

Māori cultural revitalisation in social networking sites

A paper prepared for
Te Puni Kōkiri

Acushla Dee Sciascia

HE MIHI

Ka rere te tai o mihi ki tō tātou Minita o ngā take Māori, Hon Te Ururoa Flavell, mōu e whakapeto ngoi ana i te Whare Paremata kia ekea e Ngāi Māori ki ngā karamatamata. Tēnei te uri o Ngāti Ruanui, o Ngāruahine Rangi, o Te Atiawa e mihi ake nei ki a koe. Otiia ki ngā kaimahi o Te Puni Kōkiri, koutou rā e kawea ana ngā kaupapa huhua o te Kāwana ki ngā hapori Māori huri noa i te motu, tēnei anō ka mihi atu.

Anei e whai ake nei, ko ōku whakaaro e horahia ana, e whārikihia ana hei wānanga mā te hirikapo. Ko tāku nei, he whakarāpopoto i aku tirohanga, i aku kitenga i ēnei tau e toru kua hipa e pā ana ki ngā kaupapa o te whakarauoratanga o te ahurea Māori i te ao hangarau, i te ao pae tukutuku kōtui-ā-hapori. Ka mutu, koinei te pūtaketanga o tōku kaupapa tuhinga o te Tohu Kairangi. Nō reira, ko ēnei whakaaro ōku ka whakapuakina hei koha ki tēnei kaupapa kia whai hua anō ai i roto i ngā mahi tātari me te whāngai atu ki a tātou a Ngāi Māori.

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TĒNEI PURONGO

I was invited by Te Puni Kōkiri to contribute a think piece on my perspectives about cultural revitalisation – specifically in the context of my PhD research and interests around Māori engagement in online socially mediated spaces. This paper intends to provide some personal perspectives and draw on the findings of my doctoral work on Māori cultural revitalisation in the context of social media. These insights are intended to contribute to a wider discussion around cultural revitalisation for the Ministry to focus on and invest in.

NGĀ PĀTAI

There are two overarching questions that guide this written piece:

1. What does (Māori) cultural revitalisation mean to you, what does it look like?
2. What is government's role in revitalising (Māori) culture?

There are three distinct strategic areas that the project is focused on:

1. Māori identity: Māori having access to their language, marae, whenua, iwi
2. Māori culture: development, sustainability, mana, and cultural resilience
3. New Zealand identity: Māori culture is a valued and integral part of New Zealand culture.

This paper will attempt to provide perspectives for the two overarching questions as well as strategic areas 1 and 2 within the context of online social media as spaces for cultural revitalisation.

HE KUPU WHAKATAKI

Aspects of Māori culture have moved with Māori as they navigate new and uncharted territories. The idea of navigation is entrenched in Māori history; ancestors traversed unknown seas, reaching their final destination of Aotearoa New Zealand. Navigation of such treacherous environments has provided Māori with a plethora of knowledge and learnings. With rigour and systematic observation our ancestors gained a clear understanding of the meaning of star navigation (as part of a larger knowledge system) as a compass to reach far away destinations. Their ingenuity and innovation as navigators is something that Māori of today can take much pride in, as we live in their legacy as navigators of very different environments. Our ancestors had the foresight and wisdom to take everything needed for the journey on the waka. Māori of today take their Māoritanga as they navigate social networking sites (SNS) enabling them to engage, connect, interact and communicate through complex, virtual and risky realms in SNS. Māori identity, language, culture and tikanga have not been left behind in physical spaces but have moved with Māori as they navigate these new spaces – despite the ongoing impacts of colonisation that has stifled Māori self-determination.

Māori renaissance and development over the last 40-50 years has occurred out of grass-roots initiatives and efforts to reclaim domains lost through colonisation, cultural assimilation, and loss of land, identity and language. For example, Māori sovereignty and the formation of cultural identity began during the 1970's as Māori contested the honouring of Te Tiriti o Waitangi with the Crown and a number of fundamental land marches and protests launched this ideology of tino rangatiratanga. The next decade saw the Kōhanga Reo movement launched as a whānau initiative in 1983 to save the language and invest in younger generations of speakers. Such examples highlight kotahitanga and Māori efforts in reclaiming tino rangatiratanga in social, cultural, political and economic domains. These domains represent some of the most affected areas of colonisation and marginalisation and are therefore, key sites for reclamation and redefinition. Impacts of colonisation and subjugation by the Crown have prompted Māori to find new and innovative ways in which cultural vitality can be achieved.

Cultural survival and vitality is a key priority for marae, hapū and iwi and SNS have become a main platform in which aspects of this priority can be realised. SNS are innovative, exciting, yet potentially hazardous spaces in which Māori are navigating and exploring, taking with them their culture, language, values, belief systems, knowledge systems, rituals and ceremonies (Māoritanga).

Some of the uses of SNS are observed through whanaungatanga where whānau are connecting to each other online and relationships are

being maintained and managed. Language is becoming a normalised form of communication in SNS and tikanga are being practised in these spaces. SNS has become a virtual marae where many of the practices have been transferred to the online space - some of these ideas will be explored in this paper.

HE PUNUA WHAKAARO MŌ TE WHAKARAUORATANGA O TE AHUREA MĀORI

Cultural revitalisation is a process of reclamation and restoration of cultural values, beliefs, practices, protocols and languages that have been either diluted, diminished or lost over a period of time. This process of reclamation and restoration is about Māori having the autonomy to make their own decisions about what is important to them and deciding how to improve their own situations with the resources, tools and people they want to engage with. Cultural revitalisation happens in many different forms and for many different reasons, however the root of most of those reasons is traced back to our long history of colonisation, subjugation, discrimination, suffering and loss of people, culture, language and identity.

This paper discusses below some key concepts of cultural revitalisation that are being observed in socially mediated spaces on the Internet and amongst a range of different online Māori communities. In my recent doctoral research, this study showed that rangatahi use of SNS provided them with the ability to connect to each other and engage in meaningful ways that included; maintenance of whanaungatanga; identity construction; practising of tikanga and reconnection to cultural institutions and communities.

Whanaungatanga

With new technologies available to us, ways of communicating and interacting have increased to the point where relationships can be forged and maintained between whānau, peers and groups for a range of different purposes via SNS such as Facebook. SNS are facilitating whānau connections and communication and thus, increasing whānau ties and connectedness. Whānau ora is a direct impact from maintaining healthy and consistent communication with family members, marae, hapū and iwi, increasing capability and providing whānau with the tools to carry out their roles and tasks of being family orientated and connected.

The whanaungatanga concept and processes that Māori engage with as they work at relationships in SNS enables them to form connections and strengthen ties with others in culturally recognisable ways. Despite

not having the physical human touch when practising whanaungatanga in SNS, emotions continue to be felt and expressed by users, providing a sense of meaningful interactions. Relationships are cared for and nurtured through the processes of whanaungatanga and without it the myriad of social interactions that constitute community life would suffer.

Many Māori communities use these tools as a way to keep in touch with whānau and extended whānau members. Older generations are accessing these tools and becoming versed and skilled in using them so that they have a link to their grandchildren and children. Similar needs are being met for those whānau who live overseas and away from their whānau or haukāinga – Facebook and other SNS such as Instagram and now Snapchat are fast becoming tools for maintaining relationships (to a certain degree) and keeping in touch. These attributes of SNS are hugely positive for Māori communities.

Whakapapa

SNS are providing another means of communication and platform in which Māori identity is being expressed, articulated and formed. Whakapapa in particular is an area of information that many Māori are using Facebook to search for and retrieve. They are accessing whānau Facebook pages to find out more about their genealogical connections, as well as accessing images of family trees and ancestors. Some participants in my doctoral study also used Facebook to post questions in whānau and marae pages, seeking out their whakapapa connections and information.

Furthermore, the level of networking that occurs in these socially mediated spaces offers opportunities for meeting new whānau and whanaunga who they haven't met before. Finding new whānau in these spaces is not uncommon and in some instances, Māori were meeting relations for the first time through Facebook which then developed into an eventual face to face meeting between whānau. Such trivial online connections are having powerful and meaningful impacts for whānau Māori and for their familial relationships.

Te hoki atu ki ngā marae

Another area of SNS being accessed by Māori are marae, hapū and iwi Facebook pages (in particular, rangatahi) to connect to their marae. These pages are facilitating discussions around whakapapa, events at the marae, regular meetings and encouraging whānau to return home to participate in their marae. A key driver for marae, hapū and iwi to form these online SNS communities is to capture members who may not necessarily return to the marae frequently, but have an interest in wanting to participate and return in the future. These types of Facebook pages then become a pathway for more Māori to feel comfortable and safe to return physically to their marae.

Te Reo Māori

Other uses of SNS is the opportunity to access te reo Māori speaking communities in online spaces. While my doctoral research did not specifically look into te reo Māori in SNS, my own personal experiences as a user and a speaker/learner of te reo Māori indicate that SNS is fast becoming a new space where te reo Māori is normalised and spoken. Facebook pages such as Te Mana o te Reo Māori, Māori 4 Grown Ups and Hei Whānau Reo are key SNS spaces where te reo Māori is constantly used, discussed and shared. Many Facebook users are using these pages and other similar pages to access expert speakers and teachers of te reo Māori, posing questions to the online communities and seeking resources to use. Not only has te reo Māori become the preferred language for pages like Te Mana o te Reo Māori, but there is an expectation that no matter your level of te reo Māori, your posts and comments must be in te reo Māori as this is part of the tikanga of this page.

Te Wiki o te Reo Māori 2016 saw the introduction of new challenges for Facebook users where challenges were taken up to only post in te reo Māori on their own personal pages for the week, encouraging the use and normalisation of te reo Māori in SNS. In the month of Mahuru (September) last year, a group of language warriors took up the challenge to only speak te reo Māori for the entire month. The small cohort took to Facebook to share the experiences, challenges and successes with their communities and gathered interest from national Māori news broadcasters who reported on the group and their challenge. Their video blog style commentary detailed daily encounters in local food outlets and shops or on the phone to companies who only spoke English and the challenges that were faced during this month. SNS became their platform to share this experience but to also gather support and interest from other Māori who were interested in giving it a go.

SNS are encouraging the formation of online communities of speakers and are facilitating conversation, discussion and debate in environments that are set up to be safe and welcoming. Such spaces are giving Māori and non-Māori the opportunity to access communities of speakers who they might not otherwise have access to in face to face contexts. These types of uses of SNS are positive developments for te reo Māori and contribute to the revitalisation and reclamation of the language.

Kapa haka

Another key driver for SNS use is exposure to and access of aspects of kapa haka. Kapa haka performances, performers, discussion forums and fan pages are thriving communities in Facebook. The most popular 'Guess that Kapa' was a page initially set up as a game where

Facebook users would post lyrics from a well-known kapa haka song or haka that has been performed at regional or national competitions and others have to guess which group sang that line. The page has developed considerably from there to now being a conduit for Māori performing artists (young and old) interested in a range of aspects related to kapa haka. The most recent membership count to the page is over 11,500 members. These types of pages are creating spaces for Māori to engage and interact with each other through mutual interests such as kapa haka. Users are sharing information and thoughts on kapa haka and feeling a sense of pride for both their culture, performing arts and of their own unique Māori identity.

SNS are assisting Māori users to access more information about their whakapapa, language, performing arts, marae, hapū and iwi. All of these areas that users are interested in and are engaging with is viewed as a positive aspect of cultural revitalisation and self-determination for Māori and where individual and collective identities are being constructed and formed.

The idea of having a meaningful connection to one's culture, language, identity and practices were all too important for participants of my doctoral study. Certainly in my own life experiences this is also the case. Many of my whānau and whānau whānui utilise social media as another platform for practising aspects of their Māoritanga. This might be as subtle as writing posts in te reo Māori during Te Wiki o te Reo Māori or it might be as prevalent as searching their marae on Facebook and other social media platforms and communicating with their marae via these methods. Whatever the extremes, Māori are certainly using this technology for their own purposes which include (re)connection to aspects of their culture which I argue, contributes to their cultural wellbeing and cultural revitalisation.

Tikanga ā marae

Today's ever changing and evolving society is prompting Māori to rethink and refine how tikanga and kawa are exercised. New technologies are swiftly taken up by Māori and, with that movement, long established forms of culture can either be left behind or adapted and evolved. Work, financial and family issues are everyday pressures that Māori face, which can impact on the ways in which they participate in tikanga practice on the marae. Despite these pressures, Māori need to keep up with the times, and continue to evolve and adapt according to the needs of the people.

One of the tikanga that is often observed in SNS are the notions and actions associated with tangihanga. The tangihanga ritual and the tikanga behind tangihanga are increasingly applied in virtual spaces as technology continues to advance and become a convenient substitute

for physical presence at funerals. Whānau are utilising SNS as a means to inform their networks about the passing of a loved one, about funeral arrangements and in some cases, sharing images, videos and livestreams of actual funeral processions and tūpāpaku. This mode of communication is considered as reliable as other modes of communication (such as a phone call, texting or an email) and offers a real-time component to the delivery of information, reaching a wide range of audiences and networks at once. Despite tangihanga incorporating an intensely tapu set of rituals, these tikanga and protocols have passed over to the virtual space – allowing whānau across the world to participate and engage with tangihanga processions that unfold on the marae.

Dr Paratene Ngata from Tūranga-nui-a-Kiwa was one of the first to livestream his funeral to the Internet to enable those unable to make the tangihanga the opportunity to still be part of it. I distinctly remember clicking on a link and watching and listening to this tangihanga unfold as I sat in my home in Wellington in 2008. It was a surreal experience at that time and these examples have increased in the last 8 years. Dame Te Atairangikaahu and her funeral being livestreamed to the Internet, Māori leader and Member of Parliament, Parekura Horomia who was laid to rest on his marae in Tolaga Bay, Aotearoa New Zealand in May 2013, were available online. More recently, Dr Apirana Mahuika in 2015 and Dr Ranginui Walker in 2016 were also live streamed to the Internet. The live webcast of funeral processions and speeches enable the multitudes of people to link in and witness some of the touching tributes and stories shared about many great leaders of our time, which is of particular benefit to those who are unable to physically attend the tangihanga.

In such instances, Māori and non-Māori the world over are given the opportunity to participate in protocols and be part of tikanga. SNS has the potential to become a space where cultural encounters are accessible. These connections are far from trivial and inject life and vitality into whānau and extended whānau; crucial to whānau ora, and whānau wellbeing. This could be both beneficial and hazardous, however what is clear is that cultural practices are no longer relegated to the physical space of the marae. For the one in five Māori living overseas, this is hugely advantageous for them. For the urban Māori who struggle with returning home to their marae or are unable to attend tangihanga, this is also hugely advantageous for them. The hazardous aspects of such engagement calls to question the authenticity of those experiences and other issues that involve tapu and wairuatanga.

Another aspect of SNS is that it provides a space in which to mourn and grieve. These days, it is all too common to see the outpour of messages and tributes posted about after someone has passed. The most recent example of this is the passing of Dr Ngāpō Wehi (who passed on Sunday

31 July, 2016) and the plethora of tributes being posted to Facebook about this great man. Profile pictures are being changed to photos of the kapa haka exponent and tohunga, paying homage to his legacy and his whānau. I personally learned of his death through Facebook and through observing people in my Facebook network posting photos of the late Ngāpō Wehi. These types of actions are becoming increasingly normal nowadays where tangihanga are no longer relegated to the physical marae. We are celebrating, mourning and sending our messages of poroporoaki to the dead through our smartphones and the reach of these messages is international and instant.

Ahikā

Many Māori of the diaspora are actively seeking and using virtual media to make and maintain strong connections with their haukāinga, despite being physically dislocated from them. While kanohi ki te kanohi is preferred, the reality is, that where great distances dislocate people from their Māori communities, SNS provides some means of connection to allow people to contribute to the ahikā of home. What was clear in my doctoral research, was that people were expressing their contribution to their own ahikā in diverse ways and that, given the current state of Māori society and the dislocation from ancestral lands, alternative methods and processes are being developed to accommodate traditions and responsibilities.

Maintaining ahikā takes on new meaning for the modern day Māori communities who are dispersed, urban-based and diasporic. Their priorities are about keeping connected and informed, having a voice at meetings, or providing koha to the marae account each week to pay the bills. These forms and methods have all been identified as important ways of supporting the maintenance of ahikā from afar, requiring a negotiation of how kanohi ki te kanohi is considered, applied and practised. However, these methods of ahikā maintenance are not possible unless the haukāinga and ahikā of home endorse these practices and support those living abroad to find alternative means to contribute back to home.

The ability to feel connected to ones haukāinga and ahikā from a distance is a difficult compromise and one that many of our whānau have to face if they choose to live away from their tūrangawaewae or live overseas. With one in five Māori living overseas, this is a reality for many. Having the opportunity to make some connections to ones marae and haukāinga through a virtual space, while it does not replace being physically connected, it provides a meaningful connection to one's culture, language and identity. The notion that ahikā can be augmented from beyond the marae by the diaspora means that they can fulfil at least some of their roles of leadership and knowledge bearing in ways that make it more attractive for people to come home.

However, the life of the marae and the nature of the connections that Māori have with home still require some physical presence.

Ngā take tōrangapū

Colonialism remains active in Indigenous communities across the world, dominated by western value systems that continue to have devastating impacts on communities and aspirations. Self-determination involves a people having the autonomy to decide what is right for them, and is critical to identity, culture, language and well-being. It represents the potential for autonomy across a range of domains that generate opportunities for the advancement and positive transformation of Indigenous peoples. Despite this potential, efforts for realising self-determination thus far have largely been unfulfilled as Indigenous communities continue to experience entrenched systematic racism, discrimination, marginalisation and subjugation in their own lands.

Examples of such colonialist oppression are all too common for Indigenous Australians, who, just last year were faced with the forced closure of communities in Western Australia. While mainstream media paid little attention, Indigenous communities worldwide protested against the closures using SNS as a vehicle to stand in solidarity with these communities and employed the hashtag #SOSBLAKAUSTRALIA. SNS users across the world were showing their virtual solidarity with Indigenous Australians through their Twitter feeds, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. #Idlenomore and #MaunaKea were some of the other international movements in Canada and Hawai'i respectively that were mobilising through SNS, fighting for Indigenous rights.

While mass media representations of Māori/Indigenous issues have sought to produce industrialised, romanticised and stereotypical notions of Indigeneity, there has been, in the last few decades, a shift in how Indigenous peoples represent themselves in the media. SNS is repurposed in a way that offers extraordinary opportunities for the indigenisation of media to occur where communities collectivise around virtual spaces, constructing and mediating cultural identities, aspirations and practices for themselves.

These usages of SNS are shifting and changing the power of communication where more critical discussions on topics of tino rangatiratanga are imperative to understanding the implications for tino rangatiratanga in SNS. Such discussions are of great importance for not only Māori communities but also more broadly, the implications for Indigenous peoples worldwide and their struggle for self-determination and ultimately, cultural revitalisation. SNS are providing Indigenous communities with innovative opportunities to realise self-determination. These forms of self-determination and solidarity of Indigenous peoples

are yet another form of cultural revitalisation, reclamation and restoration that is being enacted and actioned through SNS.

We can begin to see the potential for other communities thriving in online spaces, particularly for dynamic, self-determined Indigenous communities. Through this lens we can consider how online experiences of empowerment and tino rangatiratanga have an impact on Māori advancement and transformation.

NGĀ PĪERE NUKU

As has been discussed, there are many positive uses of SNS that advocate for cultural revitalisation - however there are also risks involved, mostly around the authenticity of online practices, the appropriate and respectful use of technology when it comes to tikanga and the threat on kanohi ki te kanohi. My doctoral research brought into question the notion of kanohi ki te kanohi as being threatened with the uptake of SNS by Māori. While kanohi ki te kanohi and kanohi kitea (in a physical sense) were both important practices by the people I talked to in my research, they also appreciated the affordances (possibilities) of what the technology could offer them in the interim until kanohi ki te kanohi could resume. Other hazardous uses of the technology can be the mining of individual data, of which the likes of Facebook use to personalise marketing to the user. Privacy is another issue that many Māori are not aware of when using such technologies, how public their posts are and intellectual property over the use of material (including text, images and video) shared in SNS. There is also a real risk of online-bullying and harrasment, which in some cases has led to self-harm and suicide. These are some of the negative realities of using SNS technology that must be considered and understood by Māori when navigating and negotiating these online social spaces.

TE AO HURIHURI

Modern Māori society is responding to its unique needs and seeking to perpetuate cultural participation by marrying traditions with technology. As yet this marriage is far from perfect and faces limitations and challenges identified in this research. The potentials and pitfalls for Māori use of SNS have lead us to a crossroads where the gains in terms of cultural vitality, on the one hand are weighed against what could, over time, be the demise of some of the foundational components of Māoridom.

Understanding SNS technologies is imperative for Māori development and advancement as we juggle their potential contribution to cultural survival and ultimately, cultural revitalisation and restoration. What I believe is crucial to this process is that Māori institutions (marae, hapū, communities, rūpū, whānau) have these discussions and debates, so that considered, robust dialogue can occur around the directions they take for their people, their cultural values and practices. Such a move helps to put Māori back in control of what happens and allows us to develop our capabilities and capacity in order to get what we need from development rather than allowing the agenda to be controlled by commerce or governments. With greater understanding of SNS alongside information and resources, marae, hapū and iwi can make informed decisions about virtualising aspects of culture.

Te anamata

The future of our marae, the values and practices of our culture and te reo Māori lie in the hands of the new generations and in how they choose to maintain the values, practices and language handed down from our tūpuna. The marae is the stronghold of tribal identities and knowledge systems, which will always have a place in Māori society, as long as technologies work to facilitate and connect people to the haukāinga and not replace marae or kanohi ki te kanohi. Negotiating and balancing these is a key challenge for Māori, ensuring that we can remain connected to one another while upholding the integrity and potency of our culture, values and practices.

It is up to Māori to decide the future of tikanga, the future of the marae and the roles and responsibilities of these and other spaces. Simultaneously Māori must consider the many complexities of society, how to best practice and maintain cultural values and tikanga in modern society, and the role of technological tools that can contribute to cultural vitality that is far reaching to the Māori diaspora as well as haukāinga. Educating and informing people of the potential risks and offering guidelines around how tikanga can be practised appropriately, could at least make SNS users aware of the issues. Further discussion and examination could lead to developing ways to ensure tikanga practice in SNS can serve the needs and aspirations of Māori communities.

HE KUPU WHAKAKAPI

Māori have historically adopted and adapted new technologies (from iron to Internet!) very easily and successfully. In the process, Māori culture in many of its manifestations has changed and developed to encompass te ao hurihuri and the speed and pressure of change can at times be overwhelming. In a 21st Century society, there is an increasing

need to hold on to and preserve culture and language as many pressures force Māori further away from their cultural heritage and roots.

SNS have been and will continue to play an integral role and iwi, hapū and marae will be faced with the challenge of shifting values-based practices and rituals to the virtual space to empower their people with the ability and access to participate and engage. Kanohi ki te kanohi is becoming increasingly difficult in the contemporary setting due to the pace and pressures of work commitments, financial situations and family contexts. Māori are faced with the challenge and pressure to return home to participate in cultural, social and political activities of the marae. Prolonged absence from these spaces and places may have major implications for the individual and/or the wider whānau/community where connections and a sense of belonging become weak or lost.

SNS and the Internet have played an integral role in bringing Māori communities together for a range of purposes including cultural renaissance and practice and thus, these technologies have wide-reaching implications for identity, language, culture, tikanga, whanaungatanga and social norms. Māori are urged to consider how SNS can play a role in increasing cultural capability and capacity for marae, hapū and iwi so that culture can thrive. There is also a need to ensure that kanohi ki te kanohi values and returning home to ones marae to the haukāinga and ahikā are also nurtured and encouraged. Intersecting all these considerations in a way that is inclusive and respectful of the diversity and contexts present within Māori communities is to forge a new pathway where Māori identity, language, culture and tikanga can thrive.

E anga whakamua

Māori cultural revitalisation is therefore a work in progress – constantly changing and adapting to respond to the needs of the people who are at different points in the spectrum of that process of revitalising culture for them and their whānau. Much of what has been discussed in this paper around the use of SNS by Māori communities are all things that are happening organically and at the grass roots level - they are not initiated or established by Government and are instead emerging from within (online) communities who have collectively decided that there is a need and a way to improve their contexts.

Government's role in the revitalisation of Māori culture is less about deciding what is good for Māori communities and more about supporting Māori who are currently doing incredible work in the space of cultural revitalisation. How can government truly understand what is good for Māori communities and the revitalisation of their culture when it

was government enforced legislation and processes that has had the most impact on its vitality?

Government supporting Māori communities to reclaiming and restoring their culture, language and identity can be done in a range of different ways;

- First and foremost, Government must work as an enabler for iwi Māori – enabling iwi to decide for themselves what is important, what areas need the most focus and investment, how they might approach those areas and what kinds of outcomes will be produced for their iwi. This can happen through reviewing legislation and policies that are currently hindering Māori success;
- When developing policy that have direct impacts on Māori communities and their cultural vitality – consultation with iwi and discussing policies alongside them is critical to understanding their unique contexts and situations. In turn, this will inform policy.
- Review funding models and ways in which iwi can access more funding;
- Review how Government interact with iwi and strengthening relationships and connections with iwi reflecting a partnership.

A good example of this is Te Mātāwai, which incorporates iwi representation on issues of te reo Māori revitalisation. Government is supporting this initiative, but Māori are leading it – more of these types of policy impacts are what is required to ‘enable’ iwi to do things for themselves, on their own terms.

Māori cultural revitalisation is not just about Māori communities working hard to reclaim and restore their culture and language, it is for Aotearoa New Zealand to embrace and support, including Government officials, ministers and Prime Minister

- Government can be doing more in the space of embracing te reo Māori and tikanga Māori that extends to all New Zealanders;
- New Zealanders need to feel a sense of ownership over the vitality of Māori culture as well, as it is their unique cultural foundation as New Zealanders;
- Government must consider ways in which they can support New Zealanders to be better engaged and interact with the Māori world;
- Government officials and ministers should also own this as leaders of our nation to ensure that they are supporting the revitalisation of Māori culture through te reo Māori (learning and speaking) and engaging with Māori communities, attending events and genuinely showing their support and enthusiasm to the vitality of Māori culture – essentially, this is leading by example.

Cultural revitalisation is happening at the grass roots level – on the marae, within language speaking communities and amongst whānau, however these spaces have transferred to the virtual space where much of these interactions are continuing in SNS. Government can be supportive of these online communities and initiatives through engaging with them via SNS, where they feed key information into these online communities around policy, legislation, funding, voting, rights, and other pertinent kaupapa that Māori communities need to know about. In this way, Government can better use these technologies to engage with Māori communities in meaningful and valuable ways that contribute to cultural vitality. In addition, Government can be ensuring that Māori communities are connected to Fibre Optic capabilities in isolated and rural communities. Marae themselves also need access to Internet technology so ensuring that fibre optic packages can be accessed by and tailored to marae will ensure that Māori communities – no matter how rural – are able to utilise SNS technologies in innovative ways.

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