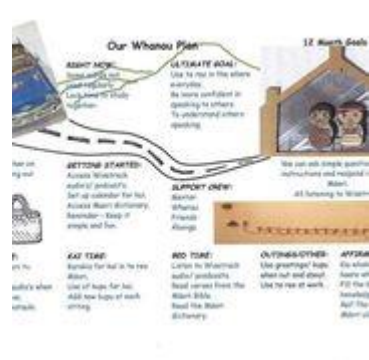
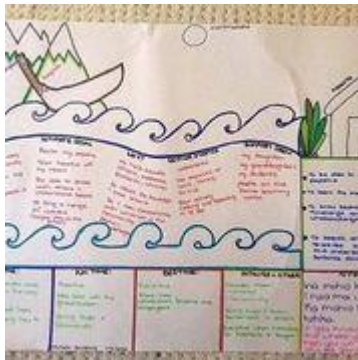


Te Manawataki o te Reo

He mahere reo mō te whānau

Kāhui: Te Reo Tukutuku





INTRODUCTION



As part of Te Mātāwai's support in revitalising te reo throughout Aotearoa, we are showcasing some of the kaupapa kaitono have been doing in Te Reo Tukutuku. Te Atarua and Dallas Hibbs sat down with us to kōrero about their kaupapa reo, and tell us a little bit about what they've been up to.



HE AHA TE KAUPAPA WHAKARAUORA REO?



Te Atarua and Dallas together developed 'Te Manawataki o te Reo', a kaupapa whakarauora reo to nurture and support emergent and beginner reo Māori speakers. The suite of support includes online audio resources, introducing whānau to roughly 500 words and over 150 foundation phrases; a reo mentor for whānau; language planning with whānau to develop strategies for reo acquisition within the home; and whakawhanaungatanga wānanga amongst participant whānau, facilitated by Te Atarua and Dallas' team. The audio resources have been specifically designed for particular domains, with 12 audio files each for: whānau in the home; the workplace; and for parents with preschool tamariki (the latter is still under development). The mentoring, Dallas explained, is critical not only for supporting whānau on their respective reo journeys, but also for brokering relationships with other whānau, organisations, or individuals that may be able to offer support or collaboration on that journey. This key aspect of mentoring is to support





the overall sustainability and momentum of reo revitalisation, so that beyond Te Manawataki o te Reo, the reo is still able to flourish.

Te Atarua has long worked in reo revitalisation, across iwi, government, and within the community, and this experience helped her to see “...where the gaps [in education] are, and what else needs to be done to reach whānau [to support their whakarauora reo].” In this vein, Te Manawataki o te Reo is targeted towards urban whānau Māori, who have little to no reo within their homes. Based out of Ōtautahi, Dallas explains that “the ‘urbanites’ are really hungry – there’s a massively hungry group here for te reo.”



One of the characteristic features of Te Manawataki o te Reo is that there is no formal assessment process whānau have to undergo. “There’s no ‘testing’”, Dallas emphasised, “because this is the wrong mentality in a kaupapa reo such as this. We don’t want people early exiting from the kaupapa [because of the stigma of ‘failing’. If whānau were to fail,] does that mean they’re failing in who they are [as Māori]?” “So there’s no ‘marking’”, he continued, in reiterating the ngāwari nature of the kaupapa reo in nurturing people into their reo journeys.

The development of customised language plans for whānau is particularly important. “It takes them through a whole thinking process”, Te Atarua explained, where one of their team would go to their house, sit with the whānau, and together develop a reo plan. During their first round of Te Mātāwai funding, they developed plans for 100 whānau in Ōtautahi, Greymouth, Reefton and Westport. Their second round of funding, received this year, enabled them to extend this to 140 whānau, in Ōtautahi, Ashburton, Te Tihi o Maru, and



Kirikiroa. “Kirikiroa was our first opportunity to pilot how we would grow our kaupapa into other regions, given we’re based in Ōtautahi”, described Dallas.

Te Atarua and Dallas applied for funding through Te Reo Tūkutu because of “...the alignment between our own aspiration, and Te Mātāwai’s.” Te Manawataki o te Reo is a whānau centred, home-based kaupapa whakarauora reo, and with Te Mātāwai’s emphasis on letting the flaxroots of communities drive reo revitalisation, “there was 100% alignment to what we were doing... everything we do is based on providing a positive experience for whānau and to keep our mahi whānau-centred.” The flexibility to be able to work this way was a big motivating factor for applying.

“I’ve found Te Mātāwai excellent to work with, and it’s because of their whakaaro of whānau having solutions to whakarauora reo.”

WHAT ARE THE LESSONS YOU’VE LEARNED?



Te Atarua and Dallas pointed to a number of outcomes that are emerging from Te Manawataki o te Reo. These include: supporting the development of rūmaki reo domains through their bespoke resources; developing more than 250 language plans; 90% of whānau enrolled in their kaupapa report using more reo in the home; content is becoming ‘gamified’ so it is more accessible online; and increasing the number of cities and areas they service. When asked if they are wanting to continue with their kaupapa reo in future, Te Atarua said “yes, for sure. Our target is to support 40,000 people, or 10,000 whānau, over the next 10 years!”



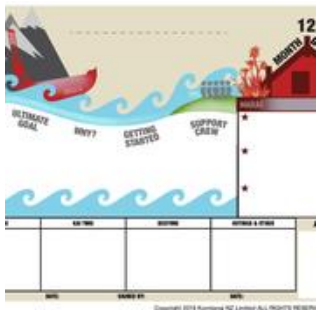
WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU FACE?

One of the main challenges Te Atarua and Dallas spoke of was managing the amount of funding received. It is not uncommon for funding agencies to partially subsidise a project, given the amount of applications they might receive. This is what they experienced. This is important for future kaitono to keep in mind, and they advised kaitono to have a backup plan should this occur. This might mean having alternative funding sources to fund the shortfall, or figuring out areas in your kaupapa where you can “skinny on, and cut your cloth” without compromising its integrity. “It’s about being strategic.”

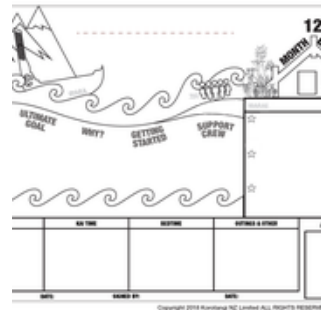
Another challenge the team faced was finding adequately skilled Māori-speaking personnel. The pool of Māori sound technicians and engineers is small, and fewer of those can speak te reo and understand its cadences and rhythm in speech. This expertise is crucial for developing the audio resources for Te Manawataki o te Reo.

What kept Te Atarua and Dallas going when things got tough was “...the very thing that made us start in the first place: the reo. Our whānau deserve that.” Further, “the goal of having one million New Zealanders speaking more Māori resonates with our own goal of supporting 10,000 whānau.” This is a cause greater than any challenge that might come their way, and continues to drive them in their kaupapa.

Advice they would give to potential kaitono revolves around having clear and concise planning:



“I’d encourage people to spend longer on their planning stage, so they can clearly communicate what they’re looking to do [in their kaupapa reo]. Planning is key! You need to look at who’s involved, what’s needed, and what you hope to achieve.”





WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE ASPIRATIONS FOR TE REO MĀORI?

Looking to the future, Te Atarua emphasises four important components for supporting the sustainability of reo revitalisation:

1. “It would be really cool to see more te reo in the community through the business sector. I would love to be able to influence as many as possible [to come onboard the waka].”
2. “There’s opportunities for collaboration with other Te Reo Tukutuku kaupapa”, she continued, reiterating the need to strategically link and network with other whānau or organisations that can support each other in whakarauora reo, in aspiring towards a ‘critical mass’ of reo revitalisation.
3. Te Atarua also highlighted the importance of ‘legacy impact’, in capitalising upon the gains already made in reo revitalisation. Te Mātāwai are a critical element within this, and on-going, strategic kōrero between them, proponents and champions of whakarauora reo, and communities need to be maintained to work towards this goal.
4. “Strengthening the virtual experience” is similarly as important, to maintain quality engagement in kaupapa reo despite disruptions that might occur, as with Covid-19.