



# Turanga Māori

A Cook Islands Conceptual Framework  
transforming family violence  
– restoring wellbeing



March 2012

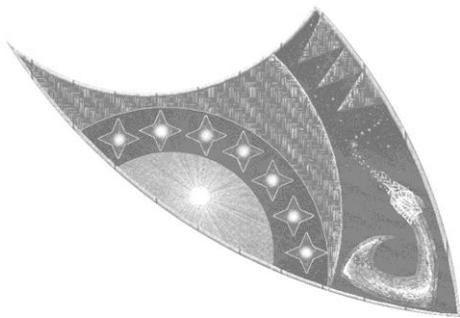
## Guide on the use of Cook Islands Conceptual Framework

This document was developed by the Cook Islands Working Group to assist with the development of a training programme for Cook Islands practitioners and service providers working with victims, perpetrators, and families from our communities who have been affected by family violence.

The information in this document can be used for research purposes\*, educational activities and programmes which promote the wellbeing of our families and communities. The Working Group request that in using this material, that the integrity of the concepts and the work is maintained. These must not be interpreted in such a way as to cause any form of harm, or violate relationships between people. Nor should the meanings of these concepts, values, and principles be compromised or subsumed under the definitions of meanings that belong to other cultures and beliefs.

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### La Tapu (Sacred Sail)

The basic shape is that of a Pacific canoe sail. This represents the vaka/canoe which is important in traditional Pacific navigation and exploring new horizons.

The fishhook represents sustainability as well as traditional knowledge. The fishhook colour shows the colours of the paua shell, which represents our migration to New Zealand and adapting to a new way of life while maintaining our traditions. The fishhook is linked to a spiritual cord which disappears up to the heavens. This represents our link as Pacific Islanders with our creator and the importance of our traditional and contemporary belief system. The background of the fish hook represents the sea which merges into a star filled night sky. These natural elements were the navigator's pathways to new horizons.

The triangular patterns above the fishhook is a common design motif found in all Pacific cultures. I used this pattern to represent a common thread found between the Pacific Islands.

The woven pattern represents the Kaiga (family), as a close knit unit. Each member in the Kaiga has a role and purpose in the same way each strand supports one another.

The seven stars represent the seven Pacific Island nations/groups of; Cook Islands, Niue, Sāmoa, Fiji, Tuvalu, Tonga and Tokelau. Together, they represent a collective star formation which provides support and guidance to the vulnerable. To the left of the arched 7 stars is a lagoon with a radiating light emanating outwards. The lagoon represents a safe and protected environment. The radiating light represents a new life nurtured within this safe environment while surrounded and supported by family, cultural knowledge, belief, and alofa (love).

Tiaki Fati Kirifi – Tokelau.

### The Cook Islands Working Group

Ani James, Jean Mitaera and Apii Rongo-Raea.

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# Executive summary

## The task

The Cook Islands Working Group (Working Group) was tasked with developing a Cook Islands Conceptual Framework (Framework) for practitioners working with victims, perpetrators, their families and communities. The Framework reflects the desire of the Working Group to deconstruct what is often presented as complex, distorted and prescriptive viewpoints of Cook Islands culture that limit the ability of the practitioner to draw on their own experiences and knowledge. To this end the Working Group intends that this body of work be relevant, realistic and sufficiently flexible to better reflect the diversity that exists amongst Cook Islanders.

The Framework provides one pathway for continuing to progress the discourse on addressing family violence. The Working Group explored, debated and shared their cultural, professional and religious experiences and knowledge over two days of *iri'iri kapua*.

## Key findings

1. The Working Group asserts that all Māori have the right to expect *no'o'anga meitaki* and *ora'anga meitaki*, that is to live in good circumstances and have a good life. An individual or collective has the potential to live life to its fullest and therefore achieve *ora'anga mou*. A good and fulfilled life is acknowledged with the blessing 'may you live on', *kia ora ana*. *Ora'anga mou* assumes a balance of all aspects of life. When all physical needs are being met and upheld spiritual and emotional wellness complement the *ora'anga* of the individual and the collective. The continuum of wellbeing has been developed and demonstrates the scope of wellbeing.
2. Violence is understood as a violation of the wellbeing of the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s). It disconnects both parties from the continuum of wellbeing and, transgresses the *tapu* (divine sacredness) of both.
3. Cook Islands culture determines *papa'anga* (genealogy) as the overarching theoretical framework from which family violence should be addressed and *ora'anga meitaki* restored. The principles that inform practice are:
  - '*Akamatūtū i tona turanga* – strengthen his/her position/standing
  - '*Akamārāmā i tona au piri'anga* – make known his/her connections/relationships
  - '*Akakite i nga akaue'anga* – inform him/her of his/her duties to others
  - '*Kia tā'anga'anga'ia kia rauka te ngakau aro'a* – the practice of *turanga*, *piri'anga* and *akaue'anga* enables *ngakau aro'a*. *Ngakau aro'a* complements *ora'anga meitaki*.

# Introduction

*Taku ipukarea ko toku ia inangaro  
Tei akaruru'ia e te pa metua ei turanga ketaketa noku  
Ei marokura tiratira tu no te ivi Māori  
Tei koropini'ia ki te korona o te aro'a  
Ei ngakau parau'anga no taku ina!*

**My homeland, you are my beloved  
United by our forefathers as a firm standing place for me  
A distinguished garment for Māori  
Surrounded by a crown of love  
Holding pride of place for my descendants!**

The Cook Islands Working Group (Working Group) was tasked with developing a Cook Islands Conceptual Framework for practitioners working with victims, perpetrators, their families and communities. The Framework reflects the desire of the Working Group to deconstruct what is often presented as complex, distorted and prescriptive viewpoints of Cook Islands culture that limit the ability of the practitioner to draw on their own experiences and knowledge. To this end the Working Group intend that the Framework be relevant, realistic and sufficiently flexible to better reflect the diversity that exist amongst Cook Islanders. As well as the work already progressed by Pacific Advisory Group, the Working Group acknowledges work undertaken by Cook Islands social workers for the Children, Young Persons & Their Families Service model E Kaveinga (1998) and the more recent report on sexual violence (2010) written by the Reverend Robert Robati-Mani and Dr Teuila Percival.

## Methodology

To develop the Cook Islands Conceptual Framework, the following key questions formed the initial platform from which the Working Group explored, debated and shared their cultural, professional and religious experiences and knowledge over two days of iri'iri kapua.<sup>1</sup> The key questions were:

1. What is Cook Islands culture? How do we understand and practise culture?
2. What is wellbeing? How do we understand and practise wellbeing?
3. What is violence? How do we understand and practise violence?
4. How can culture transform violence and restore wellbeing?

The Cook Islands Conceptual Framework provides one context within which the discourse on addressing family violence can continue to be progressed.

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<sup>1</sup> Iri'iri to sort or to plait, kapua refers to source, origin. This is a modern term used to distinguish a workshop (iri'iri kapua) from a meeting (uipa'anga).

# Turanga Māori: a Cook Islands Māori Conceptual Framework

The *orama* (vision) of the Framework is the optimum wellbeing of the *ngutuare*, *kopu tangata* and *oire tangata* within which Māori live. The continuum of wellbeing asserts that all Māori have the right to expect *no'o'anga meitaki* and *ora'anga meitaki*, that is to live in good circumstance and have a good life. An individual or collective has the potential to live life to its fullest and therefore achieve *ora'anga mou*. A good and fulfilled life is acknowledged with the blessing 'may you live on', *kia ora ana*.

**Figure 1. The continuum of wellbeing**



*Ora'anga mou* assumes a balance of all aspects of life. When all physical needs are being met and upheld, spiritual and emotional wellness complement the *ora'anga* of the individual and the collective.

## Approach to violence

There are three critical processes that must be applied when approaching violence and when responding to a perpetrator of violence:

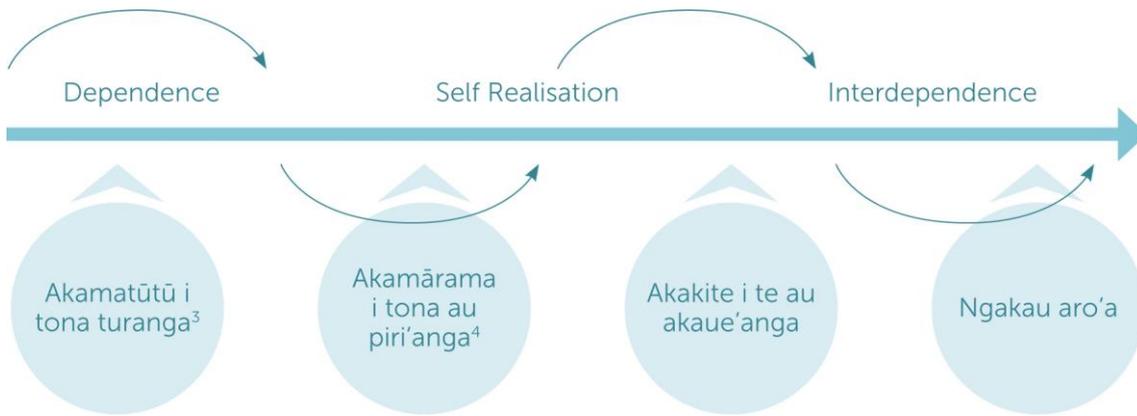
1. Dismiss the illusion that violence is acceptable, natural or culturally valid.
2. Eliminate the space and therefore opportunities for *ngutuare/kopu tangata* violence to be practised by education for the empowerment of the individual and the collective. This means that *ngutuare/kopu tangata* will need to reclaim their respective *turanga*.
3. Provide and teach transformative practices based on *akono'anga* Māori. This will necessarily involve providing alternatives to violence.<sup>2</sup>

## Transformation of behaviour

The transformation of behaviour moves from dependence to self realisation and finally to interdependence. Dependence is the stage where violence is uncovered, self realisation occurs when the *turanga* of the individual and collective are strengthened and interdependence occurs when *piri'anga* are made known and re-connected (see Figure 2).

<sup>2</sup> This has been adapted from the Transforming Whanau Violence – A Conceptual Framework (2004).

**Figure 2. Transformation of behaviour**



## Elements of the Framework

1. **Akono'anga Māori** – includes the following to be utilised as intervention and restoration tools of practice:
  - *Papa'anga* (genealogy/kinship that determines the individual place within the collective *ngutuare tangata, kopu tangata, tapere, vaka*):
  - *Turanga* (the acknowledgement by self and others of one's position/standing and potential within the collective)
  - *Piri'anga* (the individual and collective belong to a reciprocal network. *Piri'anga* identifies and responds to collective and shared responsibilities and privileges both inside and outside of the *papa'anga*)
  - *Akaue'anga* (the acknowledgement and fulfilment of individual and collective duties)
  - *Ngakau aro'a* (the willingness and conviction of the heart; generosity to self and others)
2. **No Teia Tuatau** – asserts the importance to be relevant and realistic to the environment and context within which people live today. That culture today is expressed differently. Begin where the *ngutuare/kopu tangata* is at, and:
  - komakoma<sup>5</sup> marie, let your conversation be slow (gradual)
  - kia maru to korua komakoma'anga, let your conversations be calm (peaceful).
3. **Ta 'Anga'anga'ia** – transformation occurs when all of the above are put into practice. On their own they are simply cultural concepts isolated in space.

<sup>3</sup> Strengthen his/her/their standing, sense of self.

<sup>4</sup> Make known and clear his/her/their connections or collective relationships.

<sup>5</sup> Informal speaking, quiet chat.

## Practice imperatives

*Akono'anga Māori* is evolutionary and is always situated in the 'now'.<sup>6</sup> Values may stay the same but the way in which those values and principles are practised evolves with and within each generation.

*Akono'anga Māori* is not prescriptive, this is particularly important given that there is no one Cook Islands *Māori* cultural perspective or practice. This offers the practitioner, victim(s) and perpetrator(s) the opportunity to be relevant, realistic and flexible given the circumstances at hand.

*Papa'anga* is the framework for relationships within which *turanga* and *piri'anga* and *akaue'anga* are defined and first practised.

- *Turanga* is strengthened when the individual and collective are empowered to claim their place in the *papa'anga* and with each step recognise the *turanga* of others. We start with *turanga* because it is when the victim/perpetrator understands who they are, how they come to be and who they can be.
- A victim/perpetrator may not instantly want to be exposed to the fullness of their *piri'anga*. This provides the practitioner with space to work alongside the victim/perpetrator, build self-realisation and make small connections (whether they are kin or non-kin). Learning to belong and trust may take longer for some.
- Once *turanga* and *piri'anga* have been re-established and brought to life, then observance of *akaue'anga* can eventually be introduced.
- *Ngakau aro'a* is the emotional and spiritual expression of being *Māori*, generosity to the self and to others. It is informed by *akono'anga Māori* and *papa'anga*. In many instances the *ngakau aro'a* towards the victim/perpetrator from the practitioner may be their first experience, and the platform from which the practitioner can unpack the *matapo o te ngakau* (blindness of the heart), and introduce cultural elements as tools for restoration and transformation. *Ngakau aro'a* given and received is to experience wellbeing. This Framework consciously uses the term restoration to highlight the importance of restoring *turanga* in order to transform the individual and collective out of violence.
- Ta '*Anga'anga'ia* is the acknowledgement that concepts and knowledge in themselves cannot effect transformation and restoration. The victim/perpetrator and family must take the shared responsibility to action their knowledge. Culture is lived.

No *Teia Tuatau* reminds practitioners to be realistic and relevant to the environment and context that the victim/perpetrator lives in; that is the starting point. For instance do not assume that a prayer is required. The practitioner should explore the level of knowledge and practice that the victim/perpetrator has. Begin where the *ngutuare/kopu tangata* is at.

Ta '*Anga'anga'ia* – the victim/perpetrator and their family may need some guidance and support as to how to practise their *turanga* and *piri'anga*.

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<sup>6</sup> Otherwise it is *peu tupuna* – the ways of our ancestors, which is not the same as culture.

# Akono'anga Māori – Cook Islands Māori culture

***Taka'i koe ki te papa enua  
Akamou i te pito enua  
A'u i to'ou rangi.***

**As you step onto the surface of the land  
Fasten the umbilical chord  
Carve out your world.**

## **Puati Mataiapo**

The indigenous people of the Cook Islands are *Māori*; our ancestors came mainly from Eastern Polynesia with the exception of Pukapuka, whose ancestors come from Western Polynesia. Prior to colonisation each of the fifteen islands was an entity in itself with its own distinct story of origin, traditions, dialect and cultural practices. There are some kin connections and therefore some cultural similarities between the people of Rakahanga and Manihiki in the northern group and Atiu, Mauke and Mitiaro in the southern group. Today it is realistic to consider that most *Māori* have genealogical links to several islands.

The constitutional relationship between New Zealand and the Cook Islands has changed little since annexation to New Zealand in 1901 (when the fifteen islands were clustered into a country) and self-government in free association with New Zealand in 1965.<sup>7</sup>

There is no indigenous name for the Cook Islands, 'the people did not conceive of themselves as an entity' (Numa 2003). As a Western construct, knowledge of the political, economic and social development of the Cook Islands since missionisation is well documented. Today the population of the Cook Islands is approximately 18,000 of which 14,153 live on the main island of Rarotonga

*Akono'anga Māori* is what distinguishes Cook Islands *Māori* from all others. *Ako* refers to the guidance and direction given by elders to their younger family members. *Akono* means to look after, to maintain a practice. *Māori* means indigenous, native or belonging to the place. Hence the expression *akono'anga Māori* is 'the way in which we learn and practise being *Māori*. Jonassen (2003) describes Cook Islands culture as a total way of life of the people: it is a living, vibrant and an ever growing entity. *Māori* implies particular ways of doing things, from how we dress, food preferences, humour, and a sense of order to how we mourn.

In the Cook Islands all things indigenous (both animate and inanimate) carry the name *Māori*.<sup>8</sup> We call ourselves *Māori*, our language is *Māori* and our culture is *Māori*. In truth, one is only a Cook Islander outside of the Cook Islands.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The country has an elected government and a House of Ariki whose function it is to advise on land tenure and cultural issues. Tourism is the mainstay of the Cook Islands economy. More Cook Islanders live overseas than in the Cook Islands. The population of the Cook Islands is approximately 18,000 (2011). At the 2006 Census approximately 60,000 Cook Islanders lived in New Zealand, 73% of which were born in New Zealand.

<sup>8</sup> Vai rakau Māori (traditional medicines); tiare Māori (*Gardenia taitensis* – variety of gardenia flower, national flower of the Cook Islands and French Polynesia).

<sup>9</sup> Sometimes being called Māori is as good as being called a native, the inference being that you lack sophistication.

Puati Mataiapo uses the symbol of the umbilical cord, placing culture as the conduit connecting a person to their land or *ipukarea* (homeland). Culture comes to life through practice, which continues to evolve and transform the people who live it on a daily basis. Individual and collective practice is varied both in the islands and here in New Zealand and is informed by the individual's or collective's island of origin, knowledge, emphasis on particular values or their specific circumstances and context. What is 'good form' for one family might be of little consequence to another.<sup>10</sup>

*Māori* who have lived overseas for long periods return to their *ipukarea* (homeland) expecting to see and feel the culture they left behind twenty or thirty years ago. Instead they find relatives who perform for tourists three nights a week, use digital technology and buy cooked *taro* for dinner on the way home. They also find that hundreds of *papa'ā* (people of European descent) have made the islands their home and the family *umukai*<sup>11</sup> (feast) is being hosted at the resort on the other side of the island. Culture did not wait for them; it does not stand still; it moves with the people and the changing technological landscape they live and work in.

*Akono'anga Māori* is the expression of knowledge, beliefs, customs, morals, arts and personality. It is both the substance and a set of processes whose primary purpose is to ensure wellbeing, facilitate the practice of respectful relationships and, enable the individual and collective to pursue their aspirations.

## Papa'anga tupuna – genealogy

All *Māori* are born into a network of *piri'anga*<sup>12</sup> (relationships) formalised by their *papa'anga tupuna* (ancestral genealogy). Genealogy confirms ones' place, and culture defines role(s) and responsibilities which are understood in relation to others of the same genealogy and those of other genealogies. While this is not peculiar to Cook Islands culture, it does have specific relevance in terms of an individual's or collective's entitlement to land and traditional titles. *Māori* practise both patrilineal and matrilineal entitlements.

Irrespective of ones' citizenship, *papa'anga* is an institution that places individuals and collectives into relationships and determines leadership within those relationships, rules of engagement, and distribution of wealth and training for both inherited and ascribed roles and responsibilities. All members of the same *papa'anga* have *turanga* according to their place in the *papa'anga*, their talents and their potential.

## Turanga – standing, position

*Turanga* (standing, position)<sup>13</sup> can be inherited and/or ascribed. *Turanga* evolves as the person and collective evolves. The *turanga* of children is one of the most cherished. For instance, visiting adult relatives will not sleep on the beds of children because of the *tapu* and *turanga* of children. In some families this extends to eating utensils and designated seats. Sometimes best portions of food are set aside for first born sons or youngest children or even children who carry the name of endeared great grandparents.

Each person's and collective's *turanga* is illuminated by their practice and by the acknowledgement and support of others. It is the shared responsibility of the *ngutuare* and *kopu tangata* to support each member's *turanga*. Thus the father acting in his role as father must be supported by his wife, sisters, parents and children. Just as the elder daughter must be supported by her parents, cousins, and siblings in the execution of her *turanga*. From time to time an individual may be reminded of his/her *turanga* as a mechanism to moderate their behaviour or actions given the situation under consideration. For instance, the husband of a family member may be permitted to speak in the wife's family meeting but he is not a

<sup>10</sup> An example of 'good form' is starting a meeting with a prayer irrespective of the context. This is more stringently observed in New Zealand than in the islands where some meetings are viewed as 'strictly business' and are called to order without a prayer.

<sup>11</sup> Umu is an earth oven, kai is food, and umu kai is the term used for feasting.

<sup>12</sup> Piri means together or connect, anga is the action of putting together or connecting.

<sup>13</sup> Later in this paper the definition of *turanga* is extended to mean self realisation.

decision-maker; this is outside of his *turanga*. *Turanga* is made known by both the name it is accorded and the way it is practised e.g.

***Ko Mere te teina ia raua.***

**Mere is the younger sister<sup>14</sup> between the two of them.**

### ***Piri'anga* – relationships**

*Piri'anga* is defined as relevance, relationship and connection. *Piri'anga toto*, translates as blood connection e.g.

***Kua kite rai maua e e piri'anga toto to maua.***

**We are aware that we have a blood connection.**

All *Māori* have *piri'anga* to people, land and titles. All *Māori* are members of multiple collectives both kin and non-kin. *Piri'anga* are connections that require the acknowledgement and support of others of the same collective and for them to respond accordingly. *Piri'anga* like *turanga* is sustained through practice.

The collective identities based on *piri'anga toto* are: *ngutuare tangata* (household), *kopu tangata* (family), *uanga tangata* (extended family), *vaka tangata/ngāti* (tribe/clan), or *enua* (island of origin). These collectives continue to have relevance in the islands and in New Zealand.

However, traditional chiefly titles (titles over people and land) only have legitimate authority when the holder of the title is standing on his/her title land. Should a title holder leave a member of the *kopu tangata* will be nominated to *utu* (stand in) for the title holder.<sup>15</sup> The title stays with the land and the people. When the title holder leaves the title land, he/she is perceived to have broken the umbilical cord.

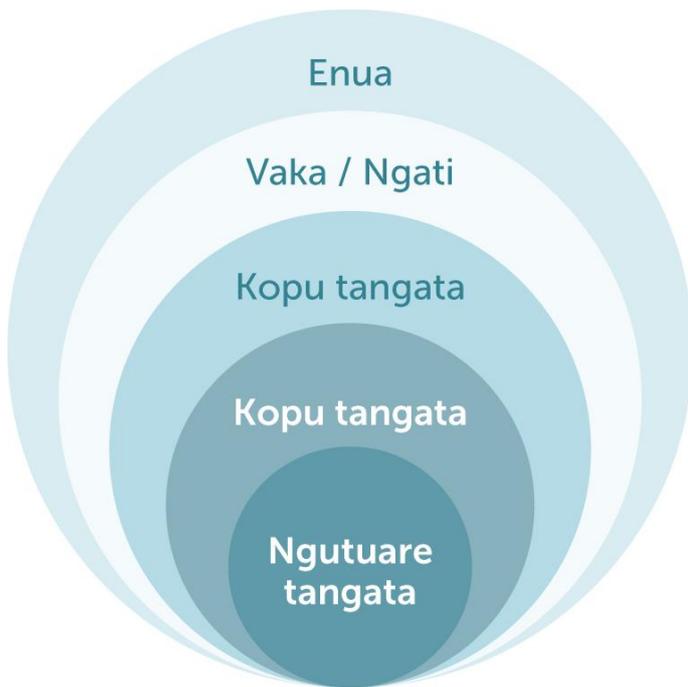
*Māori* in New Zealand gather as *kopu tangata*, *vaka* and *enua*; the leadership roles are elected as opposed to inherited.

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<sup>14</sup> One can be a younger sister or of a junior line.

<sup>15</sup> Another term sometimes used is *mono*.

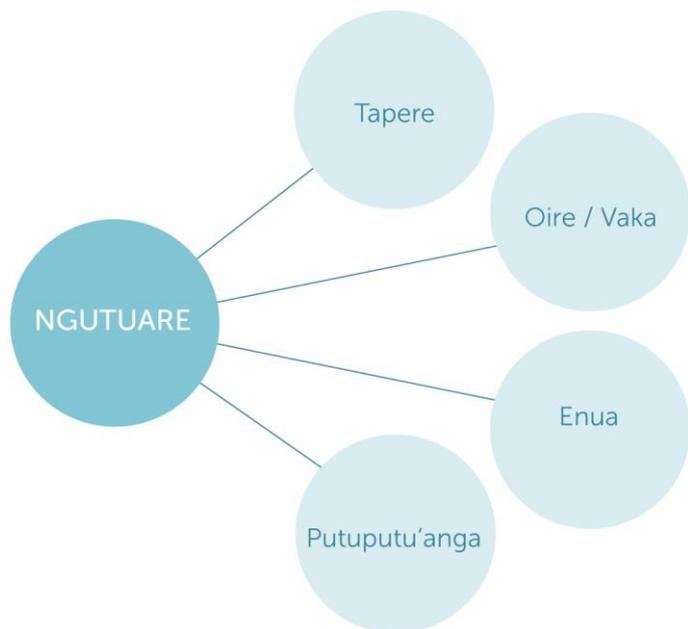
**Figure 3. Papa'anga based collectives**



A second network of *piri'anga* is based on geography/location. Location based collectives may or may not include people of the same *papa'anga*, they are known as: *ngutuare tangata* (household), *tapere* (village/suburb), *oire/vaka tangata* (district/community), *iti tangata* (wider community), *enea* (island, country) or *te au putuputu'anga tukeke* (various interest groups) e.g. church, women's groups, political affiliations and sports groups).<sup>16</sup>

These terms have been 'interpreted' to fit a New Zealand context (the same has occurred in Australia). In New Zealand *tapere* is used when referring to a suburb, *oire/vaka* for region/district and *enea* for country.

**Figure 4. Location based collectives**



In the islands and in towns across New Zealand where there are Cook Islands communities there will also be a number of interest groups, foremost among these is the church. *Māori* membership and participation in religious activities are not as zealous as a hundred or even fifty years ago. In 2011 the influence the

<sup>16</sup> There are Cook Islands Associations in a number of New Zealand towns. The Associations are usually umbrella organisations for the full range of Cook Islands groups in the area.

church once had over the *kopu tangata* or *vaka tangata* has lessened considerably. This is as much to do with a wider range of faiths that *Māori* are exposed to as it is about general disinterest. The writers would suggest that it is also influenced by the nature of the relationship between traditional leaders and the church, which is expressed in the term *tama ua a te ui ariki*.<sup>17</sup>

Whether determined by *papa'anga* or location, *piri'anga* are important to *Māori*. Knowledge of culture enables the practice of *piri'anga* and upholds ones *turanga*.

## **Nga akaue'anga e toru – three duties**

All *Māori* inherit the responsibility to perform duties to family and community, although all *Māori* may not understand that these duties exist or the extent of their reach. These duties are known as: *ara tipoto*; *ara tiroa* and are *vananga*.

*Ara* means pathway and *tipoto* refers to width. *Ara tipoto* are duties to ones immediate family, your respective parents siblings and first cousins and your own siblings and first cousins e.g. a nephew's haircutting ceremony or a first cousin's wedding. Tongia (2003) explains that *ara tipoto* duties are personal duties and observations made in times of death e.g. cutting of hair or wearing of black (or designated mourning attire) until the period of mourning has been lifted. There are *ara tipoto* duties that should only be undertaken by those within the immediate *kopu tangata*, and there are duties that are shared with friends and community members. For example, friends may support a person to perform their *ara tipoto* duties.

*Tiroa* means length, and refers to duties carried out for ones extended family, community, church, local school or perhaps a Cook Islands *tere party*<sup>18</sup> from another island. It is the customary duty of the residents of the *vaka* (district or tribe) to perform gratuitous labour for the benefit of the *vaka*.

*Are vananga* means house of learning. The traditional are *vananga* trained up candidates in genealogy, traditional concepts and esoteric knowledge. Tongia (2003) suggests that churches, schools, and sports centres have become contemporary versions of are *vananga*.<sup>19</sup> These modern-day academies provide training in literacy, oratory, leadership and cultural deportment. They also provide a community space to give recognition to a person's mastery and opportunities for candidates to 'strut their stuff'.

Living in the village on one's home island supports people to meet their various *akaue'anga*. Current times find families exploring modern means of communication especially given the associated financial costs and length of time involved in travel – and therefore being creative and realistic about how members might perform their duties.<sup>20</sup> These three duties include both kin and non-kin affiliations. They acknowledge the fact that *kopu tangata* (family) are situated within a community. There is also the assumption that support and participation will be reciprocated.

All *Māori* have *piri'anga* which are supported through the observation of individual and collective duties called *akaue'anga*. *Akaue'anga* are reciprocal – one is both a 'giver' of duties and a 'receiver' of duties. Maintaining relationships requires shared labour, resources and participation from all members of the collective. It requires members to understand that they have a duty to each other. *Papa'anga* is the framework for relationships.

<sup>17</sup> The term used by traditional leaders for Christian clergy is, *tama ua a te 'ui ariki*. *Tama* means boy or son, and *ua* refers to the thigh of the *ariki* upon which the clergy sits. The metaphor symbolises the parent/child relationship that exists between the two. The *ariki* is the parent and the Christian clergy is his adopted child and is therefore neither equal to nor higher than the *ariki*.

<sup>18</sup> *Tere* means to move or progress, a *tere party* is a travelling group. A *tere party* often has a fundraising purpose e.g. fundraising for a village meeting house, or may be a travelling group that seeks support (accommodation and food) from local Cook Islands families in towns they travel through. A *tere party* almost always becomes cultural entertainers.

<sup>19</sup> The writers agree with Tongia and suggest that *are vananga* is now applied to any institution where knowledge is gained, accumulated and demonstrated; a place and opportunity to put on 'show' ones achievements and merits.

<sup>20</sup> Distance, cost, employment constraints, participation in higher education and the frequency of family and community events influence decision-making.

# Ora'anga mou – wellbeing

Ora means life, and ora'anga is the process of living. Ora'anga can refer to life at home (ora'anga o te ngutuare), physical life (ora'anga kopapa), life at work (ora'anga i te 'anga'anga), spiritual life (ora'anga vaerua) or marital life (ora'anga aka'ipo'ipo). The term ora'anga meitaki (good life) is more often used to translate wellbeing of both the individual and the collective and is supported by the term no'o'anga meitaki (literally good living circumstances). A person who lives in good circumstances will have a good life.

***Ka aere kapipiti raua, te no'o'anga meitaki e te ora'anga meitaki. Me e no'o'anga meitaki to'ou, ka kite koe i te mataora e te au, kua rauka i reira te ora'anga meitaki.***

**Good life and good living circumstances go hand in hand. If your circumstance is good you will know happiness and peace, and wellbeing is achieved.**

***Aere a Papa ki te 'anga'anga, na Mama e akono i te tamariki, me oki mai a Papa ki te kainga ka tauturu aia ia Mama i te tunu i ta ratou kai. E ora'anga meitaki tera!***

**Father goes to work, Mother looks after the children, when Father returns home he helps Mother cook their meal. That is wellbeing!**

Ora'anga mou is an all-encompassing term. Mou confirms a full, thriving and complete life. It is the optimum of wellbeing. The inclusion of ora'anga mou allows for the possibility that a good and happy life can be further enhanced. Ora'anga mou can be enhanced to kia ora ana (to live on).<sup>21</sup>

**Figure 5. The continuum of wellbeing**



## Ngakau aro'a

Ngakau aro'a (generous heart) is epitomised through the maintenance of familial and community relationships and responsibilities. Ngakau aro'a brings heart and strength to one's practice, the inference being that one participates because one is moved to and in so doing affirms one's own place in the collective. There is both a 'personal' and 'public' responsibility to wellbeing. A well and happy ngutuare/kopu tangata will demonstrate ngakau aro'a to its members and to others.<sup>22</sup>

Wellbeing is achieved through self care and in the maintenance of familial and community relationships. All members of the kopu tangata have an inherent responsibility for self care according to their turanga.<sup>22</sup> Ngakau aro'a is its complement.

<sup>21</sup> Kia ora ana is the well-known greeting of Rarotonga, other islands have their own formal greeting. Kia ora ana means may you live on, have a long life. Each island has its own greeting.

<sup>22</sup> A child has limited capability to practise self-care, in which case a child's care is the responsibility of those who have care duties for him/her. The same applies to other vulnerable members of the kopu tangata e.g. elders, widows, disabled etc.

## Tākinokino tangata – violence

Violence (Tākinokino tangata) is a violation of the wellbeing of the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s). It disconnects both parties from the continuum of wellbeing and, transgresses the tapu (divine sacredness) of both

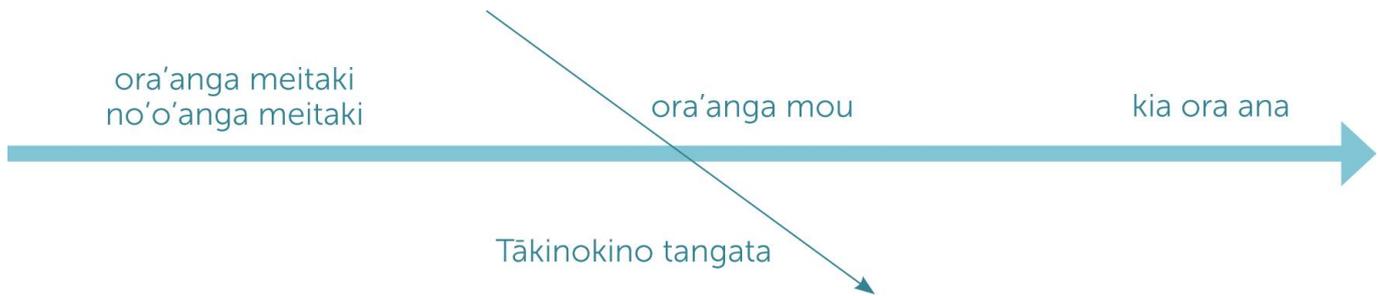
Violence can result in the victim(s) and/or perpetrator(s) going into a state of *maromaroa*. *Maromaroa* can be described as loneliness and isolation sometimes demonstrated by the victim withdrawing from aspects of her *ora'anga*, isolating herself from her *piri'anga* (relationships). Violence is neither acceptable nor cultural. Violence is normalised when *piri'anga* become silent. Continuous experience of and exposure to violence will result in *matapo o te ngakau* (blindness of the heart). This is to be so entrenched in violence that it becomes ones' norm. The poem by Tere Tarapu speaks to this (see Appendix 1). Violence is experienced by all sections of Cook Islands communities across Aotearoa New Zealand. It is not isolated to any particular socio-economic or *enua* group.

There are a number of terms that relate to violence, though they do not specifically translate as violence. They include:

<b>Tākinokino tangata</b>	to harm, ill-treat someone
<b>Tumatetenga</b>	misfortune, death
<b>Tā tangata</b>	physically beat, kill
<b>Taia</b>	to beat
<b>Motoro</b>	to enter a house to seduce or rape
<b>Takataka'i</b>	to stomp on, trample
<b>Tauma'a</b>	to curse

## Figure 6. The violation of ora'anga mou

Violence was a feature of the Māori past. It was how one collective conquered and enslaved another and the means by which women and land were taken. It was used to enact revenge and punishment.



Those historical stories have informed the continued evolution of *akono'anga Māori* which takes away the validity of violence and confirms *papa'anga* as the pre-eminent framework to understand a person's or collective's relationship to another and the set of accompanying actions that uphold those relationships.

## Restoration and transformation

Education can be the transformative process fundamental to changing violence within the *ngutuare/kopu tangata* and *oire tangata*. The Cook Islands Working Group notes that while there is an educative process inherent to the practitioner – victim/perpetrator relationship, education must be accepted as the responsibility of the whole community. Part of the educative process will be the seeking out of suitable alternatives to violence – these can be found within *akono'anga Māori*.

The inability to translate culture and cultural practices into the New Zealand environment has escalated violence as the preferred response to alienation and the diminishment of *turanga* which is in itself disempowering and feeds the opportunity for violence to be perpetuated.

It is unrealistic to consider that Cook Islands *Māori* practitioners will make the difference for Cook Islands victims/perpetrators of violence – there are far too few who work in this area. However there is a desperate need for existing practitioners to contextualise their practice within a cultural model and to be part of the educative process for *ngutuare/kopu tangata* and *oire tangata*.

The Cook Islands Working Group hopes that by making this Framework accessible, practitioners of other ethnic groups might be better informed and gain new tools and understanding when working with Cook Islands *Māori* victims/perpetrators of family violence.

## Conclusion

This paper notes the issue of diversity amongst Cook Islanders and it provides some insight into shared concepts that are understood by and inherent to all *Māori*. The Cook Islands Working Group firmly believes that *akono'anga Māori* is critical to the elimination of violence within Cook Islands *ngutuare*, *kopu tangata* and *oire tangata*. And like culture, this Framework will need to be reviewed for its ongoing relevance, realism and flexibility given the evolutionary nature of our *ngutuare* and *kopu tangata*.

*Akono'anga Māori* culture is the expression of knowledge, beliefs, customs, morals, arts and personality. It is both the substance and a set of processes whose primary purpose is to ensure wellbeing, facilitate the practice of respectful relationships and, enable the individual and collective to pursue their aspirations.

All *Māori* have *piri'anga* which are supported through the observation of individual and collective duties called *akaue'anga*. *Akaue'anga* are reciprocal – one is both a 'giver' of duties and a 'receiver' of duties. Maintaining relationships requires shared labour, resources and participation from all members of the collective. It requires members to understand that they have a duty to each other. *Papa'anga* is the framework for relationships.

Wellbeing is achieved through self-care and in the maintenance of familial and community relationships. All members of the *kopu tangata* have an inherent responsibility for self care according to their *turanga*. *Ngakau aro'a* is its complement.

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Violence (*Tākinokino tangata*) is a violation of the wellbeing of the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s). It disconnects both parties from the continuum of wellbeing, and transgresses the *tapu* (divine sacredness) of both.

Education can be the transformative process fundamental to changing violence within the *ngutuare/kopu tangata* and *oire tangata*. The Cook Islands Working Group notes that while there is an educative process inherent to the practitioner – victim/perpetrator relationship, education must be accepted as the responsibility of the whole community. Part of the educative process will be the seeking out of suitable alternatives to violence; these can be found within *akono'anga Māori*.

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# Appendix 1

The following *purua* (poem) was written by *Tere Tarapu*. The inspiration for this poem came from his experiences and observations as a school teacher in Rarotonga. The poem is part of a collection that was published in the mid 1990's and was read on air to the Cook Islands public who were suitably shocked at the frankness of the poem and the truth of its content. The poem triggered one of the earliest public debates on family and domestic violence in the Cook Islands.

## ***Matapo o te ngakau***

*E kavenga riri au no te aro'a kore*

*E vairanga tuatua kino no te tangi kore*

*E puaka taku kai putuputu i te au ra*

*E tanapapeti te kinaki i taku puaka*

*E vai mana te omaki i taku kai*

*E karo taku kapu ti i te popongi*

*E one enua te āriki i taku kai*

*E ou te vai pa'i i toku kopapa*

*E roa'anga po te 'akaoti i taku 'anga'anga*

*E moa te akavā i toku 'akangaro'i'anga*

*E puku rima te pēni i toku mata*

*E potonga rakau te tāmuramura i taku ngutu*

*E paraku tita te peru i toku rouru*

*E pūrūmu kikau te tatatau i taku kiri*

*E animara te 'akapūma'ana i toku taitaia*

*E tumu nu te 'u'una'anga i toku aue*

*Te mamae nei au*

*E mamae ngakau tikai*

*Te ro'iro'i nei au te 'akakoromaki nei ra au*

*Ko tōku tu e tupu nei*

*E mea kitekore'ia*

*E tei matapō te ngakau.*

***Blindness of the heart***

I am the cause of anger for those who have no love

A repository of bad words for the compassionless

'Pig' is my food every day

'Son of a bitch' accompanies my pork

A strong drink to swallow my food

A scolding my cup of tea for the morning

A bare earth upon which to place my food

Sweat to bathe my body

The long night ends my labour

A chicken presides over my rest

A clenched fist paints my eye

A piece of wood to rouge my lips

A rake to comb my hair

A coconut fibre broom tattoos my skin

An animal to comfort my uncertainties

A coconut trunk to hide my tears

I am hurting

A truly pained heart

I am tired, I am patient in my long suffering

This is the nature of my upbringing

Something unseen

By the blindness of the heart.

**Atu'ia e Tere Tarapu  
(Translated by Jean Mitaera)**



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
*Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora*



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