Papatipu Rūnaka Insights

Shared insights from Mō Kā Uri wānaka
with Papatipu Rūnaka

INTRODUCTION

Key to the development of our collective tribal vision Mō Kā Uri – Kāi Tahu 2050 was engaging with our Papatipu Rūnaka to gain a greater understanding of their successes and the challenges they have faced in their development over the past 25 years, what they have learnt and what they are aspiring to in the future.

While we set out with the intention of connecting with all 18 Papatipu Rūnaka, we knew from the outset that given the constant and growing demands on our rūnaka, achieving this would be highly unlikely. We were however, hugely grateful to all those who were able to make the time to wānaka with us and for the invaluable insights shared.

Interestingly, while each Papatipu Rūnaka has its own unique whakapapa, history, and relationship with place, we quickly learnt that no matter where they are in the takiwā, the challenges and experiences are very similar. So much so, we believe that much of what we captured would be reflected in the whakaaro of all 18 Papatipu Rūnaka.

This report is a summary of what Papatipu Rūnaka shared with Tokona te Raki during the Mō Kā Uri wānaka. The insights gained capture a snapshot of the journey of Papatipu Rūnaka since Settlement. Given the shared experiences and learnings they also provide an opportunity to look at a collective approach that best meets the needs and aspirations for the future.

A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE –
AN APROACH FOR THE FUTURE

Over the past 25-years since Settlement, our 18 Papatipu Rūnaka have worked hard to establish themselves as entities in their communities to deliver outcomes that meet the best interests of whānau and hapū. This has involved multiple approaches to organisational structures to figure out a model that best suits individual rūnaka needs dependent on the activities they are engaged in.

The insights captured in this report tell a story of not only the shared experiences and challenges over the 25-year journey of development for our Papatipu Rūnaka but also the many learnings, opportunities and successes that have arisen along the way. Dependent on geographic location, natural environment, population and local economies there are obvious differences, however, over the years we have seen the power of Papatipu Rūnaka coming together on various kaupapa and the successful outcomes that can be achieved. The Regional Environmental Entities are a really good example, as is the co-ownership of environmental and hauora entities between various rūnaka.

With the ever increasing complexities in our communities, the development of a community of practice is a practical, collaborative approach that could be established to provide efficiencies and solutions to shared challenges and opportunities. A community of practice is loosely a group of people/organisations/entities that are informally bound together by a shared kaupapa. Often held online, it is an opportunity to come together and wānaka on shared issues, resources, lived experiences, hear from experts, find solutions together, and importantly an opportunity for whanaukataka. The value of a virtual community of practice is that it is time and resource efficient and provides a collaborative way to move towards solutions and enhance aspirations. How do we do it as part of normal practice.

A good example was the community of practice set up for Papatipu Rūnaka as part of the Covid-19 response. The Covid-19 community of practice enabled the distribution of food and care packages to whānau. It also provided access to medical expertise via online forums and the sharing of policies between our Papatipu Rūnaka to keep whānau safe throughout Covid - rūnaka didn't have to figure their way through it individually.

Why focus on communities of practice?

	For members	For organisations
Short-term value	• help with callenges • access to expertise • confidence • fun with colleagues • meaningful work	• problem solving • time saving • knowledge sharing • synergies across sectors/districts • re-use of resources
Long-term value	• personal development • enhanced reputation • professional identity • networking	• strategic capabilities • keeping up-to-date • innovation • retention of talents • new strategies

From: Wenger's Cultivating Communities of Practice: a quick start-up guide

INSIGHTS

What follows are some of the common themes shared by whānau about their rūnaka. While each rūnaka is responding to these themes in their own unique way, all are seeing similar challenges.

1. Progress, Success, and Pride

This is something we heard from whānau around the takiwā. Through the operations of their local rūnaka they are leading change and doing it for themselves. In the 25 years since Settlement, Papatipu Rūnaka have built strong relationships within their local communities and with external partners so that they can make a practical difference, and help improve the lives of whānau and hapū.

2. Growing Demands

There is growing demand from government agencies and Pākehā organisations wanting participation in their projects and priorities (such as policy development, resource management, and co-governance) in the takiwā. Alongside these external demands, the aspirations of whānau and the local community are also growing as the financial base of each rūnaka grows, and they take on bigger kaupapa such as social services, infrastructure, housing, environmental regeneration, marae development, employment, rakatahi development etc.

3. Growing Complexity

To cope with these growing demands, it is necessary to create new organisations, committees, partnerships, programmes, etc. All of these require leadership, resources, oversight, support, time and money. With this comes growing complexity, with kaupapa overlaping and impacting each other. Whether your role is governance, operations, or as a whānau member, all these kaupapa need to be monitored and where possible supported to work together, rather than competing against each other.

4. Underlying Tension and Conflict

Over time there have been many examples of our rūnaka coming together to advance certain kaupapa. There have also however, been times when tensions arise and limit the opportunities for achieving aspirations. Some whānau in our wānaka spoke of the intergenerational trauma that is still real for many of our whānau.

5. Paid Versus Unpaid Mahi

There is confusion among whānau about what roles in the community are voluntary whānau contribution, and which roles are professional or paid employment. There is also confusion about how paid and unpaid roles interact with each other. Should whānau volunteers try to be available to support the work of paid professionals, or is the job of paid professionals to support the work of whānau members? Should cultural roles such as kai kāraka and kai kōrero be paid? Should whānau be paid to participate in wānaka or help out in the kitchen?

6. Multiple Hats and Roles

Underlying all these experiences is a common theme around the challenge of whānau having to wear multiple 'hats' or play multiple roles in the community and in the rūnaka. While this is simply the reality of rūnaka life, it can easily become the source of conflicts of interest and personal grievance when it involves legal entities, employment contracts, and breaches of confidentiality. While it is normal for whānau to have robust conversations with each other, this quickly becomes problematic when one whānau member is on the rūnaka executive and another whānau member is an employee of the rūnaka organisation.

7. Succession and Sustainability

A concern we heard from all rūnaka was the issues of succession and sustainability were concerns raised by all Papatipu Rūnaka. Most of the work being done by rūnaka, is sitting on the shoulders of a small number of individuals and their whānau. The risk of burnout and health issues are a concern. Added to this is the challenge of supporting the next generation into leadership roles and the potential loss of knowledge, both traditional mātauraka and more recent institutional memory.

In summary, these themes speak to a fundamental transformation in the way that whānau and hapū are using Papatipu Rūnaka to organise themselves and achieve their aspirations.

Shared Strategic Goals

1. Whānau / Strategic Outcomes = Whānau Hauora and Resilience

These include :

- Social services
- Health
- Mental health
- Housing

- Education (scholarships)
- Employment
- Income support (hardship grants)
- Additional support for specific groups such as kaumātua and rakatahi

2. Hapū /Strategic Priorities = Mana Motuhake / Kaitiakitaka / Identity

These include :

- Rakatirataka (political influence, partnerships, relationships)
- Culture and Identity (te reo, tikaka, whakapapa, pūrākau)
- Kaitiakitaka / taiao (environmental kaupapa, RMA, water, planning)
- Marae development and manaakitaka

3. Hapū Assets = Financial Independence

These include :

- Investment planning and criteria
- Asset management
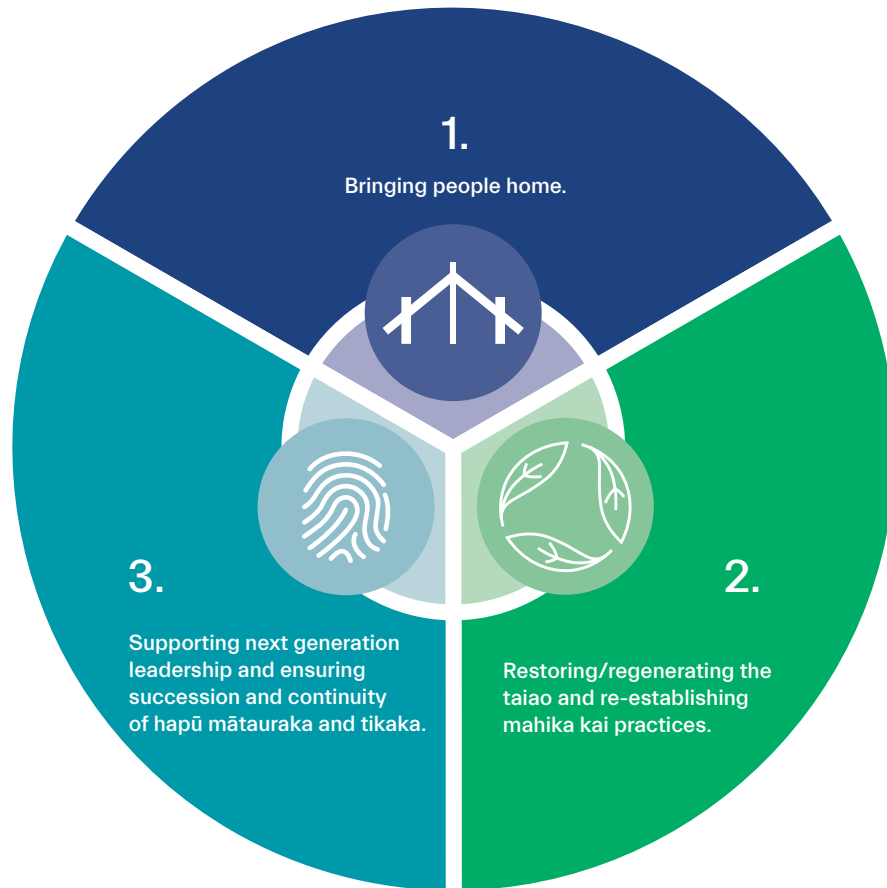- Commercial partnerships
- Papakaika development

4. Rūnaka Operations = Effective and Healthy Organisation

In addition to the three 'outcome goals' described above, most Papatipu Rūnaka also face the challenge of how to operate a modern organisation in ways that effectively advance the agenda of the hapū, and at the same time meet the legal and financial requirements of te ao Pākehā alongside the cultural practices and expectations of te ao Māori. **These include:**

- What is the best organisational structure?
- How do we clarify our operational priorities?
- How do we clarify our operational roles?
- How do we work with individual leadership styles and personalities?
- Rebalance demands of te ao Māori and te ao Pākehā?

Shared Cultural Priorities

1.

Bringing people home.

3.

Supporting next generation leadership and ensuring succession and continuity of hapū mātauraka and tikaka.

2.

Restoring/regenerating the taiao and re-establishing mahika kai practices.

What was apparent across all of the Papatipu Rūnaka was their clearly articulated cultural priorities.

Due to external demands, it can be hard for Papatipu Rūnaka to priorise their cultural goals and aspirations.

While the challenges described above are nothing new, they are real.

INSIGHTS FROM THE PAST

Before 1840

Prior to colonisation our tīpuna organised themselves according to their own cultural customs and traditions. While constantly evolving, these would have been based on core values such as whakapapa, tikaka, mana, utu, and rakatirataka.

1850-1990

The next 140 years can be understood as a process of seeking to redress the injustices of colonisation. To do this hapū agreed to work together under the collective identity of Kāi Tahu and a process called Te Kerēme, or 'the Claim'. For many local communities this was a time of surviving as best as they could. While difficult, many whānau shared fond memories of their marae and papakaika. In particular, the experience of everyone pitching in, of coming together simply to enjoy being Māori, having time for recreation and celebrating whānau. This is captured in the expression 'we were better off without the money'. Whānau also spoke of the power of collaboration with Te Kerēme and having a single focus. Over this time whānau developed ways of organising that worked for them and their local community.

2000–2025

The next 25-years can be understood as a process of radical change. Whānau had to learn to organise themselves in this new political, legal, and financial environment. While some viewed the new arrangements as 'a cloak of our own making', others experienced them as the imposition of Pākehā structures on traditional Māori ways of organising. The financial resources secured by the Claim made it possible for the redevelopment of marae, and whānau spoke of the pride they felt with the opening of a new wharenui or wharekai, and being able to host groups on their own terms. Local government agencies and Pākehā organisations were increasingly wanting to engage with mana whenua on a wide range of issues. Several whānau spoke of the challenge of hosting hui for Pākehā groups every week, and the difficulty of trying to book their own marae for whānau and hapū kaupapa.
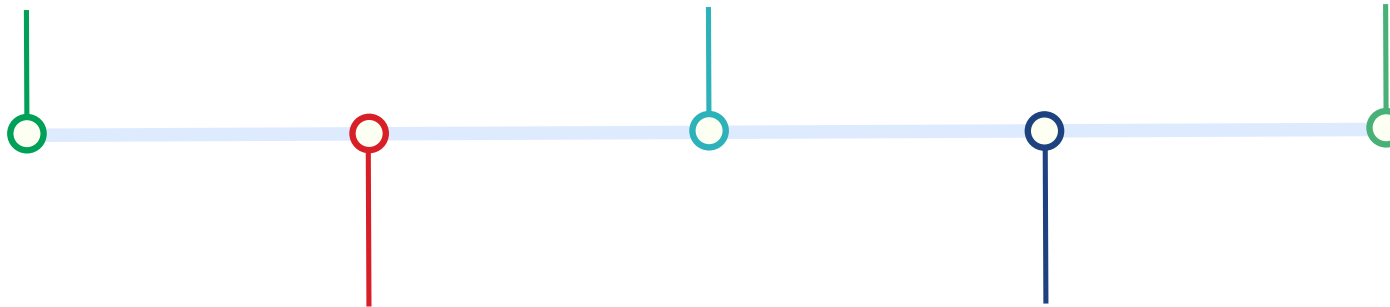
1840-1850

The arrival of Europeans and the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the various deeds had a massive impact on our people. Traditional forms of organising were disrupted by the loss of land, and resources, new diseases, and pressure to conform to Pākehā legal and financial structures.

1990–2000

The settlement of the Ngāi Tahu Claim also had a massive impact on our people. The act dissolved the Ngaitahu Maori Trust Board and created a new political, legal, and financial entity: Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (Te Rūnanga). The act also created and enshrined the existence of 18 Papatipu Rūnaka with the power to appoint representatives to the board of Te Rūnanga.

Organisational Development

The focus of the workshops was on the journey of creating and operating Papatipu Rūnaka. Based on what whānau shared, we saw an emerging pattern where rūnaka organisations transitioned through the following stages or scenarios:

1. Voluntary Leadership and Contribution

At the outset there was a lack of financial resources available to do anything. Members of the rūnaka executive tended to voluntarily lead work on certain kaupapa or portfolios (such as taiao, hauora, marae, mātauraka etc). This was a practical and pragmatic way to get things done. It also acknowledged the skills and knowledge that individual board members bought to the table.

Challenges:

- People in voluntary roles must manage their mahi around paid work and whānau commitments, which can lead to average outcomes.
- Portfolio leads differ in style and effectiveness which can result in inconsistencies across portfolios.
- Having governors performing executive and operational roles can make accountability difficult and has the potential to lead to territorial behaviour.

2. Contracts and Employment

As the level of Te Rūnanga funding has increased and the amount of work, especially from government agencies, has increased, rūnaka have started to enter into funding agreements with a range of partners. This enables the hiring of kaimahi to deliver on these programmes, as well as doing other administrative and project management work for the hapū. With the growth of teams comes the need for a kaihautū or general manager.

Challenges:

- The kinds of programmes and contracts offered by government agencies tend to be conservative and output based resulting in minimal change or lasting impacts.
- Organisations can quickly become dependent on contracts for operational income and as a result limit the capacity to prioritise their own projects that will fulfill their dreams and aspirations.
- There is often the compulsion to grow to meet demand however trying to do everything can result in burn-out and not delivering the best outcomes.

3. A Hybrid Approach (Worst of Both Worlds)

Most Papatipu Rūnaka are operating within a western structure whereby they have a governance board responsible for setting direction and a kaihautū or general manager who looks after operations. These types of structures aren't necessarily conducive to the best outcomes in a te ao Māori cultural context. The upshot is that executive/board members often see themselves as having a role in orgranisational delivery which can lead to conflict.

Challenges:

- Rūnaka executive want to 'do the exciting stuff' themselves and delegate 'the boring stuff' to the rest of the organisation.
- Operational staff don't necessarily have the cultural knowledge or relationships needed to do their job without support from the rūnaka executive and portfolio leads.
- Whānau, staff, and partners can experience confusion about who is in charge or who is the right person to talk to about specific issues.
- Whānau can take their frustrations out on rūnaka staff, and members of the executive are torn between the need to support their staff (who are often whānau), and the desire to support (or be seen to back) their whānau.
- Conflict between whānau members can quickly escalate into professional misconduct and or employment disputes which can be costly to the rūnaka and negatively impact whānau relationships.

Most Papatipu Rūnaka we spoke with are currently attempting to navigate a version of this scenario.

PART THREE

In this section we attempt to describe what we believe it might take to successfully navigate the above challenges, and to make the most of the opportunities created by the growing the capacity of Papatipu Rūnaka to practice mana motuhake in the future.

Rather than seeing this shift as something radical or new, it might be more useful to think of it as a process that rebalances te ao Māori and te ao Pākehā.

To do this successfully involves understanding that whānau, the rūnaka (the board), and the organisation (operational leadership and staff) are very different entities and have very different roles to play.

Whānau / Hapū	Rūnaka	Organisation
Te ao Māori	Hybrid/Bridge	Te ao Pākehā
Cultural leadership	Political leadership	Operational leadership
Whakapapa	Election	Employment
Tikaka	Committee	Contracts
Voluntary	Honorarium	Paid
Informal	Formal	Legal and financial
Many voices	One voice	Actions and results
Inform the vision	Set the strategic goals and priorities	Develop the work plan and deliver outcomes

Rather than seeing these roles as conflicting or contradictory, the challenge is to understand how they can be complimentary and collaborative. As we know, whānau have many responsibilities and often need to wear multiple hats. The point of being clear about the different roles is to ensure that any potential conflicts of interest can be navigated transparently, and risks can be managed.

4: Complimentary Roles (Best of Both Worlds)

We believe that the next stage of Papatipu Rūnaka development involves learning to navigate all three of these domains, and to become experts at moving from one domain to another. To do this, whānau, rūnaka, and organisations need to understand their respective roles and responsibilities.

1. All parties need to work together to empower whānau leadership and ensure that whānau are contributing and participating in the cultural life of the hapū:

•   Whānau need to feel confident to live their identity and values.
•   Rūnaka need to communicate the political complexity of their role, the external commitments and priorities they are navigating, and how these might impact whānau.
•   Organisation leadership and staff need to be clear about what they can and cannot do to support whānau in this process.

2. All parties need to work together to empower rūnaka political leadership and ensure that they are supported in their governance role:

•   Whānau need to trust their leaders, including the choices they make about hiring organisation leadership or staff
•   Rūnaka need to follow good governance practice, support their organisational leadership and staff, and use formal procedures to address concerns
•   Organisation leadership and staff need to deliver on the strategic goals set by rūnaka and endorsed by whānau.

3. All parties need to work together to empower organisational leadership and keep all staff safe and supported:

•   Whānau need to take any concerns to their rūnaka leaders and not abuse or undermine organisation leadership or staff
•   Rūnaka leaders need to follow good governance practice, back their organisational leadership and staff, and use formal procedures to address any concerns
•   Organisation leadership and staff need to deliver on the strategic goals set by rūnaka and endorsed by whānau.

To do this the board needs to agree on what that strategic focus is, what the rūnaka will do, and what the rūnaka will *not do*, and what it will *not spend time on*.

It may be useful to start this process by differentiating between mahi that only the rūnaka can lead/control (because no one else can or should do it), and what mahi the rūnaka can only influence (because there are limited resources, and because the issue is large and complex and involves other people and agencies).

If board members want to take an active (non-executive) role in these kaupapa then they can do so alongside other whānau.

PART FOUR

Transitions are hard. They involve change and this often brings uncertainty which in turn causes people to dig in and take strong 'for' and 'against' positions.

Transitions are particularly hard when we don't know that we're in one. Actions that used to work or even be easy, are no longer working, or are requiring more time and resources. Roles that seemed clear and straightforward are no longer easy or effective. Where there used to be alignment and cooperation there is friction and conflict.

In summary, 25 years on from Settlement and the creation and enshrinement of Papatipu Rūnaka, these vital organisations are now in the process of transition. Each Papatipu Rūnaka will respond differently and have a different experience, but we think the underlying drivers are similar.

While making the transition is far from simple, the nature of the transition can be expressed simply:

From	To
Seeking to address past wrongs and fighting for a seat at the table	Seeking a better future and being asked to provide leadership and direction
A lack of financial resources	Having significant financial resources
Rebuilding a strong financial base	Rebuilding a strong cultural base
One opportunity showing up at a time	Many opportunities presenting all the time
Individual board members leading separate portfolios through one organisation	Collective governance across multiple organisations and partnerships
A comprehensive strategy that tries to do everything	A clear strategic focus and priorities (including understanding what we're not doing)
Individual board members leading separate portfolios through one organisation	Whānau are trained, qualified, and supported into important roles (succession planning)
A comprehensive strategy that tries to do everything	Delegation of decision-making to subsidiary organisations (high trust)

Regional Environmental Entities were set up many years ago to manage RMA consenting requirements. Most Papatipu Rūnaka already have an asset holding and investment company. Some rūnaka are now the process of setting up social service organisations.

Another pattern that is well established is rūnaka co-owning environmental and social service organisations. While this makes sense in terms of avoiding duplication and pooling resources, it also brings another layer of complexity to the board table.

It seems clear that in another 5–10 years each rūnaka will be governing 5–6 organisations, in addition to their own rūnaka office.

This is a very different governance role than what most rūnaka board members are used to.