

Te Whakamotuhaketanga Hapū Impact Evaluation

In 2008/09, the Local Government and Community (LG&C) Branch commissioned an impact evaluation of Te Whakamotuhaketanga Hapū (TWH), the Branch's Māori community development strategy.

The purpose of the evaluation was to find out what difference the Strategy had made for the Branch and for the Māori communities we work with. The evaluation was carried out by Pam Oliver and Associates, who collected and analysed information from interviews, case studies and surveys of staff and Māori client rōpū.

The full evaluation report is provided below. Additional information for this evaluation, the *Te Whakamotuhaketanga Hapū Companion Report 2009*, is available on request from the Department. The companion report contains case study reports, and copies of the evaluation interview guides and survey questionnaires. Email your request to info@dia.govt.nz.

What does the evaluation mean for the Branch?

Overall, the evaluation found that TWH has had a very positive impact. The Māori rōpū we work with report that our staff are supportive and our services are delivered in a culturally appropriate way. Through building relationships based on manaakitanga and trust, the Branch is able to support rōpū to achieve outcomes that are important to them.

The evaluation also identified a number of challenges for the Branch to maintain and further develop our responsiveness to Māori. The findings of the evaluation are helping to shape the proposed direction for the 2010-13 TWH strategy, which is currently being developed.

Key Findings

Rōpū Māori feel that LG&C engages appropriately with them, and many have noticed a difference since the inception of TWH

The majority of rōpū responding to the survey felt that the Department's support was being provided in appropriate ways, and just over half the rōpū felt that the Department's services had improved in the past three years. Nearly three quarters of rōpū surveyed said that they had confidence in the Advisor/s working with them and felt supported by those people.

LG&C services are becoming more accessible to rōpū Māori

Most rōpū survey respondents had found it easy to make contact with the Department, and nearly two thirds thought that the Department's services had become more accessible since 2006. Rōpū members consistently described the Advisors working with them as approachable, accessible and quick to respond to their requests. A number of rōpū appreciated the efforts by the Department in recent years to improve its communications and support to Māori organisations.

However, a significant minority of rōpū survey respondents were not able to identify improvements in the Department's service to them and still encountered difficulties in obtaining either access or support relevant to their needs.

TWH has made a difference to the rūpū Māori groups that LG&C works with, supporting self determination and sustainable development

LG&C's focus on building Māori capacity and capability was seen by Māori as a direct and major contribution to sustainable Māori development, because rūpū are being supported by the Department to drive their own development, rather than having to "fit into" government policy and initiatives.

The Department's funding structures were also seen by rūpū as supporting self-determination because the eligibility criteria and accountability requirements are relevant to whānau, hapū and iwi development, accessible to Māori and therefore supportive of sustainable Māori development.

However, a number of rūpū commented on continuing difficulties in accessing government support and wanted the Department to have a stronger role in Māori development. They also noted that the short-term nature of the Department's funding made it difficult to undertake long-term planning.

The majority of staff across the Branch know about TWH and how to use it

There is a high level of awareness of the TWH Strategy amongst staff, with a majority having engaged with the Strategy and appreciating its relevance to their work.

However, some staff still identify barriers to using TWH in their work, including not having received TWH training, having a limited understanding of TWH, or being unclear about the relevance of TWH to their particular job.

The TWH framework has made a difference to the way the Branch works

LG&C staff are more aware of the unique needs of Māori and of their obligations as Treaty partners, and many have developed new skills to enable them to apply TWH in their work. Community Development and Funding Advisors (Advisors) and other staff are more confident in working with Māori, and are becoming more proactive in identifying effective ways to support Māori.

However, it is apparent that TWH has had significantly less impact at national office level, and with Support Officers and some managers. Staff turnover is also seen as a challenge for the Strategy.

TWH is on track to meeting the outcomes in the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan

The Strategy remains well on track to achieving each of the outcomes set out in the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan, as well as other outcomes (e.g. improved team relationships; enhanced LG&C profile amongst Māori). The Strategy is being managed competently, with good support from senior management, as well as a committed Māori Caucus and other champions.

To consolidate and maintain the gains achieved so far, staff identified a number of improvements that could be made to Strategy ownership, management, resourcing and implementation.