2

We recommend that the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry for Primary Industries, and the Ministry of Education assess how well all their work aimed at supporting improved outcomes for Māori is co-ordinated across the organisation and make any improvements needed to make it easier for iwi to engage with them, avoid duplication across initiatives, and be well placed to make informed decisions about where to invest funds.

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## Public organisations could provide more opportunities for sharing what they learn

- 4.50 There would be value in providers from around the country meeting to share experiences and learn from each other. Public organisations have provided some opportunities, but providers and facilitators told us they would have liked more opportunities to connect.
- 4.51 The Ministry for Primary Industries has held sessions where facilitators could meet to share their experiences of working with MABx clusters. Ideally these sessions would have been in person, but they had to be moved online due to Covid-19 restrictions. The Ministry told us that sessions had not worked as well as intended in terms of developing a community of practice and providing an opportunity to share knowledge. This was because facilitators engaged with the sessions to differing degrees and attendance began to drop. We understand the Ministry is planning to consider how to support facilitators and ensure the continued quality of facilitation.
- 4.52 There have been opportunities for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori providers to share lessons but these have been limited and not well timed. For example, before they started delivering the training, all providers met and were briefed on lessons from the pilot programme. However, this was after they had completed most of their preparations for the full roll out so they had limited time to make any changes. Providers told us they would have liked more opportunities on an ongoing basis to share their experiences about delivering the programme (for example, to see how others have been dealing with Covid-19-related issues). We understand the Ministry of Education now holds quarterly hui for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori providers to share their experiences and insights of delivering this training and to collaborate on its future.
- 4.53 The Ministry of Education's Strategic Advisors Māori have a regular teleconference where they can share progress on the different ways iwi are implementing Whānau Engagement. Despite this, we heard that more could be done for the Ministry's regional offices to learn from each other by sharing their insights from Whānau Engagement.

# Monitoring and reporting

- 5.1 In this Part, we discuss:
- how well public organisations are providing information that supports broader public accountability for each initiative;
  - how well public organisations are reporting the outputs, impacts, and outcomes delivered for each initiative;
  - the progress that each initiative has reported to date; and
  - how reporting could be improved.
- 5.2 Performance reporting is the reporting that public organisations do to explain how they have spent public money and what they have achieved. The information public organisations include in performance reporting can be used to hold them to account, in particular for the difference that they have made in terms of improved outcomes for communities.
- 5.3 Performance reporting, including reporting from providers, is also an important management control. Public money was invested in these initiatives for a specific purpose. In our view, how they are progressing should be the focus of reporting to Parliament, the public more generally, and the specific groups the initiatives are there to benefit.
- 5.4 We wanted to understand how well positioned public organisations are to monitor and report on what the initiatives have achieved. We expected to see:
- regular and meaningful reporting of achievement towards the outputs, impacts, and outcomes sought, using formats appropriate for different stakeholders; and
  - reporting that shows what has been spent, what has been achieved, and, when applicable, why results differ from targets.

## Summary of findings

- 5.5 Although we heard that the four initiatives we looked at have made a positive difference, we did not see this adequately reflected in performance reporting. The public organisations involved have taken some steps to capture what has been achieved by each initiative but, currently, reporting does not capture the full range of information relevant to being held accountable for the public money invested.
- 5.6 These concerns are not unique to these initiatives. Improvement is needed across the public sector in the way that public organisations report on their performance. We encourage the public organisations responsible for these initiatives to provide better information about what has been achieved by using performance information they already hold, or information they plan to collect, such as from planned evaluations.

- 5.7 We were encouraged by some of the reporting practices that we saw. In an effort to produce a richer picture of performance, we saw public organisations:
- using videos to record rangatahi describing their experiences of being part of He Poutama Rangatahi in their own voice; and
  - giving iwi the option to report verbally on progress of their Whānau Engagement contract.
- 5.8 We encourage innovation in reporting practices where they provide meaningful information in an accessible way.

### **Regular reporting requirements should focus more on impacts and outcomes**

- 5.9 Most of the reporting requirements for iwi, other providers, and MABx clusters are focused on what activity there has been during the reporting period. This type of reporting is useful as a management control because it shows whether providers are meeting the terms of their contracts or funding agreements. However, it does not show the full range of impacts and outcomes that participants have experienced or that are ultimately sought from the funding.
- 5.10 The public organisations involved are starting to introduce different ways of reporting, such as verbal reporting, to capture richer information. We encourage public organisations to continue making improvements to reporting that allows them to fully understand what is being achieved through these initiatives, and what barriers iwi, providers, and landowners face.

### **He Poutama Rangatahi reporting from providers includes some richer information**

- 5.11 Funding agreements between the Ministry of Social Development and He Poutama Rangatahi providers include a mixture of the detailed outputs, impacts, and outcomes that will be measured for each provider. He Poutama Rangatahi providers report monthly to the Ministry on these.
- 5.12 Some measures are based on participation – such as the number of rangatahi that are enrolled, the number that complete training, and the number that transition into education, training, or employment.
- 5.13 Other measures are more specific to individual providers and the programme they offer. Those include measures such as the qualifications, cultural skills, and work readiness skills rangatahi have gained.

- 5.14 Some providers felt that the monthly reporting is of limited value because it typically takes longer than one month for many rangatahi to show significant change. This does not mean rangatahi are not making progress, but based on the measures in the reporting it can appear that there has been no change since the previous month.
- 5.15 The Ministry for Social Development does collect some richer information from providers. In addition to the monthly reports, providers must complete a quarterly narrative report and six-monthly case studies. These reports have more detail about progress as well as the challenges that providers and participants have faced and how they have worked to overcome them. However, providers told us that completing these reports can be time-consuming.
- 5.16 Two He Poutama Rangatahi providers told us that video reports, where rangatahi tell their own story in their own voice, can offer more powerful storytelling about what individual rangatahi have achieved and the challenges they have had to overcome. We saw examples of this but providers told us they do not currently have much capacity to produce video reports. The Ministry of Social Development also told us that video reports by themselves would be difficult to store and to incorporate into more summarised internal reporting.
- 5.17 Providers told us that the reports they are required to produce do not provide a complete picture of what has been achieved. One reason for this is that employment is not immediately realistic for all participants. Some rangatahi have complex needs and will take longer to be ready for employment. For those rangatahi a good outcome is when they have engaged with the programme, built trust with the providers, and developed skills and confidence.
- 5.18 Another reason is that He Poutama Rangatahi programmes can provide a level of care that does not fit neatly into set hours. This support can continue after rangatahi have completed the programme. Providers told us their door is always open. Rangatahi can need support for navigating the system (such as help completing Inland Revenue forms) or if they lack confidence dealing with authority. Sometimes providers support rangatahi into one job and again later when they move into another. As a result, providers told us that they often do more than what is funded in their contract or included in reporting to the Ministry of Social Development.
- 5.19 Current reporting does not capture barriers to He Poutama Rangatahi achieving its outcomes. Providers told us that some He Poutama Rangatahi participants need more specialist support (such as support for issues with drugs and alcohol), but providers do not always have the knowledge or connections to access this support. There is often a lack of capacity for delivery of these types of services

even if they have funding. We heard that it could be beneficial to have a social worker or navigator attached to each He Poutama Rangatahi programme to help rangatahi access other types of support where needed.

- 5.20 The success of He Poutama Rangatahi can also be affected by the availability of appropriate and sustainable employment for rangatahi who finish the programme. In some cases the local labour market does not have the right opportunities. For example, in a region such as Hawke's Bay where many jobs are in the horticultural industry, employment opportunities are often for seasonal rather than permanent jobs.

### **The Ministry for Primary Industries uses evaluations to gain a deeper understanding of what each cluster has achieved**

- 5.21 Currently MABx clusters report monthly to the Ministry for Primary Industries on their activity and progress towards agreed milestones. The Ministry told us that the monthly reports from clusters do not easily show the status of each cluster against their agreed outcomes. The Ministry also told us that, until recently, it has been difficult to measure the overall status of MABx across all clusters because it was too early to track trends.
- 5.22 Cluster facilitators produce quarterly narrative reports for clusters as part of the framework and to provide richer information about what is being achieved. End-of-cluster evaluations are used to take a deeper look at what each cluster has achieved and what has been learned.
- 5.23 The reports that MABx clusters produce for the Ministry for Primary Industries do not show additional outcomes being achieved by each cluster. For example, one landowner talked about being able to kōrero and build connections with people they would not usually meet. This led to an investment opportunity not directly related to that cluster.
- 5.24 In another cluster, landowners saw their community come together and work towards a common purpose. We heard that the community learned and grew together in a way that is difficult to describe or measure. They provided learning opportunities for mokopuna who became involved with weather monitoring and crop trials that were part of the cluster's research. More specifically, cluster members learnt about land use and were able to pass this knowledge on to their whānau. These were outcomes that mattered to the cluster members.
- 5.25 Current reporting also omits some challenges that clusters can face in achieving their intended outcomes, especially after they have completed their MABx projects. This is because MABx was set up to cater to Māori landowners but other

schemes can be difficult for Māori to access. We were told that clusters can find it hard to move from the Māori-focused approach that MABx uses to a system that does not specifically cater for Māori land. One person described the gap between these approaches as a “valley of death”.

- 5.26 After completing MABx, clusters might need to apply for further funding and investment to allow them to implement the ideas or proposals they developed through MABx. Raising funds to invest has always been a challenge for Māori-owned farms and land trusts due to their complex ownership. This can be even harder with a cluster, which is not a legal entity and therefore cannot enter into agreements for investment.

### **Reporting from providers for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori could include more about impacts and outcomes**

- 5.27 Providers for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori report quarterly to the Ministry of Education, mainly on the number of participants taking part. Providers felt that the Ministry was not measuring the impacts on the experience of ākonga Māori hearing more of their language and culture in their schools. One provider also noted that the Ministry does not measure the quality of te reo Māori that teachers and other school staff are using after they have completed the training.
- 5.28 To attempt to address this, we understand that reporting from providers now includes comments and feedback from participants. Through this reporting, and from its regular engagement with school leadership and teachers, the Ministry has heard that teachers and staff are increasing their confidence in using te reo Māori in the classroom. As well as learning te reo Māori, participants have lifted their cultural competency and developed their relationships with their students’ whānau. Some teachers have said that Te Ahu o te Reo Māori is the best professional development they have received. We understand that Te Ahu o te Reo Māori is currently oversubscribed.
- 5.29 We also heard that some participants had experienced additional benefits. For example, some Māori teachers had strengthened their connection with their culture through their participation in Te Ahu o te Reo Māori. Others had been able to learn more about the history of their local area because this was incorporated into the local aspect of Te Ahu o te Reo Māori by their provider.
- 5.30 The Ministry of Education reports quarterly to the Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education) to provide an update on the *Supporting Māori Learners and Te Reo Māori Post COVID-19* package. These reports include more details about each initiative in the package, including Te Ahu o te Reo Māori. In our view, the additional reporting from providers, and to the Associate Minister, is a step in

the right direction. We encourage the Ministry to continue to incorporate more information about the impacts and outcomes achieved from Te Ahu o te Reo Māori in its regular reporting.

### **The Ministry of Education uses verbal reporting to capture what has been achieved through Whānau Engagement**

- 5.31 Reporting requirements about how and when each iwi will report to the Ministry of Education about Whānau Engagement have been jointly agreed by the Ministry and each iwi. These requirements are set out in individual funding agreements. The funding agreements also include the outputs, impacts, and outcomes sought by each iwi as well as customised milestones and deliverables.
- 5.32 The Ministry of Education has offered iwi the option to report verbally on their progress with Whānau Engagement. Both Ministry of Education staff and iwi we spoke to are supportive of verbal reporting where it has been used. As well as reducing the reporting burden on iwi, a verbal report is seen as a more powerful way of telling the story of the journey whānau have been on and can capture a broader range of impacts and outcomes being achieved. When verbal reporting is used, either the Ministry or the iwi will also prepare a written record of what has been reported.
- 5.33 Representatives of one iwi told us that, through Whānau Engagement, an additional outcome they have benefitted from has been making new connections with whānau, some of whom felt like they had been heard for the first time. Whānau Engagement has also provided an opportunity for iwi to become more connected with local schools and have more influence in the local education system.
- 5.34 The story-telling that can come from verbal reporting can be an effective way of describing barriers to achieving outputs, impacts, and outcomes. One barrier we were told about was that Whānau Engagement could be limited by how well the school system supports Māori tamariki. As noted in Part 3, the Ministry of Education recognises that the successful delivery of its initiatives for supporting Māori learners requires the education sector to work differently. Even if Whānau Engagement succeeds in getting tamariki to attend school, any benefits will be limited if the wider school system is not supporting good educational outcomes for the tamariki.
- 5.35 Many tamariki also face broader issues that affect school attendance and engagement and which are outside the scope of Whānau Engagement. Iwi in rural areas told us they had added barriers including limited numbers of service providers and, for whānau, rising fuel prices making it harder to get to school. We also heard that iwi in rural areas sometimes missed out on Government



funding for other initiatives, which in their experience often targeted larger iwi or communities. In some cases, iwi did not feel the funding they were receiving for Whānau Engagement was enough to meet the need in their communities. Where available, other services they provide were picking up what Whānau Engagement does not cover, such as Whānau Ora services.

## Public organisations need to strengthen their accountability to the public for these initiatives

### Public reporting does not show how much has been spent on each initiative

- 5.36 Public reporting on where public money has been spent is an important aspect of public accountability. Of the four initiatives we looked at, only one has had its budgeted and actual spending disclosed in public accountability documents.<sup>12</sup>
- 5.37 He Poutama Rangatahi has been treated as a stand-alone initiative in Budget documents, with its own appropriation. This means that it is possible to see how much funding was allocated to He Poutama Rangatahi and how much was spent. For the 2021/22 financial year, the Ministry of Social Development's annual report shows that about \$44 million was appropriated but only about \$20 million was spent. The Ministry explained that this underspend was due to delays in signing up new contracts because of the impact of Covid-19 on providers, as well as an earlier underspend transferred from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. However, the annual report does not include an explanation for this difference and in our view could provide more transparency about this.
- 5.38 The other three initiatives have less transparency. They have each been funded as part of a larger package and it is not possible to know from public documents how much funding has been allocated to and spent for each individual initiative – or even how much was spent on the larger package that each initiative was part of.
- 5.39 Other work by this Office suggests that this is a systemic problem across public sector initiatives and is not particular to the initiatives we looked at for this audit. Better reporting of outcomes is critical for providing transparency and accountability about how public funds are being spent. It would also help the government and public organisations make good decisions about where to invest public funds.

12 For example, the Estimates of Appropriation that are part of the Government's annual Budget and the annual report for the relevant public organisation.

## Public reporting does not reflect the positive impact of He Poutama Rangatahi

- 5.40 We heard many accounts of the positive impact He Poutama Rangatahi is having on young people. The Ministry of Social Development also has evidence that He Poutama Rangatahi is more successful than other ways of supporting young people into education, training, or employment. However, this success is not reflected in internal reporting or reporting to the public.
- 5.41 Internal reporting by the Ministry of Social Development is focused on spending, the number of contracts with providers, the number of enrolments, and the number of rangatahi who have moved into education, employment, or training. In our view, this is useful as management information but provides limited information about what is being achieved.
- 5.42 The Ministry of Social Development’s data shows that 57.5% of rangatahi who have enrolled in a He Poutama Rangatahi programme and for whom there is a known outcome have transitioned into employment, education, or training. This is a much better result than has been achieved by other interventions targeting the same issues.<sup>13</sup>
- 5.43 The Ministry of Social Development estimates that after all currently enrolled rangatahi have completed their He Poutama Rangatahi programme, as many as 70% will have moved into employment, education, or training. The Ministry estimates that up to 2000 rangatahi are still enrolled in a programme, including those receiving ongoing support, and who are not yet ready to transition.
- 5.44 The performance measure that the Ministry of Social Development reports publicly, however, is about the number of young people enrolled in programmes funded by He Poutama Rangatahi and not the results that are being achieved. This measure, and its expected and actual results for the last two financial years, is shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3**  
Publicly reported performance measures for He Poutama Rangatahi

Performance measure – <i>Number of young people supported onto education, training, or employment pathways</i>	2021/22	2022/23
Expected performance (in the annual Budget)	2000	2000
Actual performance (in the Ministry of Social Development’s annual report)	2174	n/a

13 An early evaluation of He Poutama Rangatahi analysed Ministry of Social Development data as a comparator, and estimated that over a year, 16-23% of rangatahi who were not part of He Poutama Rangatahi moved off a benefit into education, employment or training. This figure includes rangatahi who received other forms of assistance from Government agencies, and those who received no assistance.

- 5.45 Figure 3 shows that the Ministry of Social Development engaged more young people than expected in programmes funded by He Poutama Rangatahi, but these numbers alone do not show the impact on the young people involved.
- 5.46 In its annual report for the year ended 30 June 2022, the Ministry of Social Development did provide some additional information about what has been achieved with He Poutama Rangatahi. This included publishing that around 1200 young people enrolled in He Poutama Rangatahi subsequently moved into education, employment, or training during the year. However, this additional measure only gives limited information because the Ministry has not published any comparative or expected results.
- 5.47 Qualitative information about impacts and outcomes can also support accountability. The Ministry of Social Development also included a narrative about He Poutama Rangatahi in its latest annual report. This provided more contextual information, but was focused on describing the support that is offered by one provider that offers a career development programme rather than describing the outcomes experienced by participants.

### **The Ministry for Primary Industries has developed a reporting framework for the Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme**

- 5.48 The Ministry for Primary Industries has designed a Results Monitoring Framework to monitor and evaluate MABx against the short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes sought (outlined in Part 2). The Ministry has also applied this framework at a cluster level for regular reporting about cluster performance but for most clusters it is too early to measure the medium- and long-term outcomes.
- 5.49 The Ministry for Primary Industries' annual reporting on MABx is focused on the number of clusters set up each year. This measure is shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4**  
**Publicly reported performance measures for the Māori Agribusiness Extension Programme**

Performance measure – <i>Number of new clusters</i>	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Expected performance (in the annual Budget)	Minimum 2	Minimum 6	Minimum 6	Minimum 6
Actual performance (in the Ministry for Primary Industries' annual report)	6	23	7	n/a

- 5.50 From Figure 4 we can see that the Ministry for Primary Industries has exceeded its expected performance for setting up new clusters every year so far. However, this information does not show what progress those clusters have made or what outcomes they have achieved.
- 5.51 The Ministry for Primary Industries has included qualitative information about MABx in its annual reports. This has included case studies of two clusters and provides some insights about the impacts experienced by some clusters. The Ministry's latest annual report also included an explanation of how MABx is helping the Ministry make progress in its key result area of *Strengthening relationships with Māori*. As more clusters reach the end of their MABx funding, we encourage the Ministry to include more information in its annual reports and consider other ways of reporting publicly about the outputs, impacts, and outcomes those clusters have achieved.

### **The Ministry of Education has not measured the impacts and outcomes for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori**

- 5.52 The public reporting for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori not only does not reflect the difference being made, but also does not give an accurate indication of the performance that is being measured. The main measure the Ministry has reported on is the number of people who participated in Te Ahu o te Reo Māori each year.
- 5.53 Staff from the Ministry of Education acknowledged to us that its current measures are not adequate to capture the full impact of this initiative. Some providers we spoke to agreed. Providers recognised that it is hard to measure impact. However, some had anecdotal evidence that the training was having a wider impact, as noted above, and thought the Ministry should put more effort into capturing this.
- 5.54 The performance measure reported on publicly for Te Ahu o te Reo Māori is to maintain or improve the number of people who participated during the year. In its annual report for the 2021/22 financial year, the Ministry of Education states the number of people who participated for 2020/21 (1054) and for 2021/22 (6190) and uses this increase as a basis to state that it has achieved its expected performance.
- 5.55 This does not accurately reflect that 2020/21 was a pilot stage, and the large increase in 2021/22 was due to the initiative expanding from four regions to the whole country.

### **Performance of Whānau Engagement has not been publicly reported**

- 5.56 We have not seen any publicly available information about performance expectations or what the Ministry of Education has achieved through Whānau Engagement. This is a small initiative in the context of public spending on education and we would not necessarily expect to see it reported on separately. Nevertheless, Whānau Engagement might be seen as a significant initiative, particularly by iwi, because of the way that the Ministry has engaged with iwi. We heard positive feedback from iwi about this.
- 5.57 The Ministry of Education's quarterly reports to the Associate Minister (see paragraph 5.30) include more detail about what is being done with the Whānau Engagement funding and some of the effects it is having on ākongā and whānau. One impact mentioned is improved attendance rates for ākongā who are being supported by iwi. In our view, the Ministry should consider whether the information in these reports could be made available to the public.

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#### **Recommendation 3**

We recommend that the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry for Primary Industries, and the Ministry of Education improve the way they measure and publicly report on these initiatives so there is:

- better visibility of the outcomes sought and the progress being made; and
- more effective public accountability through reporting about what has been spent and what has been achieved with that spending.

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### **Evaluating these initiatives will help to identify the full range of impacts and outcomes being achieved**

- 5.58 Reporting by providers is a management control used to ensure that providers are meeting the terms of their contract or funding agreement. This reporting does not produce information about what is being achieved across each initiative as a whole, progress towards longer-term outcomes, or how each initiative is contributing to more strategic outcomes, such as outcomes at an organisation or sector level.
- 5.59 As discussed in Part 3, the three public organisations each evaluated or reviewed the initiatives at an early stage. These evaluations were done to see how well the design was working on a small scale before expanding the initiatives.

- 5.60 Now that the initiatives have been in place for some time, the responsible public organisations need to carry out further work, which might include evaluations to see how well each initiative is achieving its intended impacts and outcomes and to identify whether any changes are needed. This should be proportionate to the investment made.
- 5.61 The Ministry of Social Development is carrying out a full evaluation of He Poutama Rangatahi. This will look at how well He Poutama Rangatahi is achieving broader outcomes such as sustained employment and improved social outcomes.
- 5.62 The Ministry for Primary Industries will include its approach for measuring achievement of medium- and longer-term outcomes in its Results Monitoring Framework for MABx. We understand that the Ministry is planning to carry out a review of MABx, including its processes and whether some of the most advanced clusters are on track to achieve outcomes. This should be complete by mid-2023. The Ministry also has a longer-term evaluation plan for MABx.
- 5.63 The Ministry of Education is currently working through an evaluation process for the initiatives from its *Supporting Māori Learners and Te Reo Māori Post COVID-19* funding package, which includes Te Ahu o te Reo Māori. We understand that the Ministry has engaged a Māori language education and research consultancy to design and conduct an evaluation of Te Ahu o te Reo Māori. The first phase was completed in December 2022. The Ministry expects that the evaluation findings will provide evidence of the impact of Te Ahu o te Reo Māori on students and student outcomes. We encourage the Ministry to ensure that it includes an assessment of the broader outcomes being achieved over time and as more people complete the training and can apply it in their schools.
- 5.64 We have not seen any plans for how the Ministry of Education intends to measure how well it is achieving its intended impacts and outcomes for Whānau Engagement. In our view, there would be a benefit in the Ministry of Education evaluating Whānau Engagement, particularly to look at the effectiveness of the way that the Ministry engaged with Māori for this initiative.
- 5.65 We encourage the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry for Primary Industries, and the Ministry of Education to each publish the evaluation reports about these initiatives after those evaluations are complete.

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