

Te Whakaoraka

Te Rūnaka o Ōraka
Aparima

Impact Report for Wave 7
Whānau Commissioning Initiative for
Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu



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Te Whakaoraka Te Rūnaka o Ōraka Aparima

Investment

Medium

Location

Ōraka Aparima, Colac Bay

Brief description

This initiative created an active, sustainable, regenerative eco-learning space at Te Takutai o te Titī Marae (Colac Bay), enabling a whānau member to be the kaihautū of this project. The initiative has developed a partnership with Department of Corrections (prisoners are propagating and growing native plants), local schools come to the marae to learn about the environmental challenges, there is a te reo revitalisation strategy, maara kai, planting days and a native nursery. The investment is to support young members of Ōraka Aparima to understand the natural ecosystems, know how to address the toxins in freshwater, regenerate native forests and improve wai Māori.

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Introduction

Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu is the Whānau Ora commissioning agency in Te Waipounamu, a partnership between the nine iwi of Te Waipounamu; Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō, Ngāti Tama, Ngāti Kuia, Ngāti Koata, Te Ati Awa, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Rangitāne and Ngāti Rarua.

The Whānau Ora movement in Te Waipounamu is unique as the strategic direction is informed by values and aspirations of the nine iwi o Te Waipounamu.

It was formed in March 2014 as a legal partnership to reflect the aspirations of the Te Waipounamu iwi for whānau. A participants' council, Te Taumata, was established to act as guardians for the kaupapa of Whānau Ora in Te Waipounamu. In 2015, Te Taumata appointed an independent governance board.

The organisation is the realisation of an iwi led model that invests directly in whānau for social impact to bring about positive change.

The whānau commissioning model

Since establishment in 2014, Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu has employed a social innovation model to promote entrepreneurial social investment in Te Waipounamu. The overarching objectives of this approach are to stimulate a Māori social enterprise network in Te Waipounamu and to achieve positive social outcomes for whānau through targeted innovation (Investment Plan, 2017 – 2018).

Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu operates a capability development model of commissioning. The capability development model aims to build the ability of whānau to respond positively to the challenges and opportunities within their lives. Traditional models of social intervention for Māori have been heavily institutionalised, determined by knowledge and expertise external to the whānau. The purpose of commissioning whānau directly is to enable whānau to be self-reliant rather than dependent on state intervention. The model aligns with Māori values supporting transformation through self-determination.

The commissioning model is economically efficient and capable of generating long-term transformative change with a lower investment than traditional service delivery (Savage, 2017; Dalziel, Saunders, & Guenther, 2017). Service delivery tends to produce few immediate outcomes and minimal long-term outcomes, while capability development produces comprehensive outcomes over a longer period. However, developing capability is much more complex than traditional service delivery models (Investment Plan, 2017–2018).

Commissioning allows for the devolution of funding and decision making from central government so that the response to real whānau aspirations is genuine and effective. Not only does commissioning allow for a more direct relationship with whānau in the context of Whānau Ora, it places whānau at the centre of their own pathways towards prosperity (Leahy, 2018).

Whānau Ora Outcomes

The commissioning approach for Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu is designed to achieve the Whānau Ora outcomes.

The outcomes are based on the work of the Taskforce on Whānau Centred Initiatives that carried out extensive consultation in 2009. An additional element has been added to recognise the importance of the natural and living environments.

The Outcomes Framework confirms that Whānau Ora is achieved when whānau are:

- self-managing
- living healthy lifestyles
- participating fully in society
- confidently participating in te ao Māori
- economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation
- cohesive, resilient and nurturing
- responsible stewards of their natural and living environments.

Wave 7

The first wave of applications was called for in August 2014, since this time another 6 waves have funded over 140 whānau initiatives.

This evaluation is part of the seventh investment wave.

The initiatives were commissioned in July 2018. This case study report for Te Whakaoraka Te Rūnaka o Ōraka Aparima is part of a wider evaluation of ten initiatives commissioned in Wave 7 by Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu.

Method

The following section describes the evaluation methodology, data analysis and ethical protocols for all ten case studies completed as part of the Wave 7 evaluation.

Te Pūtahitanga Te Waipounamu employs a

Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework as a way of monitoring projects and their outputs. The commissioned initiatives have been collecting and throughout the length of the funding. In order to limit evaluation fatigue and avoid repetition, the evaluation team reviewed the proposal and monitoring information for each initiative identifying knowledge gaps and determining their evaluability (readiness for evaluation). Ten project profiles were developed by the evaluators that incorporated existing data such as whānau surveys and milestone reports.

An interview schedule was co-constructed with Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu. The interviews were designed to provide:

- An opportunity for initiatives to clearly state their purpose, aspirations and contribution to the Whānau Ora outcomes
- A space for reflection for whānau involved in the initiatives, either directly as architects or kaimahi, or as whānau who have contributed to the outcomes
- An opportunity to discuss the role of cultural connection in their initiative and the contribution this has made to wellbeing
- An opportunity to involve whānau, staff and other key stakeholders in a whānau orientated way that reflects the values of Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu and Whānau Ora

Ethical protocols

Ethical and interview protocols were created by the evaluation team to ensure that the evaluation protected the rights of everyone who contributed to the evaluation. The researchers followed the guiding principles for working respectfully with indigenous peoples nationally and internationally. These are articulated by Kennedy and Wehipeihana (2006, p. 1-2):

Self-determination - including the right to make decisions about all aspects of their lives. Clear benefits to those being researched.

Acknowledgement and awareness - refers to respect and due recognition and appreciation for indigenous culture, values, customs, beliefs and rights, including an acceptance of a worldview that may not be consistent with Western ideologies.

Cultural integrity - relates to the validity of indigenous knowledge and ways of being, and that cultural knowledge must be protected from misuse, misappropriation and must be preserved for future generations.

Capacity building - enabling indigenous peoples to participate actively in the research, with the aim to ultimately drive their own research.

An information sheet was developed that was distributed to the ten whānau initiatives prior to the evaluation. The evaluators also provided the information sheet to whānau who participated in the interviews. Whānau were given the opportunity to sign or record verbal consent. They were assured that the information that they shared would not be identifiable. Where whānau voice has been used in response to the evaluation questions the evaluators have ensured that this is non-identifiable by removing or changing identifying features. However, in some initiatives where the whānau are easily identifiable they were made aware that their identity would be identifiable and gave consent on this basis. All whānau who were identified were able to read the report before publication.

Several of the initiatives are developing social enterprises with their own intellectual property tied to the success of their innovation. The evaluation process was particularly sensitive to this and only captured what was required without compromising the intellectual property of the whānau.

Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu has taken a whānau empowerment approach to investment. The evaluation planned to support this kaupapa by building capability through evaluation; specifically ensuring that whānau were at the center of the evaluation, that the data was returned to the participants and that whānau could exercise control over their own narrative. These processes

enabled whānau to retain ownership of their kōrero and how it is presented in the evaluation. Photographic images have been used in this report to demonstrate the activity and achievements of whānau. Whānau who are in these photographs have given permission for their image to be used in this report.

Data Collection and Analysis

Five evaluators collected data from ten initiatives over a period of five weeks. Data collection included semi-structured interviews; as well as review of whānau surveys, documents associated with each initiative and produced resources. Where possible both whānau who were architects of the initiatives and whānau that had benefited from the initiatives were interviewed. In all cases at least two whānau were interviewed from each initiative, for larger initiatives focus groups of whānau were interviewed. Feedback was obtained from contract managers from Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu. In addition, the researchers analysed other data including whānau surveys and documents supplied to Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu so that triangulation of data was achieved. The data that was collected from monitoring whānau surveys was collected by Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu and has been labelled as whānau survey.

All interview transcripts were transcribed verbatim and copies were returned when requested. All interviews were analysed using an inductive process to classify the interview data. This is a ground up analysis, creating categories from the interview data rather than imposing a deductive sorting method. This ensures that the findings are built from the voices of the whānau. After a full inductive analysis, the categories were sorted into responses under each of the report headings.

To distinguish roles in this report whānau who were leading the initiatives are referred to as kaimahi, whānau who were involved in the initiative as recipients or volunteers were referred to as whānau. Analysis took a strengths-based approach, focused on identifying the aims of each project, the activities involved and the nature of impact in relation to whānau capability development and the positive outcomes achieved.

The characteristics of impact and their alignment to identified Whānau Ora outcomes are highlighted. Analysis has emphasised capability development as a process of progression as whānau were starting in different places, as to their knowledge of social enterprise. Each case study highlights the aspirations of whānau; the contract expectations and activities employed, as well as the types of impacts that were realised through the work. Key learnings are identified along with processes for sustainability. The case studies provide unique evidence of the different ways whānau have realised Whānau Ora and in doing so 'to lead the lives they value and have reason to value' across Te Waipounamu (Sen, 1999 cited in Dalziel, 2018).

The following case study tells the story of one initiative funded through the Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu Wave 7 Whānau commissioning round. This case study presents a snapshot of the social innovation approximately 7 months into the funding period.

Background

Te Whakaoraka is the first Whānau Ora initiative held by Te Rūnaka o Ōraka Aparima. One of the 18 papatipu rūnaka of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Ōraka Aparima is kaitiaki of one of the most delicate ecosystems in Aotearoa. Te Takutai o te Titī Marae is on the southernmost coast of Te Waipounamu at Colac Bay, just out of Riverton. It connects ancestrally to the waka Uruao and Takitimu, the maunga Takitimu and the awa Aparima. Intensive farming, erosion and loss of natural habitat has led to Colac Bay having one of the highest E-coli levels of the region. For some time, local whānau of the hapū have worked to preserve the stunning natural habit of Colac Bay and the surrounding rohe. The application to Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu is the realisation of the aspirations of the rūnaka and kaitiaki, Jade Maguire.

Jade has always had a passion for the environment. As a young child he can remember wanting to have a nursery and grow vegetables. What began as a desire to become a market gardener turned into a passion to provide native plants for riparian planting. Growing up in the area Jade had the opportunity to work with the Ōraka Aparima regenerating local whenua. These experiences had a lasting impact on him as he describes:

“Through the rūnaka we get to do some real cool things like chasing kākāpō and bagging them up. When you go to an island that’s completely pest free, you’re walking along, and you’re followed by five or six kākā and you see like a flock of Mōhua going past you. You go jump in the ocean and there’s just big seas of kina and crayfish everywhere. It’s something that happens to you because you just realise this is what the world is supposed to be like. This is how it should be. When you think, what can I do to be like that? You know, how can I make the world like that? What we need is a habitat first of all. We need to plant more plants, you know the riparian margins are the perfect place to start because you’ve got the farmers who want to pay for it and it mitigates their effect on

the land, but it also enhances our biodiversity.” (Jade Maguire)

Jade’s interest in riparian planting was ignited in his previous job as a dairy worker on a Southland farm, where he worked for a dairy farmer who was passionate about the environment. He learnt about the impact of farming on the waterways and the farmer’s aspirations for improving the quality of the waterways.

“The person I worked for belonged to this catchment group which was looking at doing things more sustainably and improving land management. I’d be sitting on the bike with him and he’d be telling me stories about nitrates and phosphates and the problems that they have.” (Jade Maguire)

“Our river was once treasured by our tūpuna for the many mahinga kai values contained within her banks but it is now polluted with farm runoff and nitrates.”

These experiences and Jade’s natural interest in the whenua led to him thinking about ways in which he could have a real impact on the environment and on future generations of whānau. Utilising the resources of Te Takutai o te Titī Marae, Jade began working as a volunteer in the gardens. There was a shell of a nursery and it was run down and as Jade worked he began to imagine the possibilities. With the support of the rūnaka the application was made to Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu to develop a native nursery that could operate as an eco-learning centre. Taua Jane Davis from Ōraka Aparima supported the application:

“Our river was once treasured by our tūpuna for the many mahinga kai values contained within her banks but it is now polluted with farm runoff and nitrates. I believe there is now a need now for people to work together.” (Taua Jane Davis)

Aspirations

The aspirations of Te Whakaoraka are:

- To create an eco-learning space at Te Takutai o te Tītī Marae. The eco-learning space aims to teach the community the skills needed to recover the natural environment and improve their own health.

The nursery at Te Takutai o te Tītī Marae provides a place for learning for young and old. The aspiration is to normalise growing vegetables and food, while also regenerating the whenua as Jade describes:

“To increase the health of our people, we need to eat right. So, you start by growing vegetables as organically as you can. It’s like teaching people through osmosis, if they’re around it you get to have the conversations, and then it makes them think about it. We will plant the seeds and little kids, when they come in, they kind of see these things. It’s normal to them, you normalise these ideas. That’s the same with trees, we talk about the cultural usages of our plants and how they’re important to Māori as people, and how if I plant this plant here it actually shelters the waterways, which leads to a lot of those cyanobacteria, which won’t grow when it’s shaded. The seeds, or the pupae, like the insects, come in and they feed on those seeds. They fall into the water, the eels come along, and they eat it and they live underneath them as habitat. All it takes is like planting this plant. And then that increases the biodiversity, but it also acts as a barrier for when the cow poo comes down and all those phosphates that cling on to the soil they stop with that plant.” (Jade Maguire)

- To attract funding to the nursery so they can continue to expand and upgrade the facilities.

This season will be the nursery’s second year of providing plants to farmers, mainly in the

Pourakino Valley. The demand for the riparian planting and continued interest in the nursery has led to aspirations to increase the capacity of the nursery and continue to upgrade the facilities. The potential for the nursery to become an employer has been realised as the demand for riparian planting and the interest in tree planting has increased through the regional development funding.

“Our goal now is to continue this development by attracting funds to upgrade the nursery and generate employment as well as continuing to provide a place of learning about native flora.” (Jade Maguire)

- The long-term goal is to influence and engage other papatipu rūnaka and local government entities to invest in the initiative.

The intention is to build trust through the period of the pilot funding and recognise how partnerships with other local entities and ngā rūnaka can support the initiative to become a sustainable 10-year venture. The aspirations of Te Whakaoraka, to regenerate the waterways, requires a long-term commitment and continued development, the initiative must be sustainable to achieve the outcomes.

“To increase the health of our people, we need to eat right. So, you start by growing vegetables as organically as you can.”

Contract expectations

The application by Te Whakaoraka to Te Pūtahitanga o te Waipounamu included three kaupapa;

- **Kaupapa Tahi** – Riparian planting, whakakaha mahinga kai research on local practices
- **Kaupapa Rua** – Tikanga maara kai, mātauraka maara kai, mana whenua tikanga, hands on schools
- **Kaupapa Toru** – Tikanga traditional knowledge of local tūpuna and the unique traditions gifted from generation to generation

Ōraka Aparima was contracted to engage with a minimum of 50 individuals. By the third quarter over 150 individuals had been engaged through the kaupapa, far exceeding the expectation. Whānau, farmers, schools, kindergartens and local youth have been involved in the development of the nursery and the activities.

Project activities

Te Whakaoraka has exceeded the contractual expectations as the demand and interest in the project has flourished. The driver behind Te Whakaoraka is Jade McGuire who leads much of the engagement. Jade has co-facilitated two tamariki wānanga, the first focused on Matariki and the second on kōanga. He has worked with rangatahi school groups which have come to the marae for educational purposes, to learn about riparian planting, native plants, and seed propagation. To date more than 11 education and information sessions have been held, seven environmental projects and three consultation hui.

Establishing the nursery

At the heart of the initiative, is the native nursery and maara kai at Te Takutai o te Tītī Marae, where thousands of plants have been propagated to use in local restoration projects. A significant amount of activity has taken place at the marae with the construction of a nursery, propagating area, a tunnel house, composting area, boxed gardens and maara kai. The maara kai, has been used to teach whānau how to grow their own food and be more self-sufficient, producing food for local whānau and kaumātua.

The photographs demonstrate the development of the nursery at the marae, and the significant amount of work undertaken by Jade and the Te Whakaoraka community.



The nursery has developed an infrastructure to propagate and grow the seedlings required to produce hundreds of plants for maara kai and the riparian planting. Whānau and community members have supported the development of the nursery constructing the tunnel house, moving soil, planting and harvesting.

Restoration projects

Te Whakaoraka has led several restoration projects, such as the revitalisation of Ōkoura, the site of an old rubbish tip in Colac Bay. The whānau, with the help of the local Lions Club, cleared the driveway and car park area and cleared invasive plants such as gorse and broom. Four senior classes from Riverton Primary School assisted by planting the site with about 800 trees.

This kaupapa is an example of collaboration of community groups and schools to bring about restoration of the whenua led by Te Whakaoraka.

Partnership with farmers

Jade has worked to develop relationships with the local farmers and recently hosted a field day at the marae supported by the Pourakino Catchment Group. This group was formed in March 2014 by a committed group of farmers who shared a desire to improve water quality in the Pourakino Arm of the Jacobs Estuary. Farm field days and events are a regular feature of the group's work. The aim is to increase understanding of the key issues facing farmers and share information about good farm management practices. There is interest in how

the marae nursery could build capacity and plant trees in the catchment which would assist the group to achieve its goal. More than 40 people attended the field day, which included a visit to the marae and the nursery. Chris Mangion, from C.P.M. Environmental Tapui Ltd, and Jesse Bythell, from Biosis Biological Surveys and Monitoring, spoke about biodiversity and plantings in the Pourakino catchment.

The field day provided an opportunity for the Pourakino Catchment Group members to understand the aspirations of the nursery and the rūnaka to create native corridors regenerating the whenua.

Partnership with the local prison

Te Whakaoraka, through the rūnaka, have an MOU with the local prison to supply the seedlings for the nursery. The seedlings are supplied by the local men's prison, these are then propagated at the nursery and planted by Jade and whānau. Jade supplies the seeds, recycles the pots and regularly travels to the prison to collect the seedlings to take back to the nursery. This relationship enables the nursery to provide native riparian planting at a much lower cost.

"Through the rūnaka we've got a MOU with the prison, so we give the prison our seeds, growing medium, pots, everything, and we get the plants back. The planting's real cool because we get to undercut the market quite a bit because we're growing them."
(Jade Maguire)



Educational activities with schools

The educational activities over the past year have helped to develop relationships as the local schools see the benefit of working with Te Whakaoraka. Groups of tamariki from kindergartens, primary schools and the local secondary school have visited the nursery, gone on bush walks, and supported planting in the area. During these educational visits, Jade aims to pass the knowledge of his tūpuna on to future generations by teaching the traditional names and uses of native plants, as well as normalising growing and eating your own vegetables.

The educational activities are hands on and take the tamariki and rangatahi out into the environment to understand the importance of

regeneration and sustainable farming practices. Jade describes the process of collecting seeds with a group of high school students:

“We went up there and just collected seeds, brought them back to the marae and then processed the seeds so that we could plant them, then planted a tray each of seedlings and there’s about 300 plants in each tray.” (Kaimahi)

Visits from manuhiri

There has been considerable interest in the nursery at the marae from a variety of groups including politicians, other marae and environment groups. Recently Te Wakaoraka work has been presented to the Deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters, the Minister of Regional Development, Shane Jones and the Minister of Environment, David Parker.



Impact for whānau

The impact of the initiative has been significant in the short period of time the nursery has been operating.

Impact on the local environment

The establishment of Te Whakaoraka has had an impact on the immediate environment through the functioning native nursery re-established on Te Takutai o te Tītī Marae grounds. The re-development on the marae has improved the whenua and utilised land and buildings on the marae. The nursery is producing vegetables, which are shared with whānau, and propagating thousands of seedlings to support planting projects.

The impact of the planting projects has seen local land regenerated and river banks planted as the beginning of a native corridor. The potential impact of riparian planting cannot be understated, while the immediate impacts may not be realised in 10-15-years the impact of this activity has the potential to be profound. As the planting projects proceed the demand has increased. As Jade describes, the relationship with the local Pourakino Catchment Group has seen the development of planting projects to create a forest:

"We've got a big project we'll be starting tomorrow. We've already got the plants, we've got the covers and there's about 1500 to plant, just up over here. The whole purpose with the farmers, I really wanted to make sure if they're getting me to do things that it creates native corridors. It was more to do with the actual bush rather than just doing things that look pretty because heaps of people kind of want things but what does it add up to in the long run? One of the farmers, he's the chairman of the Pourakino Catchment Group, he's wanting to bridge these two plots of land. He's retired some paddocks and so

we went in there and did plantings that will end up bridging those two, and every year we will just keep adding to it, to create that forest. These things, they're like 15 years before you can have a proper noticeable impact." (Jade Maguire)

Intergenerational transmission of knowledge

One of the aspirations of Te Whakaoraka was to share traditional knowledge and normalise growing vegetables for whānau. The development of the maara kai and the tunnel house saw whānau joining in the activities and building their own capability. Whānau satisfaction surveys demonstrate that this activity has reignited a passion for gardening as whānau establish their own maara kai.

"Sharing the knowledge with future generations."

"(I am) more passionate about my own garden and growing kai for my whānau." (Whānau survey)

"I went home and dug up my garden for planting." (Whānau survey)

The focus on schools and working with tamariki has been purposeful as Te Whakaoraka aims to bring about an intergenerational change. Sharing knowledge of plant names and traditional uses of native plants has engaged young enthusiasts. As this whānau comment suggests, the key to intergenerational transmission is the normalising of the activity:

(The best thing about Te Whakaoraka is ...) *"The commitment to the project and the flexible way it is both procuring and using different plants. Taking it, handing it over to the children now, and they will*

group up knowing and thinking of this as regular and normal, so they keep doing it. Sharing the knowledge with future generations.” (Whānau survey)

“I went home and dug up my garden for planting.”

Employment for locals

Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu investment has enabled the kaihautū and some kaimahi to be employed for the duration of the project. There is significant potential for Te Whakaoraka to become a sustainable enterprise generating employment for locals. There has been interest by the probation arm of the Corrections Department and the Ministry of Social development to support employment for locals through the nursery.

The planting project has created some casual employment for locals, but this tends to be sporadic and contract based. As this is the first year of operation and the demand for the planting projects is increasing it is likely that future secure employment could be generated through the nursery. As Jade explains here:

“We go out and do the mahi, you know they’re getting paid like \$1.50 a tree, they can make \$30 an hour, for how long those contracts go.” (Jade Maguire)

Increased wellbeing

The purpose and interpretation of Te Whakaoraka is understood by the whānau in different ways, but there is a clear comprehension that the project is about uplifting the wellbeing of the whānau and the whenua. As this whānau member describes:

“As I understand it, Te Whakaoraka, how do we create our oranga, you know how we empower and sustain our wellbeing and it’s completely, it is a holistic kind of way to me, because it helps you to realign with all your pou. I think of Te Whare Tapa Whā with all walls of the tinana, wairua, whānau, hinengaro, they all work together and they’re all reliant on each other. If you’re not one wall’s going to fall down, then the whole thing will collapse. When we talk about the

environment and the taiao it’s never in isolation of all those other things. This to me is real, it’s a part of that exploration of what do we need as people in this community, not just for Māori because it’s not just Māori who live here, what do we all need in order to be sustained mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually.” (Kaimahi)

“Te Whakaoraka, how do we create our oranga, you know how we empower and sustain our wellbeing...”

The whānau surveys and interviews indicate that whānau have experienced an increase in personal wellbeing as a result of being involved in the kaupapa. This whānau member describes the positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing by being involved with the project:

“It’s hard to explain. Well doing this, like growing plants and potting things up, it’s always been like relaxing, I’ve always found it relaxing and it sort of helps me because like I have depression and stuff, and it’s like yeah, it’s good for my self-esteem. I like to do something constructive.” (Kaimahi)

For this whānau member Te Whakaoraka has reinstated the pride that Māori felt when working in the whenua and being able to feed and care for their whānau. Also, emphasising the significant role of a Tohunga Kaingaki Maara (master gardener) and how during traditional times the esteemed mana this person held amongst the iwi. The experience of working with Te Whakaoraka has provided a time to consider what it means to work in the maara kai and through a sense of wairua, connecting whānau to their ancestors and the gardening methods they practiced during that time.

“I think it’s a form of meditation that we’re talking about, our wairua, I think mindfulness is such a buzzword at the moment, and it’s important don’t get me wrong, I’m not being cynical about it at all, but it’s kind of like, you know, like our tūpuna knew that for so long. There are so many accounts of how incredible our tūpuna were with their gardening, like a master gardener was one of the most important

things. It's that whole manaakitanga how are you going to feed your whānau? how are you going to receive the people onto your marae? how are you going to manaaki them? (Kaimahi)

The opportunity for whānau to reconnect to the marae and their culture was seen as an important outcome of the kaupapa for some whānau. Connection to the land and other people has been mediated through the work in the nursery and has contributed to a greater sense of wellbeing. This was best described by this whānau member:

"It's important as well on a level of reconnecting to the te ao Māori side, with a lot of us Māori you know we've grown up outside of our rohe. We don't have that connection, ... so it's like if we're talking about our mental health issues and things like that, like not understanding where you come from, how you fit into te ao Māori is one of the huge, huge diseases of today, of a lot of Māori who are finding that thing that connects you, that can connect you back into it is vital. And mahi maara is one of those ways of doing it for me that I found." (Kaimahi)

Building a sense of community and networking

Having so many whānau and community members involved in the kaupapa has increased the sense of community at Te Takutai o te Tītī Marae. The whānau survey indicates that several whānau noted a 'greater sense of community' from their involvement with the kaupapa. It appears that coming together with a shared interest and goal has created a sense of community for all those who have participated.

"I guess it's building the community from a place of deep intention and determination, they've created a better future you know."

The diverse groups that have participated in the activities, such as the Riverton Lions Club, local schools, local conservation groups and farmers

has seen the Ōraka Aparima community come together for a common purpose. This has seen the development of increased networking which has spread the influence of the Te Whakaoraka kaupapa. Recently the Aparima Community Environment (Ace) Project, which involves six Aparima catchment groups and more than 600 farms, was launched. Due to the work with the Pourakino Catchment Group, Te Whakaoraka is well positioned to meet the increased demand for native plants as a result of future riparian planting among farmers. However, it is not only the demands for plants that interests Jade Maguire, but the opportunity to increase the capability and knowledge of those involved:

"Because riparian planting is such an important element in reducing run-off from farms, it's important to not only provide trees, but to also provide a place of learning and training for people to learn how to improve the health of our water, environment and ultimately the people themselves." (Jade Maguire).

Recognition of Māori leadership

Jade Maguire, who has led the Te Whakaoraka initiative, was awarded an individual environmental leadership action award in the 23rd Southland Community Environment Awards in 2018. He was recognised for his leadership in the creation of the eco-learning centre and the riparian planting projects. His leadership and passion were noted by several whānau in the whānau surveys, as this whānau member describes:

"Jade was a fantastic speaker and facilitator. Jade's passion for Te Whakaoraka was clearly evident, while sharing his knowledge of environmental sustainability, riparian planting, restoration and development. From a mere on looker perspective, hearing and seeing and experiencing this was an absolute privilege." (Whānau survey)

Receiving the award had an impact on Jade's whānau and those who have supported him through the development of this initiative. The recognition of the positive contribution he had made to the community and the environment

surprised Jade, but he realises the importance of the award as a role model for others, especially his children.

"You know just even winning an award, I never expected anything like that. I actually had a couple of tears that night because I've never done anything like this, I've never won an award, I've never been, you know, been someone who could be considered like upstanding in the community and then that's just weird stuff especially when you're just used to being a ratbag. I took my whole family, we had 10 for seating, and so I took the girls who have been helping me, I took all my family. My family has never been, you know to anything like that. I've got a degree in audio production, so I was like the first one to get a degree and the first one to win an award like this, and just to be that role model for my children was the biggest outcome for me." (Jade Maguire)

This leadership and passion for the environment has seen him win awards and be nominated for local boards. His representation on these boards enables him to influence outcomes and ensure that a Māori perspective is included in the conversation and decision-making.

"I talked about those catchment groups, I'm actually a trustee now, I'm on a catchment group, I think there's 10 members, they're all farmers except for me. (I'm) kind of this community fellow and the only Māori boy, you can look at it as brown ticking or you can see it the way I see it, I'm in there trying to do the things that need to be done ... that's one of those things, you get to implement our cultural perspective actually in the mainstream which I really like." (Jade Maguire)



“I think it’s a form of meditation that we’re talking about, our wairua...”

Cultural connection

This section explores how Te Whakaoraka has supported whānau to confidently participate in te ao Māori and the role of culture in bringing about positive changes for improved wellbeing.

Revitalisation of the marae

Te Whakaoraka has increased the presence of whānau at Takutai o te Tītī Marae. While whānau live in Colac Bay the marae has been underutilised and the initiative has brought whānau back onto the marae on a regular basis. The renewed energy from the activity at the marae has been welcomed by many of the whānau. Several whānau commented in the whānau surveys that they saw the benefit of the initiative to the marae and the rūnaka needed to support Te Whakaoraka.

"I think Jade is doing an awesome job. This is something our marae has needed for a long time. Great way to help feed the whānau." (Whānau survey)

Many of the whānau found the work on marae to be inspiring and commented on new learning for themselves and their children.

"I have foster boys and this was the first time they've planted anything. They're eight-years-old. Jade was excellent in teaching them and myself the knowledge that he knows. The boys loved helping out." (Whānau survey)

"This is something our marae has needed for a long time. Great way to help feed the whānau."

Situating the whānau initiative on the marae has brought whānau and manuhiri onto the marae. The impact of the increased activity on the marae and the interest by the community cannot be under estimated. Since winning the environment

award Te Whakaoraka and Takutai te o Tītī Marae has increased visibility and presence in the Southland community.

Wairua

Whānau involved in the initiative commented on how the shared activity and working with the land has a positive impact on their health and wellbeing. It appears from the interviews that wellbeing is mediated through a profound sense of connection with the land and the environment. As this whānau member describes:

"When you look at te whare tapa whā model you look at the wairua wall. For me, my connection with wairua is completely based on nature, so it is the sea, it is the mountains, it is the forest, it's the land. If we're looking at cultural things, and just being able to strengthen ourselves my wairua wall is right up there. I don't have to worry about praying, karakia and stuff, it's the land. For me I think that what are Māori without land because that's what makes us Māori, is the connection with the land. You know we've got our culture and we've got our reo which we kind of get to, well we're on a marae so it's kind of all over the place." (Kaimahi)

Through Te Whakaoraka initiative whānau have commented on how the activity, being involved in the development of the nursery, has reconnected them with te ao Māori. Whānau who were surveyed through the Te Pūtahitanga o te Waipounamu monitoring commented on this connection:

"It's about wairua. A deep concept in te ao Māori that can only be understood and/or elevated through active mahi. Te Whakaoraka has helped me to realign with this truth and I continue to live and breathe it in all that I do, ngā mihi." (Whānau survey)

“...my connection with wairua is completely based on nature, so it is the sea, it is the mountains, it is the forest, it's the land.”

The recurrence of wairua as a theme in the data indicates that whānau experience a deep connection with the land through the active mahi for Te Whakaoraka. For some whānau involved in the mahi the connection to the land has been a way of reconnecting with their culture. They discussed the mauri, or life force, as vitally important, explaining how the environment and ecosystem depend upon the life force, mauri, to regenerate and be sustainable. A whānau member who had contributed regularly to planting and the development of the nursery best describes this experience:

“I mean like, it's kind of essential in this world, the reason that in society people are disconnected, for me just being in the maara is that connection, it's reconnecting and like on a spiritual level it's a direct connection to Papatūānuku and I always think of the whakataukī. I actually like have a physical connection with my feet on the papa, regenerating, sustaining and just breathing that life force and that mauri into it. The process of the mauri is infused within me.”
(Kaimahi)

Sharing of traditional knowledge

The initiative has enabled the revitalisation of traditional plant knowledge to be discussed and used by whānau members. There is a lot of interest from whānau regarding the use of plants, particularly for rongoā. As Jade describes here, he has had to learn the uses of many plants to share this with whānau as they become involved in the initiative:

“I had to study up and reinforce what I knew and then when everyone's there, it's like, 'Oh what's this plant?' How was this used? I've got a harakeke patch at the back, so this here was our main plant. It was used for everything, this was our clothing, this was

our ropes, this was everything. If you cut off your leaf down here you've got the sap in there that has antimicrobial and antibacterial properties and you put that on your cuts. My daughter knows this best, she hates the gooey stuff, but she knows it's good for her. And so, I can sit there and go like, 'oh babe', she ripped off her nail, it's like 'yep sweet I'm going to cut off some harakeke and we're going to put that sap on it, let's find some spider webs, I'm going to put it on to coagulate it'.” (Kaimahi)

The whānau surveys demonstrate there is a thirst for traditional knowledge, particularly with plant-based knowledge from whānau. This initiative is contributing to intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge as whānau learn and share together the uses of native plants. The intergenerational transmission of this knowledge is reported by whānau driving the initiative and those who participated. By engaging with local whānau, the community, organisations and schools, there is an opportunity to share knowledge about the importance of environmental sustainability with both older and younger generations. This sharing of knowledge and new learning was valued by the whānau involved in the initiative. They acknowledged they had lost that knowledge through the generations, as this whānau member discusses:

“We're really missing that from the generation above me, a lot of that's lost. You know from my grandmother's generation, my father's generation, a lot of that knowledge is lost, or you know there's a little snippet.” (Kaimahi)

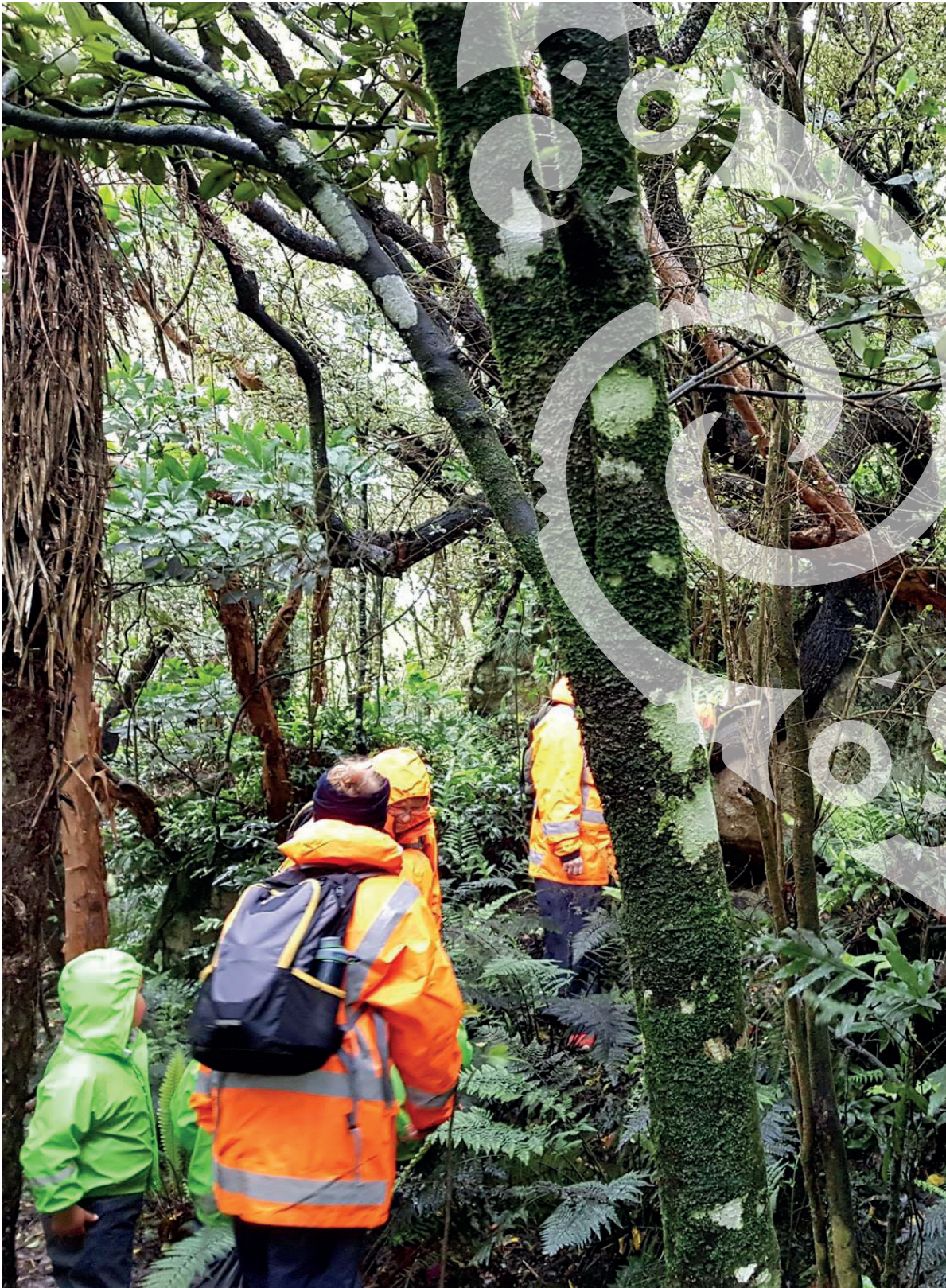
There was evidence the whānau really valued the opportunity to share this with their own children and to hear their children share it with their friends:

“(The best thing about Te Whakaoraka is) ...The commitment to the project and the flexible way it is both procuring and using the different plants. Taking it/handing it over to the children now, as they grow up knowing/thinking of this as regular/normal so they will keep doing it.” (Whānau survey)

At the time of the data collection Te Whakaoraka was expecting a large group of school children

to visit and join in planting. There has been significant interest by the schools in the district in Te Whakaoraka as a learning opportunity. The team at Te Whakaoraka embrace the opportunity to encourage the next generation to care for the environment.

"That's that whole intergenerational kind of thing, that's just the succession plan there, you don't have to make it compulsory, you've just got to engage in it and make it exciting because they love learning, they love learning. So, 160 kids next week, I'm all for it, yep." (Kaimahi)



Lessons learned

Developing the nursery has been a steep learning curve in a relatively short period of time. Te Whakaoraka whānau have managed to establish the nursery, raise interest in the region, complete restoration projects and work with schools and community groups all within the 10-month period leading up to this evaluation. Jade has had to learn quickly, be flexible and adapt the activities to meet the opportunities that have been presented, including Ministerial visits, field days and school visits.

The whānau have learnt about how to access local seeds, improve quality control and understand what farmers require for effective riparian planting in the district. This new knowledge has enabled them to plan more efficiently for future projects. In a recent news article Jade describes this learning process:

"Initially we had to work with whatever seeds we could access, but this year we have been able to be more selective and have more control over what we are producing. As we progress, we are also developing a better understanding of what farmers require for their planting." (Jade Maguire)

Working with community groups and schools has also provided an opportunity to identify future possibilities. As an eco-learning centre at Te Takutai o te Tītī Marae, Te Whakaoraka has successfully engaged the school in the district, including high school students. Developing a curriculum and even developing assessment around Te Whakaoraka is a definite possibility for the future, as he describes here:

"I just had a meeting with this teacher the other day and she reckons it's only a year to be able to assess those types of things, so we could build a whole curriculum." (Jade Maguire)

"As we progress, we are also developing a better understanding of what farmers require for their planting."

Te Whakaoraka is learning that their initiative has the potential to develop in the future. The challenge is balancing the development of demands of the nursery, planting projects, and school visits on a limited resource.

Sustainability

This section explores how the initiative is working to ensure the outcomes are sustainable post-Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu investment.

Future opportunities

The success of Te Whakaoraka has created several new opportunities that have the potential to provide future funding and security for the nursery. An opportunity to participate in a school restoration project, the regional development fund, and the potential of produce sales all have the potential to provide future funding. The challenge for Te Whakaoraka is deciding what future activities to pursue, understanding how they can scale and grow the initiative according to the opportunities, and deciding what opportunities best match their values and mission. A potential barrier to future opportunities is securing the people power, or workforce, to scale the nursery. As Jade describes here:

"I don't know, I've got like so many people pushing me in different directions. Because we got that regional development fund and so like I'm kind of just doing it... potentially we could go for funding to build a big nursery which I don't think we're ready for, the people aren't there, the funding's there though." (Jade Maguire)

There are opportunities for the nursery to develop employment through the riparian planting programme, the maara kai and the school visits. Currently the initiative is highly reliant on Jade and a casual workforce to provide sufficient labour. This limited labour capacity is constraining the ability of the nursery to grow and maximise the current opportunities. Future planning will need to incorporate a work force development strategy. There is the potential to develop a supported employment pathway for whānau who may want to gain valuable employment skills.

Environmental sustainability

Te Whakaoraka is well positioned to bring about improved environmental sustainability in Southland. Over the past year there has been a great deal of work invested in developing partnerships with regional committees, such as the Pourakino Catchment Group. The willingness of the groups to work together to bring about environmental change in the region is a credit to Te Whakaoraka and the Pourakino Catchment Group.

The continued support of the rūnaka and local community provides a foundation for the continued development of the maara kai. The infrastructure that has been developed by Jade through the initiative has enabled the maara kai to produce fresh produce and teach whānau how to create a maara kai in their own home. A continued theme from the whānau surveys is the appreciation of the new skills whānau had learnt and how it had reignited interest in growing their own food. There was also support for the initiative to receive continued support.

"Te Whakaoraka could be improved by ... more funding to allow for extra paid kaimahi, this way the vision can be more easily fulfilled in a shorter time. It is the sort of project that is worth long-term investment." (Whānau survey)

Leadership

Leadership is an essential part of ongoing sustainability for Whānau Ora entities. It has been established that strong leadership, a clear vision and the ability to communicate and share this vision are key to the success of an initiative (Savage, et al., 2017). Jade Maguire has

been recognised for his leadership through the Southland Community Environment Awards and by the whānau who have participated in the initiative. A consistent theme in the survey data was the inspired leadership of Te Whakaoraka:

"Jade is so passionate about what he does and it's infectious." (Whānau survey)

"(The best thing about Te Whakaoraka is) ... Jade, his strength, mana and knowledge and support." (Whānau survey)

"Jade, it takes someone in a position to be able to see the wider vision and hold that kaupapa." (Kaimahi)

Over the past year Te Whakaoraka has achieved a great deal and exceeded the contractual expectations in the funding agreement. This is due to the continued networking, relationship building and commitment to the environment demonstrated by Jade Maguire.

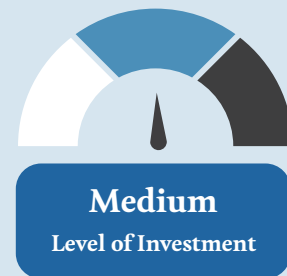
"Jade is so passionate about what he does and it's infectious."



Te Whakaoraka

Te Rūnaka o Ōraka Aparima

Creating an active, sustainable, regenerative eco-learning space at Te Takutai o te Titī Marae (Colac Bay) to support whānau of Ōraka Aparima to understand the natural ecosystems, know how to address the toxins in freshwater, regenerate native forests and improve wai Māori.



Impact

- Impact on the local environment
- Intergenerational transmission of knowledge
- Employment for locals
- Increased wellbeing
- Building a sense of community and networking
- Recognition of Māori leadership

Outcomes

- Whānau are in leadership positions in the community
- Whānau have increased their resourcefulness and learnt new skills
- Whānau are contributing positively to the community and local environment
- Whānau are reconnecting with the marae and engaged in activities on the marae
- Whānau have increased connection with whenua, knowledge of land use and increased whānau capability on whenua



Future plans

Te Whakaoraka demonstrates sustainability through;

- Future funding opportunities to continue nursery development
- Strong recognised leadership of the initiative
- Networked support throughout the community, particularly in land regeneration (relationships with Corrections and Pourakino Catchment Group)
- Long-term environmental sustainability through regeneration activities.

