



1 October 2024

Attn: Edward Tanoi
On behalf of Leeanne McAviney
Assistant Auditor-General, Sector Performance
100 Molesworth Street, Thorndon 6011
PO Box 3928, Wellington 6140
New Zealand

Tēnā koe Edward,

RE: Following up on our performance audit of how well public organisations are supporting Whānau Ora and whānau-centred approaches

Thank you for your letter asking for our progress following your 2023 performance audit of *How well public organisations are supporting Whānau Ora and whānau-centred approaches* (the Report).

Te Puni Kōkiri has been asked to self-assess the performance of our organisation against five recommendations (1, 2, 3, 4 and 7) of the Report's recommendations that relate specifically to the role of the agency. Please find our responses to each of the recommendations in the template provided (**Attachment One**).

The findings in the Report identified that, while some positive progress has been made, much more is needed to support and implement whānau-centred approaches, including Whānau Ora, across public organisations. The Report also confirmed several assumptions that Te Puni Kōkiri held, particularly that the current system settings of the public service are not fit for purpose to support whānau-centred approaches. This prevents adequate service provision from reaching and supporting whānau Māori.

Growing the influence of whānau-centred approaches across government and into communities remains a core strategic focus area for Te Puni Kōkiri. For example, the work to address the recommendations of the Report has been strengthened with a new Ministerial priority for the Minister for Whānau Ora, Hon Tama Potaka. Since early 2024, the Whānau Ora portfolio has been refreshed to focus on:

Enabling the adoption of Whānau Ora as a public service model for improving outcomes for New Zealanders with distinct needs. A key element of this is consideration of how Whānau Ora and Social Investment complement one another.

To underpin the wider use of Whānau Ora as a public service model, and expand whānau-centred, locally led, government enabled models to other agencies, Te Puni Kōkiri believes that a forward approach to monitoring and mentoring is key to success. Te Puni Kōkiri will work with agencies to improve results for Māori against the Government targets through a firm mentoring role, and elevating the monitoring role to stand alongside other central agencies.

Key to this refresh, Te Puni Kōkiri has formally commenced procurement, with an Advanced Notice issued on the Government Electronic Tenders Service (GETS). This will further strengthen the role Whānau Ora plays in our communities and enable the adoption of Whānau Ora as a public service model for New Zealanders with distinct needs. Whānau Ora is a whānau-centred approach that places whānau at the heart of service delivery, is locally-



led, ensuring services are tailored to meet the requirements of each community, and government enabled, to ensure the Whānau Ora ecosystem has clear outcomes and flexible funding mechanisms for efficient commissioning. The use of enhanced data, results measurement and reporting will inform government's social investment priorities.

Building on the previous successes of the Whānau Ora commissioning model, the procurement aims to emphasise the key elements for success through:

- Aligning to social investment, emphasising evidence-informed, outcomes-focused investments to foster innovative and sustainable solutions. Evaluation and performance insights ensure that resources are directed toward interventions that deliver measurable long-term benefits.
- Reinforcing evidence and learning, creating a system where best practices and lessons learned are shared across the network to drive continuous improvement
- Supporting a sustainable provider and commissioner sector, ensuring the ecosystem is resilient and responsive to the evolving needs of whānau. The fit for purpose process and controls ensure that governance is robust, adaptable, and appropriate for managing risk.
- Adapting to future challenges through flexible governance, scalable technology, and data-driven processes.

This work aims to extend the reach to whānau through increased investment in Whānau Ora commissioning. We would like to see greater investment using new opportunities available under the government's evolving social investment approach. We are working closely with the Social Investment Agency to align future Whānau Ora investment to their requirements. Since the establishment of Whānau Ora commissioning agencies in 2014, we have seen an increase from \$30.484m FY 2014/15 and 8,269 whānau engaged to investment of \$156.858m and over 37,000 whānau engaged for FY 2023/24.

Through the Whānau Ora prototypes, Te Puni Kōkiri is exploring system settings with a particular focus on the barriers and levers to address the systemic issues identified in your report. A prominent example of this is Ngā Tini Whetū, a four-year test phase initiative to test whānau-centred approaches with early support to achieve common outcomes, including those set out in the Child and Youth Strategy, in particular through the First 1000 Days kaupapa. This is an inter-agency initiative funded through joint investment by Te Puni Kōkiri and ACC in commissioning outcomes through Te Pou Matakana (trading as the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency).

As can be seen, Te Puni Kōkiri remains committed to expanding whānau-centred approaches across public organisations, as is reflected by our many work programmes. I believe this work will in time effectively address all recommendations.

Te Puni Kōkiri is happy to undertake any further engagement with your office, and provide any additional information, to support the self-assessments of our work.

Nāku noa, nā



Dave Samuels
Te Tumu Whakarae mō Te Puni Kōkiri | Secretary for Māori Development



Recommendation 1	We recommend that Te Puni Kōkiri seek to clarify the mandate for the role that it has for broadening whānau-centred approaches.
Action	<p><i>Actions taken</i></p> <p>Clarifying our mandate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Te Puni Kōkiri has clarified its mandate on broadening whānau-centred approaches through different methods in response to the prioritising whānau-centred approaches as a core strategic focus area for the organisation. • Te Puni Kōkiri has responsibility, under Section 5 of the Ministry of Māori Development Act 1991 (the Act), to promote increases in the levels of achievement attained by Māori with respect to education, training and employment, health and economic resource development. In addition, the Act states a responsibility to monitor and liaise <i>“with each department and agency that provides or has a responsibility to provide services to or for Māori for the purpose of ensuring the adequacy of those services”</i>. Te Puni Kōkiri will be prioritising Whānau Ora and whānau-centred approaches within its monitoring approach in the next year. • As part of the whānau-centred approaches work programme, Te Puni Kōkiri undertook wānanga with Social Wellbeing Board agencies in 2023 to better support ‘system whānau-centred approaches’ through a ‘shared understanding of whānau-centred approaches’. These wānanga utilised the mandate Te Puni Kōkiri possesses to broaden the use of whānau-centred approaches. • We are currently considering system settings for the implementation of whānau-centred policy approaches across government and will be working across agencies to explore whether there is a need for Whānau Ora standards to be developed (this work will also address Recommendation 7). <p>Future state for Whānau Ora in relation to our role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Whānau Ora commissioning agency procurement further reinforces our mandate to lead out across the public sector on the adoption of Whānau Ora as a public sector model for New Zealanders with distinct needs [further responses in recommendations 2,4, and 7]. • Te Puni Kōkiri will retain oversight of the commissioning model, provide funding to and undertake performance monitoring of the Commissioning Agencies. Part of our role is to enable a thriving ecosystem for providers and to support evidence-based learning across the system.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Te Puni Kōkiri aims to procure Whānau Ora commissioning agency services in four regions. It is intended that there will be two regions in Te Ika-a-Māui North Island and one in Te Waipounamu South Island. A fourth 'region' will meet the needs of Pasifika across Aotearoa New Zealand. <p><i>Specific actions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Te Puni Kōkiri Annual Report and the Annual Estimates hearings are public accountability measures which include the progress of the role of Te Puni Kōkiri to promote whānau-centred policy approaches and to expand Whānau Ora. <p><i>Why effective?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The above inter-agency wānanga were an effective way to bring government agencies together to discuss and explore the design and implementation of whānau-centred approaches – including clarifying the mandate of Te Puni Kōkiri to lead in this space.
Status	Partially completed
Comments on status given above	<p>This recommendation is only partially completed for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the disestablishment of the Social Wellbeing Board, the cross-agency work undertaken on whānau-centred approaches needs to be re-established as government agencies finalise the reshaping of their structures, priorities and organisational purpose. The clarification of the mandate of Te Puni Kōkiri continues to be undertaken through the Annual Report and through the annual Estimates hearings. Exploring the need for Whānau Ora standards and or regulations are in the early stages of development. The Whānau Ora commissioning agency procurement process commences on the week of 30 September 2024, with new outcome agreements for the four regional commissioning agencies intended to go live by 1 July 2025; this work will in time address this recommendation substantively.
Date commenced	November 2022
Date completed or due to be completed	November 2025

Recommendation 2	We recommend that Te Puni Kōkiri prioritise the completion of work to improve how it measures and reports the impacts and outcomes that whānau-centred approaches are achieving and consider drawing on broader information about whānau successes.
Action	<p><i>Actions taken</i></p> <p>Current state data, reporting and evaluation (internal only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Te Puni Kōkiri continues to collect quarterly reporting from Whānau Ora commissioning agencies and pilot/test programmes to monitor the delivery against funding deliverables. This reporting informs the preparation of briefings, guidance, Select Committee hearings and advice to the Minister and officials: <p>Proposed future data approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed future approach will align to the government’s social investment approach, emphasising evidence-informed, outcomes-focused investments to foster innovative and sustainable solutions. Evaluation and performance insights will ensure that resources are directed toward interventions that deliver measurable long-term benefits. A particular focus for the future of Whānau Ora will be on using the IDI to track outcomes which are of interest to the Government (particularly long-term outcomes), and to get a deeper understanding of the contribution of the Whānau Ora approach to those outcomes (noting the significant challenges in establishing attribution for intergenerational change). While work is underway through Whānau Ora prototypes such as Ngā Tini Whetū to improve how we track outcomes with specific whānau cohorts over time, the new procurement gives the opportunity to provide for a consistent model of measuring progress across all commissioning agencies. This will reinforce evidence and learning, creating a system where best practices and lessons learned are shared across the network to drive continuous improvement. <p>Bespoke evaluations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Te Puni Kōkiri has undertaken bespoke evaluations for two key pilot initiatives (Ngā Tini Whetū and the Whānau Centred Facilitation Initiative; the latter is due for completion by the end of 2024) when they will be available to the public.

- A developmental evaluation that focuses on system barriers and system levers to enable government investment in whānau-driven, locally led, government enabled initiatives is being considered.

Why effective?

- It is anticipated that the work with the Social Investment Agency will improve how commissioning agency data is captured/shared and reporting is undertaken.
- This will provide greater visibility of how the services and initiatives are meeting needs of whānau, what the return on the investment is for this provision, and where opportunities exist to increase investment for maximum return.
- The Ngā Tini Whetū evaluation of the initial two-year pilot (FY 20/21 & FY 21/22) demonstrated the effectiveness of the Whānau Ora approach by supporting the achievement of transformational whānau outcomes that would not have been achieved otherwise.
- The success of this pilot led to a successful budget bid to support a four-year Ngā Tini Whetū Test Phase from FY 23/24 to FY 26/27. The purpose of the Test Phase is to provide targeted support for hapū wāhine and their whānau in their First 1000 Days and in addition to measuring outcomes will explore system barriers and levers.

Examples of impact

- The Ngā Tini Whetū pilot demonstrated how an inter-agency initiative can support whānau ora-inspired, whānau-centred approaches to make a significant difference in the lives of tamariki, whānau, and communities.
- The “early support” prototype shared between Te Pou Matakana (trading as the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency), Oranga Tamariki (OT), Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) and Te Puni Kōkiri, was funded for two years and aimed to:
 - a. support eight hundred whānau by navigating them towards a brighter future, preventing injuries and averting a care, protection, or youth justice intervention from Oranga Tamariki
 - b. reduce the number of incidents of family harm and improve access to services for whānau Māori using a Whānau Ora approach.

Status	Partially completed
Comments on status given above	<p>This recommendation is only partially completed for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Outcome Agreements that set the parameters for measuring and reporting on impact and outcomes have largely not changed since the latest four-year agreements were signed (in 2020) • However, we expect to fully address this recommendation through including the use of enhanced data, results measurement and reporting in future Outcome Agreements with commissioning agencies that align to the social investment approach guidance and requirements.
Date commenced	March 2023
Date completed or due to be completed	1 July 2025

<p>Recommendation 3</p>	<p>We recommend that Te Puni Kōkiri continue to identify the various available sources of monitoring, research, and evaluation information about the implementation and effectiveness of whānau-centred approaches and improve the accessibility of this information to public organisations, non-government organisations, and the public.</p>
<p>Action</p>	<p><i>Actions taken:</i></p> <p>Publishing Information on Whānau Ora</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At present, we do not publish any bespoke data and evidence from Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies and pilot/test programs outside of what they publish themselves (e.g. Annual Reports and Impact Evaluations). • This includes reference to quantitative and qualitative evidence outlining the performance of Whānau Ora as a commissioning for outcomes mechanism through our Strategic Intentions, Annual Reporting, State Sector Performance measures, and annual Select Committee and Estimates hearings. • Te Puni Kōkiri is this week (30 September 2024) launching an internal data tool called Te Kete Raraunga which will capture priority areas such as Whānau Ora data to inform decision-making and policy development. In the future this tool could be made available to the public as a one-stop-shop for accessing material on whānau centred approaches. <p>Stocktake and Future Intentions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Te Puni Kōkiri completed an internal stocktake and analysis of different whānau-centred delivery models and initiatives administered and/or commissioned by Te Puni Kōkiri. The intention of this project was to make available this data for internal use. • We also provided a stocktake of initiatives that are whānau-centred to the Social Investment Agency for their social sector review of the initiatives/programmes under the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy and Te Aorerekura Family Violence Sexual Violence Strategy and Action Plan. These included Whānau Ora commissioning, Whānau Ora prototypes, and Whānau-Centred Facilitation Initiatives <p><i>Why effective:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further progress is required on how to progress the collation and dissemination of information on whānau-centred approaches into the public domain. This progress will need to ensure the effectiveness of the recommended action.

Status	Partially completed
Comments on status given above	<p>This recommendation is only partially completed for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The stocktake produced a document that is only internally shared, and only includes information on Te Puni Kōkiri examples/initiatives of whānau-centred approaches. • Further discussion is required to progress the future of this project – and how to properly publish Whānau Ora data which will include engaging with Whānau Ora commissioning agencies. This may include agreements resulting from the procurement of new Whānau Ora commissioning agencies.
Date commenced	March 2023
Date completed or due to be completed	N/a

Recommendation 4	We recommend that Te Puni Kōkiri seek to clarify expectations for public organisations to support whānau-centred approaches
Action	<p><i>Actions taken:</i></p> <p>Future State Plan for Whānau Ora</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minister’s priority for the Whānau Ora portfolio is to enable its adoption as a public service model for improving outcomes for New Zealanders with distinct needs. • In support of this, Te Puni Kōkiri is currently considering options to expand Whānau Ora and to strengthen the commissioning model to both expand its reach to whānau and increase investment in Whānau Ora from across government • This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ supporting a sustainable provider and commissioner sector, ensuring the ecosystem is resilient and responsive to the evolving needs of whānau. The fit for purpose process and controls will ensure that governance is robust, adaptable, and appropriate for managing risk. ○ adapting to future challenges through flexible governance, scalable technology, and data-driven processes. • Te Puni Kōkiri is seeking through the Whānau Ora commissioning agency procurement, to improve data, results measurement and reporting in order to strengthen how we measure and report on the impact for whānau [refer also response to recommendation 2]. <p>Joint Agency Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the inter-agency Ngā Tini Whetū Test phase which is jointly funded by Te Puni Kōkiri and ACC and commissioned to Whānau Ora provider collectives and partners by Te Pou Matakana for the First 1000 days kaupapa, the initiative is testing inter-agency governance, inter-agency investment and system levers and barriers for entering whānau-driven contracts that will contribute to developing the policy settings for government agencies to invest in Whānau Ora commissioning (particularly for initiatives that target particular vulnerable whānau and individuals in the community).

Whānau-Centred Approaches to Address System Issues in Family Violence sector

- The Whānau-Centred Facilitation Initiative supports whānau-centred family violence interventions by kaupapa Māori providers.
- It aims to address the fragmented family and sexual violence system for Māori by improving service access, restoring whānau relationships, and fostering better health and safety outcomes through locally led, whānau centred approaches. The initiative is in its final year as a prototype ending 30 June 2025.

Adoption of whānau-centred approaches

- Additionally, Te Puni Kōkiri is working to influence the adoption of whānau centred approaches by government agencies by advocating for them through our interagency relationships and via the provision of policy advice pertaining to the promotion of Māori development and wellbeing.
- Te Puni Kōkiri also promotes the efficacy of whānau centred approaches in Ministerial advice for Cabinet (e.g., Social Outcomes Committee) and Ministerial group meetings (including the Child and Youth Ministers Group, Crown Response Group, Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence Group, Social Investment Group).
- Within its monitoring function, Te Puni Kōkiri will be tracking the progress of the Government Targets and working to inform the Delivery Plans underpinning the targets. Te Puni Kōkiri will be working with Lead Agencies to identify gaps in the Delivery Plans and the progress of the targets – and also recommending the adoption of Whānau Ora and whānau-centred approaches where applicable to achieve the targets.

Why effective:

- A key focus on the future development of Whānau Ora commissioning is consideration of how Whānau Ora can complement the Government's social investment approach and support the movement of more services to the 'frontline'.
- Key shifts being sought will include improved data, results measurement and reporting.
- Te Puni Kōkiri anticipates that meeting the standards and measures for the new social investment approach will see expanded use of the Whānau Ora commissioning model across government and improve the effectiveness, reach and efficiency of government social sector funding while also unlocking the future investment.

	<p><i>Examples of impact:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An evaluation will be completed at the end of 2024 for the Whānau-Centred Facilitation Initiative. The findings from this evaluation will feed into future policy development for the adoption of whānau-centred approaches across government and into the community.
Status	Partially completed
Comments on status given above	<p>This recommendation is only partially completed for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of whānau-centred approaches has tracked well but more work is required before expectations are appropriately clarified for public organisations. The re-setting of government agency priorities and the changes across the public sector means that relationships with key agencies and their adoption of whānau-centred policy approaches will need to be reconfirmed. The Whānau Ora commissioning agency procurement commences on the week of 30 September 2024 with new outcome agreements for four regional commissioning agencies intended to go live by 1 July 2025; this work will in time address this recommendation substantively.
Date commenced	November 2022
Date completed or due to be completed	N/a

Recommendation 7	We recommend that Te Puni Kōkiri seek to clarify the nature of the “complementary effort” that public organisations are expected to provide for Whānau Ora.
Action	<p><i>Actions taken:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, different public organisations are interacting with Whānau Ora and whānau-centred approaches through the design and implementation of their own initiatives. • However, further work is required to ensure consistency and adherence of these services to Whānau Ora and whānau-centred approaches. • Te Puni Kōkiri is considering the development of standards and regulations and how they may support whānau-centred practice across government, and support expansion of Whānau Ora and whānau-centred approaches across the social sector. The development of standards and regulations is being considered in the context of whānau-centred initiatives being a kaupapa Māori initiative, outside of a government remit. • Whānau Ora is available to all families and whānau who would benefit from whānau centred initiatives to support the achievement of their aspirations. Through the new procurement, there is an opportunity therefore to increase the investment in whānau with highest needs, which could be achieved through the expansion of commissioning agencies across different geographic areas on a needs basis. • This in turn will increase opportunities for other public organisations to partner with commissioning agencies where mutual need and benefit is identified. <p><i>Why effective:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards and regulations may provide a useful lever to further clarify the leadership role of Te Puni Kōkiri to steward Whānau Ora, and our legislated monitoring role. • Te Puni Kōkiri would seek a Cabinet mandate to develop standards if following agency and iwi engagement, such standards are considered appropriate. <p><i>Examples of impact:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This specific programme for setting the standards is still in early stages of development. • The intent of the programme is to ensure any complementary efforts provided to Whānau Ora are clarified and assured. • Refer to the response in recommendation 2 on Ngā Tini Whetu as an example of how inter agency collaboration can successfully undertake Whānau Ora commissioning, which demonstrates an important form of complementary effort.
Status	Partially completed

<p>Comments on status given above</p>	<p>This recommendation is only partially completed for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific work was undertaken to define “complementary effort” but our response to this recommendation and other recommendations (e.g. reference to developing a shared understanding of whānau-centred approaches) overlap with what might be considered defining complementary effort. • Te Puni Kōkiri will continue to support agencies with guidance and advice and will seek to define “complementary effort” alongside potential standards as this work progresses. • The procurement commences the week of 30 September 2024 with new outcome agreements intended to go live by 1 July 2025; this work will in time address this recommendation substantively.
<p>Date commenced</p>	<p>March 2023</p>
<p>Date completed or due to be completed</p>	<p>N/a</p>