

***Kia tupu, kia ruperupe,
kia rangatira!***

Aotearoa Cook Islands Communities Plan 2024- 2027



Introduction

Cook Islands Maori have contributed to the economic development, security and socio-cultural fabric of New Zealand since before WWI. In 2023 the New Zealand Pacific population reached 442,632 representing 8.9% of the total population, the New Zealand Cook Islands population stood at 94,176 of which the vast majority (84.6%) were born in New Zealand. Today less than 9% of Cook Islanders living in New Zealand speak Maori. Changes over time from manual to automation, economic recessions, climate change, the global pandemic and the day-to-day challenges of unemployment, poor health and low educational achievement have all impacted the sustainability of Cook Islands households and communities. For Pacific peoples sustainability is nuanced by citizenship, length of time in New Zealand and employment. Additionally, for Cook Islanders, sustainability is synonymous with home ownership, cultural connectedness and leadership.

Our Approach

In canvassing this Plan, three online iri'irikapua (workshops) were held with Cook Islands matakeinanga (communities) from Te Tai Tokerau in the north to Waihōpai in the south. Pa metua (elders), arataki (leaders) and mapu (young people), shared their reflections on the settlement and rich histories of their communities.

Pa metua and arataki talked about the economic impact on families and the whole of community when the local mill, freezing works or factory closed down which often triggered the search for employment out of region.

Steering Group

Calling representatives from each matakeinanga, a Steering Group was formed to confirm the findings of the iri'irikapua held between February and September 2024; to endorse the Plan's priorities; provide advice on the way forward; and agree on a realistic yet still lofty Orama for this Plan.

The priorities are:

- i. Māpu development
- ii. Leadership development
- iii. Revitalisation of our Cook Islands Maori Language(s).

Kia tupu, kia ruperupe, kia rangatira!

To grow, to flourish, to succeed!

1. Cook Islands Mapu Development

Objective: Grow Cook Islands Māpu Leadership

Delivery:

- a. Establish Cook Islands Māpu Mentoring Programme
- b. Cook Islands Youth Workers attend and participate in the New Zealand Involve National Youth Workers Conference 2025/2026
- c. CIDANZ host National Cook Islands Māpu Summit.

2. Cook Islands Leadership Development

Objective: Train Cook Islands leaders (current and emerging) drawing on the Tūranga Maori conceptual framework - leadership and good governance.

Delivery:

- a. National delivery of *Cook Islands Leadership Development Workshops 2025 – 2027*.
- b. National Webinar – panel of Cook Islands leaders
- c. Steering Group Evaluation and Reset of Plan 2028 – 2031 Uipa’anga

3. Revitalisation of our Cook Islands Maori Language(s)

Objective: to develop an Aotearoa Cook Islands Maori Language(s) Strategy

Delivery:

- a. National Cook Islands Maori Language(s) Summit
 - I. Shared vision
 - II. Stocktake of Cook Islands Maori language(s) resources
 - III. Repository of language literature and resources including song compositions
- b. Research project.

`Akameitaki'anga

E reo `akameitaki'anga teia ki te au matakeinanga ma to kotou pa metua, au arataki, e te au māpu tei `oronga mai i to kotou au manako, e ta kotou e umu'umu nei, no to kotou matakeinanga. Te `akameitaki katoa nei i te putuputu`anga Cook Islands Development Agency (CIDANZ) tei turu i teia `akakoro'anga, e te Steering Group, mei te `Orometua George Kopa e te au mata o te au matakeinanga tei 'akatanotano i te au taka'i'anga o teia kaveinga. Meitaki `atupaka!

Ko te au matakeinanga tei topiri mai, e tei turu i te `akapapa'anga o teia kaveinga:

Tai Tokerau, Tāmaki Makaurau, Kirikiriroa, Tokoroa, Te Papa-i-Oea, Te Matau-a-Māui, Te Whanganui-a-Tara, `Ōtautahi, `Ōtepoti e Waihōpai.

Tauturu`ia e te Ministry of Social Development.

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