Rangitīkei Equity and Wellbeing Profile

People and Data Intelligence from the
Rangitīkei Community—2022

Impact Collective
Rangitīkei, Ruapehu, South Taranaki and Whanganui

Whakataukī

Mā mua ka kite a muri, mā muri ka ora a mua.

Those who lead give sight to those who follow, those who follow give life to those who lead.

This Whakatauki acknowledges the team and community effort that it has taken to bring the data and people insights together in this Rangitīkei Equity and Wellbeing Profile - its success has come from the contribution of many.

Our Manutaki

Designed by Ngāhina Gardiner

This design is based around the manutaki, the lead bird that guides the flock in a triangle formation during migration, the manutaki is supported and protected by rest of the flock.

This represents working together in unison for a common purpose.

Above the manu is the design known as manaia which can be used as a human form side profile of a face this represents unity of two people coming together, this forms koruru/wheku a face, this represents being transparent.

The design above the manaia/koruru is a design known as paakura it symbolises the rae of spiritual essence or spiritual belief it also represents the footprint of pukeko and is about being cautious knowing your surroundings, your environment before making decisions.

On the side of the bird's wings are two more manaia in a bird form this relates to interconnectedness our relationship with each other.

Next to this is a design known as whakarare this represents change and a new direction.

The harakeke/weave is about intergenerational relationships, it also symbolises binding of the kōrero or kaupapa.

At the bottom of the wing is a design known as pikopiko/koru this represents new beginnings and also represents nga tangata people/community.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi – Our Commitments

The Impact Collective is committed to being responsive to Māori as tangata whenua and recognise Te Tiriti o Waitangi as Aotearoa New Zealand's founding document. The principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as articulated by the Waitangi Tribunal and the New Zealand Courts provides a framework for how we are to fulfil our obligations under Te Tiriti on a daily basis. More recently, as outlined by the Ministry of Health, in 2019, the Hauora Report articulated five principles for primary care that are applicable to not only the wider health care system, but also to any person, organisation or Crown Agency working with Māori in our communities.

These principles are articulated as:

– **Tino rangatiratanga:** The guarantee of tino rangatiratanga, which provides for Māori self-determination and mana motuhake in the design, delivery, and monitoring of community services.
– **Equity:** The principle of equity, which requires the Crown to commit to achieving equitable outcomes for Māori. This is achieved through breaking down barriers and enabling equity of access to ensure equality of outcomes.
– **Active protection:** The principle of active protection, which requires the Crown to act, to the fullest extent practicable, to achieve equitable outcomes for Māori. This includes ensuring that it, its agents, and its Treaty partner, are well informed on the extent and nature of both Māori wellbeing outcomes and efforts to achieve Māori wellbeing equity.

– **Options:** The principle of options, which requires the Crown to provide for and properly resource kaupapa Māori services. Furthermore, the Crown is obliged to ensure that all services are provided in a culturally appropriate way that recognises and supports the expression of Te Ao Māori models of service delivery.
– **Partnership:** The principle of partnership, which requires the Crown and Māori to work in partnership in the governance, design, delivery, and monitoring of community services. This includes enabling Māori to express Tino Rangatiratanga over participation in governance, design, delivery, and monitoring of community services.

For the members of the Impact Collective, it is important that we enable the principles to guide our mahi. The purpose of our mahi is to provide community level insights and intelligence to enable communities to partner on the development of services to create positive impacts for the people throughout the community. These services have the ability to focus on addressing equity of access to services in a manner that is consistent with tino rangatiratanga, active protection in co-design, provide options to ensure culturally appropriate services and develop these through a solutions focused, community-led partnership approach.

Acknowledgements

There are a number of individuals, organisations and partners that have informed and supported the mahi involved to create the first Rangitīkei Equity and Wellbeing Profile. They are acknowledged below.

The Rangitīkei Community; The organisations and individuals we have spoken to.

Over the last four months, we have been incredibly fortunate to have had such superb support and engagement from over 80 individuals, representing over 30 organisations within the community. Without them, we would not have the community voice, nor would our insights reflect the real, everyday experiences, of those who make up the Rangitīkei community. We have been so fortunate to have them join us on this journey, and look forward to continuing to build and extend these relationships into the future.

Below are the organisations we have had the privilege of engaging with:

Workshops:
– Work and Income Taihape
– Bulls and District Community Trust
– Marton Budget Services
– Marton Rotary
– Community Fruit Harvest Manawatū
– Rangitīkei Rivers Catchment Collective
– Forest and Bird Rangitīkei
– Rangitīkei College
– Youth Services
– Arohanui Hospice
– Fiona Dalgety (Hunterville Councillor)
– Taihape Community Development Trust
– Older and Bolder

– The Koha Shed
– Sustainable Taihape
– Taihape Fire Brigade
– Taihape Neighbourhood Support
– Taihape Friendship Club
– Gill Duncan (Taihape Councillor)
– The Regional Police Officer
– Rural Support Trust
– PEC
– Rātana Pā Kaihoe Trust
– Rangitīkei District Council

Good Mahi Stories:
– Barbara Thomason - Tangata Whenua, Ngāti Hauiti
– Bulls Food Pantry
– Community Fruit Harvest Manawatū
– Forest and Bird Rangitīkei
– Forge Boxing
– Rangitīkei Farmstay and The Mudder
– Rātana Pā Kaihoe Trust
– Taihape Planting Day - Te Maru o Ruahine Trust & Rauhuia Environmental Services

The Waikato Wellbeing Project, Ruapehu Whānau Transformation Project and TCLT

The principle of working alongside the community to capture the lived experiences (the stories), and bringing this together with data (the stats) to generate community-led insights, is not a new concept. The Waikato Wellbeing Project, Ruapehu Whānau Transformation Project and TCLT are all great initiatives that have leveraged a similar model successfully within their respective communities, and have been great inspiration for the mahi now being undertaken by the Impact Collective.

Our Data Partner, DOT Loves Data

Our data partner, DOT Loves Data, has an incredibly talented team of data scientists and data engineers that specialise in building simple, smart and beautiful data visualisation tools. They have been instrumental in the creation of our Equity and Wellbeing Data Dashboard, allowing us to have a single source of truth to gather data insights for our communities across our frameworks.

They have also played an integral role supporting and advising our team as we have endeavored to bring together the data insights with the stories we have captured from the community.

The Impact Collective Governance Leadership Team

The Impact Collective Governance Leadership Team is made up of leaders from the following regional organisations:
– Ministry of Social Development (MSD)
– New Zealand Police
– Ruapehu District Council
– Rangitīkei District Council
– South Taranaki District Council
– Te Puni Kokiri
– Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand

These leaders and individuals have been integral in funding and playing a governance and advisory role as the mahi of the Impact Collective has developed.

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Definitions and Acronyms

AA - Alcoholic Anonymous.

BAU - Business as Usual.

CRG - Community Reference Group - A group formed to support the Ruapehu whānau Transformation Project.

CEDA - Central Economic Development Agency.

DHB - District Health Board.

ECE - Early Childhood Education.

Economic Impact - Economic impact is the effect on economies and communities that happens as a result of an action or inaction, an activity, project, programme or policy.

Environmental Impact - An environmental impact is defined as any change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, resulting from a facility's activities, products, or services.

EPOA - Enduring Power of Attorney.

Equity - Equity.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, people have differences in economic, social and environmental outcomes that are not only avoidable but unfair and unjust. Equity recognises different people with different levels of advantage require different approaches and resources to get equitable economic, social or environmental outcomes.

Hapū - Sub-tribe.

IRD - Inland Revenue Department.

Iwi - Tribe.

Kaupapa Māori - Synonymously linked to Mātauranga Māori and underpinned by: Te Tiriti o Waitangi; self-determination; cultural validity; culturally preferred teaching; socioeconomic mediation of Māori disadvantage; whānau connections; collective aspirations; and respectful relationships underpinned by equality and reciprocity.

LSF - Living Standards Framework.

Mahi - To work, do, perform, make, accomplish.

Mana motuhake - Self-determination, autonomy.

Mana whenua - Customary authority exercised by an iwi or hapū in an identified area.

Manu Taki - Manu means bird. Taki means to entice, to lead, to bring along. Here the term Manu Taki is used as the general term for leadership. We are using the term Manu Taki to refer to our leaders who have stepped up to take a leadership role in catalysing the Impact Collective – Rangitīkei, Ruapehu, South Taranaki and Whanganui into action. It symbolises leadership, uplift and succession. Our Manu Taki are not alone if we share the load, together we will go further. This further applies to our movement, where the combined efforts of many are needed to achieve our targets.

Mātauranga Māori - Māori knowledge systems: reflecting indigenous ways of thinking, relating, and discovering; links indigenous peoples with their environments and is often inspired by environmental encounters; and is conveyed within the distinctiveness of indigenous languages and cultural practices.

MBIE - Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

MSD - Ministry of Social Development.

NCEA - National Certificate of Educational Achievement.

NEETs - Young persons not engaged in education, employment or training.

NGO - Non Government Organisation.

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Rohe - Territory or boundaries of iwi. In this instance it refers to the communities, whānau and individuals within Rangitīkei, Ruapehu, South Taranaki and Whanganui areas.

Rūnanga - Iwi authority.

RWT - Ruapehu Whānau Transformation.

SA2 - SA2 is an output geography that provides aggregations of population data. The SA2 geography aims to reflect communities that interact together socially and economically. In populated areas, SA2s generally contain similar sized populations. SA2s in city council areas generally have a population of 1,000–4,000 residents while SA2s in district council areas generally have a population of 1,000–3,000 residents. In rural areas, many SA2s have fewer than 1,000 residents because they are in conservation areas or contain sparse populations that cover a large area.

SDG - Sustainable Development Goals - Part of the United Nations 2030 Global Agenda.

Social Impact - Social impact is the effect on people and communities that happens as a result of an action or inaction, an activity, project, programme or policy.

Tangata Whenua - In relation to a particular area, means the iwi or hapū, that holds mana whenua over that area.

Taonga - Treasure, anything prized - applied to anything considered to be of value including socially or culturally valuable objects, resources, phenomenon, ideas and techniques.

TAS - Taihape Area School.

Te Ao Māori - Māori world view.

Te Reo - The Māori language.

Tikanga Māori - Protocols and customs. Approaches and protocols embedded in Māori customary values and practices.

Tikanga - The correct way to do things.

TSI - The programme formally known as The Southern Initiative.

Tūrangawaewae - Domicile, standing, place where one has the right to stand - place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and whakapapa.

UCOL - Universal College of Learning.

Wairua - The spirit or the soul.

Waka ama - Waka ama is the Māori term for outrigger canoeing. The name distinguishes an outrigger canoe from other types of waka (canoes).

WAM - Whanganui Accident and Medical.

Whānau - Family, extended family.

WINZ - Work and Income New Zealand.

WWP - Waikato Wellbeing Project.

A message from the Rangitīkei...

Nau Mai, Piki Mai, Whakatau Mai Rangitīkei!

Welcome to the first Rangitīkei Equity and Wellbeing Profile, a first in our rohe where the team at the Impact Collective are able to present this level of community level feedback through the collection of data and lived experience narratives.

Since the release of the first Impact Collective – Whanganui Equity and Wellbeing Profile, the Impact Collective team have been working on engaging with organisations and providers who work within the community engagement field. It has been well received across Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Tairāwhiti, Lakes, Northland, Hawke's Bay, Wellington, the South Island and the Chatham Islands, where the methodology of bringing sustainable changes and transformation through community level feedback has been resoundingly praised. Throughout this engagement we have continued to engage with our All of Government partners and ensured that this style of community empowerment and engagement becomes part of the toolbox of how we enact government priorities into the future.

Aotearoa New Zealand is currently going through significant changes as a result of shift in community expectations in a post COVID-19 lock down environment. With the introduction of the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act for healthcare service providers, the Review into the Future for Local Government Draft Report, proposed Three Waters Reforms and changes to the Resource Management Act for Local Councils, the shift in the paradigm towards an engaged community and one that is supported to participate in determining their own wellbeing, has become more important. Within local councils, this provides an opportunity to realign our purpose around the four wellbeings; social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing.

As a result, we are implementing systems to enable the focus on co-governance, co-design and community engagement to move beyond words to lived experiences of the communities of whom we serve. The Impact Collective is affording an opportunity for the community to engage in how these services can be shaped into the future by utilising community stories into future decision making.

We would like to acknowledge the massive effort that the Impact Collective team have undertaken in increasing community engagement through the community 'Good Mahi' stories, the development of the dashboard, completion of the community insights sessions and the completion of the Rangitīkei Equity and Wellbeing Profile reports. These insights will be able to be used across the region, to support creating positive impacts in our communities into the future – you should all be proud of your efforts.

To our local Iwi and all the agencies who have continued to support the Impact Collective - and to the strength that we have gained as a collective, thank you for being part of the journey. Collectively, we will go further together than we would if we went alone.

Finally, to you, the reader. Please take the time to absorb the material in this report, and we look forward to seeing what Aotearoa New Zealand leading projects come from these insights.

Tena koutou katoa,

Andy Watson
Mayor of the Rangitīkei District

Peter Beggs
Chief Executive - Rangitīkei District Council

"Collectively we will go further together than we would if we went alone.

Andy Watson and Peter Beggs
Rangitīkei

A message from our data partner...

The Impact Collective is a ground-breaking initiative seeking to bring together Government, Local Government and social organisations across the Central North Island to improve equity and wellbeing for their communities.

This report focuses on Rangitīkei communities and, in a New Zealand first, the project team has gathered in-depth data to understand how Rangitīkei performs in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and New Zealand's Living Standards Framework. It provides an in-depth, granular and evidence-based understanding of the social, cultural, environmental and economic performance of Rangitīkei. The extensive community interviews the team has undertaken creates an unprecedented level of insight about Rangitīkei, which will help inform future initiatives, decision-making and the delivery of services - all designed to help make Rangitīkei an even better place to live.

The report is an outstanding piece of research and underpinned by current, local data. It has been a privilege to witness the effort the Impact Collective team has put into the report's presentation. I know it will benefit Rangitīkei and its people significantly for many years to come.

Ngā mihi,

Justin Lester
Government Director
DOT Loves Data

"I know it will benefit Rangitīkei and its people significantly for many years to come.

Justin Lester
Government Director
DOT Loves Data

The Impact Collective Operational Team

Tēnā koutou katoa
Ko Kōtirana te whakapaparanga mai engari
Ko Ahuriri te whenua tupu
Ko Ahuriri te kāinga
Kei Te Awahou au e noho ana
Tēnā tatou katoa

Steve Carey
Government Director

A compelling sense of commitment to the community, to inspire, to acknowledge, to enable has driven the Impact Collective to support the removal of organisational and territorial boundaries to ensure positive impact for change is made possible. Bringing extensive experience in community engagement, authentic co-design principles has enabled the Impact Collective to deliver the presentation of data and people insights in a way that is mana enhancing for the people throughout the rohe.

Having worked in both public and private sector, I understand the importance to enabling those with lived experience and those who reside in the community to have a voice and be supported to remove the power imbalance in decision making. Only then can we enable communities to thrive.

Ko Ruapehu Maunga
Ko Whanganui te Awa
Ko Ngati Tumatauenga tōku iwi
Ko Morris tōku whānau
No Whanganui ahau

Ronda Morris
Business Support Lead

With a strong background in government policy, public engagement and strategy I have had the chance to see how critical it is to have people led change.

I am excited to be a part of the Impact Collective Team and continue to build on the people, whānau and community led for positive change.

Tēnā koutou katoa
Ko Kōtirana te whakapaparanga mai engari
Ko Whanganui te whenua tupu
Kei Whanganui au e noho ana
Ko Danielle Janes taku ingoa
Tēnā tātou katoa

Danielle Janes
Strategic Impact Director

A super passionate researcher, designer and life long learner.

I am an experienced human-centred strategist, designer and change agent with a wealth of experience working as a consultant across multiple agencies as well as working in-house within large organisations.

I have a strong passion for emphasising with and understanding people, their needs, what drives them, and how this then plays out in their everyday experiences. By putting people and their needs at the heart of everything I do I am able to deliver valuable and actionable insights, strategies and outcomes that create meaningful, positive and lasting change.

Ko Ruahine te Pai Maunga
Ko Rangitīkei te Awa
Ko Tākitimu te Waka
Ko Ngāti Hauti tōku iwi
No Whanganui ahau

Caleb Kingi
Creative Director

I'm a cinematographer based in Whanganui. My craft has allowed me to travel over Aotearoa and the world shooting for a range of govt organisations, SME's, NGO's, brands and individuals.

I have a passion for telling stories that bring positive change to people, communities and organisations. I love the place I call home, it's my place of belonging and I feel privileged being connected to the whenua and the people.

Tēnā koutou katoa
Ko Kōtirana te whakapaparanga mai
Ko Tāmaki Makaurau te whenua tupu
Kei Ōwhango au e noho ana
Ko Neesha Bremner tōku ingoa
Tēnā tātou katoa

Neesha Bremner
Systems Strategist

Evidence driven and solutions focused journalist, researcher, engagement and communications specialist.

As an experienced communications and research practitioner working across business, media, government and non-government agencies, in Aotearoa and overseas, I am dedicated to embedding an evidence-based approach to everything I do.

With over 15 years working in journalism, I meet people where they are to ensure the lived experience and story is captured and understood.

From this framework bespoke solutions that are community sourced are just a conversation away.

Ko Whakarara te Maunga
Ko Wainui te Moana
Ko Mataatua te Waka
Ko Ngāpuhi tōku iwi
Ko Aotearoa te kāinga

Briar Goldie
Systems Strategist

As an experienced strategist and creative thinker, I combine several years of industry experience with wellbeing training to explore, connect, and create outcomes that drive positive change. I am strongly motivated by the potential of making the world a better, more equitable place and believe, to achieve change, we must do this together.

By empathising deeply, working collaboratively, and caring endlessly, my mahi strives to connect experiences, identify hidden strengths and empower others to be the leaders of change.

Tēnā koutou katoa
Ko Aerana te whakapaparanga mai engari
Ko Te Papaioea te kāinga
Kei Te Papaioea au e noho ana
Ko Josh Ace tōku ingoa
Tēnā tatou katoa

Josh Ace
Senior Designer

As a senior graphic designer based in Palmerston North with over 10 years industry experience, I enjoy the challenge of telling stories visually and have been privileged to have undertaken a wide-ranging scope of work within various companies throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

It has been great to be able to apply all of the skills learnt from those endeavours into the exciting future opportunities and mahi as a part of the Impact Collective Team.
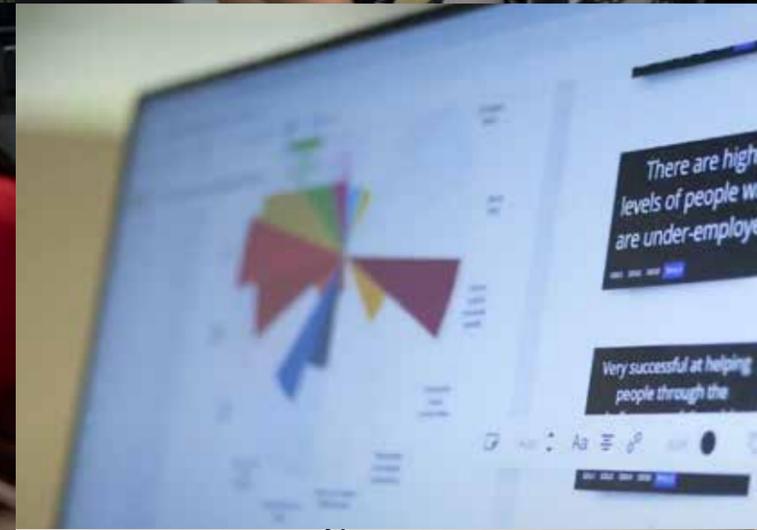
Our Kaupapa

For our people, our whenua and our communities.
Working together to gather data and people insights across our region to inform and support the best actions to improve equity and wellbeing for all of our people.

Our Principles

Unite together
Breaking down silos and developing genuine and enduring relationships between communities and organisations.

Listen together
Listening and emphasising to ensure everybody within our communities have an opportunity to share their knowledge and lived experiences.

Act together
Working collaboratively to uncover and take action on collective insights, knowledge and experiences.

Our Promises

1 **We strive to create equity and wellbeing for all -** Through breaking down traditional organisational and territorial boundaries and focusing on our communities holistically, the Impact Collective strives to enrich foundational data with people's lived experiences in order to support the co-design of pathways and initiatives across our region that will create positive and enduring impact for all.

   We seek to shift from viewing our communities solely in terms of health, wealth, access, or vulnerability, to viewing it in terms of the whole person and their whānau – a mana-enhancing approach.

2 **We serve our people, our whenua and our communities -** We are for all individuals, communities and organisations, should they be tangata whenua, tūrangawaewae to the region, or align to the purpose of the Impact Collective.

3 **We utilise a collective response -** In response to the goals and aspirations of our communities, the Impact Collective will seek not only the data, but also the real-life stories and lived experiences that sit behind it. The data is just our starting point – the stories will provide us with a wealth of insight and the 'why'.

   Together, these provide the foundation for us to craft truly collective insights representative of what matters most to our communities.

Ruapehu
12,900

Ruapehu

South Taranaki

Rangitīkei

Whanganui

South Taranaki
29,100

Rangitīkei
16,100

Whanganui
48,400

Statistics NZ - population estimates 2022
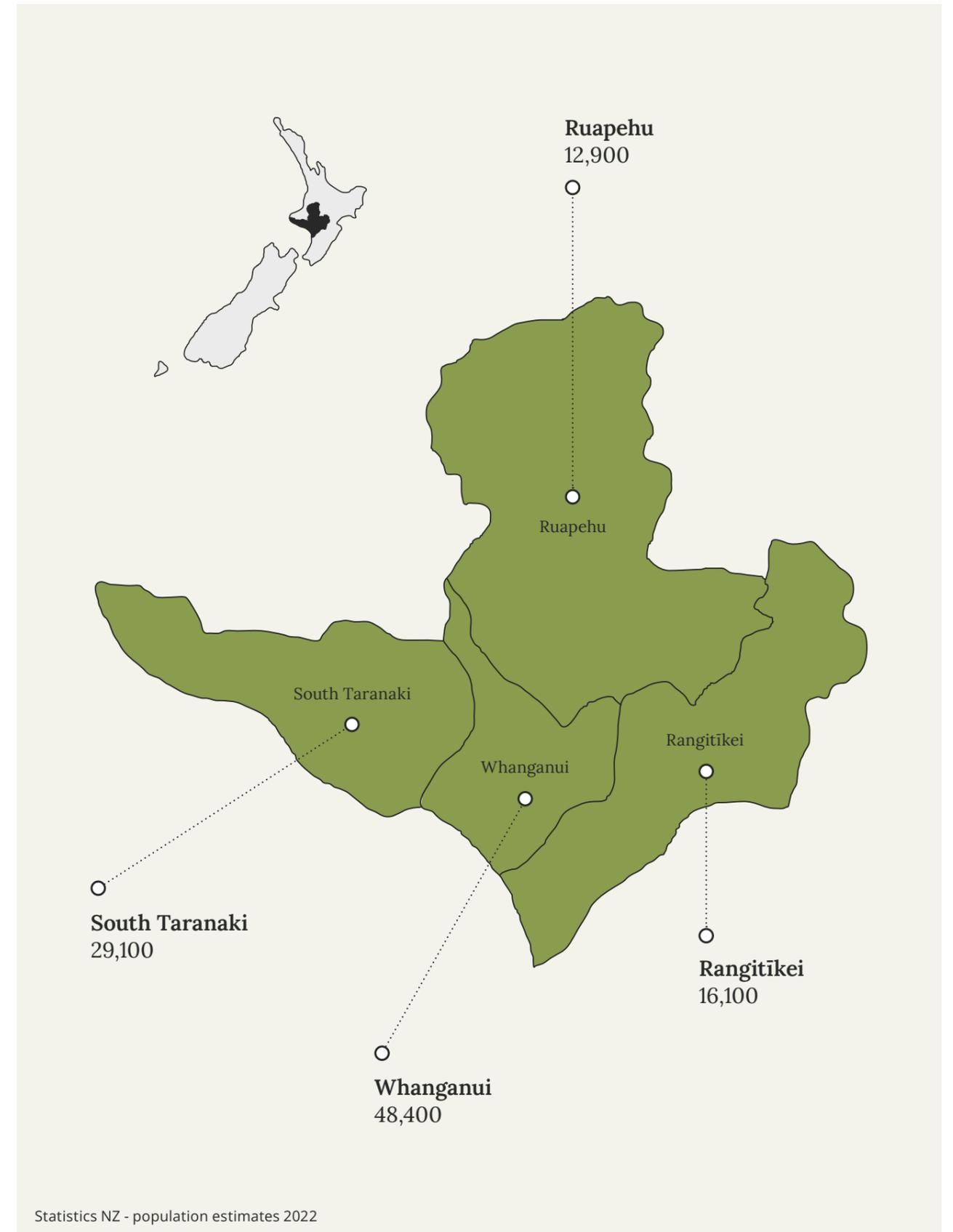
Figure 1 — Snapshot of the Whanganui, Rangitīkei, Ruapehu and South Taranaki regions

Executive Summary

Creating the conditions for change means more than merely removing barriers. It necessitates leading and modelling the desired changes, defending and supporting change to your superiors, and enthusiastically communicating and celebrating short-term wins with your team.

Alicia McKay – From Strategy to Action[14].

The Impact Collective began its journey of providing a level of community intelligence that is a 'first of its kind' in its scale and complexity in Aotearoa New Zealand with the release of the Whanganui Equity and Wellbeing Profile in July 2022. Since then, the team have moved across into the Rangitīkei District to complete their Equity and Wellbeing Profile and enable community service providers, organisations, iwi and central and local government agencies to be better informed, aligned and united over community priorities, and enable them to identify the areas where they can collectively create positive impact in the diverse Rangitīkei communities.

The only way to build this profile was to obtain an in-depth understanding of the different Rangitīkei communities, and the people who live here through their eyes and their own unique everyday experiences. We chose to leverage both existing data insights that others have already collected on the communities, as well gathering our own lived experience or people insights through speaking directly to members of the communities – in their communities.

In collaboration with our data partners DOT Loves Data, we successfully developed and built our Equity and Wellbeing Dashboard which brings together data insights from over 150 data indicators covering the breadth of areas of equity and wellbeing across our framework. At the same time as we analysed the dashboard data, our team of strategists simultaneously ran workshops and interviews with community groups and organisations, to treasure their taonga of history and stories - to gather their lived experience narratives. Unlike the Whanganui Equity and Wellbeing Profile which focused primarily on the impacts of the urban environment, the Rangitīkei Equity and Wellbeing Profile identifies the various urban and rural settings that have an impact on the lives of those who reside within the rohe.

Following an extensive process of synthesis and thematic analysis to bring existing data insights together with fresh narratives from the Rangitīkei communities, the team are able to present 61 themes that are related to a person's journey through their life, from infancy to elderly. Furthermore, a series of systemic barriers have been articulated which outline some of the issues that we face in engaging with our communities and outlines the way to move forward in a manner that is connected to and focused on the needs of the Rangitīkei communities.

Across the Rangitīkei rohe, areas of strength were characterised as being within the following areas of the United Nations 17 SDGS in order of significance; Sustainable Cities & Communities, Life on Land, Good Health & Wellbeing, Quality Education, Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure, Decent Work & Economic Growth, Reduced Inequalities and Life Below Water.

Most often, areas where barriers were identified were often found in the same areas as the community strengths, however, this is not the case with all the themes. The following areas have been identified as the most prevalent barriers in the Rangitīkei communities; Sustainable Cities & Communities, Good Health & Wellbeing, Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure, Reduced Inequalities, Quality Education, Decent Work & Economic Growth, No Poverty, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and Zero Hunger.

The final section within this profile, the summary of findings, gives you, the reader, the ability to pick up the strengths, barriers and opportunities in an easily digested format. It is designed to allow you to use the pages as a guide to design and develop services and traction plans. We hope you find these useful as you co-design services across the wider Rangitīkei communities.

Our hope is that the intelligence provided in this report achieves a number of outcomes. These include being representative of the voice of the Rangitīkei communities, aligning the lived experiences with the data insights to tell the full story, capturing and highlighting the complexity of the wider system and showing that you cannot address a single need in isolation. Throughout this, the team have captured and showcased some of the incredible individuals, groups and organisations doing good mahi in the Rangitīkei communities.

Ultimately, we wish to highlight and present the biggest strengths and opportunities of the Rangitīkei communities and act as the springboard to inspire collective action to either enhance existing strengths, or overcome existing barriers.

Finally, from the Impact Collective team, we want to acknowledge and thank the members of the Rangitīkei communities that shared the taonga of their stories, so that we can prepare this profile of intelligence and insights for the Rangitīkei rohe. It has been a truly humbling experience and one that we will revere into the future.

He Tirohanga Anamata
Reimagine wellbeing together.

Overview and Context

What has come before this work?

Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua:
'I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past'

Throughout the Impact Collective journey we have maintained the knowledge that without those who came before us in the areas of collective impact the way in which we can now forge a path of data and people insights would not have been possible. This recognition of the past is central to ensuring that we shape the future in a way that creates a positive impact for the people across the motu and whenua upon which we stand. Within Aotearoa New Zealand we are all global citizens that play a vital role in being kaitiaki for environments, the communities and supporting the whānau in the places we call home. As such, we must work together on behalf of our tupuna, for the benefit of our tamariki and mokopuna to ensure that we are doing the best we can to co-design and support a future that sustains us all - giving back more than we are receiving.

To support this important mahi, the Impact Collective investigated the international, regional and local contexts to develop a framework that was reflective of the global, national and local aspirations of the people within our rohe.

Global Context

With the shift in viewing wellbeing in a manner consistent with a person's life journey, their connection to their environment and their place in society, there have been a number of global frameworks and programmes of work established that place the person inside their communities at the heart of their development. Internationally, examples such as the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the New Urban Agenda, Public Health Scotland (Health Inequalities project), the OECD Better Life Index, the Environmental Performance Index and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 are forging the new wave of community-led development projects.

The Impact Collective investigated the global frameworks to ascertain the natural alignment to our kaupapa. As we shift the balance of existing Aotearoa New Zealand frameworks toward including a person's environment and their relationship to it, the United Nations 17 SDGS with its focus on economic, environmental, equality of access, and the wellbeing of communities and people, provided a natural link to the globally leading framework. It was important to ensure that like our kaupapa, the framework presented a holistic picture of the human experience.

The United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 (including New Zealand), provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, for now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership.[1]

The United Nations outlined in 2015 that the "aim of the goals and targets was to stimulate action over the next 15 years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet"[2]:

– **People -** We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.
– **Planet -** We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.
– **Prosperity -** We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.

– **Peace -** We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.
– **Partnership -** We are determined to mobilise the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focussed in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.

More recently, the sitting United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, outlined that the current COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the failures and inequities in our society that the UN 17 SDGs are seeking to address.

" *'Leveraging this moment of crisis, when usual policies and social norms have been disrupted, bold steps can steer the world back on track towards the Sustainable Development Goals. This is the time for change, for a profound systemic shift to a more sustainable economy that works for both people and the planet[3].'* - António Guterres

Figure 2 — The United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals

National Context

As Aotearoa New Zealand begins to shift its focus from health to wellbeing, a number of National and Regional programmes of work have been developed to support the future wellbeing of all New Zealanders. Through these, the New Zealand government created the Treasury's Living Standards Framework to ensure that services of national significance were aligned to improve the overall wellbeing of the people of Aotearoa New Zealand. As a result, large regional programmes such as The Southern Initiative and the Waikato Wellbeing Project which support the championing of community-led development towards positive outcomes, have been established. These programmes challenge the status quo of traditional organisational silos and through working in a manner consistent with a Te Ao Māori worldview, ensure that a person's wellbeing is characterised through their connection to their environment, their whānau, their communities and their sense of purpose.

With the introduction of the Whānau Ora framework in 2010, the link between national alignment and local (whānau centric) models of care was established. The goals within this provide a culturally-based approach to wellbeing that focuses on whānau, considering not only the individual, but the whānau as a whole. In 2014, the approach evolved with the establishment of three Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies that would invest directly into their communities. Whilst this is a national programme of work, it is delivered differently to each individual and their whānau to enable their aspirations to be realised – as a result, the Impact Collective have selected the goals to represent the heart of our framework, ensuring that people and their whānau are at the centre of what we do.

Treasury's Living Standards Framework

Treasury's Living Standards Framework (LSF) was developed in Aotearoa New Zealand to enable Treasury to lead policy and funding decisions, capturing many of the wider things that impact on individuals, whānau and community wellbeing. The new Living Standards Framework which was introduced in October 2021, has three levels to it – Our individual and Collective Wellbeing, Our Institutions and Governance and The Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand (please see Figure 3). The updated LSF further sought to better reflect children's wellbeing and culture.

Treasury defines these levels as[4]:

Our Individual and Collective Wellbeing - Level One of the framework captures those resources and aspects of our lives that have been identified by research or public engagement as being important for our wellbeing as individuals, families, whānau and communities.

Our Institutions and Governance – Level Two is a new level in the LSF. It captures the role that our political, economic, social and cultural institutions play in facilitating the wellbeing of individuals and collectives, as well as safeguarding and building our national wealth. This level captures the role that, for example, schools have in the wellbeing of children, or marae have in the wellbeing of tangata whenua, or the fisheries regulatory system has in sustaining Aotearoa's fisheries for the benefit of all.

The Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand – Level Three of the framework captures how wealthy we are as a country, including aspects of wealth not fully captured in the system of national accounts, such as human capability and the natural environment.

The Impact Collective are representing the 'Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand' in our framework, with the four categories of natural environment, financial and physical capital, social cohesion and human capability demonstrated. The other two levels of 'Our Institutions and Governance' and 'Our Individual and Collective Wellbeing' are reflected in the data we have collated for our Equity and Wellbeing Dashboard and depth of community insights which have been collected.
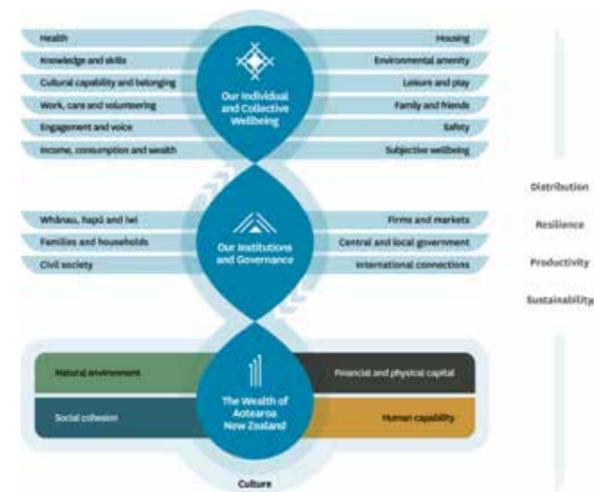
Figure 3 — Treasury Livings Standards Framework (Updated October 2021).

Whānau Ora – Putting whānau in control of their aspirations.

Whānau Ora is a key cross-government work programme jointly implemented by the Ministry of Health, Te Puni Kōkiri and the Ministry of Social Development. It is an approach that places families and whānau at the centre of service delivery, and requires the integration of health, education and social services to improve outcomes and results for New Zealand families/whānau[5].

The Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency defines whānau Ora as:

" *Whānau Ora is a culturally-based, and whānau-centred approach to wellbeing focused on whānau (family group) as a whole, as the decision-makers who determine their goals and aspirations. Building on the strengths and capabilities of whānau and wrapping the necessary services and support around them to get better outcomes and create positive changes. In areas such as health, education, housing, employment, improved standards of living and cultural identity. whānau are supported to fully realise the confidence, mana and the belief in self, family and community[6]. - whānauora.nz*

Through this definition, we recognise that the wellbeing of whānau is not expressed solely in terms of economic development, but rather sets about outlining the supporting structures and systems that contribute to our lives being 'better' and more purposeful. Traditionally, this 'betterment of life' has been measured through metrics such as the Better Life Index, and although as a whole, New Zealand performs well, the markers of wellbeing are reduced for Māori by comparison. As a result, Whānau Ora is measured against outcome domains[7]; whānau are self-managing & empowered leaders, whānau are leading healthy lifestyles, whānau are participating fully in society, whānau and families are confidently participating in Te Ao Māori, whānau and families are confidently participating in Te Ao Māori, whānau are cohesive, resilient and nurturing, and whānau and families are responsible stewards of their living and natural environments.

This direct to whānau commissioning occurs through three commissioning agencies, who partner with local organisations, providers and navigators to deliver a coordinated service based around the needs and aspirations of whānau at a grassroots level[7]. These agencies are:
– **Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency** works with whānau and families in the North Island.
– **Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu** works with whānau and families in the South Island.
– **Pasifika Futures** is dedicated to working with Pacific Island families across the country.

TSI

Established by the Auckland Council, TSI is a place-based innovation hub focused on local and system-level transformation to improve social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing for current and future generations of south and west Aucklanders[8]. This is demonstrated in TSI's four workstreams:

" *New Zealand, like Australia, and many other countries, recognises that place-based approaches can play a critical role in addressing a range of inequalities, including persistent disadvantage. This has led to an increased focus on place-based initiatives around the world for the delivery of welfare programmes and community service interventions. What makes TSI different to these approaches is that place is seen through a lens of social innovation and aspiration rather than through a deficit lens. This means that place becomes a space where people can co-create and experience positive futures for themselves and their whānau. TSI demonstrates how place-based approaches can generate real changes for people, while also providing evidence for how systems can more effectively work across diversity[8].*

The Impact Collective believe that local people hold the solutions to developing localised services to support and enhance their strengths or address community opportunities. TSI, alongside the likes of Manaaki Tairāwhiti, Ruapehu Whānau Transformation, TCLT and the Waikato Wellbeing Project, were the pioneers in advancing the place-based revolution in empowering communities at the centre of their mahi.

Figure 4 — The Southern Initiative (TSI) Four Focus Areas 2022

The Waikato Wellbeing Project

The Waikato Wellbeing Project (WWP) is a regional initiative set up to achieve a more environmentally sustainable, prosperous and inclusive Waikato region by 2030. Mātauranga and Te Ao Māori (Māori world view) principles are embedded Waikato Wellbeing Project[9]. The updated business plan for 2022-23 for the WWP is presented in Figure 5[10] and visually demonstrates their commitment to the pou of Te Ao Māori and the UN 17 SDGs and is connected by their values of Kaitiakitanga, kotahitanga and Manaakitanga. The Waikato Wellbeing Project is a community-led initiative to develop a defined set of wellbeing targets for the Waikato, based on the SDGs. Currently, the team are progressing work in ten of the SDGs and are seeking community engagement around the remaining seven SDGs.
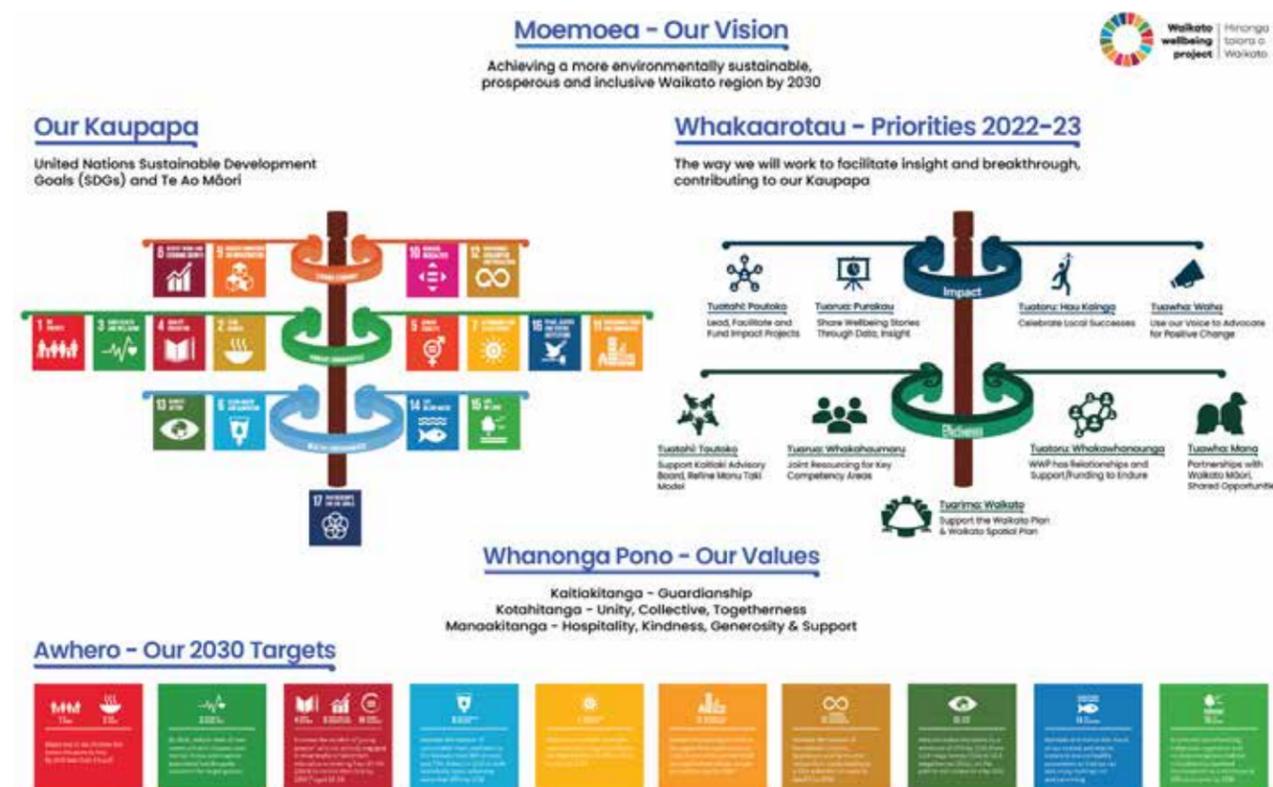
Figure 5 — Waikato Wellbeing Project 2022-2023 Business Plan

Local Context

Whilst across the country, other regions have developed programmes of work aligned to the United Nations 17 SDGs (WWP) or are seeking to address social and economic issues (TSI), closer to home, community led programmes such as the Ruapehu Whānau Transformation Programme and TCLT have sought to change not only the way we operate programmes, but also the fundamental way that we engage with and gain insights from our communities.

For the Impact Collective, these programmes of work had a profound impact on the way we sought to undertake our mahi. Inspired by the alignment of the 'stats and stories' approach from the Ruapehu whānau Transformation programme, and the community led development approach taken by TCLT, we have ensured that our communities have an opportunity to provide the community narratives context to the data that is collected on them, to enable the insights and intelligence gathered to inspire communities to develop services and programmes of work to create positive impact for them and their whānau.

The Ruapehu Whānau Transformation Plan

The Ruapehu Whānau Transformation Plan launched in 2013, containing a number of solutions for how the community could collectively enable positive transformation for all families in the communities of Raetihi, Ohakune and Waiouru. They encouraged members of the community to unite to collectively create and implement the first Ruapehu Whānau Transformation Plan (RWT)[11].

They achieved this by bringing together a steering group called the Community Reference Group (CRG)[12] which sought to enable the various groups and individuals from across the Ruapehu to be represented at the table.

" *The CRG was established in 2012 and it was their stories that primarily informed the first plan for collective, inclusive impact - ruapehuwhanautransformation.com[12].*

The solutions in this first plan sat across five focus areas; Education, Employment, Housing, Health & Social. By 2017, they had collectively delivered 20 of the 23 proposed solutions which lead to the launch of a second 'Ruapehu Whānau Transformation Plan 2020' in 2018. For this second plan, the CRG asked to increase the scope in order to be informed by a wider range of local stories. This led to the process being opened to their near 4000 population to contribute, by which they had huge success with this broader participation and sharing of stories.

TCLT

Selected as one of the five founding programmes under the Department of Internal Affairs Community Led Development programmes, TCLD Trust and TCLT Operation's Team provides a 'boots on the ground' movement in community-led initiatives. With an initial programme of work that focused on the northern villages of the Whanganui River Road (Hiruhārama, Matahiwi, Rānana and Pipiriki), the team sought to work with their communities to achieve their vision of "Flourishing Communities of People" and purpose of *"Our Journey, Our Projects, Our Way" - tcld.co.nz*

Across the past four years that they have been operating, the team has worked with the local residents of these villages. Last year, they expanded to include the remaining villages (Koriniti, Ātene, Parikino and Pungarehu) and successfully delivered a number of programmes and projects of importance and relevance to each of them.

Given the remoteness of the villages, setting up resiliency programmes and projects has been a core deliverable which included installing emergency generators, radios, defibrillators and offering home-based education workshops such as rongoā and cooking. There is a drive from the team to ensure that the communities they continue to serve are in the best place for enhanced health, wellbeing and wellness into the future.

TCLD Trust and TCLT remain mindful and grateful to all its funders, contributors and supporters as positive change continues alongside our awa whānau.

"Mā te mahitahi ka ora te katoa"

Our Framework

Our Equity and Wellbeing Framework

Figure 6 — Impact Collective Equity and Wellbeing Framework

In order to identify opportunities and measure outcomes within our communities, we have developed a 3-tier framework encompassing global, national and local equity and wellbeing frameworks.

Together these provide us with over 150 individual indicators which we are able to measure equity and wellbeing – acting as a benchmarking tool to begin to explore data insights within our region and identify priority areas that we will seek to understand in much more detail.

The purpose of this combination of global, national and local frameworks is to ensure that we encompass all elements of equity and wellbeing. Whilst the goals of each can be individually interpreted, each goal has a relationship to all other elements - as such, we have designed the framework to represent the most logical alignments.

Whānau Ora Goals

Whānau Ora is an innovative approach to improving whānau wellbeing that puts whānau at the centre of decision making. The Whānau Ora approach focuses on the whānau as a whole and addresses individual needs within the context of the whānau. Whilst this is a National Framework, the focus on individuals and whānau as its core tennant has inspired the Impact Collective to place these goals at the heart of our framework.

Whānau are supported to identify the aspirations they have to improve their lives and build their capacity to achieve their goals. iwi and the Crown have agreed to a shared Whānau Ora Outcomes Framework to guide their work to improve outcomes for whānau.

The Outcomes Framework confirms that Whānau Ora is achieved when whānau are self-managing,

living healthy lifestyles, participating fully in society, confidently participating in Te Ao Māori, economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation, cohesive, resilient and nurturing and responsible stewards of their natural and living environments.

Treasury Living Standards

The Living Standards Framework (LSF) represents a perspective on what matters for New Zealanders' wellbeing, now and into the future. It is a flexible framework that prompts our thinking about policy impacts across the different dimensions of wellbeing, as well as the long-term and distributional issues and implications.

Updated in October 2021, the LSF consists of three levels - Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand, Our Institutions and Governance and Our Individual and Collective Wellbeing. Level One, Our Individual and Collective Wellbeing, includes 12 domains that have been shown to be important for the wellbeing of both individuals and collectives, such as families, whānau and communities of place, identity and interest. Level Two, Our Institutions and Governance, refers to formal rules, informal norms, and the formal and informal organisations those rules and norms are embedded within. Institutions are often nested in complex relationships. Level Three, outlines the four categories of Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand; natural environment, financial and physical capital, social cohesion and human capability. These categories recognise that wealth generation in Aotearoa New Zealand is not limited to the historical categorisation of 'GDP', but rather the wider determinants of wealth creation - including our people and our environment.

United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.

At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling environmental and climate concerns and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

Our Methods

A Dual-phased Approach

| 1 ———— 2 ———— 3 | 4 ·········· 5 |

Seek the data

Collating and analysing the data insights through the lens of our frameworks.

Understand through stories

Engaging with communities and organisations within our rohe to ensure the insights are understood through a lived experience lens.

Identify insights and priorities

Bringing together the stats and stories to determine what matters the most to our rohe.

Support pathways

Supporting communities and organisations within our rohe to collectively co-design initiatives that will have a positive and enduring impact.

Evaluate impact

Evaluating impact by comparing the stats and stories from where we were, to where we are now.

Phase One

In **Phase One**, we present our collective insights as 'Equity and Wellbeing Profiles'. These represent the collective strengths and opportunities of each unique community that makes up the broader Rangitīkei region. Phase one encompasses steps 1-3 of our process.

This report is the second Equity and Wellbeing Profile to be delivered, focusing on the Rangitīkei community only. Following this report, Phase One is to be completed in the Ruapehu and South Taranaki communities, developing an Equity and Wellbeing Profile for each.

Phase Two

In **Phase Two**, we seek to support the communities to co-design services to build on the strengths or address opportunities within their community as required. Phase Two encompasses steps 4-5 of our process.

Through the presentation of the collective insights in the Equity and Wellbeing Profiles, community organisations, iwi and Crown Agencies will be able to identify areas for service development to support their communities in creating positive impact. The Impact Collective can support the bringing together of members of the community to co-design these services if no existing service providers are established within the community.

The Impact Collective, through undertaking scheduled evaluations of the Equity and Wellbeing Profiles will be able to demonstrate the impact that co-designed initiatives have on addressing the strengths and opportunities presented in the Equity and Wellbeing profile. We understand that these initiatives can take time to demonstrate impact for the community, however through a maturity-based system, we will be able to engage with the new initiatives and support them with confirmation of impact through our dashboard analytics and people insights.

Phase One—Delivery of the Equity and Wellbeing Profiles

This report marks the completion of Phase One for the Rangitīkei community.

This phase includes the first three steps of our process.

1 Seek the data
2 Understand through stories
3 Identify insights and priorities
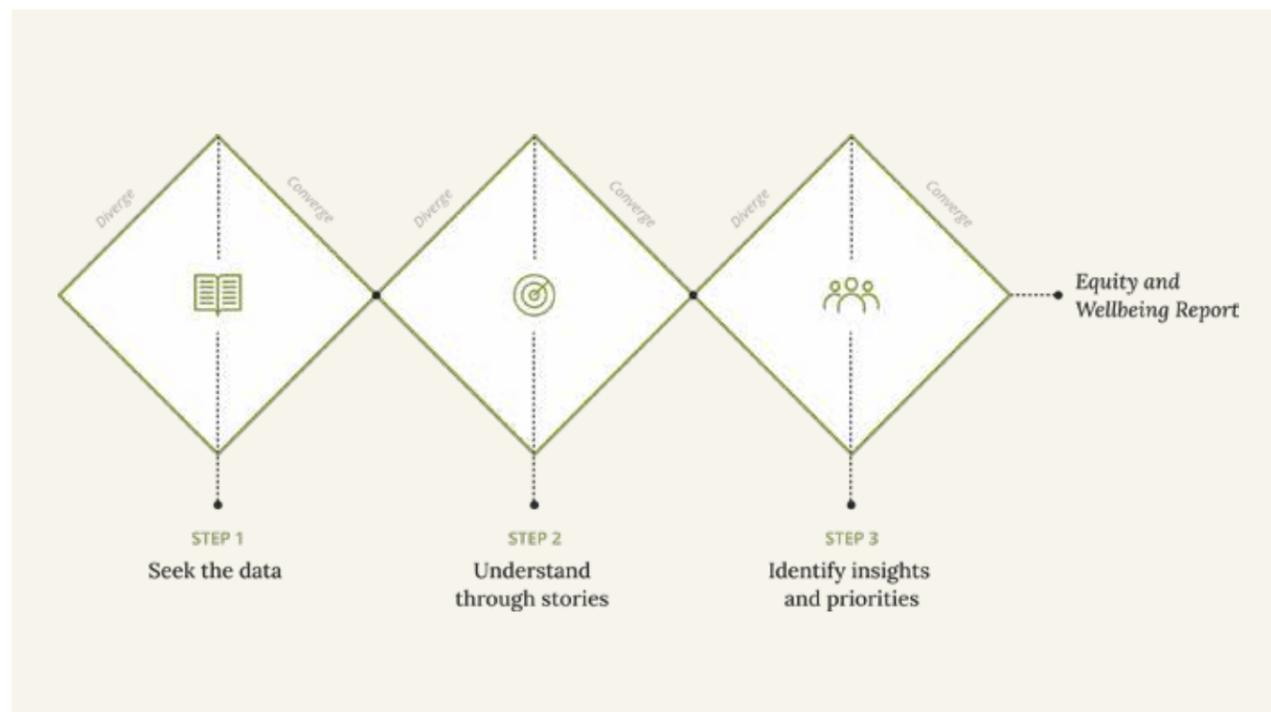
Figure 7 — Phase one of our process

Step 1—Seek the data

This step involves collating and analysing the data insights through the lenses of our frameworks.

Core to this is our industry-leading Equity and Wellbeing Dashboard which pulls data from over 100 data sources to measure how communities within our region are tracking against our Equity and Wellbeing Framework - these include over 150 individual indicators that we are able to measure against.

This provides us with a tool to explore data insights in as close to real time as possible with members of our community and identify areas we need to understand in much more detail through their lived experience narratives.

Tasks included in this step:
– Collate, analyse and cleanse the data
– Identify areas of interest to explore in the community workshops

Our Equity and Wellbeing Dashboard

This dashboard has been developed with our data partners DOT Loves Data, who have an incredibly talented team of data scientists and data engineers that specialise in building simple, smart and beautiful data visualisation tools.

The dashboard itself is a New Zealand leading dashboard that we believe will be incredibly valuable in terms of firstly; getting an as close to real-time and collective data representation of the equity and wellbeing across our communities, and secondly; unlocking the potential to be able to track and measure the impact of certain initiatives within our communities across the systems they exist within.

It brings together cross-sector statistics to understand the components and dynamics of community wellbeing from multiple perspectives. While it provides a means to measure progress towards wellbeing objectives, this data is most valuable when contextualised alongside community stories and experiences. This dashboard is innovative in measuring wellbeing at the sub-national and community level, but also highlights current data gaps for understanding wellbeing for Māori.

Wellbeing frameworks

This dashboard is organised around our three different wellbeing frameworks: the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), treasury's Living Standards Framework (LSF) four Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand categories, and Whānau Ora Goals. The indicators in this dashboard represent the concepts in these frameworks, but they are not exact replications. This is because some frameworks are continuously evolving while others measure indicators only at national levels.

Each framework has identified different concepts of wellbeing and equity, referred to as goals in the SDG and Whānau Ora frameworks and the Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand categories in the Living Standards framework. Individual indicators are grouped together and summarised into goal and category scores to measure progress within each framework.

Data sources

This dashboard pulls from many validated national and regional data sources in order to ensure good coverage across all of the frameworks and indicators. It was important that the Impact Collective presented data from these validated sources to ensure that when working with our communities and agencies that the data presented was reflective of the information held by the government. This will better enable the data to be used by the communities when they are developing community led services. The primary data sources are listed below:

– NZ Census of Populations and Dwellings (Statistics NZ)
– Ministry of Social Development
– Tenancy Services
– Homes.co.nz
– ACC
– Statistics NZ
– Statistics NZ - Child poverty data
– Statistics NZ - New Zealand business demography statistics
– Eftpos NZ
– Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
– NZ Police
– DOT Loves Data
– Dynamic Deprivation Index: DOT Loves Data product
– Bizmomento - DOT Loves Data product
– Waka Kotahi
– NZ Transport Agency
– NZ Transport Agency Motor Vehicle Register
– Education Counts
– Ministry of Health
– Ministry of Health - Health survey
– Water New Zealand - National Performance Review
– Open Street Maps
– Electricity Authority
– HealthSpace

Data gaps and limitations

Throughout the process of data collation, it has become evident that across Aotearoa New Zealand, there are areas where data collation is lacking or non-existent, the data is only provided at a national level or the time intervals between data updates is slow. This was particularly apparent in the SDG areas of Climate Action, Life Below Water, Life on Land and Partnership for the Goals. The significance of this cannot be understated as it means there is a fundamental lack of quantitative data available to support the ability for communities to address issues that may be impacting on them. Government agencies that are involved in these areas must support more regionalised and timely access to data to enable communities to design services to ensure positive impact into the future.

It was also further identified that whilst ethnicity data is beginning to be collected more often, there is still a significant gap in what is being measured and how that impacts Māori communities and Māori service development. Throughout this profile, we have ensured that the narratives of Māori participants are portrayed in as authentic as the way they were gifted to us, and that where possible, Māori data is presented.
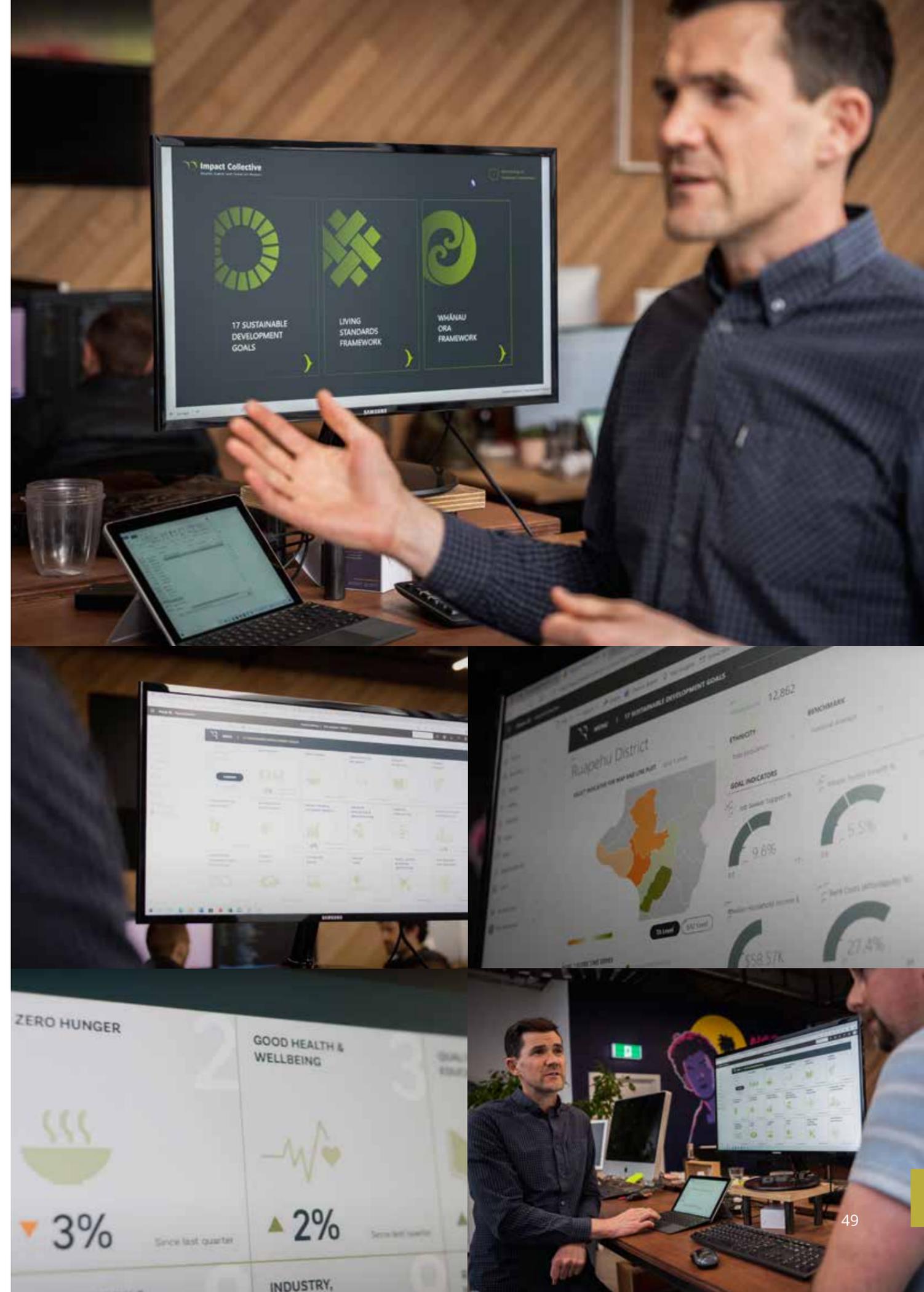
Step 2—Understand through stories

We have the data, so it is now all about understanding the 'why'.

This step is where we want to gather as many stories as we can by engaging with individuals, groups and organisations in the community to ensure the insights are understood through a lived experience lens. This ensures our insights remain true and representative of the community and that we are not making assumptions.

We cannot understate how important this step is – without it, assumptions are made, and the wrong barriers may be solved in isolation of the people that matter.

Tasks included in this step:
– Workshops with community organisations across the community
– In-depth 'good mahi' interviews, stories and podcasts with inspiring individuals, groups or organisations across our community

Rangitīkei Equity and Wellbeing Workshops

The purpose of these workshops is to gather the stories and lived experiences of the Rangitīkei community from those who are actively working in, and are members of, the community.

The key objectives of these workshops:
– To understand their kaupapa (purpose) and why they exist
– To understand the needs in the Rangitīkei community they are aiming to address
– To identify who they are working with to address these needs across the community
– To look beyond their day-to-day mahi and identify broader strengths and opportunities of the Rangitīkei community
– To present the data insights of their community and identify any relationships or differences between these and their lived experiences.

Over the course of our research, we ran workshops with over 60 individuals from the Rangitīkei community, representing 24 organisations. Below is a list of the wonderful organisations we have been so fortunate to have engaged with.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Work and Income Taihape, Bulls and District Community Trust, Marton Budget Services, Marton Rotary, Community Fruit Harvest Manawatū, Rangitīkei Rivers Catchment Collective, Forest and Bird Rangitīkei, Rangitīkei College, Youth Services, Arohanui Hospice, Fiona Dalgety (Hunterville Councillor), Taihape Community Development Trust, Older and Bolder, The Koha Shed, Sustainable Taihape, Taihape Fire Brigade, Taihape Neighbourhood Support, Taihape Friendship Club, Gill Duncan (Taihape Councillor), The Regional Police Officer, Rural Support Trust, PEC, Rātana Pā Kaihoe Trust, Rangitīkei District Council.

'Good Mahi' 1:1 Stories

In parallel to running the workshops, we also identified and reached out to capture the good mahi stories of individuals, groups or organisations that were mentioned through our workshops as doing great work for the community. This gave us the opportunity to talk one on one with many of these local community heroes, and delve much deeper into some of the needs in the community they are aiming to address.

Over the course of our research, we identified and captured good mahi stories for a further eight groups and organisations in the Rangitīkei community, talking to many of the individuals involved with each. Below is a list of the wonderful groups or organisations we have been so fortunate to have shared their stories with us. *Their inspirational stories are all available on our website in the 'Our Work' section, please take a look when you have the time.*

STORY PARTICIPANTS

Barbara Thomason - Tangata Whenua, Ngāti Hauiti, Bulls Food Pantry, Community Fruit Harvest Manawatū, Forest and Bird Rangitīkei, Forge Boxing, Rangitīkei Farmstay and The Mudder, Rātana Pā Kaihoe Trust, Taihape Planting Day - Te Maru o Ruahine Trust & Rauhuia Environmental Services.

Step 3—Identify insights and priorities

This step involves bringing together all of the stories we have captured through the research, with the statistics, to determine what matters the most to our community. This provides us with the foundation for the Rangitīkei Equity and Wellbeing Profile (this document) which aims to represent the collective strengths and opportunities of the Rangitīkei community.

Tasks included in this step:
– Synthesis of the stories
– Thematic analysis and insights generation
– Validation and refinement of initial themes and insights
– Identification of the systemic relationships across our frameworks
– Report generation
– Presentations of our findings

Synthesis of the stories

To ensure all of the valuable stories and lived experiences discussed in the workshops and good mahi stories are captured authentically, and as they are told, our Systems Strategists go to great lengths to listen back through each and every recording. Leveraging a voice transcriber app, they ensure everything is captured correctly and grouped on individual summary sheets as anonymised verbatim statements.

Figure 8 — Example of a workshop summary sheet

Thematic analysis and insights generation

Once all of the workshop and good mahi story summary sheets are complete, our Systems Strategists begin to group, cluster and theme all of the captured stories and insights. In doing so, they start to consider the upstream and downstream impacts of each insight, as well as the links and relationships they may have to one another. This starts to form the basis of the complex system that underpins the strengths, barriers and opportunities present in the Rangitīkei community.

This initial clustering goes through a number of iterations, to boil the findings down to an initial group of themes, which can then be taken back out to members of the community to be validated.

Figure 9 — Example of initial clustering

Validation and refinement of initial themes and insights

This involves re-engaging with the organisations and individuals that were spoken to in the initial workshops, to ensure the themes and findings are reflective of what we heard, and their experience as members of the Rangitīkei community.

The feedback and additional stories from these validation sessions are captured, and our Systems Strategists build this into a final iteration and refinement of the themes. This is also where the themes are grouped into relevant life stages and categories, to ensure they represent the stories from the community, and link back to our frameworks. This is also where the most up to date, and relevant statistics from our Equity and Wellbeing Data Dashboard are built into the theming process.

The unique strengths, barriers, opportunities and good mahi stories in the community are also captured for each unique theme, to ensure they are reflective of the reported lived experiences.

Figure 10 — Example of a validation sheet

Figure 11 — Complete view of the comprehensive insights map

Figure 12 — Close up of the comprehensive insights map

Identification of the systemic relationships across our frameworks

The final challenge for our Systems Strategists, is to find a way to pull the complexity of what we have heard, including all of the themes and insights, together on one page. This is no easy challenge, and requires extensive systemic analysis and thought into the upstream and downstream impacts of each and every theme, but it ensures the Rangitīkei Equity and Wellbeing Profile can be captured as a single system - albeit a very complex system.
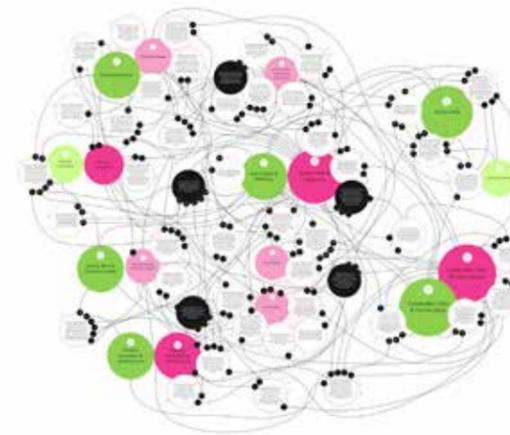
Figure 13 — Iteration of work in progress systems map
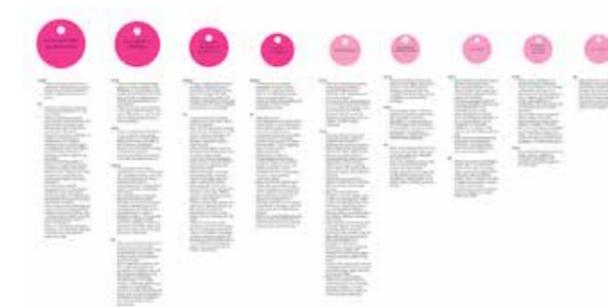
Figure 14 — Work in progress refinement of barriers

Report generation—pulling it all together

There are a number of outcomes we hope that this report is able to achieve.
– To be representative of the voice of the Rangitīkei community
– To tell the full story, aligning the lived experiences with the data of the Rangitīkei community
– To capture and highlight the complexity of the system, and show that you cannot address a single need in isolation, but as the result of the work of many.
– To showcase some of the incredible individuals, groups and organisations doing good mahi in the Rangitīkei community
– To highlight and present the biggest strengths and opportunities of the Rangitīkei region and act as the springboard to inspire collective action to either enhance existing strengths, or overcome existing barriers, in the Rangitīkei community.

Presentations of our findings

The team is happy to present and talk you through our findings in person or online if this is beneficial. Please reach out to us directly to arrange a session to do so.

Phase Two—Supporting Collective Action

This phase will commence upon the completion of each Equity and Wellbeing Profile as they are completed for each region.

This phase includes the last two steps of our process.

1. Supporting pathways
2. Evaluating impact
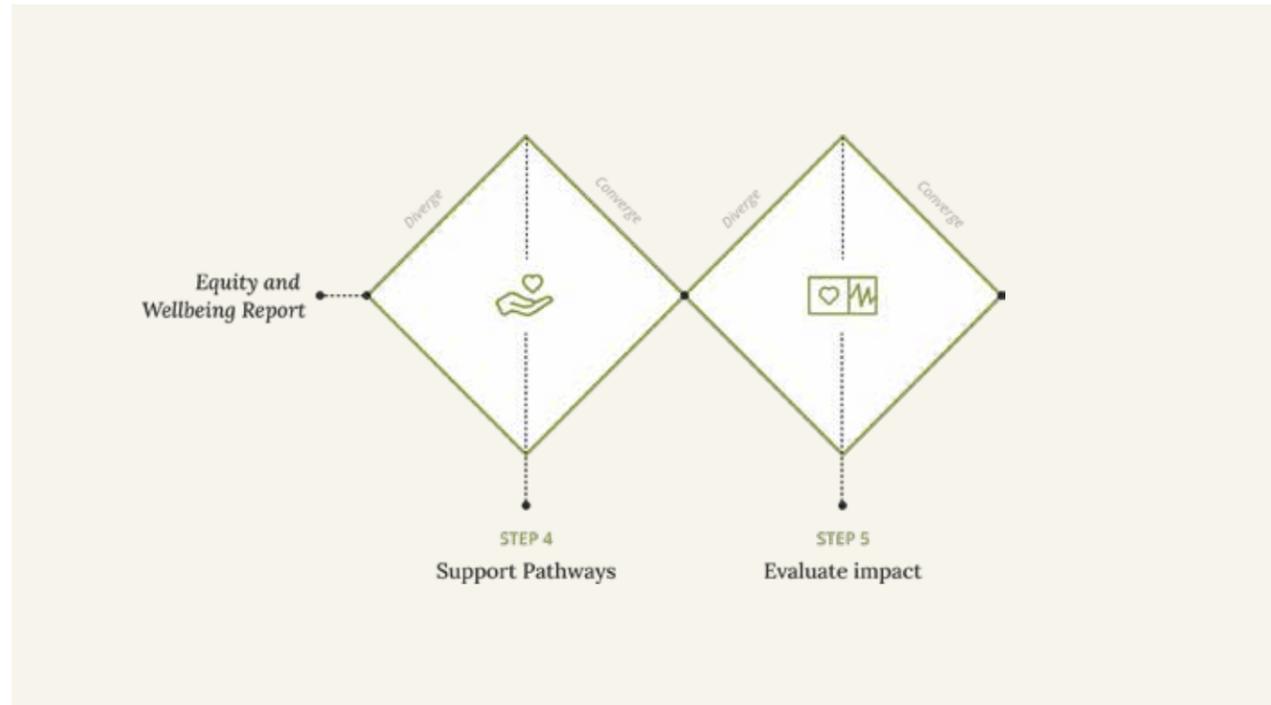
Figure 15 — Phase two of our process

Step 4—Support pathways

This step marks the transition from generating the collective insights to enabling the communities to take action.

Here it is all about supporting communities and organisations within our community to collectively co-design pathways and/or initiatives that will have positive and enduring impact. These will be aimed at enhancing the collective strengths and addressing the collective opportunities generated by this Rangitīkei Equity and Wellbeing Profile.

The Impact Collective supports the community through the presentation of the intelligence to enable these services to be developed. Many communities will have existing service providers who can take this intelligence and utilise it to develop services for positive impact. However, for communities that do not have existing service providers, the Impact Collective can support the bringing together of members of the community to enable them to co-design these services.

Tasks to support in this step:
- Presentation of the regional Equity and Wellbeing Profiles.
- Potential pathway and initiative validation against the identified opportunity areas of the regional profile in relation to what impact they may have.
- Connecting communities and services together to co-design services to create positive impact, if requested.

Step 5—Evaluate impact

This step is all about measuring impact at a community level. Often this is where many initiatives are unsuccessful in future funding opportunities due to being unable to measure or quantify the impact they are having.

Here we aim to support in evaluating the impact of implemented initiatives by comparing the data and people insights from where they were, to where they are at a future point in time. This will also highlight any new or emerging strengths and opportunities across the community.

Impacts of the initiatives developed and implemented will also be measured against our framework and the broader system they exist within through the community narratives. This will enable adjustments to programmes if required or creation of new services.

Tasks included in this step:
- Gathering fresh data insights from our dashboard.
- Gathering fresh community narratives via workshops and interviews.
- Measuring change in the data and the people insights.
- Providing updated annual Equity and Wellbeing Profiles for each region.

The Rangitīkei Community at a Glance

Rangitīkei Region
Total Population: **16,100**

Gender

50.3%

Male
8,100

Female
7,950

49.3%

Ages

Infant
1,030

Youth
6,840

Adult
5,000

Elderly
3,250

Ethnicity

Pākehā	Māori	Pasifika	Asian	Middle Eastern/ Latin American /African	Other
12751	**4218**	**901**	**338**	**48**	**241**
79.2%	26.2%	5.6%	2.1%	0.3%	1.5%
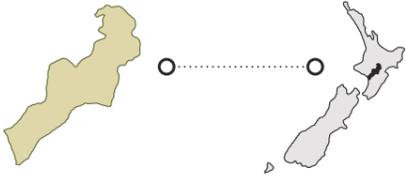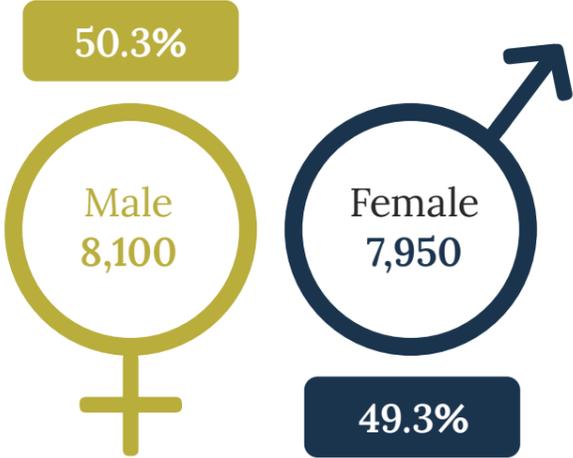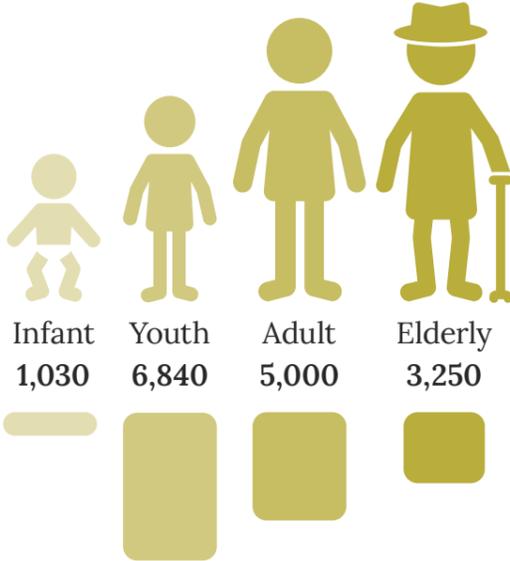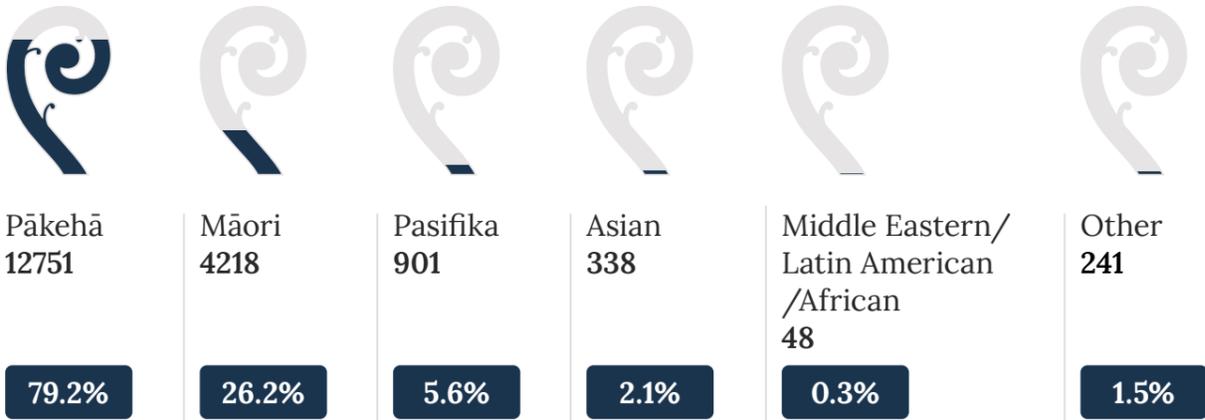
Note - percentage total over 100% due to people being able to identify as multiple ethnicities

Figure 16 — Snapshot of the Rangitīkei region

The Rangitīkei Equity and Wellbeing Profile

The Rangitīkei Communities Systems Map

KEY

- **1** Associated themes
- **+** Positive impact
- **−** Negative impact
- **** Neutral impact
- ⭕ Associated Sustainability Goals
- **→** Direction and connection

1 NEUTRAL — There is a real appreciation and presence of early childhood education facilities in the region, however, some parents experience barriers due to busyness, cost, regulations and more rural locations.

BARRIER — Many working parents share concerns they are missing out on essential bonding, social milestones and opportunities with their children, and the broader community.

9 NEUTRAL — Whilst there have been some steps forwards in relation to Māori achievement, there is still a sense that there are challenges around how the current education system aligns with and is relevant to Māori.

STRENGTH — Quality Education

BARRIER — Quality Education

5 8 2 BARRIER — Educational attainment in Rangitīkei is low, and many feel this is due to children with academic and sporting potential seeking schooling outside of the region, due to sharing concerns around the local schools available in the region.

7 6 BARRIER — COVID-19, and the sudden need to shift to online learning, has had huge impacts and disruption to the education and social journey for many children, with the ripple effects only just being felt, and acknowledged now.

25 26 BARRIER — Some feel that sexual assault and family violence, despite an increase in reporting, is still prevalent and under-reported in the community, and has many detrimental downstream ripple effects on children in families.

13 BARRIER — Due to the increasing accessibility and affordability of drugs in the region, and a lack of things to do, youth who stay are at high risk of engaging in recreational drug use.

57 STRENGTH — Many feel that being a small, close knit community means crime is low, and when crime is present, the community generally "knows" who is responsible.

Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

35 BARRIER — Many farmers are experiencing stigma and discrimination accusing them of not caring for the environment, when in reality, they are doing their best to address and reduce ongoing environmental impacts and meet increasingly complex obligations.

40 STRENGTH — There are huge benefits being experienced by some in relation to returning to and reconnecting with the land.

Life on Land

NEUTRAL — Whilst youth offending is low across the region, what does occur is very visible in the smaller communities and seen to be linked with youth boredom (due to a lack of spaces and activities for youth), gang affiliations or prospecting, and a perceived lack of consequences for criminal behaviour.

12 With generational shifts and a perception of a lack of spaces and activities (particularly for youth), it is being observed to lead to many downstream impacts.

41 NEUTRAL — There have been some huge gains and progress made in the upkeep of the region's scenic reserves, however, there are challenges due to the ongoing maintenance and workforce required to maintain and ensure these successes.

10 BARRIER — There is a strong concern in the community that there is a lack of targeted spaces and activities for youth to engage in when not at school.

4 BARRIER — There is still an undercurrent of intergenerational disconnect and appreciation of the education system, meaning some children are leaving school early and missing out on learning vital skills.

NEUTRAL — There has been a definite shift in the local schools to cater for more practically minded children, however, there are concerns around the balance between vocational and academic pathways and ensuring students gain appropriate educational achievement best suited to them.

3

BARRIER — There is a wide-spread lack of mental health support services available in the Rangitīkei, meaning that those who need help, are experiencing multiple barriers.

31 32 BARRIER — There are currently many gaps being experienced across the region's healthcare system, meaning both patients and providers are experiencing barriers around the provision, and access to the care they need.

NEUTRAL — There is a heightened awareness around protecting the wellbeing of the rivers and waterways in the region, however, this work is ongoing which brings with it challenges and set-backs.

STRENGTH — Life Below Water

15 BARRIER — The rural location, lifestyle and parental influence, combined with the lack of tertiary education facilities in the region, can limit Rangitīkei youth from exploring further education pathways. This is despite today, a perception that youth have too many options.

28 BARRIER — The lack of trust, access and knowledge of how to use the internet is causing increased barriers for elderly as essential services progressively move online, such as online banking and telehealth. COVID-19 has amplified this further.

11 17 Iwi are viewed as incredibly valuable across the region, plugging many gaps and meeting many needs in the community.

STRENGTH — Good Health and Wellbeing

BARRIER — Good Health and Wellbeing

29 The de-prioritisation of elderly population groups for accessing the care they need, is causing barriers to support needed for elderly which is leading to a number of negative outcomes.

27 NEUTRAL — The perception that certain community groups are only for 'the old', dwindling numbers and a lack of community spaces for these groups to meet, are all contributing to less opportunity for elderly connection, socialisation and activity.

42

47 STRENGTH — A strong foundation has been built with and by iwi across the region, with growing opportunities for participation and engagement, while acknowledging there are still some issues influenced by history and mistrust that are being worked through. The good work by iwi groups in the region was noted by many.

STRENGTH — Reduced Inequalities

BARRIER — Reduced Inequalities

BARRIER — With a perception of limited skilled employment options and career pathways in the region, many youth and adults leave to pursue employment pathways elsewhere, with the majority of those that stay, lacking confidence or having limited pathways.

16 23

31 STRENGTH — There is a sense that iwi health providers are stepping up to bridge the gaps in the health system right across the Rangitīkei.

NEUTRAL — While there are some great sporting events within the region, there is a perception that there is a lack of coordination and limited provision towards providing and maintaining sports facilities due to the constraints of geographical isolation and the cost burden to smaller communities.

33

48 BARRIER — There are increasing challenges to maintain community group membership and community volunteer workforces due to people ageing out (getting too old to volunteer in the same way) and barriers attracting younger members and volunteers.

24 STRENGTH — There is good progress being made in specific industries for women including with iwi, community organisations, the rural sector and health.

STRENGTH — Decent Work and Economic Growth

BARRIER — Decent Work and Economic Growth

22 59 BARRIER — Employers in the region are experiencing multiple barriers to attracting skilled employees, which is limiting economic growth for the region.

NEUTRAL — Whilst there are many active and healthy children in the region, there is a sense that those children who are obese, is a result of deprivation, expense and an intergenerational lack of food knowledge.

14

STRENGTH — Sustainable Cities and Communities

BARRIER — Sustainable Cities and Communities

51 50 46 34 NEUTRAL — Some of the local townships in the region are experiencing a level of community disconnect, or a lack of togetherness and enthusiasm due to a number of reasons. Some feel, this is improving however, as we are coming out if COVID-19.

58 NEUTRAL — There is a sense that most businesses across the Rangitīkei have fared well and generally remained resilient through COVID-19, however, the local shops and hospitality businesses in the townships have struggled.

The perception that the Rangitīkei economy is low wage and low skilled is having multiple downstream impacts on the region.

21 18 BARRIER — Intergenerational deprivation and associated behaviours, are perpetuating issues around unemployment, crime and disconnection, with insufficient support services and systems further disconnecting people from the resources they need to get out of bad situations, leading to further poverty and hardship.

45 53 54 STRENGTHS — Many of the small township communities and community driven groups across the region are perceived to be passionate connectors, funders and are key to addressing specific community needs. Many feel they are currently the main drivers of solutions and positive outcomes for their communities.

NEUTRAL — While the growing Samoan community in Marton is becoming well established, there are perceived challenges by some around connecting to this community due to limited communication channels and a sense that they want to keep to themselves.

52

STRENGTH — Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

BARRIER — Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

NEUTRAL — Whilst housing has traditionally been cheap, and home ownership is generally high in the Rangitīkei, the nationwide housing crisis has now trickled down to the region, creating a lack of affordable housing and challenges for local and newer residents, elderly and those on lower incomes.

BARRIER — No Poverty

BARRIER — Zero Hunger

STRENGTH — There is a growing awareness and effort from some in the community around growing, harvesting, sharing and learning about food, and a sense of togetherness and fulfilment that naturally comes through these experiences.

38

The increasing lack of affordable housing, low incomes and the rising costs of living, puts significant stress on families and causes a multitude of downstream social issues.

37 36 BARRIER — While there is an acknowledgement of decreasing services and greater travel times living in a rural community, decreased services, barriers to internet access, a lack of public transport, declining rural road conditions and increasing fuel prices are creating further barriers to accessing services, employment, education and recreation. This is impacting lower income families disproportionately.

BARRIER — Some water infrastructure in the region is not fit for purpose and perceptions around safe vs. unsafe drinking water are complex, and don't necessarily reflect reality.

44

BARRIER — Many experience issues and barriers to consistent and affordable internet and cell phone connectivity in the region, which is having a number of downstream impacts.

43

61 NEUTRAL — Whilst some still have affordable rentals, due to the low income nature of the region and rising rents, many are struggling to find affordable, safe and healthy rentals. This is creating a number of negative downstream impacts such as overcrowding, homelessness and an increased need for emergency housing across the region.

19 BARRIER — The issues associated with the low wage Rangitīkei economy are being heightened by the increasing costs of living.

60 30

20 BARRIER — The increasing social and financial complexity of life, coupled with the lack of transparency of financial obligations, is making it really easy for the vulnerable to get into debt.

BARRIER — There is increasing food insecurity in the region, particularly amongst lower income families, with increasing need to access food banks and alternative food providers. It is noted by many that there is a stigma around needing, and being seen to need support with food.

39

BARRIERS — Across the Rangitīkei there is a strong need and community drive for shared multi purpose community hubs, youth spaces and community building and rejuvenation projects, but skepticism exists over the Council's ability to deliver hubs in alignment with community needs.

49 55 56

Figure 17 — The Rangitīkei Communities Systems Map

How to read the insights

Themes

The system map on the previous page (see figure 17), aims to capture the complexity of everything we have heard on one page, including all of the themes. To make things a little easier to follow, each theme has a number, and you will see these numbers featured in the map, representing where they sit in the system and what they may or may not be related to.

In this section of the Equity and Wellbeing Profile, we delve much deeper into each unique theme that has been uncovered through engaging with members of the Rangitīkei community.

Life Stages

In order to ensure our themes are as relatable as possible, we have aligned them to the various life stages of the array of individuals in the Rangitīkei community. This is broken down into infant, youth, adult, elderly and all (see figure 19).

Additionally, we have captured some enablers and barriers within the system that are impacting the ability for organisations to work with and effectively meet the needs of the Rangitīkei community across these various life stages.

Figure 19 — Life stages

Figure 18 — Close up of theme numbers attached to Systems Map
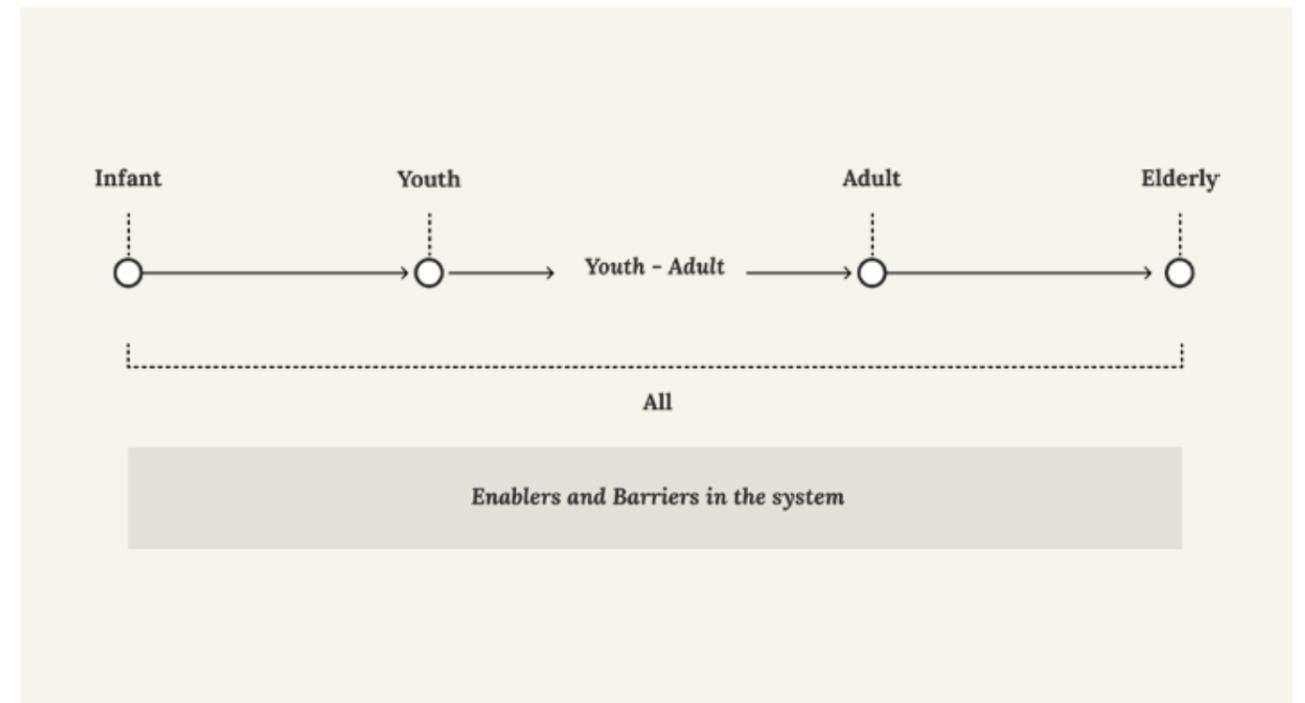
Framework Tags

We have also aligned and tagged each theme to our frameworks, which include the combination of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals, Treasury Living Standards and whānau Ora Goals. You will find these tags on the top right corner of each page. They are coded as below...

Sustainable Development Goals tags:

No Poverty   Zero Hunger   Good Health & Wellbeing   Quality Education   Gender Equality   Clean Water & Sanitation

Affordable & Clean Energy   Decent Work & Economic Growth   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Reduced Inequalities   Sustainable Cities & Communities   Responsible Consumption & Production   Climate Action

Life Below Water   Life on Land   Peace Justice and Strong Institutions   Partnerships for the Goals

Treasury Living Standards tags:

Natural Environment   Financial & Physical Capital   Social Cohesion   Human Capability

Whanau Ora Goals tags:

Self-managing and empowered leaders   Leading healthy lifestyles   Participating fully in society

Confidently participating in Te Ao Māori   Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation

Cohesive, resilient and nurturing   Responsible stewards of their natural and living environments

Statistics

In order to capture both sides of the story, we have built into each theme, any relevant statistics drawn from our Equity and Wellbeing Dashboard. This is to ensure each theme tells not only the people's story, but the data story too.

If you have less time...

If you are short of time, there will be a summary page that captures all of the themes in a life stage at the beginning of each life stage section. This will give you a great overview of the range of themes that were captured.

Alternatively, the last section of this report 'Summary of Findings', beginning on page 277, aims to summarise all of the themes and insights captured in this report, into an easily digestible, and actionable format.

If you have more time...

If you have more time, there is a wealth of information on each individual theme. This includes the relevant stories that were captured from our community that speak to the strengths, barriers, opportunities and any good mahi stories in the community for each, as well as any relevant statistics.

We hope you find these insights both interesting, and inspiring. Enjoy!

Infant

This life stage encompasses all infants and toddlers that fall within the ages of zero to five years old.

Quality Education

Theme 1—There is a real appreciation and presence of early childhood education facilities in the region, however, some experience barriers due to busyness, cost, regulations and more rural locations.

Theme 2—For many parents, the pressure to go to work and send their children to early childhood education, can mean that they are missing essential bonding and social milestones and opportunities with their children, and the broader community.

Framework Tags

Quality Education   No Poverty   Sustainable Cities & Communities

Financial & Physical Capital   Social Cohesion

Participating fully in society

There is a real appreciation and presence of early childhood education facilities in the region, however, some experience barriers due to busyness, cost, regulations and more rural locations.

Strengths

– There are a number of early childhood education providers with good coverage across the region, 'they seem to be popping up everywhere'.
– Many have observed that early childhood education providers in the region always seem to be busy.
– Children get fed in some early childhood education centres, which might be the only nutritional meal they'll get, especially those from lower income families.
– Many feel the 20 free hours a week for three year olds contributes to high attendance, with a sense that this has been a successful initiative by the government.

   " *Kindergartens have always had a good following, and been well run and supported in general.*
   " *Sometimes kindy is the only nutritional food they'll get.*

Barriers

– Early childhood education is becoming necessary for families because of both partners having to work. However, some have experienced difficulty getting access for young babies into early childhood education, meaning they have to choose which to prioritise (early childhood education or work).
– For some working parents, there is a sense that the majority of income goes on early childhood education and for many, especially younger parents, the subsidies help, but they still have to weigh up the cost.

– The downside of success is full early childhood education centres, meaning for some, satisfaction levels aren't the best due to over-run centres, waiting lists and staffing shortages.
– Some feel hygiene and food is not great at some early childhood education centres, with some feeling their children are always sick because the bugs 'go round and round and round'.
– Some early childhood education centres lack registered teachers, or say teachers are registered, when they are not.
– There have been many closures of local township and more rural or mobile early childhood education centres, meaning these families are left feeling like they have not a lot of options, either having to travel further to access centres or in some instances, mothers having to give up their jobs due to being unable to access early childhood education.

   "Of my 30 or so hours of work a week, at least half of that was going to childcare. It's like the privilege of going to work.

   " *I'm actually amazed at the childcare prices that parents are paying, that's more than their wage sometimes.*
   " *You are definitely doing that math of like, how much more do I need to work and the game of what you pay vs. what you earn.*
   " *My friend is on maternity leave at the moment, with a six month old baby and thinking about obviously getting into daycare, but she said that the trouble was the ones that are good are always full.*
   " *They were being absolutely pedantic about the locations, they weren't thinking about the children's needs, or the parents' needs, they were just thinking about structures. It's a pity, really. [referring to the closure of the rural mobile kindies]*

   " *Children should be at home if they are unwell but they are not, they are sent to the centre and it just contributes to a cycle of unwellness.*
   " *We see the tension it causes the parents, do I work or send the children to childcare, or do I sacrifice income to stay with children.*
   " *There is a lack of early childhood education providers in most communities, there are not a lot of options.*
   " *At least two, three or four mothers [I know] have had to give up their jobs because they couldn't find childcare.*

55.7% OF RANGITĪKEI PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN ATTEND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, WHICH IS **LOWER** THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 64%.

64%

55.7%

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

PARTICIPATION HAS ALSO DECLINED CONSISTENTLY SINCE 2013 AND REMAINS ON A DOWNWARD TRAJECTORY.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

Opportunities

– Access to early childhood education needs to be more fair across the board.
– The high demand for early childhood education means the region needs more providers.
– Bringing back the rural mobile kindergartens for those who live further out - they are of huge benefit.

   "There are a lot of facilities out there, but the good ones, that's normally really hard to get into.

Good Mahi in the Community

– Thriving Marton early childhood education centres: Mill Street Kindergarten, Follet Street Kindergarten, commercial centres and the Kōhanga Reo in town.
– The mobile kindies that used to go around the rural hills - unfortunately these closed down due to regulations.
– Another new Kōhanga Reo is about to be established by Ngāti Apa to meet demand and already has a waiting list and hasn't even opened yet.

   " *There is a new Kōhanga Reo about to be established by Ngāti Apa as they've seen an opportunity to have another KR in the town. They already have a waiting list and they haven't even opened yet.*

For many parents, the pressure to go to work and send their children to early childhood education, can mean that they are missing essential bonding and social milestones and opportunities with their children, and the broader community.

Framework Tags

Quality Education   No Poverty   Good Health & Wellbeing   Decent Work & Economic Growth   Gender Equality

Sustainable Cities & Communities

Social Cohesion

Cohesive, resilient and nurturing   Participating fully in society

Strengths

– COVID-19, and having more time at home to bond with their children, has awakened some parents to how important that bonding time is.
– For some parents with flexible work hours, they are able to find a balance, meaning they are not missing essential bonding time with their children.

"*A lot of parents, especially with COVID-19, haven't wanted to send their babies to daycare and would rather bond with their baby.*
"*On the other hand, a local woman who has just had her third baby and she's been able to work as much as she wants, and the children have found places in the local schools and kindies, and I don't think she's missing essential bonding.*

Barriers

– Some parents feel they have 'no choice' but to go to work, meaning they are missing key developmental and learning milestones with their children. Many feel this is a national issue causing a lot of guilt amongst parents with young children.
– Some have expressed concern that some parents either lack the time to, or aren't valuing helping and connecting with others at early childhood education centres.
– Parents that do shift work, are facing further challenges in finding time to see and connect with their children, and share a sense that daycare doesn't accommodate their work hours very well.

– Single parents are experiencing additional barriers as they are also mitigating systems and agencies set up for traditional family structures.

"*The sad thing is for a lot of parents, there is no choice – I am a firm believer in parents as the first teachers – but this isn't possible in today's world.*

"*It is part of the trade-offs of modern life, a lot of people are working.*
"*With some there is no choice. For some it is better to have on-going parental input in early years.*
"*It can be an obligation and a sense of grief and feeling of guilt of not being able to be there for children and guilt when finances are tight.*
"*It's a no-win situation for some parents.*
"*In the fire brigade, the wife was the secretary and he is a volunteer firefighter who works at the saw mill and working the night shift, recently he has changed to a different mill to day shifts so he can see his children.*
"*Some have to lose money if they are ever going to spend any time with their children.*
"*It's especially hard for single parents. We see some at the end of their tether. "I need this income, but I also need rest."*
"*They (single parents) are either caught in the system, or fighting the system to get by.*

RANGITĪKEI HAS LOW EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PARTICIPATION RATES, RELATIVE TO BOTH THE NATIONAL AVERAGE AND SURROUNDING DISTRICTS, AND HAS BEEN ON A **STEADY DECLINE SINCE 2013.**

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

Opportunities

– Reminding parents of the value of early childhood education in relation to building connection and socialisation.

"*They don't know what they are missing, they don't value it, they're not connecting. We've got to change the pitch, that connection personally is valuable.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– The rural mobile kindergarten's that closed down - the ability for mothers to connect with each other was just as important as for the children.

"*That rural service gave rural people something the urban people didn't have. It was really positive and created a good community, it was a pity that it stopped.*

"*It's got much harder. When my children were toddlers we had mobile kindy which would go to the rural halls. That ability for mothers to connect with each other was just as important as for the children. But that was closed down due to regulations.*
"*What is important about that (mobile kindies) is that it was a social opportunity for the mothers. It was important because it gave a sense of community which is an important aspect along with early childhood learning.*

Youth

This life stage encompasses all children and teenagers that fall within the ages of five to 18 years old.

Quality Education

Theme 3—There has been a definite shift in the local schools to cater for more practically minded children, however, there are still concerns around the balance between vocational and academic pathways and ensuring students gain appropriate educational achievement best suited to them.

Theme 4—There is still an undercurrent of intergenerational disconnect and appreciation of the education system, meaning some children are leaving school early and missing out on learning vital skills.

Theme 5—While there are good education options across the Rangitīkei, there are concerns in specific communities around their local schools and their unique journeys.

Theme 6—COVID-19 and the sudden need to shift to online learning, means children are spending even more time online, heightening issues around suitability (to different learning needs), accessibility and the negative effects of spending hours online.

Theme 7—COVID-19 has had huge impacts and disruption to the education and social journey for many children, with the ripple effects only just being felt, and acknowledged now.

Theme 8—Educational attainment in Rangitīkei is low, and many feel this is due to children with academic and sporting potential seeking schooling outside of the region.

Theme 9—Whilst there have been some steps forwards in relation to Māori achievement, there is still a sense that there are challenges around how the current education system aligns with and is relevant to Māori.

Good Health & Wellbeing

Theme 10—There is a strong concern in the community that there is a lack of targeted spaces and activities for youth to engage in when not at school.

Theme 11—There is a lack of mental health support services available in the Rangitīkei for youth, therefore youth and their families who need help, are hitting multiple barriers. COVID-19 has made this need even greater; 'People need things where they live'.

Theme 13—Due to the increasing accessibility and affordability of drugs in the region, and a lack of things to do, youth who stay are at high risk of engaging in recreational drug use.

Theme 14—Whilst there are many active and healthy children in the region, there is a sense that those children who are obese, is a result of deprivation, expense and an intergenerational lack of food knowledge.

Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

Theme 12—Whilst youth offending is low across the region, what does occur is very visible in the smaller communities and seen to be linked with youth boredom (due to a lack of spaces and activities for youth), gang affiliations or prospecting, and a perceived lack of consequences for criminal behaviour.

There has been a definite shift in the local schools to cater for more practically minded children, however, there are still concerns around the balance between vocational and academic pathways and ensuring students gain appropriate educational achievement best suited to them.

Framework Tags

Quality Education Decent Work & Economic Growth

Human Capability

Self-managing and empowered leaders Participating fully in society

Strengths

– Many have experienced that there are some good programmes in the schools for students to get work experience while at school.
– There has been some success in vocational training and working with local providers.
– Practical pathways are a good option for some children, as they might be doing really well in a non-academic pathway.
– Teacher aids provide additional support for time poor teachers, and help to better cater to individual student needs.

"The way that the business sector and tertiary training sectors work with schools now is way better than five, 10, 20 years ago. So there's a lot of crossover now and working together.

" *If it's for education or for a job I don't have an issue. But if it's going to nothing then that is an issue for all of us.*
" *This is why teacher aids are just awesome. You latch on to the right kid and give that kid a little bit of a boost, to look forward while they're still in school. That's time teachers don't have.*
" *Teacher aids, they do get to build relationships with these children in schools, because they've got time. And it's these relationships that keep these children afloat.*

Barriers

– There is concern that schools have gone too far the other way (promoting non-academic vocational pathways), steering youth straight into employment and meaning they possibly miss out on more academically driven pathways.
– Some also feel that as soon as there is a teaching issue, some students are guided into vocational pathways which may not be best suited to them.
– Some children are leaving school without basic English and Math due to alternative credit subjects such as horse-riding, agriculture etc.
– There is a sense that education doesn't work for some children, meaning NCEA and exams can be a big deterrent from school for those that are not academically minded.
– Some have expressed concerns that their children are lacking choice in school, acknowledging that more options are provided online, but they don't have the support that's needed.
– Some feel the local schools are not focused on treating children like individuals - meaning some are falling through the cracks and getting into trouble due to living in a community where 'there is nothing for them to do but school'.
– The children who slip through the cracks have nowhere to learn 'old school' skills, i.e. cooking, sewing, woodwork etc.
– Some feel that schools aren't teaching essential life skills, meaning some children come out of school and they have no idea of the reality of life.

– Funding for teacher aids is being cut back and there is a growing concern from schools that you really have to fight for it, meaning children that need additional support and guidance, often miss out.
– Some have experienced barriers attracting good quality and qualified teachers to more rural areas. This can have downstream impacts on the children in schools.

"If you're going to school and being told level two is good enough, why would you do anything better?

" *I'm just hoping now that vocational pathways haven't become almost a default, where a student is getting a bit tired of school, so 'I'll just go do a panel beaters course or building course'.*
" *The school tells them they are individuals, but they're trying to put them in a box.*
" *Of course we want all children to either go into training or employment when they leave school. But to know the range of options is important. We've done a lot of work in vocational pathways… I just hope it's not been at the expense of traditional academic pathways or whare wānanga.*
" *Does the whole school shift and then more academically minded children then miss out? Then do parents have to pick and choose schools that way?*

" *We see a lot of children being guided into vocational pathways, it could be a teaching issue, as soon as there is an issue they are guided into a vocational pathway.*
" *We are in a community where there is nothing for them to do but school.*
" *It is never easy to get well qualified staff to come to rural areas, that is the other thing.*

"I've got a special needs child, and you have to fight, and fight, and fight, and fight for funding. It's a never ending job.

RANGITĪKEI EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES ARE MUCH LOWER THAN URBAN SCHOOLS IN SURROUNDING DISTRICTS. 34% OF RANGITĪKEI STUDENTS ACHIEVE NCEA LEVEL 3 OR ABOVE, COMPARED WITH 59% IN WHANGANUI AND 53% IN PALMERSTON NORTH.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

34% RANGITĪKEI

59% WHANGANUI

53% PALMERSTON NORTH

Opportunities

– Teaching children the fundamentals in school including learning 'soft skills' as a priority i.e. how to adapt, how to problem solve, and to develop a way to be resilient.
– Creating and building greater awareness around educational options and pathways, to help students choose the pathway they have the most potential in.
– There needs to be re-education back in the schools to start from the basics.
– Finding ways to make academic pathways more fun and interactive.

"It's *about creating options, and showing children their options, so they aren't leaving school shortchanged.*

" *How do you get it across to students that this is setting you up for a career path and that what you miss out on in high school, you might not be able to pick up elsewhere.*
" *We always go back to shove them in a box, let's get these children out!*
" *There needs to be re-education back in the schools to start from the basics.*
" *I think more children would take up academia if that became cooler, funner and more interactive.*
" *You can do a lot of stuff, like science, in a cooler way, rather than what they have right now…I just don't think they've looked at what's right.*

" *I know the school hasn't got the capacity to do it. But actually, we need to have a look at our children and go, they have to do this. They have to do budgeting. They need to understand going on the benefit is not the right thing to do. You should be getting your CV done and finding work.*
" *This (education) isn't going to get any better unless you start it right in the cradle.*
" *Learning these so-called 'soft skills' is actually a priority, it's no less than hard skills. Unless children learn how to adapt, learn how to problem solve, develop a way to be resilient, they will suffer. That will take away options as much as not having a particular qualification.*
" *Home economics needs to come back, budgeting needs to come back, understanding simple things like you need a will by the time you're 18 and that you need an EPOA (Enduring Power of Attorney) in place.*

"*There are so many things that I think, personally, they need to be taught. Like growing a garden, cooking, how to manage money, just your basic things. Give them a little background in that.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– Gateway Courses, i.e. the house built on campus at Rangitīkei College.
– Marton Rotary provides dictionaries to every school student.

"*Rangitīkei college has a gateways course that builds a relocatable house.*

" *They are linked in to UCOL, and he has two apprentices from that Rangitīkei College gateway programme.*
" *[Marton Rotary] Provide dictionaries to every child in a particular year in primary school, every child gets these beautiful big illustrated dictionaries. We know that sometimes this is the only book that goes into the home.*

There is still an undercurrent of intergenerational disconnect and appreciation of the education system, meaning some children are leaving school early and missing out on learning vital skills.

Framework Tags

Quality Education · Peace Justice and Strong Institutions · Decent Work & Economic Growth · Sustainable Cities & Communities · Human Capability · Social Cohesion · Participating fully in society

Strengths

– Many share the view that school provides routine, structure and security for children.
– Some children who leave school early go straight into work at a young age in rural communities i.e. there is a lot of physical traditional work in the region. Some have the view that this could also be to do with the fact young people growing up on farms are needed to work on the farms.

"There is a lot of physical traditional work, the men of the community are out there working, and that is where the boys want to be.

" *Maybe it's because there's some kind of security blanket of being at school. That's what my son said, he misses being at school because of the routine and the structure.*
" *It is not all about qualifications it is also about attitude, this life we are in.*
" *Every child's needs are different, for some it is right to leave early, and for some it is not.*

Barriers

– What's going on at home impacts how children are in school, as coming from disrupted families can influence their morals and attitudes towards schooling.
– Many feel educational attainment should be higher, but it's not because there are a lot of children in Rangitīkei not at school, that aren't educated.
– Parental pressure for children to get a job can limit their children's expectations and mean they miss out on further education opportunities.
– Some feel that children leaving school early for low skilled jobs are short changing themselves.
– Some feel that attitude and a lack of motivation may be a barrier preventing some children from breaking the cycle of not having an interest in schooling or gaining an education.
– For some children, leaving school at 16 to transition into employment is viewed as the right thing to do, however, there are some still concerned that this is very young to leave education.

"There's a wide range of reasons why children were coming out of school without qualifications. It's all connected, self esteem, mental health problems, parents with mental health problems and so on.

" *Baby is born, loved but not, because of how they've been treated. Baby goes to school, and is disruptive because of alcohol and smoking in the home, and then the teacher can't stand them.*
" *My children were playing rugby and the manager said to me "your children will not see in their lifetime what my children see in their day" and that really stayed with me.*
" *We've got three (saw) mills here, so there are avenues of employment, so children get to 15 and find a pathway, and that's why we only have half a dozen year 13's here at the school.*
" *Three boys, they all went to the same school, you could tell they were in deprivation... They would walk into school soaking wet when it's raining, they didn't have the tools to learn and there were behavioural issues. Then it would be found out that the parents bought very little food.*
" *There is a big problem with truancy in schools throughout the country. Children that aren't attending school are likely to also be the ones that are unemployed because of the way they think about life.*
" *By the time they leave 5th form, that's when they risk dropping out of school, NCEA, that's what happens.*
" *These children come out of school and they have no idea of the reality of life.*
" *At 17 if I got offered $50k a year, I'm out there earning the big bucks.*
" *'Stay at school until you get a job' is actually much more prevalent, I found, in Marton than other schools I've worked in.*

" *I can remember walking to [school] on the road and crying because it was a frosty morning and my feet were sore. It wasn't abuse. It was teaching me to respect what was given to me. Because those things that were given to me, were given out of hardship. They had to work so hard.*
" *You're there to teach, you're not their mother or their father... you're there to teach the core skills and they are supposed to get all this other stuff at home. Unfortunately they don't get taught that at home and some teachers pick it up at school.*
" *There's so much that the parents don't tell them until they are in the shit.*
" *I was told recently, only 47% of eligible students are going to school and that shocked me.*
" *A large number of students are also having to leave school early to find a job in Taihape which is alarming*

"For most children that see this stuff, the violence, the drinking and stuff, the majority don't want it, most of them just want to be able to eat and have a roof over their head.

20.35%

OF RANGITĪKEI SCHOOL LEAVERS ARE LEAVING WITHOUT ANY NCEA QUALIFICATION, **WHICH IS DOUBLE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE**.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education
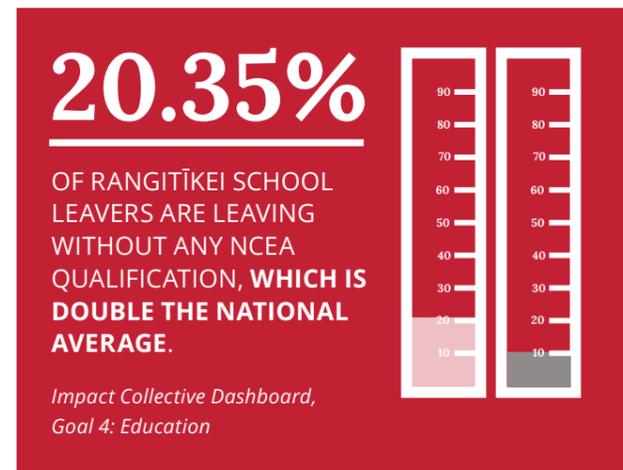
THE STUDENT STAND DOWN RATE IN RANGITĪKEI SCHOOLS IS 40.74 PER 1000 STUDENTS, **CLOSE TO DOUBLE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE**.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

Opportunities

– The truancy service needs to be much more proactive.
– Supporting children to learn about and experience alternative pathways to those they have been exposed to through their upbringing.
– Connecting older, isolated and retired residents with some of these children as mentors.
– Create room for youth in skills and needs based community groups to enable them to upskill and have different life experiences.

"It's all about creating options. I don't care where children go, leaving school to a low skilled job might be the right thing to do, as long as they have options to do other things if they don't want to do that, so that they aren't leaving school shortchanged.

" *The truancy service needs to be much more proactive, it's deep rooted social issues that need to be wrapped with the right support.*
" *Truancy services are very slow too.*
" *Giving a child a look at what they could head towards, a different type of life to what they have, they need to be able to see that to move toward it because at the moment they can only see their parents getting drunk.*

" *Is there an opportunity to connect older retired residents to volunteer and work with some of these children? Potentially it would create a win-win situation and give those isolated as older people a sense of purpose through helping out these younger people.*
" *Is there a need for something more skills based and needs based; like mens shed, women's groups and places like that. Could we immerse our youth into some of those groups?*

While there are good education options across the Rangitīkei, there are concerns in specific communities around their local schools and their unique journeys.

Framework Tags

Quality Education | Reduced Inequalities | Sustainable Cities & Communities
Social Cohesion
Participating fully in society

Strengths

– There has been a new vision, values and culture implemented more recently for Rangitīkei College - which is core to their vision of "no limits" and getting young people to look beyond Marton.
– Taihape Area School (TAS) is viewed by some as a strong sporting school.

"I've gradually come to understand that sort of culture trumps everything if you want to bring change.

" *That's what we (Rangitīkei College) have been working on now. We've developed a whole new sort of core purpose, vision, values, and they really mean something to the school, and they are a real benchmark from which we determined all our decisions.*
" *It is a fact that TAS produces fantastic sports people.*

Barriers

– Some mentioned that Rangitīkei College went through a rough period with a bland and mediocre school culture, with very low expectations. There was also very little acknowledgement of Māori, even though the school roll was (and still is) almost 40% Māori and nearly 10% Samoan.
– Some feel that Rangitīkei College doesn't currently have enough support wrapped around the children - especially those with disabilities and learning difficulties.
– Some feel that Hunterville School has had an up and down journey, which seems to be dependent on the leadership and the principal at the time and whether or not they live locally.

– Many feel the new Taihape Area School campus and building is not fit for purpose, this is a terribly sensitive and contentious topic of conversation in Taihape.
– Some have shared concerns around the education provided at Taihape Area School, and the diminishing numbers of senior students.

"The leadership of a school makes more difference than you would ever imagine it possibly could.

" *It went through a rough period of 10 or 15 years where it didn't really seem to stand for anything. It wasn't that bad. There was no crisis that hadn't sort of bottomed out, or anything like that, but didn't really stand for anything.*
" *The school culture, it felt very bland, very mediocre, very low expectations.*
" *If you walked around the school, there were no distinguishing factors really, that made it look as though it was different to any other school.*
" *There's a lack of communication, resources and collaboration.*
" *They were not supported in class and there was no support for the mum.*
" *It's an up and down journey, dependent on leadership and the principal.*
" *The old college was previously out of town, then it came into town with a new complex but it was built on a design from the northern territory, which has slightly different weather than we get here in Taihape, internals are all not working, all the plumbing, and all the services within the walls.*
" *It is costing more to keep it going than it would be to tear it down and start again.*
" *When I moved to the district, there were nine schools here for a town of 5000 people, you do the maths.*

"Everyone feels that they know how schools should be run. They've all been there so they are all experts.

Opportunities

– Revitalising school cultures, as school culture is everything.
– Trying to root schools in the community, encouraging schools to have place-based curriculums and becoming part of the Rangitīkei.
– Professional development for the teachers.

"I hadn't really been in a school like that before. I mean, every school has got its vision and values, but they tend to be on the letterhead or something like that rather than lived.

" *Doing quite a lot in the cultural revitalisation space. Doing a lot of professional development and work around that. Which has been interesting. Very interesting.*
" *Preparing for the future, this is where a lot of the cultural responsibilities come in but a lot of people don't quite get that... I can argue it from a moral point of view, but I can also argue it from a pragmatic point of view. You've gotta be ready for that.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Rangitīkei College -** has implemented new leadership, culture, values and a 'no limits' strategy. The current Principal was recognised for his 'outstanding' work since he joined the school.
– **Nga Tawa -** high academic achievement and high teacher to student ratio.

"We (Rangitīkei College) are really trying to root ourselves in the community, that place-based curriculum and becoming part of the Rangitīkei rather than just another state school that could be anywhere.

" *Nga Tawa does equestrian, you can bring your horse, and that gets you extra credits.*
" *They also have 12 kids to one teacher, so they have one on one time with the teacher.*

COVID-19 and the sudden need to shift to online learning, means children are spending even more time online, heightening issues around suitability (to different learning needs), accessibility and the negative effects of spending hours online.

Framework Tags

Quality Education   Good Health & Wellbeing   Reduced Inequalities

Human Capability

Leading healthy lifestyles   Participating fully in society

Strengths

– There were some benefits with moving education online for some, such as continuing social interaction with their peers, without having to do this face to face.
– Some felt that online learning over COVID-19 created a more interactive environment for those that tended to sit back and disengage in class.

" *The children that usually sit at the back of the class, you can't hide on Zoom.*

" *Online learning leaves a bit of a trail for us on our end, to see that they are doing, what they are meant to be doing.*

" *It made things easier for us in some ways, contact-wise, they were home a lot more, probably bored, so they had a phone next to them and they were called more regularly.*

" *Inclusion, whilst they had that period at home they could still be included online, minimises that anxiety because they are not having to be face to face.*

"Online learning served a purpose, it was out of our control and the schools did their best to provide children an education, at the time you couldn't really do a lot more really.

Barriers

– Many have experienced that online learning is variable. Some students click into it, some really struggle. Some felt going to school is very different to sitting in your room and trying to motivate yourself to do work.
– Not having internet access is a huge barrier for some students and has been detrimental to their learning, particularly during lockdowns.
– Whilst acknowledging that schools didn't have a choice but to teach online during COVID-19, and that it served its purpose, some shared concerns that this may not necessarily be a valid form of education, with some teachers not necessarily trained to teach online optimally.
– Many feel a huge downside of COVID-19, the lockdowns, and children not being at school, is the loss of the opportunity to develop social skills, deeper friendships and connecting.
– Some children (and parents) feel let down academically, being left to do things by themselves on their computers or by not having access to a computer.
– Many feel children are overloaded with technology that can drain their energy and make them impulsive and impatient.

– Many feel the other downside of children spending so much time online, is that they are spending less time outdoors.
– Some are now experiencing a backlash, when children are at school, they would now rather default back to technology, i.e. look at their phones, rather than listen to the teacher.
– Some families have made the shift to home-schooling as a result of COVID-19. There are some concerns around the safety and health of these children in their home environments, who are no longer coming to school.

"We've chucked them into technology, and we're trying to bring them out to go participate in the outside world. What do you want?

" *Online is variable. Some students click into that, some just struggle. Not because they are lazy, they just don't get it. So there's that from a straight learning point of view.*

" *It's all well saying "yeap, we've got a computer at home" so they tick that off but they have nine other people at home and their parents are also working from home and need to use it. One device isn't enough.*

" *But onscreen learning, there has been a real switch off from children in the last couple of years. I guess it has no, sort of, novelty now.*

" *I really feel for the teachers too - trying to motivate the children through a screen is really hard.*

" *Everything's instant, you're right, and also with the young people today, I can pick up this thing (phone) and be anywhere in the world and do whatever I like.*

" *Their reality isn't reality. But this is the world that they live in. And when they're sitting in a classroom with 34 other children and a teacher, they'd rather sit there and look at their phones. That's the reality, our young people are on these (phones).*

" *They don't stick at things and they you know, like, when I talked earlier about the tech overload, we have such an impulsive generation because they just want that instant gratification that technology gives them.*

" *The students that are inspired to learn will take their laptops and get online and they will do it with parental encouragement, but if you haven't got this at home there is no incentive to jump online and to learn.*

" *Missing out on the interactions children have with each other in a classroom situation, it's really important, and the less able ones learn a huge amount by being in the social interactions in the classroom.*

" *I think the whole thing about moving online for education is going to be a future nightmare for us, on both sides (the receivers and the providers).*

" *Teaching children online without really justifying it, as a valid form of education, we haven't had a choice.*

" *The whole association with technology with education is possibly a mistake, too soon for a child.*

" *One of the biggest challenges is online stuff, like eating pure sugar, constantly getting hits, concentration is zero, and they just can't do it.*

" *The more time you spend online, the less time you spend outdoors.*

" *It really varies, some schools are very technological, and others are not, and it comes down to money, meaning huge numbers of children are disadvantaged if they don't have it.*

Opportunities

– Collating screen time data to understand the impact it may be having on children.
– Big Brothers, Big Sisters type programmes to provide support to students who have lost connection through COVID-19
– Education around how to use the internet and social media positively.
– Encouraging children to have a better balance and spend time outdoors (without access to wifi).

" *We need to look at how much time students spend on a screen in a school day. We don't actually collate that data and what the overall impact of that is.*

" *Maybe we need to pay more attention to making sure everybody can readily access the internet for good uses.*

" *Some of our schools are not for everyone, [and some aren't good at] being there for one another. Is there a space here for big brother programmes that can give [support] to one another through that relationship?*

COVID-19 has had huge impacts and disruption to the education and social journey for many children, with the ripple effects only just being felt, and acknowledged now.

Framework Tags

Quality Education Good Health & Wellbeing Reduced Inequalities

Decent Work & Economic Growth Sustainable Cities & Communities

Social Cohesion Human Capability

Leading healthy lifestyles Cohesive, resilient and nurturing Participating fully in society

Strengths

– Some feel optimistic that now we have come out of COVID-19 restrictions, life will largely return back to normal, and the negative impacts on children may self-correct.

"Now we are out of the restrictions, and life may never be what it was, it might just largely self-correct..."

Barriers

– Many children have experienced disturbances to starting school life during COVID-19.
– Some schools have experienced low attendance rates to important school events, which can have some downstream effects.
– Some have experienced difficulty getting children to school and staying in school - when they're at school they are okay, but getting them to school has become a bigger problem.
– Many express concern around children missing out on the social benefits of being at school, which impacts their learning and development going forwards.
– There is a feeling that children received a lack of mental health support through COVID-19 and that support services were waiting for children (and parents) to come to them, rather than being proactive.
– Some expressed concerns that masks may be a barrier to social interactions for some children.

"People got to the point of struggling with the struggles. They're sick of coping, they have coped but they are sick of doing it. You know, adapting, reframing, and so on."

" *It's been quite challenging this year in particular, with general attendance, it's at 70%, that means every kid is away three days every two weeks and for every kid that isn't away for three days another kid is away for more. A lot of that is sickness, but a lot of it's also a lack of engagement with schooling and with learning.*

" *So our retention rates have dropped. Most of them have gone into what they call employment, but it is 'I'm working on my uncle's farm a few days a week'. A lot of the sort of underemployment stuff.*

" *They haven't gone to nothing and they haven't gone to other schools or anything. They've just gone off and drifted off. That has been quite significant over the past couple of years.*

" *School is more than about what you're learning in class, they are missing a whole lot of other things.*

" *A lot of our services come from Whanganui, or they come from Palmy and it's just not delivering what they are funded to do. So our children are missing out.*

" *It's the children, it's our next generation that has been impacted by this. What is the world gonna look like when they're ruling it? With zero life skills, zero understanding, zero empathy, just broken children in adult bodies.*

" *If the children are in school, they're meeting people, their peers, their teachers with masks on and it's a straightaway barrier.*

" *It's just so hard to make connections when you can't even see the person's whole face.*

" *They provided us some valuable insight around mental health. I think that's the biggest thing that affected youth through COVID-19, and the lack of support there is for them in that space.*

" *When you've got one school counsellor to a few hundred children, it's just not sustainable. How are you going to be able to support that many children? It's just not how it should be.*

"How has that been affecting them, not just socially, but mentally and emotionally? They've been excluded from things in a time where that's part of their development as a human, having some way to belong, having self worth and knowing that you're worth people putting time into you."

Opportunities

– Services need to be held accountable to ensure they are doing what they are funded to do.
– Children need a safe space to go, regardless of COVID-19 related barriers i.e. their vaccination status.
– Better connecting and networking between youth service providers.

"The more small things, and networks, that we get in play, hopefully, the more impact it'll have.

" *What came from that though, is a real need to hold our services accountable, especially in a small town like Marton.*

" *There is a real need for it (The Lobby), the council has decided to mandate vaccinations for that space. So that's a real issue for me and especially when we know that kids need somewhere safe to go whether they're vaccinated or not.*

Framework Tags

Quality Education   Decent Work & Economic Growth   Sustainable Cities & Communities

Human Capability

# Educational attainment in Rangitīkei is low, and many feel this is due to children with academic and sporting potential seeking schooling outside of the region.

Strengths

– Some feel that of those youth who leave and do come back, they come back highly qualified.
– Some feel that being a small rural school is an advantage as they can do some things that bigger schools can't.

"We're actually talking about being small and being rural as an advantage. Yeah, there's some things we can do that the biggest schools can do, but there's a lot of things we can do that they can't do either.

" *A lot of people come back to the farm who have done things like a degree at university or a trade, before they've come back, and oftentimes they are much more successful than those who come straight back to the farm.*

Barriers

– Some local families are sending their children out of the area because they perceive the schools elsewhere as better for their children (better academic or sporting opportunities); this is particularly prevalent with farming families.
– Rural schools are viewed by some as more traditional, conservative and with an element of 'red-neckism' which may act as a deterrent for some parents.
– Some feel that the most able students seek their education outside of the region but that is not to say that there aren't able students that remain in the Rangitikēi.
– Some feel that for those who do stay in the region for schooling, it is perceived to be more challenging to succeed than at schools outside of the Rangitīkei.

– For many children that stay in the district for schooling, it is because they don't have a choice; some feel this is a sign of a broken system.
– Some feel that the lack of a bus service (public transport) in the region may be an additional reason some seek schooling outside of the region.
– Many feel that as there are also no tertiary education facilities on their doorstep for youth to engage with, which acts as an additional disincentive to attend secondary education in the region.

"The struggle is so much harder for the children that do really well in our schools, than the others, it is harder to succeed.

" *Those that can afford it (private schooling outside of the region) have the option, those who can't, don't.*
" *In rural Bulls and Hunterville, farmers children tend to go to either Fielding or single sex schools as they tend to have agricultural courses and because "big is better", that's the belief anyway.*
" *They see students are going to Feilding High School so they think we've got to be more like Feilding High School. Whereas we'll never be like those. We can never be a school of 1500, we can never have a first 15 that plays on a national stage.*
" *It's not that there are not able students here, it's that the most able students are more likely to go out of the area for their education.*
" *It can be a natural progression in families, going to school where your parents went (if you can afford it), it's family culture.*
" *If there are significant (numbers of) children that go out for education and their data isn't captured in the Rangitīkei.*

" *It's a real issue that our youth are going away to school because our three colleges are not considered... if you can afford a better option, people wouldn't consider them, this is a big issue in our communities.*
" *Parents are concerned about the quality of the high school education and small high schools, the choices they are able to provide are more limited.*
" *I sent my daughter to school in Feilding to be in a stronger academic and challenging academic environment.*

RANGITĪKEI EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES ARE MUCH LOWER THAN URBAN SCHOOLS IN SURROUNDING DISTRICTS. 34% OF RANGITĪKEI STUDENTS ACHIEVE NCEA LEVEL 3 OR ABOVE, COMPARED WITH 59% IN WHANGANUI AND 53% IN PALMERSTON NORTH.

34% RANGITĪKEI   **59%** WHANGANUI   **53%** PALMERSTON NTH

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

75.2% OF RANGITĪKEI SCHOOL STUDENTS ATTENDED HIGH SCHOOL UNTIL AT LEAST 17 YEARS OF AGE, WHICH IS BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 83.5%.
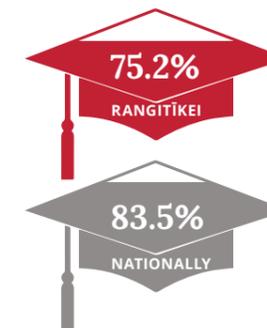
Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

75.2% RANGITĪKEI

83.5% NATIONALLY

Opportunities

– Offering better support, education and tools to those youth who don't have a choice but to stay in the district for schooling.

" *How do you pick these people up and give them the tools to add to the culture of the district?*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Youth Council -** an aspirational bunch of youth aiming to represent their voice to Council.

"We've got a good youth council for the Rangitīkei district. They are an inspiring bunch of kids.

Whilst there have been some steps forwards in relation to Māori achievement, there is still a sense that there are challenges around how the current education system aligns with and is relevant to Māori.

Framework Tags

Quality Education   Reduced Inequalities

Social Cohesion

Confidently participating in Te Ao Māori   Participating fully in society

Strengths

– Some have observed an increasing presence of Māori leadership roles in schools, which means more role models for Māori children.
– Iwi and hapū are making some positive moves in the community which is reflecting back on Māori students.
– Some share the view that the teaching of the Māori language and values in schools has increased over the last 10 to 15 years; there is also a new curriculum coming with a stronger emphasis on New Zealand history that will allow Māori children to feel more connected.
– Some have observed that Māori and Pākehā children are spending more time together and mixing well in school environments compared to the past.

"The new curriculum will be a good thing to allow our children, our Māori children, to feel more connected. It will be around New Zealand history and the context of what comes with that and how schools chose to teach that.

" *I always notice some of the most outstanding students we deal with from the local high school are Māori or Polynesian, and usually women, the leaders.*
" *Māori is being far more professionally taught in schools and engaged with by the students than it was 10 to 15 years ago.*
" *My observation of the groups milling around recently was that groups were mixed, there weren't explicit Māori or Pākehā groups of children.*

Barriers

– Many Māori feel that the school curriculum is not tailored to, and is creating struggles for Māori children.
– Leaving school to work or look after family members can be cultural for some Māori families, which means they can leave without their NCEA.

"Mainstream structures, they forget the wairua side of things, that is lost in the teaching. It is just instructional.

" *At TAS they have about an 80% roll of Māori, and a lot of those children go to the school but gain no education while they are there because they feel a lot of the stuff they are being taught is irrelevant or they have no connection to it.*
" *We were a proud people. And we had our own mana, but not as it's perceived today.*
" *I'm just wondering if what we are teaching to our children, especially our Māori children, is relevant for them when they leave school?*
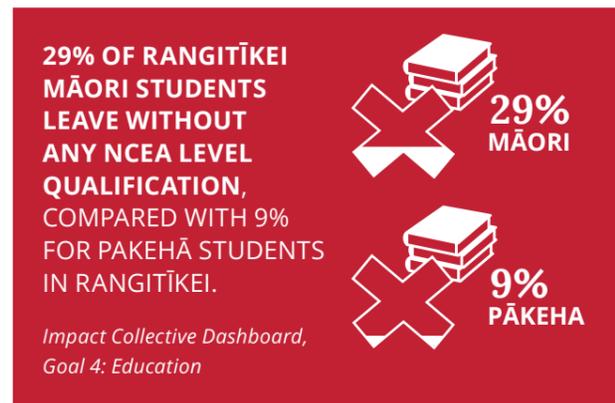
29% OF RANGITĪKEI MĀORI STUDENTS LEAVE WITHOUT ANY NCEA LEVEL QUALIFICATION, COMPARED WITH 9% FOR PAKEHĀ STUDENTS IN RANGITĪKEI.

29% MĀORI

9% PĀKEHA

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

STUDENT RETENTION FOR MĀORI IS **ALSO WEAK**, WITH **69% OF MĀORI STAYING AT SCHOOL UNTIL AGE 17** COMPARED WITH **75% FOR THE GENERAL POPULATION**.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

NON-MĀORI ARE **10.45% MORE LIKELY TO OBTAIN AT LEAST NCEA LEVEL 1** WHEN COMPARED WITH **MĀORI**.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

Opportunities

– A more relevant and tailored curriculum for Māori children i.e. some have observed that Māori children love to work with their hands and create, how can this be better nurtured?
– The progression and ongoing implementation of iwi and hapū education programmes.
– Reconnecting Māori children with their whenua, whānau and identity.

"How do we fix it? I don't know how we fix it. But I know for me, it is having this place, the whenua, for our family, when they're troubled or down and out to come and reconnect, not only with the land but with each other, with the wairua of the place and, you know, to their tupuna and learning their whakapapa.

" *It's just a standard curriculum that is pumped out everywhere but I mean like, what's being promoted at the moment is bringing in a more iwi lens, if they were learning about their people, and about their history, that would involve maths, it would involve english, but it has to be relevant.*

" *So if you don't read or write well, if you got a repair manual for a Harley Davidson motorbike engine, you can learn how to read because it's something that you're really interested in. Yeah, whatever pathway it takes.*
" *Our Māori children, they love to work with their hands and create.*
" *It's about our people learning their identity, who they are, and that we are a good people.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– Iwi & hapū education programmes.
– **Ngāti Apa -** Continue to grow and develop as an organisation, they have a great campus with great facilities for teaching and learning.
– **Rangitīkei College -** teach Te Reo and do Kapa Haka.

"Our iwi and hapū are making some good moves, some positive moves in the community which is reflecting back on our Māori students.

" *We have very strong iwi in Marton, Ngāti Apa, and they have Turakina Girls College grounds, a massive set up there and great learning classes and computers etc.*
" *There are facilities there, they (Ngāti Apa) are a really strong iwi and they are doing cool things.*
" *The holiday programmes they (Ngāti Apa) are providing are mana enhancing and reconnecting children with their whakapapa and their roots which is a huge opportunity. We didn't have that opportunity.*

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing | Peace Justice and Strong Institutions | Sustainable Cities & Communities

Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Social Cohesion | Financial & Physical Capital

Participating fully in society

There is a strong concern in the community that there is a lack of targeted spaces and activities for youth to engage in when not at school.

Strengths

– There are some initiatives and/or spaces in the region that have been recently refurbished or funded by community groups that are beginning to offer youth more to do i.e. The Lobby in Taihape, the Marton Skatepark and Playground and Forge Boxing (see the 'Good Mahi in the Community' section of this theme on the next page).

Barriers

– There is a sense by some that the only place for youth is at school, with financial and transport barriers preventing some children from being able to access sports and activities outside of school.
– Some have noted there is a real problem with the pre-teen cohort in relation to after school care; there is nowhere safe for them to go, or places are not open at an appropriate time.
– Some feel that some activities or resources that have been provided to youth in the past, have not been what they wanted or aligned to their needs.
– Some are grieving the loss of The Lobby (youth space) in Marton and now feel there is no designated safe space for teenagers in the township.
– Some have acknowledged that how youth entertain themselves has changed over the years with a sense that youth today expect things to be organised or 'put on' for them, as opposed to finding or organising something to do for themselves. Some feel the role of technology may have influenced this.

"Sports and education, it's all good for schools to provide those things but parents have to be able to afford the uniforms and things."

" *We did have a youth hub in the town that didn't really work for whatever reason.*
" *I think a lot of people may be looking for something to be put on for them to show up, as opposed to get off your chuff and organise something and find something.*
" *The commute for parents to work means children have nowhere to go.*
" *Young people at the expo said The Lobby wasn't open enough, and not at the times they wanted it to be open.*
" *There's been lots of youth groups over the years organising things, and that's never worked either.*

Opportunities

– Better public transport for youth to allow them to get around the region with ease and to interact with one another.
– The creation of spaces that integrate youth.
– Active youth programmes that provide them with pathways.
– Reconnecting youth to the natural environment.
– Duke of Edinburgh Award schemes, getting those sorts of groups in the schools.

"What I know the young people of Taihape have said is that we don't want to be shoved off into our own little corner, we want to feel involved."

" *There is a big need here in relation to the demand for this but there aren't the services or facilities.*
" *My ideal would be there will be a youth hub somewhere but I want it in collaboration with the rūnanga's, they do a lot of collaboration in that area and the local school, so it's not driven just by Council.*
" *They did a survey and they actually said that's not what we want. We want a space to go as part of the community, not to be shoved off.*
" *When they did the research about the hub, talking to youth, they didn't want a space in the hub just for them, they wanted to be integrated.*
" *I said it would be great if we had more transport so the children could get around the district and interact, at that age rubbing shoulders was so important.*
" *Duke of Edinburgh Award schemes could be involved, getting those sorts of groups in the schools.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– The Lobby in Taihape has just been refurbished, has recently reopened and is going great.
– Years ago, there was an outdoor education group and each month, an activity was planned for the children and it worked great.
– Forge Boxing provides an active hobby for youth to engage with in the area, with trickle down physical and mental health benefits.
– The new skatepark and playground in Marton is popular and widely used by youth in the area.

"The new skateboard park and the new playground are hugely used so when you do provide something for the children they do use it!

" *They have just reopened The Lobby in Taihape and they have built a stage which is just awesome, it's being used for music etc.*
" *At The Lobby in Taihape, they've lowered the age, they've removed the play stations, and got noise canceling headphones so that the space isn't drowned out with noise. The new lobby is a lot more inviting with a lot of space for children to hang out and talk to one another. Learn to talk rather than having their noses in their phones all day.*
" *Years ago, there was a time when the outdoor type had the outdoor education group. And each month, an activity was planned for the children like hiking or going somewhere or rafting or one time we took them up to the confidence course at the army. Another time we took them up to the army for gun safety. Forge boxing is going really well. Once the lobby closed that's where their attention went to. A lot of children go, like a lot.*
" *She's even started to get a van where the Taihape local police are driving down youth to Forge boxing, so that youth have something to go to.*

Waka Ama - Rātana Pā Kaihoe Trust

"The dream is to make waka ama accessible to anyone and everyone.

" My kids were introduced to waka ama through family friends. I was getting a haircut one day and they were looking for kids for the team, and asked if mine would be interested in waka ama and that was pretty much it.

" We went down for our first session and our kids were hooked.

"It is water and health, all bundled up and into one sport. There's, like a competitive element, definitely a competitive element to the sport. But there's also just that part of just getting out on the awa and connecting.

" I have a passion for following my kids and supporting my kids. I ended up being a coach, which led to wanting more and wanting the best for our tamariki. So that's where the idea of creating our own club came from.

"We want to share the waka ama that's been shared with us, to give that opportunity to our kids in our community, and then, spread that opportunity throughout the Whanganui and Rangitīkei District.

" Our kids paddled, represented at national level, but it was under other clubs out of Whanganui. And the dream was that, you know, one day that our kids will paddle and represent us.

" I'm trying to relay that to the next generation, who want to aspire to be the best in the world or, just go out for a social paddle, if that's what they want. We need to be able to give them the opportunity.

"While I'm doing it, I'm supporting every other kid that wants an opportunity and making sure there is opportunity for kids in Ratana.

"It's another vehicle to achieve, not just in that particular sport, but also in the values that they learn along the way, that are probably more important.

" That's the reward of being a coach or being someone who's supporting children, it's because you can see the benefits, social, making new friends, rugby mates, waka ama mates, opening up social circles.

"The thing I love about sports is you're not just teaching that particular sport, you're teaching commitment, you're teaching better communication... it's not just an individual sport, you've got to be there, not just for yourself, but for your teammates. And that translates into so many other things, in school, and out and about in your community.

" I want them to be able to achieve what they want to achieve, and to be able to help that by providing opportunities, rugby, waka ama, whatever. If I can help, then that's the role I'm gonna play.

"As a coach. I just want the best for our rangitahi. And to be a good role model and to be able to provide some opportunities.

Forge Boxing

" *Forge boxing came together with me getting a random message after work one day. And at first, I thought it was a scam message just asking about running classes ... I messaged her back, thankfully.*

" *She ended up getting me in for an interview... questioning my career and If I'd be willing to run the kids in the community through basic training and that, I was fully keen on it.*

" *One of the ideas that was put forward on the table was actually by one of our local policemen who had talked about kids getting picked up and really having nowhere for them to be directed to.*

"The police engaged with these kids and asked them 'what do you want to do?', 'what would keep you off the streets?', 'what would stop us from having to pick you up?'. They were all like, 'yeah, we want to learn how to fight, we're gonna be fighters'.

"That was really where the idea was born, as it's an opportunity, not just to teach them how to fight, but to use fighting and boxing skills to teach them resilience, self-discipline, all those good things that make successful adults.

"To put the ones on the right path, that are walking down the wrong path. And that we can be a place that gives them a sense of belonging, and self-worth, and all those good things that make good adults.

" *We started getting it sorted, finding an area to work in, getting kids in, some showed the same determination as I did right from the beginning. It's really cool, so many kids just love what we're doing here.*

" *We partnered up with the school and the police in town, to get a gauge on where everyone's standing.*

"After we started, all the 'troubled youth' sort of dissipated, and they became just 'youth'. We were getting just the occasional 'in trouble kid'. And slowly it turned into no kids getting in trouble.

" *I think it will only grow as word spreads around what we're up to. And we've started adult classes now too. Youth get connected that way.*

"For Forge Boxing, I just want to see the kids having fun. If any kids want to progress into their own boxing career, then I'll be happy.

"It's given me a sense of accomplishment and knowing that we've done something that matters and that we're doing something. If it only makes a difference to one kid, then it's all worth it.
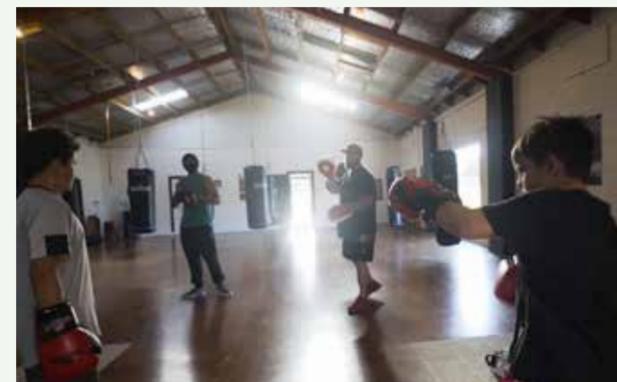
There is a lack of mental health support services available in the Rangitīkei for youth, therefore, youth and their families who need help, are hitting multiple barriers. COVID-19 has made this need even greater; 'People need things where they live'.

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing | Reduced Inequalities | Peace Justice and Strong Institutions

Sustainable Cities & Communities

Financial & Physical Capital | Human Capability

Leading healthy lifestyles | Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

Strengths

– Networking and referrals are working well for some mental health support services in the region.
– There are some nationwide programmes and 0800 numbers that youth can access.

"Community providers and stuff, we spend a lot of time networking in our community, getting to know each other, means we can cross-refer.

" *There are nationwide programmes like I am Hope that people can access by just picking up a phone.*

Barriers

– Many feel mental health support services are lacking for youth and their parents, and that the services coming in from other areas aren't enough.
– There is a sense that there is a lack of awareness around national services and 0800 numbers, and for many youth, these are one step too far removed to really help.
– Some feel that some services offer surface level support, rather than taking a whānau-centric approach in order to get to the core underlying issues.
– Many feel there is a huge breakdown in services, with many feeling they are the "ambulance at the bottom of the cliff and failing miserably."
– Most feel COVID-19 amplified the need for mental health services across the board, with COVID-19 having a huge impact on our young people, including isolating them from services and support.
– Some schools embrace services that can make a difference to young people, but unfortunately some schools think they can do it all on their own and feel they don't need the support of external providers.
– Some feel that counselling services that are provided at schools, often eat into important socialisation time i.e. lunch breaks, meaning these children miss out.
– Some feel that whilst there are some good people trying to do some good stuff for youth in the region, and pouring a lot of money into it, it is still not enough due to the sheer scale and complexity of this issue.

"It was a lack of resources, lack of funds, lack of information, lack of anything.

" *I had to look outside the box to access services for my son.*

" *There is nothing for the children here. Systems here do not work.*

" *Talking to a mother with a suicidal son and he has not had a proper counselling session.*

" *There are issues around access to mental health and wellbeing, the rural nature and distances to travel make it more challenging.*

" *There is support out there, but they rely on other agencies that comes across from Whanganui.*

" *You have to kick at closed doors and you have to have those resources to do that.*

" *School counselling, you have to go at lunchtime and it disconnects children from their peers.*

" *The general frustration about a lot of people trying to do some good stuff, but really not make a hell of a lot of difference - anything around youth.*

" *It doesn't matter how much money you pour at it, it is still not enough.*

" *It glosses over the real issues like breakdown in family, parents having to both work to afford cost of living.*

" *Even when I think of non-emergency mental health cases, there's a three to six month wait to even be able to make an appointment with a counsellor.*

" *(Youth are) becoming more reclusive, not going out, social impacts, mental health impacts, online gambling has increased hugely since COVID-19.*

" *(COVID-19) has disrupted their access to services including us because they are just not out in the community as often.*

" *We try, and try again with schools who won't welcome our support services in their schools.*

" *Unfortunately, some schools just feel they are doing okay on their own, and don't need the support of external providers.*

" *There's not a lot in our area to support mental health and youth. There's not a lot of movement in that space either. You don't see anything being put in place.*

" *Instead of having a whānau scope they have a youth scope. So they pick them up, go get Burger King, bring them back and that's about it.*

" *This is the bottom of the cliff. And it's not because we haven't asked for help before. We asked for help before, we even went near the cliff, there just hasn't been any (help).*

" *From a personal perspective, and a professional one, there's just a mess of breakdown and it is just failing miserably.*

"You guys are the professionals. You're supposed to know how to help me. You're supposed to be able to give me tools to be able to do better for my children but you don't have anything.

MENTAL HEALTH IS AN INCREASING PROBLEM ACROSS NEW ZEALAND **WITH THE RATE OF YOUTH DEPRESSION DOUBLING SINCE 2012**.

2012

2022

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND: GREATER URGENCY REQUIRED, Koi Tū: The Centre for Informed Futures at The University of Auckland

Opportunities

– More accessible information around support services available to youth (national and local).
– Children need support close to where they live.
– Some feel there is a need for lived experience support programmes with one person supporting another in the region.
– Community leaders want young kiwis, our future leaders, to make it and believe it starts with one person at a time.

"Through lived experience, being able to support others in their time of need, giving young people confidence to be the best versions of themselves they can be, if we can break the cycle this whole generation has been locked into, that's a win, but it starts with one person at a time.

" *I just want these young kiwis, our future leaders, to make it. You look at each one of them and you know there is hope, a way out of it, and a way to a successful future.*
" *They certainly need the help close to where they are.*
" *That's where we should be getting those services involved, before everybody's broken at the bottom.*
" *More information needs to go out about healthlines that are available for all.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Kiwi Can Programme -** a national wellbeing programme right through the schools that went particularly well in the Rangitīkei region, it was their response to a number of youth suicides.
– Youth services and their support of young people with support and resources they need.
– iwi provided mental health support services.

"Kiwi Can was around mental wellbeing, right through the schools, a national programme that went particularly well in our district.

" *We work closely with the iwi critical worker at the social agency. They are great at coming in and providing support.*

Framework Tags

Peace Justice and Strong Institutions   Good Health & Wellbeing   Sustainable Cities & Communities

Social Cohesion

Participating fully in society

Whilst youth offending is low across the region, what does occur is very visible in the smaller communities and seen to be linked with youth boredom (due to a lack of spaces and activities for youth), gang affiliations or prospecting, and a perceived lack of consequences for criminal behaviour.

Strengths

– Some feel shop-lifting and vandalism and aligning petty crime is not that evident in the Rangitīkei.
– There is a perception by some that "by in-large the youth are pretty good."
– Some feel that by giving youth a sense of pride and belonging it positively impacts their lives mitigating incentives toward criminal behaviours.

"I found that in Rangitīkei, crime is less than in other schools. There's lots of talk about it and about gang stuff. But it's not visible, I've never seen a gang patch... We have virtually no vandalism at school.

" *I got funding and gave them dress pants and a white shirt, got them to go in a bus to Whanganui, and they stood straighter, walked taller and behaved much better purely because they had dress pants and a nice shirt.*

" *You get a kid, and you dress them up good, and they become a different kid (referring to rugby uniforms)'.*

" *This photo was taken in 1991, of the prison league team, and they had all the different gangs, all the different chapters, they all played together, and their pathway was to play a game of rugby league, so they forgot about their battles, they forgot about what they were doing inside of the prison, because they knew at the end of the game they were gonna get a boil up and a bucket of KFC.*

Barriers

– Many feel there is a lack of engagement, activities, spaces and opportunities for young people in the community which may contribute to some criminal activity.
– There is a strong perception that many youth are bored, especially during the school holidays. Young people don't have enough to do.
– Some feel youth crime tends to be petty crime or reckless driving.
– It is perceived by some communities that boredom and an increasing gang presence are creating the opportunity for youth to prospect in some towns.
– Some feel that police staff changes and the loss of positive relationships are creating a barrier to the continuity of youth programmes; such as a previously successful rugby league programme and youth outdoor programme in Taihape.
– Some feel there is only so much the police can do to intervene and there are minimal consequences for criminal activity by youth . Some perceive current approaches ineffective for youth crime prevention.
– Some feel youth learn and are highly influenced by their peers, more so than from an adult or a teacher. If this is a negative environment, it can lead to a negative outcome.
– Some feel that since COVID-19 , youth are doing 'silly and naughty things' more regularly.

"Rural areas used to also be really busy towns, now there are a lot of boarded up buildings, which is an opportunity for youth offending, whereas we never used to have that.

" *Since COVID-19 children are much more engaged in naughty silly things.*

" *I have a bus stop just outside my house and during the school term it's fine, but during the holidays it gets absolutely hammered, children smash the windows or kick it.*

" *We do have a group of little shits in this town, they are very opportunist. They'll get into anything and everything.*

" *Offending is not so much criminal, so we have a lot of graffiti artists. But we also don't have a lot for them to do here.*

" *This shouldn't be a surprise, this is a challenge in small rural communities, we train our children, and unless you have a gateway to transition them safely into the next stage of their working life it's easy to fall off the tracks.*

" *I did hear last year there were children going to school with red handkerchiefs out their back pocket designating gang affiliation.*

" *It's the most frustrating thing, because as a parent I've taught him right from wrong, and he knows what he's doing is wrong but he doesn't care because nothing happens.*

" *Those children (often) have at-home issues where there is alcohol, drugs, violence.*

" *We've got a group of young ones around town who know they're basically untouchable.*

" *We send them out to get off the screen but were sending them out with nothing to do.*

THE YOUTH OFFENDING RATE IN RANGITĪKEI IS HIGH AT 79.3 OFFENDERS PER 10,000 YOUTH, COMPARED WITH 64.2 NATIONALLY.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 16: Safety & Inclusivity

NATIONALLY
64.2
offenders
per 10,000 people

RANGITĪKEI
79.3
offenders
per 10,000 people
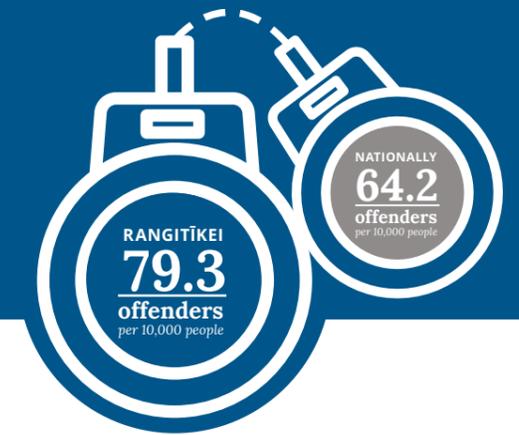
Opportunities

– It is felt strong mentors and positive role models are needed for youth in the community, particularly for young boys and men.
– Many feel there is a strong need for the provision of youth specific community spaces that enable youth to learn more about themselves and who they are.
– Some feel youth potential can be harnessed through environmental based mentoring.
– Providing positive environments to enable youth to learn from one another positively.
– A youth worker is needed, attached to the police station in Taihape.

"If you have a group of young people and you want to change the direction of whatever they're doing, you have to provide an alternative pathway.

" There needs to be more specific support for boys and young men. In families without fathers, where are their positive role models?
" Crime comes down to education, learning more about yourself and who you are, we need a space for these things to happen.
" If they had facilities to meet together more responsibly that could remedy this.
" Bad children are capable of doing bad things, but we had a system in place that made them almost normal, just by looking after them and guiding them.

" I would pick 15 good children and 15 bad children, 15 boys, 15 girls, and they just walked... and they came out different people.
" Had a father ring up and say 'what did you do to my son!. We come home now and the veggies are in the pot ready to cook, and he's telling me he learnt it in the bush'.

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Forge Boxing -** Boxing was mentioned by some as a great hobby for youth to engage in, to both get fit and learn resilience.

"Forge boxing is going really well. Once the lobby closed that's where their attention went to. A lot of kids go, like a lot.

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing | Peace Justice and Strong Institutions | Quality Education | Decent Work & Economic Growth

Sustainable Cities & Communities

Human Capability

Leading healthy lifestyles | Participating fully in society

Due to the increasing accessibility and affordability of drugs in the region, and a lack of things to do, youth who stay are at high risk of engaging in recreational drug use.

Barriers

– Some feel that the lack of opportunities for youth in the region, opens the door to substance abuse as there is nothing better to do.
– Some perceive that poverty and the "low cost" of substances is facilitating an "ease of access" to drugs for young people.
– There is a strong community perception by some that gangs and drug use is increasing in the Rangitīkei.
– Some feel that drug use is intergenerational, and influenced by the family environment.
– Some feel that at-risk youth were more severely at risk during lockdown and some saw an increase in domestic violence and a resultant increase in drug use in youth.
– Some feel that the increase in drug use has a direct correlation with increased crime in the area; in particular, methamphetamine.
– Some employers that do compulsory drug testing, have not experienced any failed tests. However, they suspect this could be a result of the compulsory drug testing deterring drug users from applying for these roles.
– It was noted that large scale drug busts are facilitated by Whanganui Police, who are outside of the region, due to a lack of police resources in the region.

"We are a small town, but there are at least eight houses that we go along and knock on the door with a $20 bill. You don't have to say anything. But they will come out and they'll offer you either a point bag of meth, or a tinny, most of it is just meth.

" *In small rural communities, there is vaping, drugs etc that comes from families - it's a generational thing.*
" *Drugs are a way to address boredom... It's a way to entertain yourself.*
" *And yes we have heaps of drugs here, P is everywhere!*
" *We have a P house here, everyone knows where it is, I've told the cops, they know too.*
" *A lot of crime in this town is driven by P, it is high risk.*
" *Drugs are strong in the area, the house we bought, apparently they sold drugs from here because when we arrived we had the police around.*
" *For a while he (the local drug dealer) was living up my street, I was terrified, when he had somebody there who really was on meth, I was scared.*
" *It's the demise of the family due to those things (drugs).*
" *I keep being told by people there's a hell of a lot of meth here, and you'd be surprised who takes it.*
" *We don't get the resources up here, and when they do have a bust, it's not coordinated by our guys, it's all run by Whanganui.*
" *I think it relates back to people not being able to cope with their daily lives.*
" *They have a lot of trouble at the colleges with children vaping. It's on the doorstep of addiction and addictions lead to other issues.*

"The cause is poverty, all of these other things are just symptoms.

Opportunities

– There was a strong feeling by many that more police and aligning resources are required in the youth drug space.

"We don't get the resources up here, and when they do have a bust, it's not coordinated by our guys, it's all run by Whanganui

" *We've got one of the best cops in New Zealand, but every time they shut one house down, another two pop up.*

Whilst there are many active and healthy children in the region, there is a sense that those children who are obese, is a result of deprivation, cost of food and an intergenerational lack of food knowledge.

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing | No Poverty | Zero Hunger | Quality Education

Human Capability

Leading healthy lifestyles | Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation

Strengths

- Many haven't experienced or noticed many obese children walking around their township.
- Many feel that school breakfasts, lunches and fruit in school programmes have made a huge difference, giving children greater access to healthy food and it is felt to have reduced school lunch bullying in some instances.
- It is perceived by many that the predominantly rural aspect of the Rangitīkei region contributes to active children and therefore less obesity.

"If our children are eating better, if they turn up to school fed, they do better (at school). Fruits in school and school lunch programmes need to continue because those children do better.

" *I'm not necessarily aware of obesity in the region but we tend to deal with farming families rather than those in the towns.*
" *Luckily nearly all the schools and kindies provide breakfast and lunch, I've had a couple of the meals, which are nice.*
" *We do have the school breakfast and lunch programme in Taihape which is great. It stopped a lot of the problems that arose out of children coming to school with no lunch which resulted in some bullying.*
" *I'm surprised, the children off the farm often have quite an active physical life.*

59% OF RANGITĪKEI CHILDREN MEET RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR VEGETABLE INTAKE, WELL ABOVE THE NEW ZEALAND AVERAGE OF 47%.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 2: End Hunger

59%

47%

Barriers

- Some feel that there are many reasons that contribute to child obesity including being in a lower socio-economic bracket, education, a busy lifestyle, alongside a specific lack of cooking and food knowledge.
- Many feel the high cost of fresh fruit and vegetables is especially difficult for low income households, and is contributing to childhood obesity; 'people will choose cheaper food.'
- Many feel that 'crappy', cheap, convenient and unhealthy food options are a huge contributor to child (and adult) obesity.
- For those living in deprivation, many feel they are having to turn to cheap and unhealthy food options, as they cannot afford healthier food, which may be contributing to higher child obesity in this socio-demographic. Additionally, they experience cost barriers to joining sports clubs and activities to help them keep active, furthering this issue.
- Some cultures experience barriers to gathering and accessing healthier food options that are readily available in their home countries.
- Some feel that the increasing time many children are spending online is leading to increased obesity in children; "the more time they spend online, the less time they spend outdoors".
- Some have observed an increase in food binging and spending behaviours as a result of COVID-19.

"Obesity is a sign of poverty again, not being able to afford food, and not being able to afford to join sports clubs.

" *There is a real erosion of people's ability to cook for themselves.*
" *For big families that are busy, sometimes you are just eating what you can get, and when it comes to meal time, you just take the easy option and get something that you don't have to prepare.*
" *Unfortunately fast food is cheap food and easy food, but not healthy food, and that is the one that needs emphasis.*
" *It's hard when you only have $50 in your account, you can't go to a market and buy fresh produce.*
" *Pre-COVID-19 we had a sport coordinator that got wiped, we are not feeling the love.*
" *The cost is horrendous for these parents, even for the children to just join, things like lifesaving etc... All of these things are just big inhibitors for the children to be involved, the cost of fuel too.*
" *During COVID -19, we were deprived from Mcdonalds etc, for a long period, so when we came out we all went 'nom nom nom nom'.*
" *We have a large Samoan community, the way we eat isn't great, the cheap lamb flaps full of fat, and coconut cream is our go-to, but it has always been like that.*
" *A lot more people are getting obese because they're sitting online.*
" *(Youth) used to go outside to find something to do. But now they find that online.*
" *We seem to be going through a phase where there is less interest in joining traditional sporting clubs because of the interactions and time they spend online I.e. gaming.*

" *A lot of it is based around what the dietary things are, and their lifestyles, a lot of gaming and stuff with today's young people, and a neglect of the kind of things they are putting into their bodies.*

" *It relates to the quality of food, there's cheap food in the shops, high carbs, unhealthy fats... instant noodles, cheap fillers with zero nutrition and that is what leads to obesity.*

" *If I'm second guessing myself when I'm making this purchase. I can only imagine what someone with younger children or less money is thinking.*

" *Looking at children's lunch boxes for starters... The lunch boxes, what is happening with the lunch boxes! It's all processed food, sugary packets and barely any fruit in there.*

" *I've seen quite a few children walk around with energy drinks. I mean, no one needs an energy drink unless they are an olympic athlete as far as I'm concerned.*

RANGITĪKEI HAS A DEPRIVATION INDEX LEVEL OF 8, **MAKING IT AMONGST THE HIGHEST 20% OF DEPRIVED COMMUNITIES IN NEW ZEALAND.**

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 1: End Poverty

TOP 20% HIGHEST DEPRIVATION

Opportunities

– Tapping into transport and active movement to help fight obesity.
– Reinstating a sport co-ordinator or lead agency to be more active in the region.
– How do we support families to eat healthily on a limited budget?
– There is a need for the health guidelines to be revised and updated in order to ensure they reflect what is considered scientifically healthy food.

"*We're led to believe something is healthy but it is not actually based on evidence, so until the dietary guidelines are fixed, we are going to keep getting obese people.*

" *We've been trying to push from Council for Sport Whanganui to fund a programme, and to be more active in the district.*

" *How to better equip our families with meal ideas, meals on a budget, to get some ideas around eating healthy on a budget.*

" *They've got an opportunity for healthy food (at school)... it's great as they have an opportunity to try something different and are coming home and saying I like this so we try it at home.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– The fruit and lunch in schools programmes are viewed by a majority of participants as "game changers", i.e. Fruit in schools in Rātana, Taihape breakfasts in schools, and the school lunch programme in Marton.
– Cooking classes in Marton teaching the basics.
– Mokai Patea provided food boxes to the community during COVID-19 and are pushing nutrition tips out via their social media channels.

"*The local school (in Taihape) provides breakfast and lunch as well, that gives you an idea of the groups you're dealing with in Taihape. A lot of them will probably go to school without having had breakfast which creates the demand. I don't like to think about what their home lives are like to be honest.*

" *I've been involved in running cooking classes in Marton and teaching adults the real basics.*

" *The fruit and lunch in schools is a game changer. My children come home and say i like this and I'm like oh ok I'll get that.*

" *When I had COVID-19 they (Mokai Patea) rang me up straight away and came over with a box of food.*

" *Mokai Patea services have been giving out nutrition tips, putting out recommendations for staying healthy on their Facebook.*

Youth-Adult

This life stage encompasses all teenagers and young adults between the ages of 16 to 25 years old, who are transitioning out of school into further education or employment.

Quality Education

Theme 15—The rural location, lifestyle and parental influence, combined with the lack of tertiary education facilities, can limit Rangitīkei youth from exploring further education pathways. This is despite today, a perception that youth have too many options.

Decent Work & Economic Growth

Theme 16—With limited skilled employment options in the region, many youth leave to pursue employment pathways elsewhere, with the majority of those that stay, lacking confidence or having limited pathways.

The rural location, lifestyle and parental influence, combined with the lack of tertiary education facilities, can limit Rangitīkei youth from exploring further education pathways. This is despite today, a perception that youth have too many options.

Framework Tags

Quality Education   No Poverty   Reduced Inequalities   Decent Work & Economic Growth

Financial & Physical Capital   Human Capability

Self-managing and empowered leaders   Cohesive, resilient and nurturing   Participating fully in society

Strengths

– Some feel that some tertiary education facilities are accessible to the area, i.e. Massey, as well as those you can access via correspondence.
– Some universities are starting to make a shift to include work experience into degrees.
– Some share the view that some farming families spend quite a bit (financially) for education or sporting purposes, and often encourage their children to do something else such as study, before they return to the farm.
– Some young people end up in apprenticeships, especially with Gateway Programmes provided through schools. Some however, feel these opportunities are scarce, with a view that there is a lack of apprenticeships available in the region due to the cost burden on employers.

"There are other pathways to pursue your passion.

" *It's also been proven over the past few years that if you do an apprenticeship, rather than tertiary qualification, later in life you end up better off.*
" *Farming families tend to spend quite a bit for education purposes.*
" *In our day, not many children go straight back to the farm, they are often encouraged to do something else first.*

Barriers

– You have to go away to obtain most qualifications meaning many youth don't have access to academic opportunities if they don't have, or can't afford a mode of transport.
– For some, the costs related to studying elsewhere are also a barrier, i.e. affording rent, boarding etc. Some parents may not be able to support a child to go off and achieve tertiary qualifications.
– Some parents don't want their children to pursue education-based qualifications; other things come ahead of their child's education, i.e. caring for family, the farm, earning and contributing to family expenses etc.
– Many feel that career advice is severely under-resourced, unable to provide meaningful career guidance and counselling at schools.
– Some share concerns that 'sometimes you can only be what you know to be…'; youth pathway options can be limited by their environment, parental influence or a lack of role models.
– Some youth are getting increasingly confused about their role in society in relation to gender roles and work.
– Some feel that some youth have an expectation that a lot of the groundwork needs to be done 'for them' to obtain a career pathway, meaning in some cases, they may lack the initiative, or the opportunity is taken away from them, to be proactive and do things themselves.

"The access thing, no public transport, it just makes it too difficult, no-ones taking them, this is yet another barrier to overcome.

" *They don't have access to academic opportunities if they don't have that mode of transport, also affording rent, boarding etc.*
" *(Accommodation costs are) $150/$200 over the student allowance maximum, so where is this money meant to come from?*
" *There is designated funding for career advisers but it's minimal. It works out about one or two hours a week.*
" *Most of the schools I have been to have been information disseminators. They just get the brochures from the universities or from the training organisation and give those out. That's really all they can manage. They can't do any sustained career counselling, or advice.*
" *I hardly have anyone who has aspirations to go to uni, our young people we get are vulnerable and needing that kind of support, you almost have to start from square one with them.*
" *There has been a change in society around women liberation, there is now no gender, children are getting even more confused about what their roles are.*
" *There seems to be a mis-balance happening where these women are getting into male dominated roles… where are the men?*
" *Apprenticeships aren't available because of the cost to employers so people don't tend to do it.*
" *Some of them are out of education for a reason so the only option we have is certain industries, so they end up going onto courses just to tick a box which I think is a little bit pointless to be honest.*
" *I'm not sure that youth have too many options, personally the problem is that there are not enough role models, not enough ability for children to be exposed to people that have done some really cool stuff.*

" *For people in Rangitīkei, university is a long way away, and UCOL is a mess, so the options are pretty slim.*
" *The terrible thing is there is a bus, but they (students) can't catch it, or they have to pay for it, and that is above what they can afford on the student allowance.*
" *I believe that children that leave school should either go into university or go into an apprenticeship or have something that they go to, a community project here, rather than 'oh well I'll sit on the couch and go play Playstation and somebody else will provide.'*
" *When we have employment programmes like this, they don't even need to go out and look for jobs themselves. We do all the work for them. They don't have to write their own CV's because it's all done for them.*

48% OF RANGITĪKEI SCHOOL LEAVERS DO NOT ENROL IN ANY FORM OF TERTIARY EDUCATION, COMPARED WITH 35% NATIONALLY.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

48%

35%
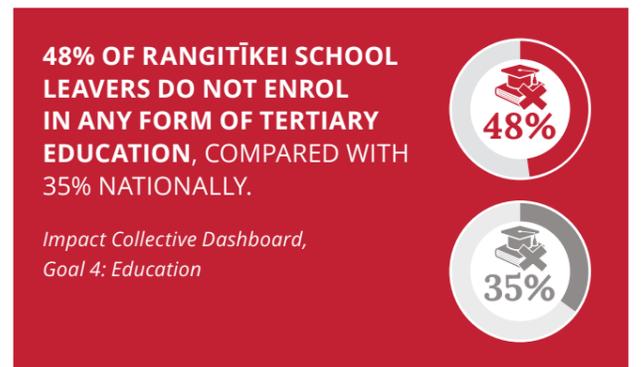
18% OF RANGITĪKEI SCHOOL LEAVERS **UNDERTAKE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE**, WHILE 34.5% **UNDERTAKE A CERTIFICATE LEVEL COURSE**.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 4: Education

Opportunities

– Allowing youth to dream big and explore what they want to do.
– Better role models from the community for youth i.e. mentors/job coaches.
– More funding allocated to allow youth to identify appropriate future pathways.
– Universities are more ready to incorporate real life work experience into degrees.
– A satellite campus in alignment with the skills building needed for the Rangitīkei region.
– Having public transport in the region, and between regions, to allow youth to have better access to tertiary education.

"Dreaming big, whatever they want to do, if they wanna be a singer, be a singer, do it… we need to think sideways a wee bit and allow them to follow their dreams.

" *I think there needs to be much more designated, I probably wouldn't call it careers because it sounds boring, but funding that is ring-fenced for future pathways.*
" *A big move for universities now would be to incorporate work experience into their degrees, because people who get degrees and have no work experience are looking for jobs and competing with those without degrees and three years work experience.*

" *I would challenge some of that, just because there is not a tertiary institute in your town, doesn't deprive you from getting a tertiary education.*
" *We are missing the cohesiveness between teachers in schools to join together a child's interests. They need people, teachers do some role modelling, but they need to have real people out in the community to see some of those jobs.*
" *There is absolutely no reason why someone from Rangitīkei shouldn't be able to go and work for Rocket Lab over in Mahia.*
" *Having the confidence to step out of comfort zones, and having some mentors to do that.*
" *Need a system put in place around public transportation between regions, but who is going to do it?*
" *Is there an opportunity for a satellite campus in alignment with the skills building we need in our district?*
" *They (job coaches) are around everywhere, in every community, because you've got retired people, we've got retired builders, we've got retired electricians, retired truck drivers etc.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– There is a satellite UCOL campus in Marton which is getting good uptake and increasing the courses it offers, it is also about to launch in Taihape.
– Massey extramural education programmes.
– Gateway programmes in schools across the region.
– The 'One Step' Programme through MSD.
– Some education providers are working to help with transport issues but only for their students due financial considerations.
– Otiwhiti Farm Cadet School in Hunterville who train up 18 shepherds each year.
– Mokai Patea is promoting further education in their community.
– School Rocket Challenge - introduces children to the engineering industry.

"But as the saying goes, a journey of 1000 miles begins with one step, and that is what the programme is called.

" *Rangitīkei college, and other schools have good gateway programmes for students to get permanent apprenticeships. There have been lots of success stories.*
" *The Gateway Programme operates in lots of schools and students can opt into it and those who do are allocated to a local building business for one day a week. If they do well, often the employer will offer them a position.*
" *There is a push from Mokai Patea Services to push young people to get further education.*

" *There is a satellite UCOL campus which is getting uptake and increasing courses . I understand it is also launching in Taihape.*
" *I'm an engineer, and we have been doing the rocket challenge for school children in the region for the last three years. It gets children to understand what engineering is all about, and some of those children might now turn out to be engineers in the future.*
" *Massey has one of the biggest extramural education programmes in the country, but maybe not many people know about it, and it is not that far away.*

"How can you aspire to be something when you don't see any examples in your family, peoples or community?

With limited skilled employment options in the region, many youth leave to pursue employment pathways elsewhere, with the majority of those that stay, lacking confidence or having limited pathways.

Framework Tags

Decent Work & Economic Growth   No Poverty   Sustainable Cities & Communities   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital

Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation   Participating fully in society

Strengths

– Some feel there are lots of training and job opportunities in agriculture, food industries and construction for youth in the region.
– Youth unemployment is low and there is a sense that there are very few NEETs (Young persons not engaged in education, employment or training) in Rangitīkei, as some support services have stated they struggle to find them.

"I don't think there are limited skilled employment opportunities, particularly in the trades side, people are desperate, there is a huge shortage of builders and electricians, which are skilled people.

"*Here, it's not so much the Meatworks or Uni, we also have employment at our local mill, with honey, with farming, mustering, cafes etc... There is employment here in town.*
"*We also have apprenticeships, electrical, mechanical and plumbing, there are options within the industries of this area.*
"*There are lots of introductory and training programmes as links into the trades, so some things are happening.*

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN RANGITĪKEI IS LOWER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE, AT 7.3% LOCALLY COMPARED WITH 8.75% NATIONALLY.

7.3% RANGITĪKEI   **8.75%** NATIONALLY

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth

Barriers

– Some feel that many of the youth who leave to pursue academic tertiary pathways, often do not return due to a perceived lack of employment opportunities in the region.
– For some youth, they are unable to set their sights any higher than what they know, as their parents either don't know how to encourage them, or don't allow their children to surpass their own ambition.
– Many feel that youth under-employment is high in the region and often overlooked as it is not included in many of the unemployment statistics.
– Some feel that some businesses still take advantage of their youth; teaching them the bare minimum and then using the 90 day clause to get rid of them.
– Some feel that many young people in the region lack resilience, confidence and hustle to go and explore pathways elsewhere; COVID-19 may have amplified this further.
– Some feel that some youth are more risk-averse and lack purpose and motivation these days, with some being very content being on the benefit.
– Some feel that for youth who go to Work and Income to collect their job benefit, there is no onus on them to give back, in order to receive that, which may be contributing to a further lack of motivation.

"You don't see children do 'risky' things anymore, so much risk-averseness has snuck in over time that we don't allow ourselves to grow naturally.

"*There is a lack of employment so the young people go off somewhere else, the exception is the farmers' sons that stay in the district.*
"*When you employ someone older who has responsibilities, bills, a mortgage, their want to be at work is stronger, they've got bills to pay. But when you are 19 or 20 "so be it" really. We see a little bit of that.*
"*It looks like a good stat on the surface but we have so many 18 year olds doing 20 hours a week on extremely low wages which isn't really enough.*
"*I think they are being taken advantage of. They put these children into work, teach them the absolute minimum to get the job done, then get rid of them after 90 days.*
"*It's harder to get a job here in this region, it's only a small community, nothing big to entice people so they have got to go out of the area to seek work.*
"*To have the confidence to go into a position, and get on and do it is really really hard especially when you come up against people who have been there longer.*
"*Young people lack resilience, confidence and hustle, maybe come out of COVID, (there's a) lack of confidence to go and explore pathways elsewhere.*
"*You're either a government agency, local government or a little cafe or business. Or it's either farming, gardens, meat works, those are the local jobs people can get here.*
"*It's no-ones fault, it's just technology, the way society has gone, youth don't have that purpose in the same way, they are bored.*
"*It's either meatworks or move out of town. And if you're going to uni you're leaving as well.*

" *There is no future here for our children.*

" *We do know students often do leave for academic opportunities and don't return because we don't have the employment opportunities here.*

" *Certainly there are some employment things that if you want to do them, they won't be available in the Rangitīkei.*

" *For Māori and Pasifika children, to do something better than your parents, is not really part of their culture, so to encourage them to aim high, is really hard to do.*

" *There is help with training, and tertiary things happening in the town, and farm training, but motivation and attitude are the issues.*

" *There were about 1000 children (at a career expo) and it was just depressing. You look at the future of what is coming out of schools and you think holy moly.*

" *Yes, to meatworks or university, because that is likely the job you will get into if you choose not to go off to university.*

" *The huge mills, and meatworks, are the only role models of jobs these children could get into, and they don't set their sights any higher because the parents don't know how to encourage them.*

New Zealand   Rangitīkei District
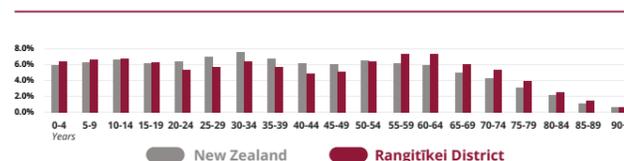
RANGITĪKEI STRUGGLES TO RETAIN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES AGED 20 - 49, WITH THIS AGE BAND **WELL BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE POPULATION PERCENTAGES**.

Stats NZ Population Estimates 2022, Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth

Opportunities

– There is a sentiment that some youth need to be more proactive in seeking information around job opportunities in the region, however, how do we make this information easier to find?

– Rangitīkei needs to develop industries so that they can better attract young people back to jobs.

– Workplaces need to create more time to support youth transition into work and build their confidence.

– There are farm cadet programmes offered in the region that are often overlooked and have been going for a very long time.

– What employment can we offer youth who go out of the region to get educated, so that they come back?

"*Sometimes you just have to work on a person, work on their confidence but workplaces don't have time to do that.*

" *The information won't come to you, you have got to look for it...*

" *Maybe the insight here is we've got to do a better job of talking about our technology we are engaged in producing.*

" *The last 4-5 people brought on to our production area are all young, so hopefully we can actually get them and they can see that there is a career option. There's that path for those people as well to say, 'actually, I can earn more money by doing a more technical level of job.'*

" *That's why we need to develop industries so that we can attract young people back to a job.*

" *What employment can we offer them so that they come back?*

" *What's going to attract them back? They're not putting down those strong roots.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Marton Rotary -** leadership camps and awards.

– Mahi Tahi Programme and Ngāti Apa partnership to support doing weekly or longer courses and training with accommodation.

– The Mayors **Taskforce For Jobs** has been very successful in our area, a youth emphasis but across all ages.

– **Rangitīkei College** and **Central Movers** build a house programme.

– Farm cadet programmes.

"*Rangitīkei College and Central Movers have set up a programme for children to build a house in their last year (of school). This meant the children stayed in school, that didn't want to go back to school.*

" *There are farm cadet programmes offered in the region that often are overlooked, and have been going for a very long time.*

" *Mahi Tahi is thanks to Ngāti Apa as well, they are really making an improvement in that space, building dormitories within the old school (Turakina Māori Girls) so people are able to stay weekly or longer courses/training.*

" *The Mayors Taskforce For Jobs, has a focus on youth, market gardens stuff, and they do have some big industry planning to move into the area.*

Adult

This life stage encompasses all young, middle-aged and older adults that fall within the ages of 18 to 65 years old.

Good Health & Wellbeing

Theme 17—There is a reported perception that there is a lack of specific rural mental health services in Rangitīkei, meaning that many members of the community, particularly farmers, who are already reluctant to access services, are encountering further barriers due to the way the system is set up.

No Poverty

Theme 18—Insufficient support services and systems are disconnecting people from the resources they need to get out of bad situations, leading to further poverty and hardship.

Theme 19—The issues associated with the low wage Rangitīkei economy are being heightened by the increasing costs of living.

Theme 20—The increasing social and financial complexity of life, coupled with the lack of transparency of financial obligations, is making it really easy for the vulnerable to get into debt.

Theme 21—Intergenerational deprivation and associated behaviours, are perpetuating issues around unemployment, crime and disconnection.

Decent Work & Economic Growth

Theme 22—Aside from a few big employers in the region, who are seeking skilled workforces predominantly from elsewhere, the traditional nature of the low skilled employment market and a lack of suitable housing in Rangitīkei is creating barriers for both employers and job seekers.

Theme 23—The perception of a lack of career progression and pathways in Rangitīkei is creating barriers to finding skilled employees.

Gender Equality

Theme 24—There is good progress being made in specific industries for women in managerial roles including with iwi, community organisations, the rural sector and health.

Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

Theme 25—Sexual assault and family violence, despite an increase in reporting, is still prevalent and under-reported in the community.

Theme 26—The complex trauma caused by family violence has many detrimental downstream ripple effects on children in families.

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing | Reduced Inequalities | Sustainable Cities & Communities

Financial & Physical Capital

Leading healthy lifestyles | Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

There is a reported perception that there is a lack of specific rural mental health services in Rangitīkei, meaning that many members of the community, particularly farmers, who are already reluctant to access services, are encountering further barriers due to the way the system is set up.

Strengths

– Some noted there had been a development in and more funding dedicated to providing mental health initiatives and services for farmers (see Good Mahi section).

Barriers

– Some share the view that it is not just farmers having issues accessing mental health services, it is the whole region, as a result of being more isolated.
– Some feel there is a fundamental shortage and lack of mental health resources and support available for those who live rurally, which is "very difficult" to access.
– Some feel that mental health in farming communities can be quite complex, with people dealing with multiple issues and farmers generally being more reluctant to engage with services.
– Some felt there may be a mis-alignment between the operating hours and location of these services with the busy, time poor nature of working on the farm, meaning some farmers can't access them.
– Many feel that for those that do manage to access the limited support available, they are just "cycled through and thrown back out into the community" due to a lack of follow up resources; they don't get over it in five minutes, they need support for a period of time after that, but they just don't get it.
– Some feel the consistency of individual counsellors and a familiar face is really important for farmers, meaning that when counsellors come and go, there is an additional barrier for farmers in building a relationship with someone new.

– Many feel that mental health services need to have a psychological understanding of rural communities and farmers in relation to how they think and work. It is felt this is lacking and prevents farmers from opening up.

"It's difficult, really difficult. There are a reduced number of counsellors and you need people who speak a farmers language, if you ask a farmer how he is, he'll say "I'm ok". They don't actually tell you the truth and they don't think they should. They don't complain they just get on with it.

" *Normally when they call for help, they'll call for one reason, but after a while you realise it's quite complex and there are a number of issues and animal health might be one of them. They almost minimise the problems but often it's complex and there are a number of issues.*
" *We haven't been able to get the support services needed and getting them into the mental support system is hard, really difficult.*
" *The government has thrown a lot more money at it, but I think at the end of the day, there's just a shortage of trained personnel that are available and the mental health services are under extreme pressure themselves.*
" *If you're not aiming to top yourself, they're almost not interested in you. They're really only dealing with the worst of the worst.*
" *That's absolutely critical. When they are suicidal they'll be there, when they are over the crisis, they're not there. They don't get over it in five minutes, they need support for a period of time after that. But they just don't get it. They walk away and say 'if they're suicidal again, you let me know'.*

" *He was discharged at the weekend. He lived on his own. He was a young guy. No food in the house, no plan. He'd been committed to hospital, but he was discharged without a plan. So we had to rally around and get a bunch of people to support him, but that is not our role, that's the mental health role.*
" *It's actually understanding how they think and work. Now, that's the same with any culture they think and work differently depending on the culture they come from. Rural is a different culture of a way in which people live.*
" *I think one of the other things in the mainstream system is we have set up all these places to help our people, are they really helping?*
" *It's not just farmers having issues accessing mental health services.*
" *Definitely they (farmers) are reluctant to access services, and if more were available it would be easier.*
" *I've been to a couple of meetings over there where mental health services were invited, two sessions that I have gone to were talking about the mental health risks of farmers and suicides etc.*
" *Some of these services aren't at the right time or location in working hours so people can't access them.*
" *Have some psychologists setting up too, compared to some places, we are not too badly off, but if someone needs something up in the Taihape area, we have to recommend they travel to access support, so there is an issue with that.*
" *Counsellors come and go a bit, and it is important when we recommend them that they have some sympathy.*

Opportunities

– Providing farmers with a plan forwards that takes into account the complexity of their lifestyle.
– Consistent counsellors for farmers with lived experience knowledge.

" *That's not what we (Rural Support Trust) need, we're not experts in this, but we are at the coalface of it. People need a plan in front of them, that they are a part of, something that's prepared with them and that walks the path with them like we do with farmers.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Rural Support Trust -** building rural networks and communities to help people help themselves to find solutions, whatever they may be. It may be health, it may be financial, it may be fund management and may be loneliness, a whole range of things.
– **NZ Farmer Health Check Service -** this was a great success as it was set up at locations farmers were, i.e. the sale yards, allowing this service to better fit in with the schedule.
– **Farmstrong Movement -** offer a Rural Health & Wellbeing Programme grounded in farmer experience including 0800 numbers and online services, however more of a local and physical presence is needed in the region.
– **Surfing for Farmers -** starting out at Foxton Beach this Summer and has been really well received by farmers around mental health.

" *NZ Farmer set up a health check service for farmers they funded for a while.*
" *Surfing for Farmers is starting out at Foxton beach this Summer, that has been really well received, around the mental health of farmers.*

Insufficient support services and systems are disconnecting people from the resources they need to get out of bad situations, leading to further poverty and hardship.

Framework Tags

No Poverty   Zero Hunger   Good Health & Wellbeing   Reduced Inequalities   Quality Education

Peace Justice and Strong Institutions

Human Capability

Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation   Participating fully in society

Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

Barriers

– Many share the view that the region has insufficient support services.
– Some share the view that there is support available in the region, and they are doing their best to help, however, they face challenges such as addressing the complexity of the wrap-around support needed, building awareness of the services they provide and getting community buy-in and engagement.
– Some feel that whilst there are a number of support services available and accessible via telephone, that face to face services are far more effective and would be their preference, however, there is a sense that these are lacking in some townships.
– Some feel that organisations forget about the people at the centre because they are outcomes focused.
– Some feel that services aren't referring out when they should as they want to keep people under their umbrella, for funding purposes.
– Many feel that there are gaps between services, with a sense that some service providers are out of touch with one another, negatively impacting the clients.

– Many feel people don't deal with the issue if the services aren't available in the area.
– Many feel accessing appropriate and timely information is difficult with people "not knowing where to go for information."
– Many feel people also don't have choice within their community with what providers they work with to get support, due to the limited options. Some feel this can result in a conflict of interest for people who need services in small towns, as they often personally know the people they need to get support from.
– Some noted that many forms to access help and support can be complex and "really confusing for everyday people".

"These people have no drive, no motivation, because they've been constantly let down from services.

" *Yes we have a low population but most of this population needs some help and support.*
" *I've held four health expos over the last decade and I got a lot of pushback from certain people in the community saying 'you only have to have these every two years', but it has to happen every year, because people don't know that information, they go to the wrong organisations or the wrong people and get the wrong information.*
" *The difference between low income and high income is not going to change. But if we get these people on the ground, up a little, that's gonna be the start of something. It's never gonna happen. But that's what my belief is, we need to be worried about the people at the bottom.*
" *You've got someone's aunty down at one of the services so they don't want to deal with that. They've got somebody that they were at the pub drinking with over the weekend and they are the budgeting person. There's a lot of conflict of interest when it comes to the small communities.*
" *You'll go somewhere and there are all these different places you could be referred to for help, but they will try and keep you under their umbrella. Instead of having the people's best interests in mind.*
" *There's plenty of opportunity to get some more support, but if it isn't here, they just don't deal with it.*

" *Working in this environment, they're not wired like us. Some people understand what they need to do to find (information) and others never will.*
" *We had the resources, we had the staff, we had the will, but sometimes you don't get buy-in from the community or the client you are trying to help.*
" *There is a lot of support out there, it is just do people know about it, are they tapping into it?*
" *It's true, a lot of that area is very territorial, so that would be the dysfunction as they are not willing to share clients due to the way they are funded.*
" *Yes, harsh but true. Absolutely true. It needs to be said. All of this is accurate.*

"I said to them, we should be sharing some of this information, because what's going to happen is we're all going to be ringing all these vulnerable people in our community, and they're going to get bamboozled and, sure enough, it happened.

15.8%

OF RANGITĪKEI'S WORKING AGE POPULATION IS ON A BENEFIT, **COMPARED WITH 12.3% NATIONALLY**.

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 1 End Poverty

RANGITĪKEI DEPRIVATION LEVELS HAVE STEADILY INCREASED SINCE 2018, WITH THE DISTRICT NOW SITTING AT A HIGH DEPRIVATION LEVEL OF 8, COMPARED WITH A NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 5. (DEPRIVATION LEVEL 10 REFLECTS THE MOST DEPRIVED COMMUNITIES IN NEW ZEALAND, SUCH AS CANNONS CREEK, PATEA OR FLAXMERE).

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 1 End Poverty

Opportunities

– Improve the information around available services and what they provide.
– Processes to access support need to be made simpler, so that people don't have an overwhelming or frustrating experience.
– There needs to be a stronger physical presence in the community by service providers to reduce misinformation around services and what is available to support people in need.
– Re-establishing the health coordinator position in the region.

"We definitely need more organisations. Yeah, for me to admit that is freaking me out because I don't like duplication of services. But in Taihape we need duplication.

" What we needed to do was find what services had what people on their list, find who's got the time to do it and then cross them off. Whether they're supporting the community, it's doesn't matter, get the mahi done.
" Face to face support services are far more effective than via the telephone.
" The health coordinator position was dis-established, it was a real bright spot, we really want one back.

Good Mahi in the Community

– There was once a Health Coordinator position in the region that was a real bright spot.
– The local iwi Ngāti Apa and Mokai Patea both run different programmes.
– Ngāti Apa have also just purchased the local medical centre with plans to get that up and running, with some hoping for more affordable and accessible support and care.
– Other support organisations mentioned that are doing great work across the region include Budgeting Services, Jigsaw and Oranga Tamariki.

" Age concern and Budgeting services, Jigsaw, all come over from Whanganui, Oranga Tamariki, they do come and they are here.

The issues associated with the low wage Rangitīkei economy are being heightened by the increasing costs of living.

Framework Tags

No Poverty   Zero Hunger   Good Health & Wellbeing   Decent Work & Economic Growth

Financial & Physical Capital

Leading healthy lifestyles   Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation

Strengths

– Some felt that people who live in the Rangitīkei have a better standard of living.
– Some feel that while wages may be low there are also some lower costs with living rurally.
– Some feel there are lots of ways to save money living rurally due to having access to things such as hunting.
– It was noted that there are some industries offering higher wages i.e. higher paid central government workers, lawyers, accountants, technology manufacturers, however, that was not perceived to shift outcomes for those on lower wages. Some had a view that a number of these higher paid employees also live outside of the region.

" *What's important is that it isn't just your income, it's your outgoings, so if you looked at the other side of that equation, then you're just as well off, potentially, so the income is only half of the picture.*
" *Inflation is not unique to Rangitīkei, we have lower wages but may also have lower housing costs, but then we will have higher transportation and food costs.*
" *We have a higher proportion than any other area of central government workers on higher wages in Rangitīkei - we have roughly 2000 residents (working for central government). But is it enough to pull the bottom up?*

Barriers

– Many felt that the large proportion of the Rangitīkei workforce in major industries are on low pay or minimum wage.

– There is a strong perception that there are little to no high income jobs in the region and that Rangitīkei is a low wage economy.
– There is a perception by many that a large proportion of people on low wages are unable to afford costs of living and need further support. Some feel this is starting to affect everyone too, not just those on low wages.
– Some noted a concern that some people may not be able to afford transport to access part time, or full time jobs.
– Some noted that seasonal work and the distribution of wages may be causing behaviours that supported people getting into debt.
– Some felt that with the increased cost of living, some essential items such as hygiene or cleaning items are being de-prioritised to cover other essential costs, leading to poor health outcomes.

" *It is probably because we don't have a lot of places paying above the board wages, so if you're going to go to work and not earn as much as the benefit, then the benefit is the more attractive side of things.*

" *A lot of our people in the north are manual labourers, they would be getting between $25-$30 an hour, so you're not getting that $50-$60 an hour for trades, and we also don't have the businesses where you would be getting that top level $100,000 plus, just the type of businesses and work in the area.*
" *There are families that can't afford to or don't have the resources to get to work opportunities.*
" *Coming from Tauranga to here, the wages were half.*
" *We have a lot of people on low wages who are still unable to afford costs of living and need more support.*

" *Seasonal work and distribution of wages may be causing behaviours of getting into debt.*
" *With my clients, the first thing to go is soap, shampoo and conditioner, because it's too expensive.*
" *Low wage jobs lead to that poverty and hardship.*

" *It's not just people on low wages affected – everyone is.*

THE MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN RANGITĪKEI IS $63,700, COMPARED WITH $90,400 NATIONALLY.

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 1 - End Poverty

$63,700
$90,400

RANGITĪKEI HOUSEHOLDS SPEND 34.2% OF THEIR INCOME ON RENT, COMPARED TO 31% NATIONALLY, MEANING RANGITĪKEI RESIDENTS HAVE LESS MONEY AVAILABLE FOR DISCRETIONARY ITEMS.

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 1 - End Poverty

Opportunities

– The need for new high paid and high skilled employment opportunities across the district.

" *We need to grow job availability and that skill base. What this stat is telling me is that our jobs are at the bottom end of the pecking order. So, with these new jobs the capability and skill base over all in the district will increase.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– There is a new rail hub in the pipeline (pending court approval) to be based in Marton that has the potential to open up over 300 high skilled jobs.

" *We are in the environmental court currently around the industrial park wanting to be opened on the boundaries of Marton – looking at opening up 300 jobs, high skilled jobs too.*

The increasing social and financial complexity of life, coupled with the lack of transparency of financial obligations, is making it really easy for the vulnerable to get into debt.

Framework Tags

No Poverty   Good Health & Wellbeing   Quality Education

Human Capability

Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation

Strengths

– There is a growing awareness and acceptance by some people who are dealing with financial issues that they need support, as the budgeting process can be confronting, and it is much easier not walking that path alone.
– There is an appreciation by some of the valuable role a budget advisor plays in their life due to increasing complexity around balancing their needs with their finances; it is much bigger than telling people what they can or can't do with their income.

"I took on a very public creditor on behalf of a suicidal client, I called their bluff, they ended up wiping nearly $14,000 off this clients debt and he was able to breathe for the first time in four years.

" *There are benefits of using (budget) services, getting financial help but it also means I am not as isolated and able to connect.*
" *Budget worksheet shows the vulnerability in our clients.*
" *Somebody walking alongside them, being not alone is huge.*
" *It is rare, but amazing when they come back to us and say I don't want to do this anymore, I need help.*

Barriers

– Some feel that pride, independence and a sense of shame may contribute to people seeking financial help too late.

– It was a noted concern that the ease of accessing credit and lack of regulation surrounding it has put those who can least afford it at financial risk.
– Many felt that 'buy now pay later' schemes and associated media messaging is detrimental to financially vulnerable individuals, resulting in them accumulating debt they cannot pay off.
– There is a strong perception that getting into unintentional debt can be catastrophic i.e home loss, relationship breakdown, suicide etc.
– Some noted a growing complexity around financial wellbeing; with family breakups and misunderstandings arising from people signing up to things they don't understand.
– Numeracy, literacy and financial knowledge barriers are also contributing to people signing up to things they don't understand, this is observed especially in younger people.

"These clients are so, so vulnerable and they (financial lenders) need to take some responsibility to look after them.

" *Financial need is what we see but there are many other needs, housing, welfare, mental and physical health etc.*
" *If we aren't the right person sitting there listening it can be quite damaging.*
" *Buy now pay later schemes are not covered by legislation... there is no regulation, there is no credit check.*
" *Clients come with 14 problems and we are skilled to help them with just one.*
" *Clients argue in front of us, over who needs to pay what... the home is broken.*

" *This is huge - many of our clients can't read and write - and are signing up to things they don't understand.*
" *Those who use these lenders are often those who mostly shouldn't have the ability to use them.*
" *Afterpay is the latest example... it is evil... these leaders are not taking note of whether the person signing the line is actually able to pay it off.*
" *People are far more likely to talk about their sex life, than their money.*
" *Perception that 'if I go to budgeting they will fix my crisis'.*
" *A lot of people who get into financial difficulty take out a loan but haven't gone through the process of considering if they can afford the loan, nor has the lender, this is a downward spiral.*
" *They have got to be desperate to admit that they are in a hole and not in control of their money.*
" *And the lack of financial literacy is just crazy, I'd like to take our education system and just shake it.*
" *Case managers, with working age clients, high hardship users, there is that lack of money management there.*
" *It makes it tremendously difficult for schools in terms of all the things they are expected to cover, i.e. educating about finances in school.*

Opportunities

– Introducing financial literacy into the school curriculum, however, some feel this puts a tremendous amount of pressure on schools in relation to all the things they are expected to cover.
– Reducing stigma and encouraging people to reach out for help more proactively, before they get into financial trouble.

– Businesses (financial lenders or buy now pay later schemes) need to take more accountability for their vulnerable clients.

"There is a huge need for some sort of financial education to be compulsory in schools.

" *Message needs to be 'we want to see you before you get into trouble'.*
" *They (financial lenders) don't see the raw stories, they need to get the core facts of the truth behind that person as a number. This is where we have to challenge them - it is jolly hard.*
" *I saw a lot of value in learning how to understand the laws that apply such as the consumer guarantees and fair trading act, as well as learning to negotiate with creditors and understand when a deal is fair or not fair.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– Marton Budget Services are doing great work in their community, sitting somewhere in between a budgeter and a social worker due to the complexity of their clients.
– Mokai Patea Budget Services are really great and open to anyone, not just Māori.

" *We aren't social workers or lawyers, but aspects of those roles overlap and come into our work.*
" *We have a budget service run by Mokai Patea which is really great but lots of people don't understand that it is not just limited to Māori, it is for anybody.*

Intergenerational deprivation and associated behaviours, are perpetuating issues around unemployment, crime and disconnection.

Framework Tags

No Poverty Zero Hunger Good Health & Wellbeing Peace Justice and Strong Institutions

Decent Work & Economic Growth Sustainable Cities & Communities

Social Cohesion Human Capability

Leading healthy lifestyles Participating fully in society Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation

Barriers

– Some feel there is an undercurrent of intergenerational bad behaviours, benefit dependency and unemployment in the region, and there is a lack of wrap-around support services for these families.
– Some feel that for those in vulnerable situations, everyone is in survival mode, and people have lost or are losing hope due to the barriers accessing support, raising costs, and the increasing pressures to sustain themselves and their families.
– Many feel that parents are facing increasing levels of stress and disconnection which is bringing pressure on the whole whānau, contributing to the breakdown of wider family units.
– Some feel that for those families in survival mode, it is perpetuating issues around crime and bad behaviour; 'they do what they need to do to get by'.
– Some feel that the cheaper cost of living in smaller regional towns, may be attracting those who live in intergenerational deprivation.

"The ones that are in these situations do what they need to do, whether it be stealing, lying, you know, it's what people do when they are in survival mode.

" *People tend to work if they're in survival mode. That's how I see people.*
" *Poverty in many ways, spiritually, mentally, physically, because of the demands of the world.*
" *Most of the parents have no idea… but we have generational, not just been on benefit, but generational bad behaviour.*

" *Generational unemployment, some of that in Marton is a lifestyle.*
" *If we were to bring them through the facility we'd get a lot of 'don't touch that person, don't employ them'. So, I'd say a fair number of that might be because they are unemployable.*
" *People move to smaller, cheaper regions, because it's cheaper to live here on your job seeker support payment than it is to manage it in Whanganui or anywhere else in our region.*
" *Is that figure influenced by our proximity to the prison? Kaitoke. I think you might have some of that here in Marton, because it's even cheaper here, when you can get rentals, it's cheaper in Marton.*
" *They come home tired, they come home frustrated, because they know they've got bills to pay. And they are just meeting the mark.*
" *It is very hard to get full wrap around services for these families too.*
" *Employment is how people develop better opportunities and better lifestyles, so for people on the lower end you can see it is perpetuating the cycle.*

7.2% OF THE RANGITĪKEI POPULATION IS ON A JOBSEEKER SUPPORT BENEFIT, **COMPARED WITH 6.2% NATIONALLY.**

7.2% RANGITĪKEI   **6.2%** NATIONALLY

*Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 8 Decent Work & Economic Growth*

Opportunities

– Better role models, empowering those in challenging situations and building resilience; "Helping people to help themselves."
– Challenging the inter-generational perception of what is just normal life for those stuck in this cycle; they only know what they know.
– Providing extra wrap-around support services to help the generational unemployed transition into work.
– More investment upfront with young people to stop them transferring into the benefit cycle.

"For generations coming up its normal life unless people are exposed to opportunities, ideas or the fact that life can be done differently.

" *The way we get people out of poverty, I think, is by empowering them. It's like that teach a man to fish, that's way more useful, rather than just doing hand-outs.*
" *If they are not getting that role modelling, the family is deprived, they haven't got the money, they have to worry about where the next meal is coming from, there is no time or energy for role modelling.*
" *We need to change expectations and hopes and goals to break out of intergenerational patterns.*
" *So what can we do when it is multi-generational unemployment? They need an extra wrap around.*
" *Becomes an intergenerational cycle of poverty and not being able to step outside of their own experience.*
" *I think it needs to be nurtured within the home.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Mahi Tahi Programme -** A co-lab in our area with MSD, Council and iwi to get people into employment, that has been really successful.

"It (Mahi Tahi) was a really personalised programme that gave the people pastoral care, right through as far as they needed it.

" *Over COVID-19 the government started Mahi Tahi, a co-lab in our area with MSD, Council and iwi to get people into employment. That's been really successful, we even won one of the top districts in New Zealand in terms of how that's worked.*

Framework Tags

Decent Work & Economic Growth   Sustainable Cities & Communities   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital   Human Capability

Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation

Aside from a few big employers in the region, who are seeking skilled workforces predominantly from elsewhere, the traditional nature of the low skilled employment market and a lack of suitable housing in Rangitīkei is creating barriers for both employers and job seekers.

24% OF RANGITĪKEI'S WORKERS ARE IN THE AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY SECTORS, COMPARED WITH 12% NATIONALLY.

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 1 End Poverty and Goal 8 Decent Work & Economic Growth

24%   12%

12% OF RANGITĪKEI WORKERS ARE IN MANUFACTURING COMPARED WITH 19.5% NATIONALLY, **AND 9% IN RETAIL** COMPARED WITH 19% NATIONALLY.

Manufacturing		Retail	
12%		9%	
19.5		19%	

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 1 End Poverty and Goal 8 Decent Work & Economic Growth

Strengths

– Unemployment rates within the district are not "felt" to be high by many.
– Some employment placement programmes in the region i.e Work & Income Taihape are doing well and meeting targets.
– Some have observed there are a high proportion of people in management roles in some smaller communities in the region.
– Personal relationships are viewed to be advantageous to gaining employment by some.
– It was noted that with a seasonal labour force not available - locals have had to pick it up which may have helped keep unemployment down - they have struggled to fill these roles locally.

"We've been meeting our targets every month for six months here (in Taihape). For the people on the job seeker support, we're on the top for the region."

" *We have a fantastic case manager who does a lot of mahi around getting people work.*
" *It doesn't feel like that. If that was the national unemployment rate there would be a crisis, there would be people fighting for jobs, but it doesn't feel like that for me that there are heaps of people standing outside saying 'god help us'.*
" *Some of them were family members of other people who work here, so that's always a good recommendation for us. People don't recommend someone if they're gonna reflect badly on them.*

Barriers

– Many feel that the lack of housing is the biggest barrier to attracting and hiring skilled workers to the region, and further contributing to the skills shortage.
– There is a perception that businesses in the region are low value, low tech and low paying and that there are not many businesses that are in the higher bracket for wages.
– Some felt that the physical work and labour available in the region may also be less desirable.
– Reasons people are unable to work can be complex such as the small portion that are on health benefits that 'are not employable', however, they still may be able to work in some capacity.
– Some noted that people are increasingly picky with what jobs they take on, in relation to pay, work-life balance, travel etc.
– Some big employers in the region are failing to increase wages to remain competitive i.e. the freezing works is traditionally a preferred employer but time has gone on and the pay has stayed the same. There is now a sense that you can earn the same doing labouring and other jobs.
– Some larger employers are perceived by some to be "set in their ways".
– Changing community demographics, and ownership of local business may be contributing to differing expectations and employment practices.
– Accessing migrant workers and becoming accredited is perceived as "a huge amount of work" for local business owners seeking international staff.

– It is suspected by some that a shortage of staff in the farming sector may be influenced by negative perceptions of agriculture as an industry.
– Many have noted that there is a skill shortage across the region which reflects what is taking place nationally, in particular, the region is struggling to find middle-management in trades, migrant/labor market roles and agricultural workers.
– It was noted that the skills shortage is leading to people stealing skilled employees which is impacting wages and employee 'loyalty'.
– Participants suggested that drug testing, which is taken very seriously, may be affecting the ability to gain employment for some.
– Some have observed that some employers needing employees have a very high staff turnover as a result of questionable employment practices.

"There are lots of jobs out there, they are just not jobs people want to do.

" *Seasonal work may be affecting these stats - there is a lot of unemployment here, case managers have massive case loads!*
" *Also for those that live locally it is really physical work which most generations coming through from New Zealand just aren't interested in that type of physical work.*
" *The majority of it is some people think they can pick and choose what they do, 'I've got this qualification, so I can only do that'. Well, you haven't got a job yet in that space but you still need to feed your family, you still need to pay the rent.*

" *Our businesses aren't as high-value, we have supermarkets and some shops, but we don't have many businesses that are in the higher bracket for wages.*

" *I'm not saying it's overly negative but there are flow on employment issues, when people are struggling to work under the leadership because of cultural differences.*

" *Right now the staff are difficult to get and that means that often the farming team is down a staff member and that puts pressure on people and farming families.*

" *Well, have you heard much good about agriculture lately? Have you heard about dirty dairying and all those terrible things that agriculture does? Yeah, well, we hear it too and people hear that continuously. So that doesn't sound like a really promising career for a young person.*

" *There's a lot of negativity about agriculture... So there's not really a feeling of support or a good culture.*

" *When lawyers were making a lot of money, the people enrolled and when accountants were making a lot of money so many students lined up to be accountants. They follow where they think there's a future and you can't blame them for that.*

" *Now we're a district that, like everyplace else, is madly searching for people to work.*

" *The downside to doing that is that you're just driving the price lever up and people are being taught to not have loyalty to employers.*

" *We can't find the people at the mid-level that you need to grow the workforce.*

" *Housing is the biggest barrier to employment in the district.*

" *I know employers with space for ten more employees, but there are no houses so they can't hire them.*

" *The barrier for finding skilled employees is the lack of housing, there is career progression, but it is the lack of housing.*

" *We are lacking in doctors, care workers, social workers, we can't get these workers full stop.*

Opportunities

– Attracting more high-value employers to the region.
– Attracting more skilled employees to the region through pushing the lifestyle benefits.
– Providing 'single men's quarters' type housing to allow more single men to move to the region for work.
– Opening up our borders again to enable skilled migrants to enter the country.

"There are heaps of skilled jobs here, but not the skilled people.

" *We have one employer that is high-value, PEC, but we need 50 of those.*

" *It would be nice to be able to advertise and have countless applicants that say, 'you know what, this is rural New Zealand and how cool is that that I can walk to work and have a high tech degree without having to suffer the transportation woes of Auckland'.*

" *The government really needs to... open up the immigration, again, to be able to enable skilled migrants to enter the country.*

" *We've got heaps of jobs, we can't fill them, lack of skilled employees, they need specific skills and we don't have them.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– The freezing works are viewed as key regional employer.
– **PEC -** A leading technology employer in Marton hiring a number of skilled employees.

" *The first ever pump in the world came out of our (PEC) factory in Marton - which is pretty cool.*

" *The security system that came out of here, that's used all around the world now. You know, this is technology that was created here in Marton.*

Framework Tags

Decent Work & Economic Growth | Sustainable Cities & Communities | Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital | Human Capability

Self-managing and empowered leaders | Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation

The perception of a lack of career progression and pathways in Rangitīkei is creating barriers to finding skilled employees.

Strengths

– Some Rangitīkei employers feel they are giving people the opportunity to build a career.

"What I'll always hold close… where people are able to show that initiative, show that motivation, giving them the opportunity to develop careers. That is really, really important to me.

" *We take a great deal of pride and in being able to state that we offer a high technology career in rural New Zealand, not many places in New Zealand have that option. Not many places in the world have that option.*
" *I love the fact that the people are able to grow within the business. That's sort of what excites me about who we are and what we're about philosophically.*

Barriers

– Some have the view that there are limited pathways to acquire skills for quality jobs that enable people to move up in their careers and get ahead in life.
– Some feel that field specialisation may not guarantee employment in that area.
– Some have experienced coming into the region with higher education and skills and can't find jobs.

– There is a sense by some that for the skilled jobs that do exist in the region, these are being filled predominantly by skilled workers from outside of the region. Some feel this is taking opportunities from locals, however, others feel it may be a result of a shortage of skilled workers living in the region.
– Some share a sense that professionals tend to rely on moving from job to job for career progression, rather than staying within organisations and working their way up, some feel this is due to a tendency for organisations to have flatter structures in today's world.

"Many don't know they have the capabilities because they haven't been nurtured enough, and encouraged to step out of their comfort zones.

" *Higher skilled education is seen as a pathway to a better life; however, there are only so many skilled jobs available in an area like Taihape.*
" *The general problem with unemployment statistics is they don't talk about the quality of employment or for that matter whether it's sustainable in the future.*
" *There's a lot of low paid low skilled labour here but they don't lead to any kind of professionalisation or any kind of real improvement in standard of living.*
" *We don't have an industry or service that would cater to a more technology-based skillset, same with wrap-around businesses, i.e. business upskilling, so people go elsewhere such as Palmy.*

" *It's very specific. There is a hell of a lot of onsite skill that needs to be transferred into people that's not part of our natural training. You don't go get a degree in "intrinsically safe electronic design".*
" *There's a big demand for youth to work in these channels. But they're dead end jobs. They don't lead anywhere. The meat works is an obvious example.*
" *Career progression is that people who have higher paid work tend to develop their own career progression and they move to do that. The days where you stay within an organisation for your whole life and your career progression is within that organisation doesn't really apply anymore, as we tend to have flatter organisations.*
" *Professionals tend to rely on career progression by moving from job to job, especially millennials who tend to jump around quite a bit.*

RANGITĪKEI IS A LOW WAGE ECONOMY, WITH A MEDIAN PERSONAL INCOME OF **$43,000, COMPARED WITH $48,160 NATIONALLY.**

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 8 Decent Work & Economic Growth

$43,000 RANGITĪKEI

$48,160 NATIONALLY

Opportunities

– Finding pathways for people to acquire skills that will enable them to be able to move up in their careers, and life.
– Businesses in the region need to be more willing to take on and invest in training employees.

" *They need to be willing to take on people and train them.*

There is good progress being made in specific industries for women in managerial roles including with iwi, community organisations, the rural sector and health.

Framework Tags

Gender Equality   Reduced Inequalities   Decent Work & Economic Growth

Social Cohesion

Self-managing and empowered leaders   Participating fully in society

Strengths

– There is a perception by some that a large proportion of leadership in iwi and Māori organisations is female.
– It is felt by many that more women generally work in industries such as social services, health and hospice, and therefore are more likely to hold leadership roles in these spaces. It is also perceived the groundwork is predominantly done by women in these industries.
– It has been noted by some that female representation in the rural sector is improving with the generational shift in leadership roles and higher prevalence of couples on farms working in partnership.
– Many from the Taihape community in particular, feel there is a strong presence of female leadership in businesses and organisations across the township.

"When you look at Māori communities and villages in the past, you know, from my experience and learnings, there were always female leaders within those communities and I think it's still like that at the moment. It wasn't unusual to see females leading our people.

" *Mokai Patea (is led by) a woman, Taihape Health Centre, the manager is a woman, Work and Income, the managers are women. The REAP manager is a woman. In Taihape we are far more progressive.*
" *I know there are a lot of women in management in the iwi organisations, there are quite a lot.*
" *Women are in managerial roles including with iwi, it shouldn't matter what the gender of the person in the role.*
" *As younger generations take over farms there has been more sharing of roles.*
" *I would have put women higher than that here in Taihape. Two of our major businesses in town are run by women. There's two of our industries that employ over 40 employees each and are female.*
" *We have some very strong women coming from our community.*
" *We'd be 60-70% women in Taihape. It's a great thing, it's done on ability, it's not done on the fact you don't wear trousers.*
" *Women in leadership roles are becoming more common and it's good.*

RANGITĪKEI IS PERFORMING WELL FOR **WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS** WITH **35% OCCUPYING THESE ACROSS THE REGION, COMPARED TO 31% NATIONALLY**.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 5, Gender Equality

35%

31%

WOMEN WHO ARE TRAINED IN STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS) **HAVE INCREASED FROM 18% IN 2013, TO 20% IN 2018.**

18%   2013

20%   2018

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 5, Gender Equality

Barriers

– It is perceived as positive that more women are getting into leadership roles but some feel the numbers are lower than what they had hoped for, there is room for improvement and they are still waiting for some bigger outcomes.
– It was noted by some that the more conservative nature of rural communities may be a contributing factor to a lack of female leadership in some sectors, with some still having the tendency to fulfil the traditional roles and expectations.
– Some have observed that teachers seem to be overwhelmingly female - this may be a result of the limited financial progression in the profession acting as a dis-incentive to male teachers who are instead transitioning into leadership with higher income opportunities.
– Some feel that women build a broad range of life skills through their daily lives that are not necessarily credited for, or viewed as advantageous, to their career progression.

"It has an impact on a school, there are so many dynamics that make up a healthy functioning school. If you have a non-representative staff in all sorts of ways, age, ethnicity, gender etc, then children miss out. That's diversity.

"As a female, you have a massive portfolio of roles within your household. And I don't think society appreciates how well females do all those things and get them all done.

" *I hope there is good progress being made in equality, but I don't see it.*

" *You've got all those household tasks, you've got the meals, you've got the planning and logistics, and all those things are massive in a work environment and yet you're never credited for the amount of time, effort and energy you have spent on developing those skills.*

" *People who live in the country still expect the traditional roles to be the foundation.*

RANGITĪKEI IS NOT PERFORMING AS WELL FOR WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT POSITIONS WITH 30% OCCUPYING THESE ROLES, COMPARED WITH 37% NATIONALLY.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 5, Gender Equality

Opportunities

– Looking more deeply at who is putting themselves forwards for roles and who is not, and why and how this is affecting the placement of women into leadership/management roles.
– Better acknowledgement of the vast number of skills women acquire in their day to day lives that are transferable to their career progression.

"You could take those skills and transfer them into an everyday nine to five job and it can be done. But you need that connector, someone that goes 'hey, you're great at doing that, let's put this into a resume'.

" *The problem may be at the appointment level. And that's the whole gender bias stuff. But it also might be at the application level. So why aren't women putting themselves forward for those sorts of positions to be considered?*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Agri-women's Development Trust -** supporting women in agriculture across the region.

"It (Agri-women's Development Trust) is about igniting women and giving them confidence to do whatever they want.

Sexual assault and family violence, despite an increase in reporting, is still prevalent and under-reported in the community.

Framework Tags

Peace Justice and Strong Institutions | Good Health & Wellbeing

Social Cohesion

Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

Strengths

– Some feel that an advantage of being in a small community is that for some who need help and support, it often comes from places they would least expect.
– Some felt that increased reporting has made a big difference to sexual assault figures, however there is still a way to go.

"The thing about our small communities, when someone needs help, right when you think there's no one, all of a sudden because someone's spoken to someone, a friend knows a friend, you've got the help you need. That's what happened with the rūnanga.

" *Reporting has made a big difference to those figures, everyone is reporting it far more freely now.*

RANGITĪKEI'S REPORTED SEXUAL ASSAULT RATE IS SIGNIFICANTLY BETTER THAN THE NEW ZEALAND AVERAGE AT 11.63 OFFENCES PER 10,000 PEOPLE POPULATION COMPARED WITH 16.78 FOR NEW ZEALAND.

SEXUAL ASSAULT
OFFENCES
PER 10,000 PEOPLE
11.63 | **16.78**
RANGITĪKEI | NEW ZEALAND

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 5: Gender Inequality

Barriers

– Some felt there is still an under-reporting of sexual assault and domestic violence due to the rural culture. There is also a perception that there is a knowledge gap between what domestic violence and sexual assault is and what the line is for reporting.
– There is a feeling in some groups that actual rates are higher than those reported despite improvements in reporting.
– There is a concern from some agencies that some in the community feel there is nothing wrong with domestic violence and sexual assault.
– Some felt there was more pressure to resolve the issues (and less reporting of domestic violence) in partnerships in farming communities due to the nature of the farming business and the "just push through it" mindset.
– Some have experienced incidences where a connection between alcohol and/or drug abuse and domestic violence is clear.
– COVID-19, and the lockdowns, were noted by some as a specific factor contributing to increased family violence.
– Some feel that being geographically isolated is another barrier working against victims who are trying to access support for family violence.
– Some victims of sexual assault or family violence experience prolonged and/or delayed trauma, often suppressing it until much later on in their lives.
– Some feel that elder abuse in relation to families abusing or taking advantage of elderly relatives, is on the rise.

"The consequences of breaking up a family that lives on the site (on family farms) makes it even more difficult so there is probably more pressure not to report, or not to talk about it, or to make it work.

" *I think it is much higher than that statistic, a lot of our clients do not report the sexual assaults.*
" *The sexual assault is also dealing with the trauma of what has happened in the past, seeing it all over the place with the church and institutional stuff that has gone on.*
" *Some people are only coming forward now, 20, 30 and 40 years later, reflective of how traumatised they have been.*
" *On the basis of reporting, a more conservative rural society, it might be less reported.*
" *My point is about reporting, what is considered reportable?*
" *It is not reported, but it is also not talked about either. People need to talk about it before they report it.*
" *The consequences of breaking up a family that lives on the site (on family farms) makes it even more difficult so there is probably more pressure not to report, or not to talk about it, or to make it work.*
" *There's more pressure to make it work. Because, I handle quite a few cases where there has been a problem and I tell you, there are extreme complications around untangling it. So there's more pressure to try and resolve the thing.*
" *We are seeing family violence in those we care for, in the elder health and elder abuse area.*
" *Probably true, and still remains relatively hidden, and the lockdown they tell me, has made things worse, people having to be in close proximity for longer.*
" *We don't have Victim Support here anymore, so if you have recently suffered trauma, someone will ring you up on the phone, and that's not what people need, they need face to face.*

RANGITĪKEI'S REPORTED FAMILY VIOLENCE RATE OF 20.75 OFFENCES PER 10,000 PEOPLE POPULATION **IS SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER** THAN THE NEW ZEALAND AVERAGE OF 16.91.

Impact Collective Dashboard, Goal 5: Gender Inequality

Opportunities

– Some feel that as a smaller community there is a greater opportunity to come together and offer support.

" *The thing about our small communities, when someone needs help, right when you think there's no one, all of a sudden because someone's spoken to someone, a friend knows a friend, you've got the help you need. That's what happened with the runanga.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Mokai Patea Services -** working successfully to support families in the community.
– Preventative work by the Rūnanga.

" *The Rūnanga are working with families to prevent this from happening. Preventative rather than an ambulance at the bottom of the cliff.*
" *They are doing a lot of great work in this space, and it's very private work. They don't showcase a lot of families that go through this because it is very hard and we are very proud people with other races.*

The complex trauma caused by family violence has many detrimental downstream ripple effects on children in families.

Framework Tags

Peace Justice and Strong Institutions   Good Health & Wellbeing   Sustainable Cities & Communities

Social Cohesion

Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

Barriers

– Some feel that children living in a home dealing with family violence are dealing with loads they shouldn't have to carry; just getting to school is a massive achievement for some of these children, with some too afraid to go home.
– Many children dealing with family violence at home, are too afraid to, or unaware that they are able to speak up about it, meaning they often miss out on the support they need.
– The on-going impact of dealing with the trauma of past domestic violence as children, was noted as an issue, as it is often suppressed and not dealt with for many, many years.
– Some felt there was a connection between family violence and youth offending, and evidence that youth crime may be higher in households with domestic violence.

"If you are continuously worried about where the next thump is coming from, again, you are caught in that trap of not being able to see beyond that immediate fear and worry.

" *Some of our children have to carry loads they shouldn't have to, just getting to school is a major achievement when they have to deal with a whole lot of stuff at home.*
" *The harder parts are when it's more subtle, when you know something is going on but the young person isn't talking, or you hear indirectly but not directly. It's the awareness that you know something is going on.*
" *A high family violence rate means you will have a corresponding youth offending rate.*
" *I did hear from the library that some of the library children didn't want to go home, so they sort of just wandered around.*
" *If there is family violence, people have talked about how it has affected them as children.*

Opportunities

– Changing parenting styles through "gentle parenting" courses.
– Some feel that as a smaller community there is a greater opportunity to come together and offer support.

"What they've been doing is a course called "gentle parenting". Whether there is an opportunity to bring that into the community, maybe.

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Mokai Patea Services -** working successfully to support families in the community.

"The families still have to engage with them so they don't have 100% of all the families, but they probably have 60% of the families, long standing families that are pretty proud of that connection.

Elderly

This life stage encompasses all older adults that are aged 65 years old and above.

Good Health & Wellbeing

Theme 27— The perception that certain community groups are only for 'the old', dwindling numbers and a lack of community spaces for these groups to meet, are all contributing to less opportunity for elderly connection, socialisation and activity.

Theme 29— The centralisation of essential physical and mental health services, and the de-prioritisation of elderly population groups for accessing the care they need, is causing barriers to support needed for elderly. For many, this is leading to negative health outcomes, suffering, suicide and population movement (away from their community, loved ones and friends) to access care.

Theme 30— Lack of appropriate housing for elderly is leading to many continuing to live in large homes they can no longer look after, leading to declining health and financial vulnerability for some and contributing to the lack of available housing stock in communities.

Reduced Inequalities

Theme 28—The lack of trust, access and knowledge of how to use the internet is causing increased barriers for elderly as essential services progressively move online, such as online banking and telehealth. COVID-19 has amplified this further.

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing | Sustainable Cities & Communities | Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Social Cohesion

Participating fully in society | Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

The perception that certain community groups are only for 'the old', dwindling numbers and a lack of community spaces for these groups to meet, are all contributing to less opportunity for elderly connection, socialisation and activity.

Strengths

– Some have the view that elderly have a lot of support, clubs to join and things to do in their local townships, especially in the Marton community. It is acknowledged by many that it takes confidence to link up with these, which may be a barrier for some elderly.

"In Marton, there is quite good support for the elderly, through all those sorts of organisations, the church groups and the Marton Friendship Club is very strong too.

" *There is interaction between middle-aged guys that know the oldies, helping them out, and I think that is quite good for the younger person.*
" *In this community, I found it a wonderful welcoming supportive community with so many things to get involved in, maybe people just aren't aware of them or don't have the confidence to link up with them.*

Barriers

– Some have the view that there are lots of active groups in the community for elderly to engage with, however, numbers are declining due to numerous factors such as the perception these groups are just for 'the old' and a sense that older people are moving out of town to access healthcare due to a lack of aged care in some townships.
– It was felt by many that whilst some acknowledge there are many spaces to meet in their townships, it is a challenge trying to find a place for these groups to meet that is fit for purpose and will stay open.

– There has also been on-going displacement of community groups in some townships as locations have fallen into disrepair or have closed.
– Some groups are amalgamating to address declining membership.
– COVID-19 was viewed to have contributed to further location closures and club membership decline.

"It would be great to have a forever place, but that's so hard here, the groups are pushed out all over the place.

" *So it has progressed, but sadly, because we are such an old group, we have had some people pass... four weeks ago we were 35 people, but now only 29, as we have had two pass, and four move away.*
" *(The Taihape Town Hall) was the info centre, library, councillor offices and had an auditorium with a full rafted stage to the point we could have the New Zealand Ballet come and perform on our stage, but it is now not functional.*
" *It is similar with the women's club in Taihape, there were so many beautiful items and facilities in there that everybody loved, it was like walking onto your favourite pair of slippers and then boom, asbestos in the ceiling tiles, and four weeks later, it's closed, and those women are still displaced.*
" *It's not a lack of spaces there's a lack of suitable spaces.*
" *I don't really know (where they could go) but there are community halls, lots of community halls. But it's whether they are suitable...*

Opportunities

– Finding more reliable, consistent quality locations for community groups to meet up.
– Many need facilities that cater for varying interests, with acknowledgement by groups that participation will vary depending on the activity.
– The "allure of a good feed" to bring older groups together was a benefit, bringing people together and making it easier to facilitate connection.
– The desire to have, and benefit of having aged care facilities in townships to maintain community connection and keep clubs going.
– Help and intervention to encourage elderly residents to get out and participate in the community, and have a good laugh.

"They enjoy the variety, they love the togetherness, they get that community, and they just talk.

" *Old people can't cook a roast for themselves, because they have only got themselves... so it's nice to cook them all a roast when we gather.*
" *Grandchildren are the best, they will do everything for them and show them how to do everything.*
" *The only way to keep those who are isolated connected is to get a van, go where we choose, and sit and have lunch.*
" *I would love them all to come down and join us, I would just like that town hall fixed.*
" *They are having difficulty getting out and about so need help and intervention.*
" *That could be an enticement, they get a roast meal with a pudding, so we are going to do that, that's an enticement, to have a roast.*
" *A sense of humour awakened gently can mean things don't grow so big.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Marton Rotary** and **Friendship Clubs** (Taihape and Marton) putting together trips and providing opportunities for connection, support and care.
– **Older and Bolder -** Keeping seniors in touch with one another.

"We have a retired psychologist in the club which is great support for those that need any extra support.

" *It's a fun noisy place (the Marton Friendship Club) because we just do what we feel like, we extend our sense of humour, if you have a laugh and a chuckle you can relax.*

Framework Tags

Reduced Inequalities | No Poverty | Good Health & Wellbeing | Quality Education | Sustainable Cities & Communities | Social Cohesion | Participating fully in society

The lack of trust, access and knowledge of how to use the internet is causing increased barriers for elderly as essential services progressively move online, such as online banking and telehealth. COVID-19 has amplified this further.

Strengths

– It was noted by some that lots of technology workshops for the elderly come through regularly, and that some elderly are well connected and will often go to each other to figure technology related challenges out.

"Lots of workshops come through all the time, regularly, now they all have cellphones and are close-knitted they will go to each other and figure it out.

" *I've got so many seniors, if I had a problem with the computer, there was several of them that I'd go to for the help.*

Barriers

– Some feel that the older generation (75+) are particularly stubborn when it comes to the need to use the internet and technology. Support is available but addressing mindsets and resistance to change is challenging.
– Some elderly refuse to use or can't use the internet and don't trust it, preferring face to face services and connection. The increasing threat of online scammers, particularly targeting this demographic, is only adding to their distrust.
– Essential services such as banking moving online are forcing the move to access technology and services online for elderly. The impact 'going cashless' may have on elderly was a particular concern with a sense that 'they only work with cash... it is all they know'.

– The push to use online services is perceived to be causing stress, anxiety and dis-advantage for many elderly.
– Many felt internet access and associated costs are causing additional distress for elderly.
– Some have the perception that technology and online services are getting harder to use, as opposed to easier, which acts as an additional barrier.

"I don't think a lot of people, especially the older generation, actually realise how debilitating that is to not have the internet.

" *Some don't trust the internet, which I understand. I had a client ring me up crying because she'd been scammed tens of thousands of dollars.*

" *But in a way it (moving banking online) was probably good for them, they can't just live in the dark ages and put money under their mattress, there are ladies out there that still do that.*

" *A lot of these people also can't access banks, or even holes in walls. Some are very good, but we still have the pocket of people that just don't cope.*

" *They've taken cheque books away, then landlines away, all those things impact as well.*

" *In the first lockdown, the over 70's were not allowed out of the house, they had to get friends to do their shopping, but couldn't pay the friends. How do I, when I am locked in, get my shopping when I don't have cash?*

" *A lot of them are old farmers, they have worked out on the farm all their life, and earned their dollar. They will do it, but they will argue it, and it's not until they are forced to do something.*

" *I'm 68, so I am talking about the next generation up, that generation is very stubborn.*

" *The elderly have already lost that fight, we can't change it, but what can we put in place to accommodate them, giving them a mobile phone isn't going to help them.*

" *It's really scary, if you can't do that online stuff, it's really scary, to the point of heart palpitations etc.*

" *In one word, it is a nightmare, it just doesn't work, and it is really grossly unfair, so there is a huge barrier, an enormous barrier, it's not fair.*

" *The next thing is losing their landlines, which is going to drive that (fear and anxiety) even further, it is very problematic.*

" *I have spoken to some elderly too and for them they are a very face to face generation, so putting it online may cause health issues for them if they are less able to see people within the community.*

" *I would have thought that some of these programmes would be getting more intuitive, and they are just not, it seems crazy.*

Opportunities

– Giving the older generation time to adjust to change, build trust and offer the personal touch.
– Bringing the youth and elderly together could create great learning opportunities (i.e internet) and also creates more trust between the age groups. Many felt grandchildren are a key resource in training elderly and helping them access the online world.
– Seniors helping seniors, leveraging those in their community who are good with technology to help others, and give them a sense of purpose.
– Banking hubs set up to provide elderly with the face to face service they require.

"We as communities need to support these people through that transition.

" *But I've got so many seniors, if I had a problem with the computer, there are several of them that I'd go to for help.*

" *The way forward is what they talk about with banking hubs. They are doing it in Levin. In the middle of the mall one bank will be there one day a week, and they share that facility.*

" *Bringing the youth and elderly together could create great learning opportunities (i.e internet) and also creates more trust between the age groups.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Rangitīkei Council** offered basic computer literacy classes.
– **Senior Net** - workshops on using the internet
– Courses run through REAP in Taihape.

"The Council were offering to come out to the little townships and teach basic computer literacy so have tried to step into that space.

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing | Reduced Inequalities | Sustainable Cities & Communities

Financial & Physical Capital | Human Capability

Leading healthy lifestyles | Participating fully in society

The centralisation of essential physical and mental health services, and the de-prioritisation of elderly population groups for accessing the care they need, is causing barriers to support needed for elderly. For many, this is leading to negative health outcomes, suffering, suicide and population movement (away from their community, loved ones and friends) to access care.

Strengths

– Some feel that in the absence of the support and care they need, some elderly are great at supporting and checking in on one another which is viewed as very valuable.

"*Elderly people support each other a lot, peer support, that is often extensive and more valuable.*"

Barriers

– Many felt the way the system is set up, means elderly are not able to access the resources, support and services they need; unable to get the support they deserve.
– It is felt that elderly can't access the physical or mental health services they want or need without getting questioned about it. There is a strong perception that elderly are de-prioritised due to age.
– It was noted that elderly needing hip replacements are not prioritised leading to suicide for some as the wait and the pain is too much.
– Some have first hand experiences of, and feel that elderly suicide is a very real issue in the region.
– It was felt by some that successive governments have run down the health system, which has had a disproportionately negative impact on elderly.

– The closure of retirement homes and aged care facilities in some townships is felt to be dislocating elderly from their family and community groups as they have to move to access care. For many, they are having to grapple with the fact their future only exists elsewhere, and away from their family.
– The closure of local and rural hospitals was strongly noted by many as fundamental to compounding access issues related to aged care in rural communities and townships.
– All of the above are felt to negatively contribute to the mental health decline of elderly in the region.
– It was felt by some that elder abuse is now occurring in some family and care situations.

"*I deal with people 60-100 years old, at that age they are classed as redundant, if you couple all of that together with huge amount of pain, that defines suicide.*"

" *A nationwide problem is suicide in elderly.*
" *Across the whole country, orthopaedics going public are only for acute, there is no capacity for elective surgery, that is where the crisis is.*
" *What choice do these old people have, they die in their beds alone.*
" *They pay taxes all their life, they deserve better than being put on the shelf and 'oh we need to look after the young people'.*
" *I'm on the ground level, I deal with these people, I sit with them while they are crying, I work with these people all the time.*
" *Even incontinence products, people don't qualify unless they have less than six months to live, once upon a time that wasn't an issue, but now, people won't go out because they can't access those things.*

" *As we age our ability to manage anxiety and slip into depression can be very subtle, more to do with ageing than past events.*
" *The health system is just completely broken, people can't get anything they want or need without getting questioned about it, you can't get anything unless you meet the requirements.*
" *Closing the hospital down and closing the rest home down has really changed the outlook for Taihape's older people.*
" *They just can't sustain a rest home here, they just can't get the staff.*
" *It's heartbreaking for them, because they are losing their friends, and the family of course are losing their loved ones.*
" *The lack of resources for elderly in our community is a massive concern.*
" *Self isolation and self harm is just as high in elderly as it is in youth.*
" *It makes me angry about the lack of support and services (for elderly).*
" *The ambulance service, they (elderly) can sometimes be waiting up to two hours if they fall over and break their hip, the ambulance is bad here.*
" *Some elderly also don't have anyone left around for them.*
" *I just had a memorial on the weekend of an 82 year old man who committed suicide, so its alive and real.*
" *A lot of elderly have to move out of town to a retirement village or rest home, it causes a lot of anguish for them.*
" *We had a suicide of an elderly gentleman just out of town last month, he was losing grasp of reality, had family surrounding him, was just really sad.*
" *If their family lives ten hours aways, no-one is checking on them.*

Opportunities

– Providing aged care and related medical support services where people live .
– Equal and fairer access to mental and physical healthcare for elderly.
– Greater acknowledgment from the central government of what the lived experience is like for elderly, and how bad the situation really is.

"*We really really need people at the Ministry to understand what it is that we do, a huge void, there is no representation of palliative care down there, no-one even reads the reports I have sent them to see what is happening.*"

" *Purely how we get to those people in a position that they trust to talk to people.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Taihape Older and Bolder -** offer two vehicles that provide a health appointment transport service and have strong uptake.

"*Taihape Older and Bolder operate two vehicles, good support for our people in town.*"

Lack of appropriate housing for elderly is leading to many continuing to live in large homes they can no longer look after, leading to declining health and financial vulnerability for some and contributing to the lack of available housing stock in communities.

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing No Poverty Reduced Inequalities Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital

Leading healthy lifestyles turing

Barriers

– Some elderly are living in cold and damp homes which are larger than required and they are unable to afford increasing heating costs. Some feel this is because there are no appropriate local housing options for the older population, or they simply just don't want to leave their homes.
– It was noted by many that there is a lack of fit for purpose elderly housing options in townships for elderly wishing to maintain community connections, including the loss of pensioner flats in some townships.
– Many feel there is a lack of retirement homes in the region, further contributing to elderly staying in their big empty homes, as they don't want to move away from their friends and family to a retirement home outside of the region.
– Some noted that there are also elderly living in bad family environments as a result of the lack of appropriate housing, in some instances leading to elder abuse, particularly around money.

"They don't want to rock the boat. It can get really toxic because they still value the support they get from having someone at home with them.

" *The other thing is trying to convince the council, they are the only ones with the money to build, there's a shortage of houses in Taihape, a shortage of care for the elderly.*
" *And again, the ability, you are left with one partner, usually the female, who then has to deal with the housing situation, and just goes through the whole thing of finding an agent that isn't going to shaft you and trying to get a good deal.*

" *Across the board, it is shocking for families, overcrowding, not enough houses available, really shocking if you are seeing an elderly person in emergency housing.*
" *Some of the flats in the Rangitīkei weren't up to certain specs, it is shocking, and they can't even afford it with their pension.*
" *Elderly people are having to leave their friends and families, when they can't live alone.*
" *There is definitely population movement, Marton has our only retirement village that I know of and we just have so many people in Taihape that go 'we are going to have to move'.*
" *They did close the rest home in Marton a couple of years ago, there are certainly no retirement villages in the region that I am aware of, so people who need more support and their family is not there, tend to have to move away, so that is an issue.*
" *Elder abuse will be becoming an issue, especially financially, pressures put on grandparents to give money to the grandchildren which will turn out to be money for drugs.*
" *They may own a home but children move in to supposedly look after them but then it can get really nasty.*
" *We had one lady whose family did that and put her into a home and then she darn well died of COVID-19, that was really sad.*
" *Our problem is we have got so many elderly people in big houses, three bedroom houses that they don't need, and it's a bit much for them.*

New Zealand Rangitīkei District
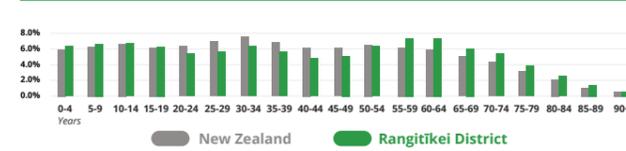
RANGITĪKEI HAS AN ELDERLY POPULATION WITH ITS STRONGEST AGE BRACKETS BEING FROM 55 - 89, WHEN COMPARED WITH THE NATIONAL POPULATION AVERAGES.

Stats NZ – Population Estimates 2022

Opportunities

– More homecare options to be provided for the elderly in their homes.
– Communal Housing such as the Abbie Field concept; 'flatting for seniors'.
– The Spatial Plan by Council - hopefully leads to some units for elderly being put on the flats in some townships, close to healthcare facilities.
– A new rest home in the region 'so we don't lose our grey-haired heroes'.

"Looking for funding because we always lose our oldies; the oldies are the heroes of the town, and we lose them because there aren't enough rest homes and medical care here.

" *I think the Abbey Field concept is a really great idea - HQ is in Nelson, one in Palmerston North, it is a charitable trust 'flatting for seniors', and they love it!*
" *So we're wanting them to sell those homes or rent them out. But then what do we do with them? What can we offer them? Can we put them into this sort of communal housing?*
" *We do have, especially in Taihape, a lot of aging couples who are living in these big huge three and four bedroom, big lawns, big sections, and they'll stay there. I get that, but for one to probably need more homecare people around them, maybe there is an option that we can provide.*
" *Quite excited about the spatial plan that has just been done, hopefully can get some of the industrial out of town and put some units on the flats.*
" *If elderly people want something smaller, they also want to be closer to health facilities.*

All

This phase captures themes that are relevant for the Rangitīkei community across all life stages.

Good Health & Wellbeing

Theme 31—Many have the view that there is a crisis right across the health system (physical & mental), which is amplified by local hospital closures and nursing shortages. There is however, a sense by some that iwi health providers are stepping up to bridge the gaps across the Rangitīkei.

Theme 32—With a traditional reluctance and fear to talk about death, mis-perceptions of palliative care and the increased complexity of an individual's circumstances, alongside gaps in the health system, is meaning palliative care providers are experiencing barriers to provide appropriate and timely care. An aging population is increasing pressure to address this and to upscale services appropriately.

Theme 33—While there are some great sporting events within the region, there is a perception that there is a lack of coordination and limited provision towards providing and maintaining sports facilities due to the constraints of geographical isolation and the cost burden to smaller communities.

Theme 40—There are huge benefits being experienced by some in relation to returning to and reconnecting with the land.

Life on Land

Theme 35—Many farmers are experiencing stigma and discrimination accusing them of not caring for the environment, when in reality, they are doing their best to address and reduce ongoing environmental impacts and meet increasingly complex obligations.

Theme 41—There have been some huge gains and progress made in the upkeep of the region's scenic reserves, however, there are challenges due to the ongoing maintenance and workforce required to maintain and ensure these successes.

Zero Hunger

Theme 38—There is a growing awareness and effort from some in the community around growing, harvesting, sharing and learning about food, and a sense of togetherness and fulfilment that naturally comes through these experiences.

Theme 39—There is increasing food insecurity in the region, particularly amongst lower income families, with increasing need to access food banks and alternative food providers. It is noted by many that there is a stigma around needing, and being seen to need support with food.

Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure

Theme 36—While there is an acknowledgement of greater travel times living in a rural community, a lack of public transport, declining rural road conditions and increasing fuel prices are creating further barriers to accessing services, employment, education and recreation. This is impacting lower income families disproportionately.

Theme 37—Whilst there is a level of acknowledgement that living rurally will mean a more limited access to certain services, the additional decline of many essential services in these areas is now no longer meeting community needs.

Theme 60—Whilst housing has traditionally been cheap, and home ownership is generally high in the Rangitīkei, the nationwide housing crisis has now trickled down to the region, creating challenges and barriers for local and newer residents, especially those on lower incomes.

Life Below Water

Theme 42—There is a heightened awareness around protecting the wellbeing of the rivers and waterways in the region, however, this work is ongoing which brings with it challenges and set-backs.

Reduced Inequalities

Theme 43—Many experience issues and barriers to consistent and affordable internet and cell phone connectivity in the region, which is having a number of downstream impacts.

Theme 47—A strong foundation has been built with and by iwi across the region, with growing opportunities for participation and engagement, while acknowledging there are still some issues influenced by history and mistrust that are being worked through. The good work by iwi groups in the region was noted by many.

Clean Water & Sanitation

Theme 44—It is clear there is some infrastructure in the region that is not fit for purpose, however, perceptions around safe vs. unsafe drinking water are complex, and don't necessarily reflect reality.

Sustainable Cities & Communities

Theme 34—There are many benefits of living rurally in Rangitīkei, including ease of access due to being centrally located in the North Island, cheaper housing, good climate, and the small community culture. Some are concerned however, around the changing demographics of rural communities.

Theme 45—Community driven groups are perceived to be passionate connectors, funders and are key to addressing specific community needs. Many feel they are currently the main drivers of solutions and positive outcomes for their communities.

Theme 46—There is a growing feeling by some that the rural community has become less connected, more individualised and it is harder to access clear information. However, some also feel that COVID-19 has triggered some positive changes to address the perceived gaps.

Theme 48—There are increasing challenges to maintain community group membership and volunteer workforces due to people aging out (getting too old to volunteer in the same way) and barriers attracting younger members and volunteers.

Theme 49—Across the Rangitīkei there is a strong need and community drive for shared multi purpose community hubs, but skepticism exists over the Council's ability to deliver hubs in alignment with community needs.

Theme 50—Some feel that the location of Bulls and the expanding Ohakea Air Base transient community, influences their ability to bond and connect as a community and develop appropriate community resources.

Theme 51—While retirees feel Marton is a desired place to live, there is some widespread lack of enthusiasm due to perceived neglect of buildings and community resources and a "we're only Marton" mentality.

Theme 52—While the growing Samoan community in Marton is becoming well established, there are perceived challenges by some around connecting to this community due to limited communication channels and a sense that they want to keep to themselves.

Theme 53—Many feel that Hunterville is a self-sufficient and close-knit community with a 'do it themselves' attitude to meet community needs, by providing their own resources and funding.

Theme 54—Taihape comes together strongly as a community when needed (i.e. through COVID) but acknowledges that they are a community that can be divided when big decisions need to be made.

Theme 55—Whilst they acknowledge they can be an indecisive township, Taihape feels there is dysfunction in their relationship with the Council, feeling let down and neglected in numerous community building projects; some feel they are the region's "poor cousin".

Theme 56—There is a sense that Taihape as a township, is feeling tired and run-down, and is in need of a rejuvenation in order to thrive socially and economically into the future.

Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

Theme 57—Many feel that being a small, close knit community means crime is low, and when crime is present, the community generally "knows" who is responsible.

Decent Work & Economic Growth

Theme 58—There is a sense that most businesses across the Rangitīkei have fared well and generally remained resilient through COVID-19, however, the local shops and hospitality businesses in the townships have struggled.

Theme 59—Due to the traditional nature of the local economy having limited skilled work opportunities, employers that are now beginning to offer skilled employment, are struggling to attract people to the region, which is limiting economic growth.

No Poverty

Theme 61—Whilst some still have affordable rentals, due to the low income nature of the region and rising rents, many are struggling to find affordable, safe and healthy rentals. This is creating a number of negative downstream impacts such as overcrowding, homelessness and an increased need for emergency housing across the region.

Many have the view that there is a crisis right across the health system (physical & mental), which is amplified by local hospital closures and nursing shortages. There is however, a sense by some that iwi health providers are stepping up to bridge the gaps across the Rangitīkei.

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing   Reduced Inequalities   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital   Human Capability

Self-managing and empowered leaders   Participating fully in society   Confidently participating in Te Ao Māori

Strengths

– Many feel that Māori health providers are flourishing, with their teams invested in their community, and providing services where they need to be.

Whilst the following have been identified as a strength, they have also been identified as a barrier:

– Whilst many feel the entire health system is in crisis right across the country, some felt that no health system is perfect, and have highlighted areas where healthcare services are doing well considering the pressures on the system, i.e. Taihape Health Centre.
– Some share the view that people, and the media, can be tough on the health system in New Zealand, with the sentiment that no health system is perfect, and it comes down to what a country can afford.

"I'm a supporter of the health system, no country in the world has the health system they want, they have the health system they can afford.

" *Our healthcare in Taihape is really great ,they do struggle, but they seem to manage to run health services really well.*
" *They are a team invested in their community, providing service where it needs to be.*
" *We have one female doctor, she's just a treasure, she's been there years and really knows the community.*
" *Media has a lot to answer for there, they have brainwashed the population, I don't think it (the health system) is half as bad as they have made out.*

Barriers

– Some feel accessing national support services based outside of the region via 0800 numbers is no comparison to having an in person face to face service or interaction. There is also a lack of awareness of these services in the community, with some unaware they even exist.
– Many feel the local hospital closure in Taihape has had a negative impact on the community, leaving many gaps in service provision and meaning many now have to travel to access the care they need.
– Some have had scary experiences due to ambulance delays, and with an additional nervousness around the helicopter service being removed, some are feeling their future health may be at risk if they find themselves in a medical emergency.
– Some have accepted that moving to a rural community comes with higher risk around being unable to access life saving medical care, however, others find this unacceptable.
– Many feel COVID-19 has amplified the health crisis, bringing with it additional complexities and challenges such as a decrease in children being immunised, which is believed to have been brought on by COVID-19 vaccination fatigue.

"A lot of organisations get funding, and say they cover Taihape, or rural areas, but we don't see them, they might have an 0800 number, but they don't (come to the community).

" *There is a huge crisis in health, orthopaedic health, elder health, mental health, midwifery.... and preventative care.*

" *With the health system there is a crisis, full stop.*
" *Trying to get GPs and stuff in our region is really challenging too.*
" *There is a nationwide shortage of nurses, so recruitment is taking place everywhere. Any spouses that are qualified nurses will be snapped up immediately.*
" *Once upon a time there was one public health nurse to 3000, now you'd probably find it is to every 100,000.*
" *Our biggest threat here in Taihape is the medical side of things.*
" *You take a higher chance coming to a place here that doesn't have the medical services that could save your life, that's the hard reality, but we accept it.*
" *An ambulance can take an hour, then you're dead.*
" *They were going to stop the helicopter coming and that would have been awful.*

Opportunities

– There is a strong feeling that there is an increasing need for nurses, hospitals and retirement facilities where people live, particularly in Taihape.

"There is going to be a big need for more nurses in the hospital expansion and a potential new retirement home.

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Robert Bartley Bus -** mobile health clinic that takes services to the community.
– Iwi healthcare providers, including Mokai Patea Services and Ngāti Apa, are filling big gaps in their communities.
– **The local Taihape Health Centre is absolutely humming -** a team invested in their community, providing service where it needs to be, specialists will come up to the medical centre and there is an emergency helicopter service when needed.

"Taihape Health Trust have now got too big and are going to go in with Mokai Patea services, and a physio, into an amazing new rehabilitation of the old hospital, which itself is in good nick. It's very exciting for Taihape.

" *Definitely think the health bus is a plus, it comes to Hunterville every second weekend so that is great.*

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital

Leading healthy lifestyles

With a traditional reluctance and fear to talk about death, mis-perceptions of palliative care and the increased complexity of an individual's circumstances, alongside gaps in the health system, is meaning palliative care providers are experiencing barriers to provide appropriate and timely care. An aging population is increasing pressure to address this and to upscale services appropriately.

Strengths

– It was noted by some that hospice is incredibly well supported by the community.
– Many prefer to die in their homes, and hospice is enabling these people to feel safe and supported to do so.
– Some felt that death can be positive, especially for those who have lived long and active lives in the community.
– It is viewed by some as a real privilege to be a part of someone's end of life journey.

"It's a real privilege being a part of someone's end of life.

" *It's part of being a not-for-profit service, is the amount of gratitude people have for the work that we are doing.*
" *Actually dying at home has become the main area of dying, including for aged care.*
" *People want to be in their homes, it is where they feel safe and supported to be.*
" *Talking about death, I've been talking about it quite a lot lately. It is not a sad thing, a 94 year old dying, after a very active and community minded innings.*
" *We want people to live well, but we also want people to die well.*

Barriers

– It is felt by some that there is a big mis-perception in the community and that people don't understand the depth and breadth of the care that is provided by hospice.

– It was felt by some that conversations around death, end of life and associated care historically, and currently, still have a lot of fear around them. It was noted that older men found this particularly difficult.
– Many people experience complex psycho-social issues when dealing with the concept of death, meaning some find it really difficult to help, knowing there is so much going on.
– Some feel the growth in the complexity of needs in palliative care means that palliative care workers need multi agency support to cater to the varying needs of their patients.
– Many feel there are some real gaps in other parts of the health system at the moment, which is having a negative downstream impact on palliative care - they are having to plug the gaps they are not trained to deal with.
– The future of workforce recruitment, retention and diversity of staff are challenges facing the hospice industry, particularly as the baby boomers reach retirement. There is growing concern that the growth in palliative care is something they are not going to be able to deal with on their own.

"People are living longer, they don't just turn up with one thing wrong with them, they will have multiple things going on, you don't get a simple patient.

" *These guys are dealing with this complexity, so very much needs to be a partnership with other providers.*
" *There is a huge army of older people who are going to die in the next 30 years.*
" *There is a feeling they have patients who don't have support they need in certain areas.*

" *It puts enormous amounts of strain on our staff and puts enormous stress levels onto their work.*
" *A lot of elderly men don't want to talk about health (or death), they have always been a tough group of men to try and get to the doctor.*
" *Specialist medical people, nurses, allied support team with social workers, spiritual support, social workers, it such a wrap around (service).*
" *Big picture, (we want) the holes in the health system to be repaired, we don't even know what core palliative care looks like without knowing what it would look like without those holes.*

RANGITĪKEI'S AVERAGE AGE OF DEATH IS 71, **WHICH RANKS IT THE 8TH LOWEST 'YOUNGEST AVERAGE AGE TO DIE' IN NEW ZEALAND**.

Impact Collective Dashboard - Goal 3 Good Health & Wellbeing

19% OF RANGITĪKEI RESIDENTS SMOKE, COMPARED WITH 4% ACROSS NEW ZEALAND.

Impact Collective Dashboard - Goal 3 Good Health & Wellbeing

19%

4%

Opportunities

– Repairing the holes in the healthcare system is felt to be urgent.
– Creating opportunities and pathways within the workforce in order to grow and retain staff in palliative care.

– End of life providers are seeking community feedback to have a better understanding of issues, gaps and service provision and how it affects specific community groups and to ensure equity of access.
– Ensuring the workforce of palliative care providers is more diverse; 'people want to be treated by people like them'.

"My future would be that everybody does have access to the things that they need.

" *We would like to build some relationships with more diverse community groups to understand what are some of the challenges around death.*
" *Is the face of hospice reflecting the people we want to look after? People want to be treated by people like them.*
" *There is a new era, as the population has evolved in regional areas, we are facing conversations around equity. We don't restrict people's access but that doesn't answer peoples perceived barriers around access, and strategically, we want to address this.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Arohanui Hospice -** palliative care and end of life situations, 250 people out there in our community today they are providing care for and only four people in the inpatients unit.

"We are incredibly well supported by our community, nearly half of our funding comes in through those channels.People appreciate the work we do.

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing   Reduced Inequalities   Sustainable Cities & Communities   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital

Leading healthy lifestyles

While there are some great sporting events within the region, there is a perception that there is a lack of coordination and limited provision towards providing and maintaining sports facilities due to the constraints of geographical isolation and the cost burden to smaller communities.

Strengths

– Some feel there are a number of successful sporting events and facilities provided in the region for children that like to be active.
– Some perceive sports as a large focus and of importance to the region's communities.

"We are also working with tennis and netball, and the memorial park is just great, and they are doing up the grandstand. So we have some great movement going on, maybe it's just a lack of PR about this?

" *(The squash) club is renovating its club rooms, putting in commercial kitchens, another court to be able to have national tournaments, they have 160 members and are running free workshops for young children.*
" *The Council for the first time, have sponsored the event (Mudder) and been behind us financially.*

Barriers

– Many feel the lack of public transport, high amount of travel time required to participate in sports, and the associated expense such as the cost of uniforms, membership and travel, can limit access to sport participation for children in the region.
– The smaller rural townships across the region have fewer existing sport facilities, many of which are ageing and need to be refurbished. There is a sense that the only way to get these upgraded is by the community 'doing it themselves' in relation to funding and resources.

– Gaining funding and support from some agencies has been challenging and at times can put key sport events across the region at risk.
– There is an observed lack of sports coordination across the region with the sports coordinator position disestablished during COVID-19 restrictions. This is viewed by many as a real loss to the community.

"I'm not being a dick, but I can afford to take my children to Whanganui for gym on Saturday morning if I want. I can make the time and I can afford the petrol but lots of people can't so I really felt passionate about that. I wasn't there for my children but for the greater good of the community.

" *Sports are huge, but you have to travel.*
" *A lot of the rural rugby clubs have closed or amalgamated, so for people having to travel for practise, that becomes really difficult.*
" *Large dairy farms rosters make getting off to practise really difficult too unless the employer is really supportive of staff trying to get to practise and games.*
" *Because of the drop in population, a lot of our sports people have to travel out of town to participate in their sports, that is even for school children too, and costs of travel are a barrier.*
" *They have to travel to Whanganui or Palmerston North (for basketball), so they can only play if they go down to Whanganui.*
" *Prior to COVID-19 we had a sports coordinator in our district, over COVID-19 we lost that. So there is this void.*
" *We have community members that would really love a sports club, but it's that lack of coordination.*

Opportunities

– Communities want a dedicated centralised sports hub, with improved facilities and club rooms.
– A dedicated sports coordinator for the region; someone that is able to spend 40 hours on the ground a week, to collaborate and bring all of the region's resources together to create more of a collective approach.

"It's about having someone who is people-focused and who understands their audience. They're not there for their own ego or their own agenda.

" *There have been discussions (at Council) around getting a sporting hub coordinator, a person to help facilitate those sorts of things.*
" *We essentially want to put someone 40 hours on the ground to collaborate and bring all our resources together to create more of a team approach.*
" *Community members would love a sports hub.*
" *Sport facilities are expensive to maintain so they need to be centralised.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– The local Mudder event has Council, CEDA and business backing after a challenging period with the local sport agency. Event organisers also give back to the community and other organisations supporting mental health.
– **CEDA (Central Economic Development Agency)** - they are from out of region but have stepped in to support sporting events such as the Mudder.

– **The Spatial Plan by Council** - inclusion by the local government to increase access to sports and to support healthy lifestyles, this is a work in progress currently.
– Waka Ama is creating opportunities for youth to have activity-based connection, purpose and build community connection, with further opportunities needed for primary and intermediate, or those not attached to school to participate.

"Difference with Waka Ama is the age groups are broad, from babies to 80 year olds. You can be on the waka with your grandparents and parents. There's unity, whānaungatanga. That unity captured our kids.

" *We have implemented a cycling strategy to build out where the Council can work in that space. Our spatial plan is also putting an emphasis on safety incidents, walking and cycling for children to school, across different parts of our towns.*
" *CEDA's ethos around tourists or people is, no boundaries and working a bit more collaboratively because we're all in this area.*

The Mudder

"*He went on an Outward Bound Course and when you get time away, and you're not busy with day-to-day life, I think you have your best ideas and thoughts about what to do next. Why don't we create a course on our farm? Because we knew we had all these natural obstacles.*

"*But we wanted to create something that helped put our region on the map. It wasn't just about us, it was about putting the Rangitīkei on the map.*

"*When The Mudder started off, there was no real link to mental health. It was just a fun event.*

"*A personal journey really cemented that message of The Mudder. I was with a friend for a week, and every day, I dragged them out of bed, and we went for a walk and it really cemented what was happening around them. The exercise was helping them more than any pill from the pharmacist.*

"*It's a real flow on effect knowing that we're part of this wellness story. I guess we branched out into different networks of people's journeys.*

"*Manawatū's CEDA (Central Economic Development Agency) contacted us and they said, 'Hey, what you guys do is really cool. What do you need help with?'.*

"*I really love CEDA's ethos around tourists and people. No boundaries. They were like yes, you're on the line (of the regional boundary they cover), but it's okay. Our tourists don't drive through Bulls and say we are in a different region now. So of course, we want to work with you.*

"*They (CEDA) came to the party and really helped us with all the backend administration and stuff. We wouldn't be here today without their support.*

"*People don't realise The Mudder is a Mum and Dad, that have other businesses and stuff, that we just kind of try and fit this into our schedule.*

"*We have individuals, small businesses, it's not just the big guys. It's not just about the corporates and stuff, we've got individual families.*

"*We get excited to build relationships and meet new people and become friends with them, essentially because they want to be part of this event.*

There are many benefits of living rurally in Rangitīkei, including ease of access due to being centrally located in the North Island, cheaper housing, good climate, and the small community culture. Some are concerned however, around the changing demographics of rural communities.

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities   Good Health & Wellbeing   Life on Land

Natural Environment

Leading healthy lifestyles
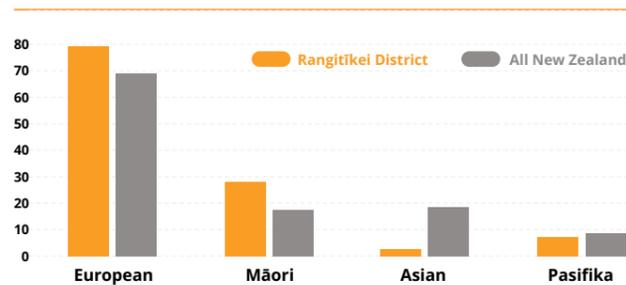
RANGITĪKEI'S POPULATION IN 2023 IS PROJECTED TO BE 79% EUROPEAN, BUT WITH A STRONG AND GROWING MĀORI POPULATION OF 28%.

STATS NZ POPULATION ESTIMATES 2023

THE MĀORI AND PASIFIKA POPULATION IN THE RANGITĪKEI IS ESTIMATED TO GROW BY 690 PEOPLE IN THE FIVE YEARS TO 2023.

STATS NZ POPULATION ESTIMATES 2023

Strengths

– Some have noticed a significant population shift from "up north" urban communities into Rangitīkei townships. It is noted that people are valuing the Rangitīkei lifestyle and the larger, more affordable homes living in the region allows.
– The small community connection and mindset that pulls together and is supportive of one another in times of adversity is seen as a strong benefit to living in the Rangitīkei; 'if you have got a cold, bang, you've got lemons'.
– Some feel that the open spaces with clean air and Rangitīkei's central location are all seen as attractors to the region. In addition, being able to easily access 'the great outdoors'.
– There is a strong sense of interconnectedness and interdependence across the smaller Rangitīkei rural communities.

Whilst the following has been identified as a barrier, it has also been identified as a strength:

– Some feel that the changing demographics in townships, including the arrival of Pacifika and Indian communities, can add value and fill some gaps. It was acknowledged that this change was sensitive for some.

"We live in the middle of nowhere but the centre of everything.

" I had an acre of land in the middle of Marton, an acre! And it had all the vegetables and fruit in the backyard, apple trees, pear trees, you name it, they were there. Those are some of the benefits.
" There are no parking meters in Marton, no traffic lights, no traffic jams, if you want something from the shop you park outside of it... these are all benefits people don't see.
" Rangitīkei is also very central. Quite often in our cities you've got to drive hours to get out of the place. In a couple of hours we can cover most of the North Island... Wellington in a couple hours, Taranaki in a couple hours, Hawkes Bay in a couple hours and skiing in a couple hours. There are huge benefits in being in a location like ours.
" The people that bought the Four Square, are an Indian family and it was pretty banged up and rundown when they took it over. It looked shocking for about a year and then suddenly it's great. And they've got a good stock of fresh food. And you're sure they've got the chicken and chips, but they've actually done a really good job.
" Concerning the changing demographics; I sort of feel it is inevitable as our young people who live rurally are not prepared to work really hard, and the people (and cultures) who buy these businesses work really hard.

" We are getting really racially sensitive in this country
" There is a fear of change, any change, cultural change.

Barriers

– Some feel that while property may be more affordable, the compromises include lower wages and less access to career opportunities in the region.
– Some felt that the lack of public transport and high travel distances to access services is an adjustment to those used to having easy access to these in more urban areas.
– There is a perception by a few that cheaper housing and affordability in rural communities is attracting some lower socio-economic families that are being pushed out of more expensive areas, which may be creating downstream issues related to crime and low achievement if they are unable to obtain the appropriate support in the community.
– There are several communities where farms have begun to be taken over by trees (forestry) which has resulted in the smaller remote schools closing. This depopulates these remote communities and for the few that remain, it is quite depressing and isolating.

Whilst the following have been identified as an barrier, they have also been identified as a strength:

– Community and the wider services (jobs and contribution to the local economy) that support the industry are really important. A farmer isn't a farmer entirely on his own. You have to have all these other support systems around.

"There is so much pressure. You don't know if it's going to end, you don't know if agriculture will survive in the future and you don't know who's going to sell out. It's just real uncertainty.

" The massive planting of forestry supposedly to offset pollution is taking a lot of really top class land. That's agriculture going down.
" There are several communities where the schools have closed because the children go because the farms have been taken over trees. That depopulates the community and for the few that are left it is quite depressing.
" Farmer looking to sell their land and the likely buyer is an organisation that plants trees for carbon credits and he's on really good quality Hill Country land.
" Farmers don't work in isolation, we have a number of services that we work with, for example, education. You can't get people living on your farm if you can't get schooling for your children.
" We're all interconnected, really. We're all dependent on each other. it's not just a farmer. There's a whole sphere of people and the expertise around us that work with us and support us really.
" Makes you realise how dependent farmers are on their support systems that are built around them and their networks.
" There are a lot of jobs that are connected as a result of farming, i.e. stock counting, there's a whole network that a farmer needs to have to make it work - it's quite high the number of people needed to make farming work. For every one job in farming could mean 12-20 jobs elsewhere.

Framework Tags

Life on Land   Reduced Inequalities   Responsible Consumption & Production   Life Below Water

Natural Environment   Social Cohesion

Responsible stewards of their natural and living environments

Many farmers are experiencing stigma and discrimination accusing them of not caring for the environment, when in reality, they are doing their best to address and reduce ongoing environmental impacts and meet increasingly complex obligations.

THE GROSS LAND AREA OF WHOLE FARMS PURCHASED FOR PLANTING (TO FORESTRY) **FROM 1/1/2020 TO 30/6/2022 IS ESTIMATED AT 102,234 HECTARES**.

Land-use change from pastoral farming to large-scale forestry update, Beef + Lamb New Zealand August 2022[15].

Strengths

– It is felt by some that there has been a significant improvement in information gathering and monitoring of water quality in rivers and river catchments. This in turn is supporting evidenced river care such as riparian planting.
– There has been some strong uptake from farmers of environmental programmes with demonstrated successes such as water catchment monitoring.
– There is a strong perspective that farming communities come together and work well collectively for evidenced projects.
– Working collaboratively with external environment groups and as individual farmers has made a significant dent in the removal of old man's beard and invasive plant species.
– It is felt by some that farming is a large contributor to the economy and farmers are doing their best to foster good practice and should be supported in that.

Whilst the following have been identified as strengths, they have also been identified as barriers:

– There is a strong perception by many in the rural sector that farmers have been made responsible (scapegoated) for environmental decline, with some farmers feeling discrimination and stigma from the negativity and feeling fear around disclosing they work in the sector. Some noted that there is a difference between the perception and the reality of the stigma against farmers.
– While some view forestry as an opportunity for farmers to better utilise unproductive land, especially now with Emissions Trading Schemes (ETS), there are also concerns about the loss of productive agricultural land.

"Farmers are getting their head around what needs to be done, rather than sticking their head in the sand.

" *100% of farmers should have a farm environment plan.*
" *It's probably not that you can actually see the progress, because it's not in something practical or something to look at. But, hopefully it's more in the successes, perhaps people might be feeling a bit more confident about what's ahead of them... because they can do it as part of a group rather than on their own.*
" *We're gathering data to sort of back up the fact that farmers aren't actually ruining their environment; they have started off by doing monthly water monitoring. We can say that we've got so many farmers, and this is the water quality. So our impact is actually quite low.*

" *To show how much fencing they've done and how much native planting they've done, and then you've got to put that beside the water testing data so that you've got that base line. It's our way of measuring change as well, how much change has actually happened. We can do that now and do it again and another five years time and see what those figures are, and how that has changed.*

Barriers

– Many feel there is significant local, regional and central government pressure with legislative, compliance and reporting changes, creating uncertainty and pressure for farmers. The costs, complexity and pace of becoming compliant to multiple environmental regulations was also noted as an additional stressor by some.
– Many farmers feel they have more of an obligation put on them to resolve environmental decline and address climate change, when it is a universal obligation to be addressed and resolved by everyone; some urban locations and businesses are also negatively contributing.
– There is a strong perception by many in the rural sector that farmers have been made responsible (scapegoated) for environmental decline, with some farmers feeling discrimination and stigma from the negativity and feeling fear around disclosing they work in the sector. Some noted that there is a difference between the perception and the reality of the stigma against farmers.
– Pressure around environmental and climate change obligations has contributed to increasing mental health issues amongst farmers.

Whilst the following have been identified as barriers, they have also been identified as strengths:

– Some felt there had been a stock intensification of the dairy industry over the last 30 years, that was negatively impacting the environment. However, it was noted that farming collectives in the region were making huge strides in addressing these environmental impacts, i.e. methane.
– It was noted by some that animal welfare is a concerning issue. It is smaller, but when it is an issue, it is normally related to farmer stress, poor mental health or old age.

"One time you used to be proud to be a farmer, now people just don't mention it.

" *I freak out every time we have to do a cattle crossing, 'omg, hurry up, and get across, someone might see us, we're just moving them across, not leaving them in here'.*
" *There is so much pressure. You don't know if it's going to end, you don't know if agriculture will survive in the future and you don't know who's going to sell out. It's just real uncertainty.*
" *I think a lot of people want to return NZ to the way it was before we got here, but that doesn't leave much room for us does it...*
" *The challenge will be moving forward as people don't want to be farming anymore.*
" *The urban community hasn't really understood how dependent they are on agricultural production, and that has not helped.*

" *The prices have been reasonably good, and this is the first time I've ever known farmers to be unhappy when the prices are good. Normally, when the prices go up, all their problems go away, they're happy, they get on with it and they do the extra work. But it's not like that now.*

" *By the time people get into that position (with poor animal welfare), they don't realise it's happened over a period of time, so neighbours or rural professionals will pick up on it and report it to us.*

Opportunities

– Environmental workshops as an opportunity to share successes and for building communities around creating good environmental outcomes.
– There needs to be further clarity and clear timelines from central government and agencies so farmers can plan and designate resources appropriately (with support if needed) to meet obligations and prevent overwhelm. This will also support mental health and wellbeing in farming and rural communities.
– Rural and farming communities need to come together and get better at telling the rural story to the rest of the country.

"*If farmers were shown some appreciation, that might make a big difference about how they feel about themselves and what they're doing. It wouldn't necessarily be more money but psychologically they would feel better and that's really important.*

" *It's helping educate on good practices, isn't it. We unfortunately can't do it, but they're showing them how to do it properly.*

" *What humankind has been doing, since the Industrial Revolution, has tipped the scales around the economy, economics, and the need to make a living. It's a question of now rebalancing the scales.*

" *We've got a growing world population and food production is not growing quite as fast, so we need to be more efficient food producers and have good systems that avoids wastage.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Rangitīkei Rivers Catchment Collective -** running targeted environmental practice workshops which are providing the tools and resources to support farmers in adjusting practices to harness better environmental outcomes. These workshops are building confidence and providing clear guidelines to address issues.
– **Rangitīkei Environment Group -** focusing on the eradication of Old Man's Beard, with their scope of work going well and expanding.

"*His idea was that we needed to create these catchment groups, to have farmers working together as a collective, gathering data and information to prove that actually what is being done is not detrimental, it's a bit of a push back, I guess to the demands from society.*

" *That's a pretty huge achievement. We (River Catchments Collective) are up to 85 sites every month, across those groups, which is probably almost three times what Horizons would be doing.*

While there is an acknowledgement of greater travel times living in a rural community, a lack of public transport, declining rural road conditions and increasing fuel prices are creating further barriers to accessing services, employment, education and recreation. This is impacting lower income families disproportionately.

Framework Tags

Industry Innovation & Infrastructure · Good Health & Wellbeing · Reduced Inequalities · Quality Education · Sustainable Cities & Communities · Financial & Physical Capital · Participating fully in society

AVERAGE TRAVEL TIME

PUBLIC HOSPITALS
RANGITĪKEI: **47 MINUTES**
PALMERSTON NORTH: 7 MINUTES
WHANGANUI: 8 MINUTES

HIGH SCHOOL
RANGITĪKEI: **13 MINUTES**
PALMERSTON NORTH: 3 MINUTES
WHANGANUI: 4 MINUTES

SUPERMARKET
RANGITĪKEI: **20 MINUTES**
PALMERSTON NORTH: 4 MINUTES
WHANGANUI: 5 MINUTES

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 9 Infrastructure & Innovation

Strengths

– Some feel there is less congestion and less traffic generally in the Rangitīkei, compared to urban areas, and that this is a perk of rural life.
– Some feel that short commute times and less dense traffic are of particular benefit, if you are living and working in the same township.

Whilst the following have been identified as a strength, they have also been identified as a challenge:

– While many acknowledge the travel distances to access services can be large, some feel it is relative, or no different to travel times in larger urban communities due to the congestion they experience, i.e. Auckland. Some also feel that this is 'just part of living rurally'.
– There is a pragmatic acceptance that travel and longer journeys are part of rural life, i.e. High travel times to access education with the closure of smaller rural schools and accessing children's sport.

"Compared to travel times in Auckland, traveling an hour will only get you a couple of kms where as here it'll get you to Palmerston North, we have travelling times but we don't have traffic.

" We have local providers trying to help, one willing to drive to Marton to pick up students to help them take out their education options, but it's only open to students who want to enrol with that certain provider.

" This region has always been like that. So they've just always allowed (for it) and it's been acceptable to allow time. It's actually just what you do. You just drive. You accept it.

" You wouldn't let it limit you. That's to say, it's just a factor that everyone just has to deal with, I guess.

"For farm owners, we have relatively new cars, we can get there easily ,but sometimes our employees or people living in towns in rural areas who don't have high incomes and don't have good cars and the reliability we have to make all those trips.

Barriers

– The increasing costs of travel (i.e. petrol) is compounding transport issues and making people think twice about non-essential travel. Additionally, some are unable to access essential services as often as they'd like due to cost to travel across the region. This is particularly prevalent amongst lower income and remote households, sometimes resulting in them leaving the district in order to have better, more affordable access to services.
– There is no public transport in Rangitīkei which is viewed as a significant issue by almost all; creating barriers to education, employment, sport and essential services.
– It is perceived by some that Council is unwilling, or unable to act, or allocate funding, to address the lack of public transport in the area.
– Some have experienced emergency services getting lost due to poor GPS and therefore being unable to reach people in a timely manner due to travel times and poor roading conditions.
– Some feel the roads are becoming less safe and less well maintained. Additionally, there is no road alternative if the main highway closes as a result of significant weather events or an accident.

– Some expressed a concern around changes to Waka Kotahi funding and how this will impact roads in the region.

– A lack of driving license providers in some communities alongside the expense associated with obtaining a driver's license, combined with the lack of public transport, means that some have no choice but to drive without a license.

"If I had to go to doctors in Whanganui I wouldn't go. It's an hour out of my day to travel alone, and you've got to put gas in the car.

" *The other big issue is transport, we used to have a bus network all through the area but now we have got nothing. They can't access education because they have no transport (all areas including Whanganui).*

" *Marton is only 20-30 mins away from Whanganui, yet there is no public bus that goes there, and that is terrible.*

" *You're not thinking about whether you take them to school or whether you take them to practice. But obviously you would be considering what you might be doing on the weekend and how far you might need to travel at the moment with fuel prices.*

" *There are some issues from the central government. When State Highway 1 closes in certain places, there is no alternative, you are stuck.*

" *We're a long narrow four and a half thousand square kilometre district. But we've got some significant infrastructure that runs through that central government tends to ignore.*

" *I'm concerned that going forward, with Waka Kotahi's change of funding, it is likely some roads will be closed.*

" *I don't think we will be maintaining our existing roads - we've lost $10 million over three years out of our roading budget, so it doesn't bode well for the next little bit.*

" *We are a rural community and roads and drains and footpaths are important, there isn't much money left over for extras, we are stuck with the basics but they are important, i.e. If you don't have good roads, everything suffers.*

" *They could be doing other things with this time, instead they come home and by the time they get home, they're already knacked. Then they've got to sit around and do some homework, when they've just spent 40 minutes getting home.*

" *Council has a part to play, we pay a lot of rates and still there are terrible roads, terrible water, and no buses.*

" *Also it's a government thing too... They can provide transport in the major cities but they can't even provide us a little bus... it shows their priorities and where we sit.*

" *It depends on what you consider to be crime as well, careless driving, accidents, driving without license etc, lots of this is happening, everyone drives anyway because public transport is so poor.*

Opportunities

– Shuttles to access health services and sports.
– Allowing the public to access private shuttle services when seats are available.
– Reinstating rail links across the region as soon as possible to help address the lack of public transport in the region.

"Sometimes it is (about) looking outside the box at what is available and reaching out to the community.

" *We need to get our rail up and running asap.*

" *If we had commuter trains, it would be very helpful.*

" *As a club we want to have shuttle or buses to do that. (Transport) is a barrier to some kids taking up the opportunity of Waka Ama.*

" *It should be a matter of all the (tertiary) training providers all pitching in, contributing a certain amount to keep it (a bus service) sustainable.*

Framework Tags

Industry Innovation & Infrastructure   Reduced Inequalities

Financial & Physical Capital

Participating fully in society   Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

Whilst there is a level of acknowledgement that living rurally will mean a more limited access to certain services, the additional decline of many essential services in these areas is now no longer meeting community needs.

Strengths

– Some noted that they had good access to some wellness services such as yoga classes in some townships.

Whilst the following have been identified as strengths, they have also been identified as a barrier:

– Whilst many understand that by living rurally, they will naturally have a more limited access, and larger travel times required to essential services, some feel there is less choice than previously, with some doing additional work themselves such as maintenance and repairs.
– Some feel that online services are addressing some essential service gaps, but many services remain, and need to be face to face.

"I don't know whether there is an additional decline, the people we know living rurally are attached to the land, and they say you get some gains and some losses and that is just a fact of life.

" *You can get wellness or fitness depending on where you live. We have lots of wellness stuff here in Taihape.*
" *The essential services are still there, but we used to have more choice, so you are missing the second business that used to do it.*
" *My husband for example is doing a lot more maintenance on the tractor himself, call-out charges are ridiculous.*

" *I think that for a lot of rural people, there is a lot of online interaction and use.*
" *The other nice thing about it is that you are on your own which is a double edged sword isn't it ? If things go pear-shaped, they go pear-shaped pretty quickly.*

Barriers

– It is felt by many that there is always going to be limited providers in rural communities and that it was just part of the package of "rural life", with many prepared to drive to access their preferred service providers.
– Even in small communities, the pressure on essential services is visible and felt by most i.e limited doctors and healthcare providers and schools are at capacity.

"Another thing is in a rural area you vote with your wheels. If you aren't providing a good service people will drive elsewhere.

" *A rural person needs to take responsibility for all of those traditional things that a city takes care of; storm water, sewage, water that isn't going to kill us, rubbish collection, getting health treatment etc.*

22% OF RANGITĪKEI HOUSEHOLDS DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET, COMPARED WITH 14% NATIONALLY.

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

58% OF RANGITĪKEI CHORUS CONNECTIONS ACCESS THE FIBRE NETWORK, WITH THE REMAINING **42% OF CHORUS CONNECTIONS ACCESSING SERVICES THROUGH THE COPPER NETWORK**.

Chorus 2022[16].
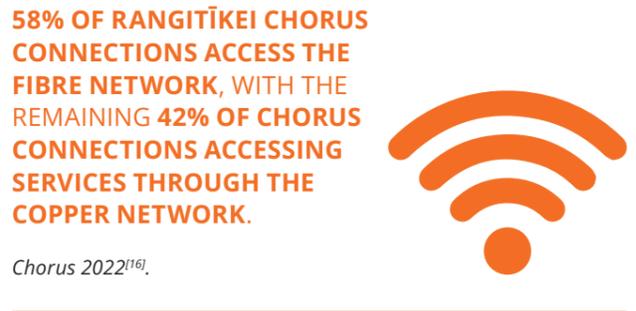
Good Mahi in the Community

– Health shuttles are perceived as essential connectors to services.

"We also have a health shuttle, for specialist appointments, they are free and goes to Whanganui, Palmerston North, Taihape Medical Centre and Wellington.

Framework Tags

Zero Hunger · Life on Land · Good Health & Wellbeing · Quality Education · Sustainable Cities & Communities

Responsible Consumption & Production

Natural Environment · Human Capability

Leading healthy lifestyles · Responsible stewards of their natural and living environments

There is a growing awareness and effort from some in the community around growing, harvesting, sharing and learning about food, and a sense of togetherness and fulfilment that naturally comes through these experiences.

Strengths

– Some organisations run workshops alongside their food collection and harvesting of fruit and vegetables to support people into growing and nurturing their own food.
– Some members of the community are taking advantage of having bigger sections and moving into growing their own food to address the high cost and increasing un-affordability of fruit and vegetables, and there is a sense that fruit and vegetables grow really well in the region.
– Some also noted an increased interest in community gardens and gardening during COVID-19.
– Some feel that the 'act of service' around harvesting, gardening and connecting people to locally grown fruit and vegetables builds connection and contributes to mental and physical wellbeing - and needs to be further encouraged in the region.

"When I first moved here, I couldn't believe the size of cabbage and cauliflower in the gardens, so we can grow really good stuff here and the Rangitīkei."

" *We do (planting and harvesting) workshops and that is where I am kinda looking to head towards with the Koha Shed.*
" *The people that come in, I say 'hey, do you want some seedlings, do you want me to help you start a garden', it's an avenue for getting the people who are most likely to need it.*
" *Also being country towns, whether it be Marton, Bulls, Hunterville, a lot of the town sections are big enough for people to have their veggie gardens, so there is plenty of opportunity for people to grow things.*

" *I've grown up with growing your own vegetables and, of course, when you've been in a place for 20 years, you've got trees and so on, which are providing you with all the fruit vegetables that you want.*
" *Country people are also probably more into gardening and growing their own things. It's part of their makeup.*
" *I don't know if it's more in the Rangitīkei than other areas, but certainly apples, pears, you can grow it all sorts here without any trouble at all.*
" *We've got a community garden in town here which people can join to grow food.*
" *Knowing that you're helping the community as well. It's just awesome. It's good for your mental health.*

Barriers

– Some feel there are challenges around the storage and distribution of food, alongside some being unwilling to share their excess food, which is contributing to food being wasted or left to rot on the ground in people's backyards.
– There are some barriers around approaching locals and asking them to share their excess fruit and vegetables due to people having different mindsets. Some felt that changes in property ownership sometimes were disruptive to sourcing food.
– Many feel more people need better access to fresh fruit and vegetables. This has been made more pressing through COVID-19.
– Some feel that there are some families now who wouldn't be able to organise a vegetable garden due to a lack of knowledge, or having restricted access to, or ability to grow a garden in their backyard.

"There shouldn't be the need to pay for fruit, there shouldn't be a need when so much is being wasted.

" *I'm very aware of some mindsets can be very different in regards to their food. I knocked on a door one day... and I said, 'do you mind if we harvest your apples and then we donate it to the community?'. And the next thing you know, I got this abuse. That's fine. If you don't want to share your fruit, that's fine.*
" *I'm a gardener, I know how much excess I have, it's massive, absolutely massive.*
" *Having people okay with us going in (to their gardens), it's really difficult for first timers, because the conversations I'm having with them are very specific about what we're doing, why we're doing it and who is benefiting.*
" *I see a desire, particularly amongst younger people to do that (grow their own food) but I see a lot of older people put their time and energy into maintaining really attractive, beautiful gardens, none of which are edible. I'm appalled by that.*
" *People don't know how to do it in the same way as back in the 60's.*
" *I don't see people growing their own food individually in their own little plots. Just about everybody has access to a garden, even if it's terribly limited, they can be very productive.*

Opportunities

– Foodscaping in local parks.

" *One of the suggestions I've made to the manager of Parks and Recreation here is that we start doing foodscaping in our parks, and that we plant fruit trees and we plant vegetables and we enable people who really need this food and have a hard time finding it.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Sustainable Taihape, driven by Vanessa Witt -** building food growing, harvesting and cooking knowledge in the region.
– **New World -** 'Little Garden' seedlings promotion.
– **Community Fruit Harvest Manawatū -** harvesting excess fruit from local gardens and providing it to the community, free of charge.
– **Marton Market Community Garden -** where you can access free fruit and vegetables, and donate if you have a surplus.

"I saw fruit everywhere that wasn't getting used, was going to waste and falling on the ground, which is why I started Community Fruit Harvest Manawatu.

" *We've got an absolutely fabulous relationship with Super Grans, she's booked the kitchen once every week so she can do preserving classes and cooking classes once a week up until May (with our fruit). I've made sure that she's got different fruit during winter so that she can keep going even though we're not harvesting.*
" *Marton Market grow their own fruit and veggies, the Community Garden where you can go and access free fruit and vegetables, and you can also donate if you have an abundance of something, Project Marton (used to) run this.*

Community Fruit Harvest Manawatū

"*This branch of community harvest has been going for 10 years. It started from Community Fruit Harvesting, which is an Auckland (organisation). We call it the mothership. We branch off.*

" *I became involved in Community Fruit Harvest Manawatū about three and a half years ago. The call was put out for somebody to help with emails, answering messages and stuff like that. And I thought I could do that.*

" *It was just a random harvest, I've got a tree here, I've got a pumpkin field, so it was quite sporadic, the harvest time.*

"*That didn't make sense, when I saw so many fruit trees, just dropping the load, why can't we do that? Why can't we get that one and that one?*

" *What I do is I do a flyer drop, or people make contact by Facebook, and I get them on a yearly rotation.*

"*All this fruit, or any of the fruit that we've collected, goes to places like Just Zilch, businesses, social services, Salvation Army, the food banks.*

" *I also offer it outside my house because not everybody goes to food banks.*

"*Families have lives, are busy trying to survive, and don't have time to wait in line, especially when it's for fruit. My house is a lot more convenient. You know, they just pull up, chuck what they need in their car. And then off they go.*

" *We also do a lot of workshops when it comes to preserving fruit and stuff.*

"*The aim is to get people to think about what's in their backyard, who they can share it with. You know, and if they can share it all with their immediate neighbourhood in the immediate community, then we're not needed… I'd be quite happy if this group wasn't needed.*"
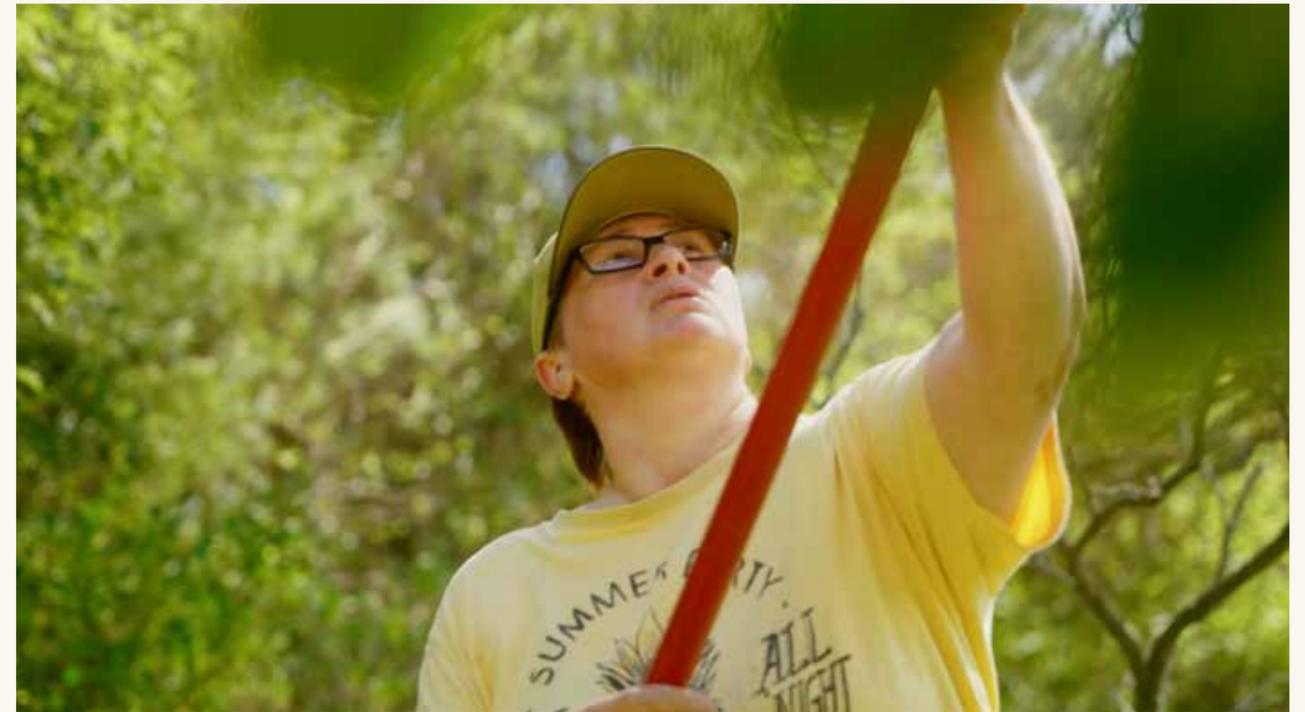
Framework Tags

Zero Hunger   No Poverty   Good Health & Wellbeing   Reduced Inequalities

Human Capability

Leading healthy lifestyles   turing

There is increasing food insecurity in the region, particularly amongst lower income families, with increasing need to access food banks and alternative food providers. It is noted by many that there is a stigma around needing, and being seen to need support with food.

Strengths

– Some food banks feel having a location off the main road and only collecting basic details of people needing food, was helping people feel less shame around getting food during their time of need.
– Some are finding having a relaxed 'it's just helping people get food' attitude,and being a 'friendly face' is helping people feel less shame around getting support with food.
– Some food banks are having success using Facebook and social media to advertise and improve outreach to those having trouble buying enough food.
– Some food banks are being more intentional about the donations they seek and foods they hand out, to ensure they are providing healthy and accessible food alternatives.

"I'd like to think that people see that they can trust me, they can reach out and not feel ashamed that they need assistance.

" *We moved the Bull's Pantry to a side street, so people felt that they could come in and not feel judged or be seen by someone driving past.*
" *The reason we wanted to do it was because we wanted to make people feel more comfortable about coming.*
" *By not being means tested, or having to take too much personal information from our customers, it removes those barriers.*
" *I think if you get a friendly face or somebody that just makes you feel comfortable.*

" *They know that it's all 100% confidential, so you don't have to worry about that.*
" *We're keeping their integrity intact.*
" *We try to advertise the food pantry through a few different ways; We've got the food pantry page, we've got the Bulls page, Facebook page, we've also put it into our local newsletter, which is delivered to every household. That also goes out to an email database. So we've been spreading the word as far as we can.*
" *I don't think there is a stigma around that at all here, I think people are just really into sharing a bit more.*

Barriers

– Some potential food bank users were unsure of what their situation had to be in order to use them. This was felt to be causing shame for those needing help and many felt that shame was seen more amongst older people wanting help.
– There is a real and growing need for people to access food either cheaply or for free. Many feel this increased over COVID-19 and continued with the increasing costs of living.
– The volunteer workforce at food banks and lack of full time staff sometimes means that emails and social media messages asking for support are missed and people can't get in touch with food bank services when 'having a rough week' or wanting to donate food.
– Red tape and box ticking by some organisations is felt to be stopping some people getting food and support in a timely manner such as having to have used up all of their MSD food grants before they can access food.
– Some feel that the small number of food, fruit and vegetable shops in the region, is making some food more expensive, i.e. There is only one supermarket in Marton which means they come at a greater expense due to lack of competition.
– Some expressed concerns about the quality of food offered by some food banks, with the majority being refined carbohydrates that may further contribute to poor health outcomes.
– Many food bank volunteers feel that stigma or shame is one of the biggest barriers to people accessing and using food banks.
– Some feel that a lack of awareness about local food banks was a barrier to people accessing food bank services and support.

– Some have the view that by providing some people with free food, it is enabling them to spend the money they do have on things such as alcohol and cigarettes, enabling unhealthy habits to continue.

"If you can't eat, if you're not getting food at all, and you're not getting decent food regularly, how are you supposed to function? How are you supposed to do what you need to do if you don't have the nutrients to do it?

" *We've gone from maybe five to 10 people walking through our doors weekly.*
" *There is a real need for people to access food either inexpensively or for free.*
" *My concern is, I see a lot of the foods being saved (at food banks), but how much of that is just refined carbohydrates?*
" *Yes, we don't want people going hungry, but we're just switching one problem for another, if we are providing food that is actually just going to lead to poor health.*
" *Some people think that we are enabling people to keep buying their cigarettes or whatever they think they're buying by giving them free food.*
" *There's a huge stigma about food pantries, and only poor people should come to it and you know, or those in disadvantage or poverty.*
" *We are seeing more people walk through the doors, we are seeing a lot of people that would normally go under the radar.*
" *In Marton and Rangitīkei, they only have limited options in terms of where they can buy their kai, from New World and Countdown, two of the most expensive (supermarkets). So for low socio-economic whānau, there are no options.*

" *I understand it, (food bank volunteers) kind of need to be protected so they're not overwhelmed with the communication, but then there might be people trying to donate food, you know, and that was a barrier to me donating food to the food bank.*

" *That stigma is huge, it has always been there and it is not going away.*

" *There's still a bit of a stigma for older people. They just don't want to do it, which is a shame.*

FOOD BANK USAGE IN NEW ZEALAND **GREW 30.2% IN THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2022**.

+30.2%

Foodbank Aotearoa New Zealand, Stuff (2022, July 12)[17].

Opportunities

– Providing more seamless, 'no questions asked' food support services for those in need.

" *Wouldn't it be fantastic if (people who needed food support) could just roll up and get food without having to tell someone their whole life story around why they need that food. I can understand how a person would feel, that would be a barrier for them to get food.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Evelyn George -** delivers bags of seasonal vegetables to people's doorsteps
– Numerous food banks across the region such as **Bulls Food Pantry**

" *(Evelyn is) a wonderful woman in the community who will deliver you a bag of seasonal vegetables, and that will last you a fortnight.*

" *Like you saw earlier, one of our locals came in with grapefruit. So they're seeing that as a positive of helping themselves, they don't have all this food going to waste, but also helping the community.*

Bulls Food Pantry - Bulls District Community Trust

"Back in 2020, with the first (COVID-19) lock down. The Marton Food Pantry was quite overwhelmed with the response from the community requiring food. From that they realised there were quite a few people coming from Bulls needing assistance while they were off work.

" *We opened in March 2021 and we've had a bit of a roller coaster. We've moved into a welfare response, where we had provided food parcels for those during the August lockdown for those who were off work. We have also given out food parcels for those with COVID-19. But we've had to re-evaluate how we work and what our core focus is, which is to re-distribute food that would normally go to waste.*

" *When we first started, it was very quiet...and then as the environment of the country changed, the need seemed to increase.*

"I feel each time I've come here the numbers are more. So, whether that's people realising that we're available, or it is that they're needing that extra helping hand, isn't it?

" *Once upon a time, you'd just see the big cities or big towns needing food bank support, but now it's all of these out of the way places that are feeling the pinch as well.*

" *We get donations from within the community, from businesses, as well as other locals, people with fruit trees on their property.*

"One of the biggest barriers is getting over the stigma.

" *There's still a bit of a stigma on the older people...they just don't want to do it, which is a shame. But that's how some people feel, as if it is a stigma for them.*

" *I just tell them to come along, and all you have to do is write down your name, phone number, and how many people are in the house. And that's only in case something is recalled. It goes no further than that. The community doesn't know. You've got free food, we've got stuff here that needs to go out the door, so come and take it.*

"Not being means tested, or having to take too much personal information from our customers, removes those barriers, and we are seeing more people walk through the doors. We are seeing a lot of people that would normally go under the radar, which is fantastic.

There are huge benefits being experienced by some in relation to returning to and reconnecting with the land.

Framework Tags

Good Health & Wellbeing   Life on Land

Natural Environment   Human Capability

Leading healthy lifestyles   Cohesive, resilient and nurturing   Responsible stewards of their natural and living environments

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RANGITIKEI'S OVERALL POPULATION IS ESTIMATED TO HAVE **GROWN BY 650 PEOPLE IN THE FOUR YEARS BETWEEN 2018 TO 2022, AN INCREASE OF 4%**.

4%

Stats NZ Population Estimates 2022
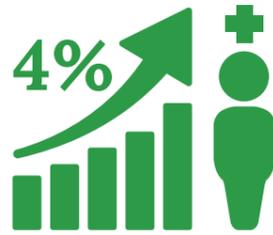
Strengths

– For many, the land is a place of replenishment, and a place of healing.
– For some, returning to the land can be viewed as returning to the old days; allowing many to escape from urbanisation and what many feel are its many negative impacts.
– Many feel there are huge wellbeing benefits of getting out into nature; 'nature is a wellbeing tool for good health'.
– Some share the view that returning to the land can also keep the family together and whānau strong.

"(Being in nature) has been proven to reduce blood pressure, reduce heart rate, reduce muscle tension, reduce the production of stress hormones. It also reduces anger, fear, stress, and increases pleasant feelings.

" *Someone's lighting up a fire, someone's organising to go to the river for barbecue and someone's putting the beers in the car. And, you know, then they're playing games out on the lawn together, depending who it is, young children running around climbing trees and getting told off by their mothers to get down and not fall. And you know, that, to me, is just such a special place to be. And I think they've lost that. And being urbanised.*
" *Partly from an educational perspective, but also from a wellness perspective, there's nothing like being in a piece of natural bush.*
" *More of the community is spending more time there (the local reserve), just immersed in there because of the value to people's wellbeing, just being in the bush. There is no better place to recharge the batteries.*
" *When I see the young people come here, we become like they were in the old days.*
" *Returning to your own land is a good thing. And thinking about how to provide for your family.*
" *This land is the land that has sustained my family for generations... This was always the hunting and gathering place for our people.*
" *One of the big things that really impacts me when I'm a bit lost is, I might drive home from work at night, and all the stars are just in the heavens above me. And I usually just open the gate and I just say, thank you, thank you for creation, thank you for my life.*

Barriers

– For many of our Māori whānau, they have become really disconnected from their iwi, or their land base (if they had a land base).

"This life is so different. There were eight of us in our family at the time. We all attended a small school and we were surrounded by family in this community.

Opportunities

– Finding ways to escape the system and reconnect with ourselves, our strengths and our family.
– Finding ways to encourage the community to get out into nature more often, living and experiencing it.

"From a health and wellbeing perspective, it's been proven time and time again, this is what we need. This is what's been missing in our lives for so many years. And this is why we are highly stressed. This is why we strung out. This is why we're crabby with everybody ,because we're not doing this stuff. We're not getting out there amongst nature, and just living and experiencing it.

" *The first thing is finding out who you are, and what strengths are in you, and what strength comes from knowing who you are, and what you can achieve. As a whānau group.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Forest and Bird -** rejuvenating and maintaining the beautiful local reserves for the community to access.

"The Rangitīkei (Forest and Bird) branch, we're probably one of the smallest branches of the whole organisation and we have got the most reserves to look after. So, that's what keeps us busy.

Barbara Thomason, Tangata Whenua - Ngāti Hauiti

"This land is my turangawaewae. Where I have stood as a baby. My little feet are woven into this land, my heart is woven into this land. My memories of my Mum and my Dad are woven into this land. My uncles, my auntie's, my tīpuna, all the people that I love. It is my reconnection to, and it's my connection to them. They live around me every day. I feel at home here.

"It's a place of replenishment for a lot of people, a place of healing. We were workers of the land here, and the land was important because it sustained us. Spud picking, working in the shearing shed, working as whānau, and having a big lunch out in the paddock on the hay bales.

"That has been my vision, that I keep the family together. It was a vision imparted to me by my Mum. It just started off with my brothers and sisters. Now we have cousins, uncles and aunties, and this place is always busy. It's like a train station sometimes.

"People tend to work as if they are in survival mode. They work as individuals. And they try to sustain as individuals. For many of our Māori whānau, they've become really disconnected from their iwi, or their land base, if they had a land base. And they're not working the collective; collectively, like our old people did.

"When I see the young people come here, we become like they were in the old days, someone's lighting a fire, someone's organising to go to the river for barbecue...to me, it is such a special place to be. And I think they've lost that, being urbanised.

"We need to learn these things to live in this world, to get employment and all that sort of thing, but for our Māori kids, they love to work with their hands and create.

"I think mainstream structures forget the wairua (soul/spirit) side of things, that is lost in the teaching; it is just instructional.

"I've seen so many things develop, young people picking up Te Reo, they are pursuing the taonga of their ancestors.

"I think the pressures of life have disconnected children from their family. Because parents have to work. They go to daycare centres, because that helps them to be on the production line of life, so that has been lost.

"They come home tired, they come home, frustrated, because they know they've got bills to pay. They are just meeting the mark. I think a lot of people have lost hope.

"It's about our people learning their identity, who they are, and that we are good people. We were proud people. And we had our own mana.

"Having this place, the whenua for our family, when they're troubled or down, and to come and reconnect, not only with the land but with each other, with the wairua of the place and, to their tipuna and learning their whakapapa.

"Lifting their mana, lifting their wairua, if they're down and just making them feel loved. That's it, that unconditional love. That's what it is. That's one of the things that I would like to leave behind for my mokopuna.

Framework Tags

Life on Land | Quality Education | Sustainable Cities & Communities | Life Below Water

Natural Environment | Social Cohesion

Responsible stewards of their natural and living environments

There have been some huge gains and progress made in the upkeep of the region's scenic reserves, however, there are challenges due to the ongoing maintenance and workforce required to maintain and ensure these successes.

THERE ARE **NINE RANGITĪKEI DISTRICT COUNCIL PARKS AND RESERVES**, AND **FIVE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION SITES** WITHIN THE REGION.

Rangitīkei District Council[18] & Department of Conservation (2022)[19]

Strengths

– There are a number of organisations across the Rangitīkei who are championing giving nature a voice.
– The efforts to upkeep the scenic reserves and native bush across Rangitīkei makes it a much more attractive place, and means people can enjoy spending quality time in these special places.
– Many of the townships in the region have incredible nature right at their front door, some feel this is very unique and special.

"It's quite extraordinary to think that you can drive for 20 minutes outside of Marton and you can be in a bush that is basically like New Zealand was 200 years ago. That's what we have here.

" *We just see ourselves, of course, as custodians (of the land), it doesn't matter who owns it, we need to look after what we have here.*
" *We're hoping to make them (the scenic reserves) a much more attractive place, and keep the maintenance up for people to enjoy them.*
" *Before we were here, I think it's fair to say that our facilities here and our tracks and everything else, for one reason or another, became rundown. So what we're doing at the moment is really trying to rebuild things.*
" *Picnic facilities on the side of the walking tracks, these are a good way of trying to connect with families and get them interested. It also gives parents an opportunity and also grandparents to take the next generations through.*

Barriers

– There is a sense by many that today's lifestyle and busy parents means people aren't getting outdoors like they used to.
– Some shared that maintenance of the reserves requires ongoing work, and it is constant. For example, weeds and the pests threatening bird life are a constant battle.
– There is no internet coverage in reserves which creates barriers to leveraging the internet to activate things such as having 2D barcodes on stuff to scan and pull up information on the internet - this means any reserve history needs to be physically presented on the reserve sites.
– Some feel that DOC are 'completely underfunded', meaning they are pulling out of maintaining scenic reserves around some townships, leaving the work to the community groups. There are also spaces such as railway corridors that Council will not cover.
– Some feel there is a lack of awareness from the community around the scenic reserves that exist in the region, but it is gradually building.
– Most of the walking tracks are over the roots of trees which means as the reserves get busier, and foot traffic increases, more effort needs to go in to protecting the reserves, i.e. investment to implement boardwalks. However, there is a sense this is still a while away until it is necessary.

"It's like what you're doing when you're farming. Every farmer knows you don't just do something today or for an indescribable period. You just have to keep doing it.

" *There was a story in the local paper, "where are these reserves anyway?". This is part of the challenge. Here's this person who's lived all our lives in the Rangitīkei and she has no idea where the reserves are.*
" *A lot of them are just completely unaware of what's here.*
" *The railway corridor, that's another massive one. They (Council) are not taking care of any of that, so there is just always going to be this corridor of weeds that no one is taking responsibility for.*
" *While we have very, very low numbers of people who might be visiting our reserves, it's probably not going to threaten a lot of those trees. As the volume of traffic increases, that likes to go through the reserves, it may well be that we've got to do boardwalks. But we're a long way away. Before we actually need to worry about that.*
" *One of my frustrations is that we don't have internet coverage within our reserves. It would be so easy for us just to put up barcodes and just put up information around some of the stuff we have there.*
" *A couple of projects with pest control, where the school has been approached, and both those projects have not got past the principal, he just wants to focus on school at the moment.*

Opportunities

– To upgrade reserve signage (off main roads etc) to signal to the community that 'there is something special here'.
– Introducing green corridors between the region's reserves, to ensure there is a continuum (for wildlife).
– To build awareness and be better connected with the community in order to educate and provide opportunities for them to actually engage, or go out into a piece of bush or scenic reserve.
– To engage with busy parents and ask them what it would take to get them to visit and engage with the scenic reserves.
– Finding the next generation of people who value the scenic reserves and wish to continue their maintenance and upkeep.
– Educating school students around the history of the region's scenic reserves.
– Collaborating and building more awareness of regional public reserves and areas such as better and more obvious signage on roads to draw people in.
– The creation of an environmental collective oversight group.

"We need to find the next generation of people who are going to come in and think this is a valuable place just as valuable as we are, and hopefully more valuable, and they'll do an even better job.

" *I think part of the challenge going forward is to engage with some of those people and with the parents and say, well, what would it take for you to feel like it's valuable exercise, or a valuable place to visit? Those are the kinds of conversations we need to be having, with parents and schools.*
" *Part of our responsibility for doing this is really to educate and provide opportunities for the local community to actually engage, or go out into a piece of bush.*
" *A lot of our reserves are very rundown and signage isn't very obvious from the road, so what we are wanting to do is to make it a little bit more obvious that hey, there's something special here and this is actually out into the public.*
" *One of the challenges looking after these precious little reserves is we're not well connected with our community. And that might seem strange, because we live here, but we've only got some of the connections that we need. And we need to be much better connected.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Forest and Bird Rangitīkei -** the maintenance and ongoing upkeep of the Rangitīkei reserves. They also have a programme working with schools and are installing tree labels, in English and Māori, aimed at school children or people who are unaware of what native trees look like as an educational tool.
– **Tutaenui Stream Restoration Project -** huge community involvement and engagement of all sorts of people in the community transforming an area which was just wasteland, the usage of the Tutaenui stream and the Tutaenui dam/reservoir was noted by many families.
– **Predator Free Marton -** like a mens shed for building rat traps etc.
– **Ngāti Apa and Ngāti Hauiti -** Undertaking environmental restoration projects.

"Iwi are doing some awesome work on the ground when it comes to the environmental space and I think these stories need to be told where we just haven't talked about them, because there's so much work going on.

" *Macpherson's reserve is one which we've put an enormous amount of effort into. We've just built some new picnic tables in there, it now has a little toilet and we've rebuilt a bridge. This reserve is really family friendly.*
" *Clearly, in this day and age, if we weren't here to speak for the trees, or to speak for the indigenous species, and the birds, then nobody else will. That's really the aim of Forest and Bird as a society.*

Forest and Bird, Rangitīkei

" We've got five reserves that we look after... All the reserves were donated by landowners to stop the government of the day taking them over and logging them.

"We're responsible for controlling the weeds. We've got a lot of old man's beard up here on the Rangitīkei and it's a horrible invasive weed.

"And also we look after pests, pests like possums, rats and stoats. We maintain the tracks, bridges, boardwalks, signs, and picnic areas for the public to enjoy.

" Where we are today (Macpherson's Reserve), would have been all Kahikatea forest. These massive great trees are a solemn reminder that our most productive pastoral land in New Zealand, was home to these towering giants before Europeans arrived.

"It's a subtle reminder that not all bush reserves are as intact and it's a good example of a native lowland forest that's making a recovery. I think this actually instils some hope. Because we realise that our natural world is constantly trying to restore order.

"I think advocating for nature is what we do at Forest and Bird and I really think that's really important. You know, we provide a voice for the land, the birds, the water, and so on, and the trees.

" We need the support of our neighbouring landowners, because of course, we've got fences, but these fences are not secure all the time. And yes, we've got weeds.

" We have to do it in concert with our neighbours, if our neighbours don't do it, then all that's going to happen is we'll kill our possums and then they'll all move in from the neighbours.

" We have a lot to learn about how we can control these things, keeping deer and other animals out, as well as invasive weeds. It's just a constant battle, absolutely, a constant battle, you know, the moment you do something, there are always going to be consequences. At the moment, I think we're winning the battle, we're on the correct end of it.

"We continue to fight, it's an ongoing battle to protect these areas...I think we are very fortunate that we've got a very large agency, we network and work with, Horizons.

" Horizons have responsibility over the entire region to control possums and rats and stoats. They have a particularly aggressive program to get rid of possums. And I have to say that they've been extraordinarily successful.

"We couldn't achieve half of what we do without having these collaborations, the excellent relationship we've got with Horizons is a really good one. We've got another one with the Rangitīkei Environment Group, they deal with a lot of our weed control. And without them, we couldn't do half of what we do.

Framework Tags

Life Below Water | Sustainable Cities & Communities | Life on Land

Natural Environment | Social Cohesion

Responsible stewards of their natural and living environments

There is a heightened awareness around protecting the wellbeing of the rivers and waterways in the region, however, this work is ongoing which brings with it challenges and set-backs.

Strengths

– Some feel that iwi and farmers are really leading the charge in this space, and doing a great job.
– There is a real awareness and strength of working with youth in these projects, teaching them to look after our water and the land, in hope that it poses well for future generations; and many are really well engaged.

"For me, as a landowner, I just want to continue to be able to love it, and look after it, protect it, and do whatever I can in my lifetime, and help to bring my mokopuna to a place where they don't have to do all this hard work.

" *And for those people in our cities that say, 'hey, the farmers and iwi are leaving the place in a poor condition', and all the environmental things they get blamed for, come on out and have a look at what's been done here. And this has been done all over the country. I just take my hat off to them.*
" *It's so important that when we turn around behind us, that we've got people following us, that's really important, because if we don't, then obviously, our work is of no value in the long term.*
" *It's awesome because it's teaching them (youth) you know, teaching them how we can best look after our water.*
" *So these days, holistically, they (youth) get to feel it, they get to see it, they get to smell it, they get to touch it, they get to understand all those different things that are important and why we're here.*

" *This planting here is going to really help the filtration from the runoff that we're gonna get off the farm.*
" *By fencing off these waterways and planting the riparian verge, and putting in a whole heap of native species, it stops the nutrients going into the waterway.*
" *We are getting a lot of the places that we are testing where the damage is not bad, but it's more just future proofing everywhere.*
" *It's a way to support our multiple owned Māori blocks (of land), with lots of owners who would find it hard otherwise to come up with the funds to do this sort of stuff themselves.*

Barriers

– Some view safe swimming spots as an issue across the whole region which is largely driven by poor waste water management, with a perception that little regional councils don't have a requirement for people to manage waste water, the way the people in the big cities have to.
– There is an issue with pollution of the Hautapu River; there is a popular swimming hole there and that same area has had a sewage overflow during storms and heavy rain which resulted in the Council being fined. There is still some concern about heavy rain and children swimming in this river.
– There is a sense that river quality is declining and that a number of species such as whitebait, eels, trout and black flounder have now basically gone from some of the region's rivers, due to what's going up and down them.
– There is also a sense that the stories related to the rivers, told to younger generations, now have to be framed as 'we used to...' rather than 'we still can..', which is a loss for many families.
– Some have the view that the increase of jet boating has negatively impacted rivers, with some concerns around contamination in relation to what they bring into the rivers, if they don't wash their boats (especially if they go from the sea to the river).
– Some have also observed and have concerns around Council digging in river beds for infrastructure materials.

– Some noted that while lots of farmers are involved, and progress is being made, there are some downsides to fencing off waterways such as weeds, and that there needs to be clarity around the time and financial costs of the on-going maintenance.

"A lot of good work has been done, but we are not clear about the amount of maintenance we are building for ourselves.

" *I agree, where I do a bit of my mahi in Papakai Park (Taihape), we have a swimming hole there and around that same area there has been a sewage overflow during storms and heavy rains. The Council was fined $60,000 by Horizons for polluting the Hautapu River.*
" *They had to monitor the sewage outfall. Yet, it's a very popular area for children to go swimming and for families to get together. Cameras have been removed now and we're wondering why.*
" *Regional Council rules, little regional councils don't have a requirement for people to manage waste water the way the people in the big cities have to... you'll probably find some quite established businesses in the smaller regions admitting their wastewater straight out into the system.*
" *The ability to treat the water before it goes into the rivers is not up to standards.*
" *We can't do anything to stop them (Jet boats) from using it (the river) but they can contaminate (the waters) with what they bring in. Especially if they go from the sea to the river. So do they clean their boats? Hopefully they do.*

ONLY 25% OF RANGITĪKEI'S SWIMMING SITES ARE DEEMED SAFE TO SWIM IN.

25%

LAWA, Rangitīkei Safe Swimming Sites [23]

Opportunities

– Schooling programmes and projects, working with the children to monitor the water; putting the hard work in now so future generations don't have to.
– Continuing to work collectively in projects such as the fencing off of waterways and planting to stop nutrients going into waterways.
– Better waste water management; to be able to go to the region's swimming spots and there is not a sign there saying 'you can't swim'.
– Some feel that river care outcomes could be improved by working more collaboratively.
– Providing facilities at jet boat launching spots to allow them to wash their boats to prevent bringing in pollutants.

" *It's not one group that can do this. Everyone needs to do this. Farmers need to work with iwi and we need to work with collectives. We are working in silos in different parts of the river but there is good work happening in that space to address that.*

" *We're going to expand on other programmes where we, you know, involve them (youth) and be more interactive with our younger generation, because we can't do this forever, so we definitely need them to be part of this journey for us, and with us.*
" *I've already had kids asking me what are we doing this for and you know, being able to say you know, we're protecting the water so that you kids can swim in our rivers for forever, that's the end game. We grew up swimming in it as kids ourselves.*
" *But there's nothing down there where they go in (at the river) and push their boats in, to wash it before they do, as you would have in many of the other areas.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Ngā Puna Rau Rangitīkei, Whenua Enhancement Programme -** a collective iwi project with multiple owned Māori blocks who would find it hard to maintain their waterways and land on their own.
– **Ngā Puna Rau Rangitīkei -** Dam planting with youth from Mokai Patea Services.
– **Friends of Taihape -** a fabulous project happening in Taihape around the Hautapu River, creating trails through the native bush.
– Multiple funders helping to make this mahi possible including MBIE, MPI and the One Billion Trees Fund.

" *We're lucky enough to receive funding from MBIE through the provincial growth unit, and from MPI and the One Billion Trees Fund. So through that funding, we were able to put together a project team and a couple of fencing businesses to actually carry out the mahi.*
" *The project (the Whenua Enhancement Programme) entailed 97 kilometers of fencing and 366,000 native plants being planted.*
" *It (the Whenua Enhancement Programme) supports a lot of owners who probably wouldn't have had the ability to put in that sort of infrastructure without assistance. So to be able to help I think it's over 100 owners in this block.*

Taihape Planting Day - Ngā Puna Rau o Rangitīkei and Rangitīkei Environmental Operations (REO) Limited

"The kaupapa for today is that we've got a massive planting day. It's part of a journey funded by the Ministry of Primary Industries for fencing and riparian work. We're toward the end of that project. Today is a day of forces coming together.

"This is a really cool day because it's actually a collaboration between multiple agencies. It's very rare that you see multiple agencies working together on a day like this.

" We all came together six years ago, to ensure that we could find a more effective way to put activities onto our tributaries that can help enhance the wellbeing of our waterways.

"You know, iwi, and farmers are leading the charge. And for those people in our cities that say, 'hey, the farmers and iwi are leaving the place in a poor condition' and all the environmental things they get blamed for, come out and have a look at what's been done here. And this has been done all over the country. I just take my hat off to them.

" They all have their own environmental aspirations. But what we've found is a common ground. And, you know, one thing that's been very clear in this space is the importance of inclusion... and having days like these.

" It's been the kaupapa on our journey. How do we keep that? How do we, you know, with the water testing, how do we do more planting? How do we get our water to a place where we're able to drink it? Yeah, because in some places...it's not (drinkable).

"It's really fantastic to see some of the schools here like Mangaweka School, Moawhango School, helping with this environmental planting. Yes, it's stunning... It's awesome, because it's teaching them how we can best look after our water.

" It's the tangible stuff of all the hard mahi that we've been doing over the years, and to be able to showcase that in bringing in our community. And all those different people that have been part of this journey.

" We are doing whatever we can do, so that our mokopuna are only going to be maintaining and so they don't have to do all the hard work that we're going through right now.

" These are massive projects and really nice for the waterways, planting with karakia and waiata. The energy, and the cultural ties to the environment, it has been wonderful.

"I just want to continue to be able to love it , look after it, protect it, and do whatever I can in my lifetime, and help to bring my mokopuna to a place where they don't have to do all this hard work. And we will continue to work, walk this journey together with our stakeholders, and to ensure that we're doing our utmost to be able to get into, and to a better place than we are today.

"We've been blessed with the opportunity just to be working outside, doing something hopeful for the future (together) and for future generations. And for the health of our water.

Many experience issues and barriers to consistent and affordable internet and cell phone connectivity in the region, which is having a number of downstream impacts.

Framework Tags

Reduced Inequalities | Quality Education | Decent Work & Economic Growth | Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital

Participating fully in society

Strengths

– Many of the libraries across the district have computers and free internet that people can access with no cost.

"All the libraries here have computers and the internet and people can use it with no cost.

Barriers

– Internet connection, especially for rural communities like Rangitīkei, is a huge problem and incredibly inconvenient for these families, as it now plays an essential role in everyday life.
– For some rural families with limited access to the internet, they can only get access at a much higher financial cost.
– People without access to the internet are experiencing more and more barriers to essential life tasks, i.e. booking appointments, banking, farm management.
– There is also very limited cellphone access across the region, with a number of black spots, meaning some rural residents have to have their own safety devices because their cell phones won't work.
– With the increase usage of cell phones, and decline in landlines, some have experienced challenges to making contact with people in their communities, especially rurally, as there is no directory to go to anymore, to find people's cell phone numbers.

"If you're off State Highway 1 or 3 in the Rangitīkei, kiss your cell phone goodbye. It won't work.

" *I'm trying to work, my children are at home trying to do homeschooling, and we don't have unlimited internet, so we have to keep upping our amount of gigs. That comes at a much higher price than urban.*
" *If I didn't have the convenience of my internet, then I would get what I needed to do, done, but it would just take a hell of a lot of effort.*
" *There are some rural areas that can't get good access to the internet at all. Even cell phone service.*
" *It's hard for rural areas to actually get that sort of infrastructure, unless you have an excess amount of people that will want it... We live in a little no exit that can only get ADSL, so in order for us to get Fibre, there has to be more than ten families that want it, and it'll cost us $1500 each.*
" *These are big businesses you are talking about that can't get access to good internet, it can't be good for the economy either.*
" *Cell phone connectivity is a problem, especially for some rural communities that don't have any cover.*
" *We don't necessarily know our neighbours as well as we did, when farms change hands, get new managers etc, people have a cellphone, no landlines or directory anymore, no-one knows how to contact them.*
" *There is no directory of cellphone numbers so people don't know how to make contact. Traditionally, you think 'oh well, we will just ring up everybody down the road', but without a directory you can't do that anymore.*

22% OF RANGITĪKEI HOUSEHOLDS DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET, COMPARED WITH 14% NATIONALLY.

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

58% OF RANGITĪKEI CHORUS CONNECTIONS ACCESS THE FIBRE NETWORK, WITH THE REMAINING **42% OF CHORUS CONNECTIONS ACCESSING SERVICES THROUGH THE COPPER NETWORK**.

Chorus 2022[16].

Opportunities

– Equity of access; better access across the whole country 'everyone should be on an even playing field'.
– A cell phone directory, especially in farming communities that have transitory populations.

"It is one of the council's priorities to increase connectivity but it comes down to government push back.

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Whanganui Rural Community Board -** connecting rural communities to the internet.

"The Rural Community Board has done some amazing work getting the internet to the rural district.

It is clear there is some infrastructure in the region that is not fit for purpose, however, perceptions around safe vs. unsafe drinking water are complex, and don't necessarily reflect reality.

Framework Tags

Clean Water & Sanitation   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital

Responsible stewards of their natural and living environments

Strengths

– Many think the water across the region is perfectly drinkable, and were surprised to hear that a portion across the region is not.

" *I don't believe this for a moment - it has got to be nonsense.*

" *They may not have drinking water they are happy to drink. But there is water coming out of the tap.*

" *For Ratana, we have got a new water system in the last three years. I think it's going okay.*

Barriers

– Many share the view that Marton has an uneven distribution of water supply and quality through the township, with many of the community unsatisfied with the colour, appearance and smell of the water, despite being told it meets regulations and is safe to drink; they attribute the water quality to being a reflection of it being a long-standing rural township.

– There is a sense that there are so many rural homes across the region with different regulations in relation to what is considered a water supply and what is not, especially in relation to being on tank water, which can be confusing. It is felt that new water safety standards and the impending new water regulation changes are heightening sensitivity around this.

– Some share concerns around the water infrastructure being behind, tired and needing to be re-done, right across the region.

– Some question the measure of 'safe', with the view that they have been told they shouldn't be drinking their water because it's not safe, but their whole life they have been drinking it and have never had any trouble. Some expressed concerns their water source would be "taken away" as a result of this.

" *Unless you've got a water filter, 100% of homes in Marton do not have access to drinkable water.*

" *Marton water, from a lab perspective, is okay to drink, but people won't drink it because of the colour and smell.*

" *People are buying water on top of paying rates for a service that isn't available.*

" *Unless you've got a water filter, 100% of homes in Marton do not have access to drinkable water.*

" *It's a function of the age of the community.*

" *We've had reports in the newspaper with the mayor telling the people of Marton to not be discouraged by the colour of the water. If my water was discoloured, I'd be discouraged from using my water. No matter how much the mayor says its ok.*

" *There is a water standard, and you either meet that standard, (or you don't), and now the central government has put in a regulator.*

" *Water is an issue, five generations of us have drunk tank water with ill effect but we are bracing ourselves for news it is unsafe and it is going to get taken away from us.*

" *In my community, we get our water from the Hunterville water scheme, but that's only graded as stock water, but we've never been sick.*

" *Rural water supplies such as Hunterville, are for stock water only, however we have all been drinking it for years. The township is supplied with the same water supply, and that is treated.*

" *In Taihape I don't think I have ever been told it is unsafe, but we don't meet our consent with Horizons. We need to address a few things but the water is completely safe.*

" *You've got a lot of rural houses with tank water, and rural people develop an immunity to it. There's been countless stories like that.*

OF THE SIX WATER SOURCES OVERSEEN BY THE RANGITĪKEI DISTRICT COUNCIL **ONLY RATANA FULLY MEETS ALL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR SAFE DRINKING WATER AS SET OUT BY THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH.**

Annual Report on Drinking Quality 2020-21, Ministry of Health, 2022[20].

FOR 2020 THERE WAS AN AVERAGE OF 1.4 UNPLANNED WATER SUPPLY DISRUPTIONS PER 1000 HOUSEHOLDS.

Te Waihanga, Water Services Dashboard

1.4
PER 1000
HOUSE
HOLDS

Opportunities

– General infrastructure upgrades across the region.

– The Taihape plant capacity needs to be upgraded to process water faster to meet demand.

– The Marton water issues need to be addressed.

" *The concern we do have in this town (Taihape) is if we have a power cut, we lose our ability to treat our water before it comes to town, the fire brigade is looking at this at the moment. I'm not sure if it stops the flow in total.*

Community driven groups are perceived to be passionate connectors, funders and are key to addressing specific community needs. Many feel they are currently the main drivers of solutions and positive outcomes for their communities.

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities | Industry Innovation & Infrastructure | Reduced Inequalities

Social Cohesion | Financial & Physical Capital | Human Capability

Participating fully in society | Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

Strengths

– There are many passionate people working for community organisations across the Rangitīkei who care deeply for the individuals and communities they serve.
– There have been a number of successful projects across the region driven and funded by passionate members of the community.
– Community organisations and groups also serve a purpose in bringing people across the community together, to self nurture and look after one another.
– Some have the perception that the community groups are stronger in the northern region (Taihape).

Whilst the following has been identified as a strength, it has also been identified as an opportunity:

– Some community groups and townships use multiple forms of communication to connect and raise awareness, however, some feel they need to be more proactive at community profile building.

"This is what it is all about, pride in our community, growing up out here in Ratana, having a brotherhood of friends you've grown up with, and having that opportunity to give back and give that to the next generation.

" *Slowly but surely we are growing better relationships in the community.*
" *When people come to us and say we have got this idea to do this thing, but we need help, we'll invite them along, ask what they need, and help meet these needs.*

" *The (Marton) playground came about because two mothers would drive the children to Whanganui just to play on the playground, and they decided we're not doing that anymore.*
" *Playground vs. civic centre, what made the playground happen? It's community driven and not council driven. That's the other part too, was that there were really good people in this group.*
" *It's a great opportunity to bring the different factions together, rural and urban, young and old, men and women. They come together for a common purpose.*
" *People outside of our community notice a sense of pride, of kotahitanga and unity.*

Barriers

– Some community groups have the membership, the time and the financial backing but don't always know where to spend their time or money.
– Sometimes small community politics such as personal friction between individuals can stop progress or halt projects altogether in some instances; the personalities in community groups tend to make or break them.
– Some feel you have to work 'damn hard' to establish yourselves within a community, having experienced barriers when being new to an organisation, area or role.

"There's a grieving process that everyone has had to go through but when do you get over that and how do you entice people into something that had an untidy finish, that takes serious passion because you've got an unpaid community.

" *We have the membership, the time and money backing but we don't always know where to spend our time, or our money.*
" *There could be individual or group needs in the community we haven't heard about.*
" *It's largely about personalities, which is one of the biggest problems with a lot of community groups. You get the wrong person in the wrong position, and nobody wants a bar of it.*
" *Sometimes in our small community it's politics or more I don't like how that person does things so it stops things in some instances.*
" *We have to therefore work hard in that area to establish ourselves because past people lost the contract and are unsure if they are going to stick around.*

Opportunities

– Council taking the time to get Project Marton up and running again.

"To me that's a real gap (Project Marton folding). That work has gone in-house now, but that's not the answer, Project Marton could get so much external funding whereas the Council can't. Now we're starting from scratch, rebranding and all that, it's become quite a mountain and because it's been so untidy, hasn't really been addressed by Council.

" *It was that key co-ordinator. It was a paid role which finished up, and then a breakdown of relationship between them and the group, and transitioning to finding that next key person left a gap. People couldn't commit to the time involved.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– Neighbourhood Support and Taihape Older and Bolder were mentioned as essential community groups doing great things in Taihape.
– **Taihape Development Trust -** provides a list of services and they also do a welcome pack, with a list of various services that are given to real estate agents for new home purchasers.
– **Marton Rotary -** funding a number of successful projects for the Marton community such as the skatepark, they also do new to Marton tours and info packs.

"In a world where everyone is going outwards, Rotary is an excellent thing for bringing people together.

" *We formed the Taihape Development Trust 15 or so years ago... looking at social infrastructure and filling the gaps.*
" *We have a trust, the Taihape Development Trust, that has a similar role (to Project Marton).*

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities

Social Cohesion

Participating fully in society   Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

There is a growing feeling by some that the rural community has become less connected, more individualised and it is harder to access clear information. However, some also feel that COVID-19 has triggered some positive changes to address the perceived gaps.

Strengths

– Some community connectors are playing a vital role in bringing community organisations, groups and services together to meet individual needs.
– Some have noticed a shift the community has made more recently, especially since COVID-19, which is going in the right direction and bringing the community closer together, having noticed an increase in places to go and things to do that encourage community connection.

"We were locked down and in a way, we are used to isolation, but it made people think about their neighbours more, and reach out to elderly in the area more.

"*There are more and more cool little places that are creating communities and making people happy and want to live here.*
"*I put my feelers out and make those connections outside of our community.*
"*You get to know people, build relationships, build trust.*
"*Let's stop, let's get together, and in fact, rural communities have become more social, you couldn't go to the local pub, so we made a local pub in a paddock.*

Barriers

– People can be resistant to join community networks for a number of reasons including not knowing anyone, being shy or mis-perceiving the purpose of the network or group.
– Some feel their communities are becoming more individualised, and families are becoming more singular in their approach to raising children; 'it no longer takes a village.' Some fear this can have downstream impacts such as being less prepared to face adverse events as a community.
– Many struggle to find a central source of truth to tell you where to go to get the right support. Additionally, there are cost and funding barriers preventing an online platform being created as a central source for accurate and up to date information. Another barrier is that information also becomes out of date so quickly.
– Some believe there is a nationwide gap in our social cohesion which has been amplified through COVID-19 and that there is a lot of emotion and mis-information being pushed out via social platforms and word of mouth these days.

"I'm concerned that rural people are feeling less connected. It's a basic human need, and that people don't feel included in their communities, it's serious.

"*Where would somebody go? Because you turn up to the Council.. How does somebody find out where I can go because I am new to the area? My husband has moved here for a job, I'm not working and I need to find out where I can go and what I can do?*
"*But how do you get a person or people to go to a club?*

"*People are shy, when you suddenly move from knowing everybody where you grew up to not knowing everybody.*
"*The fact that the rural community is becoming less connected tends to be true, I think farming families used to go to town once a week but now a spouse is working in town and they are in and out of town everyday.*
"*It means we aren't as well resourced if an adverse event removes the access to town.*
"*Before, when you raised children, it took a village. You had your extended family around you, whereas now families have become so singular.*
"*Most up to date are social media things, so even when you create a website you have to be reliant on different things feeding in.*
"*Even updating their facebook page is really difficult because there is just so much information.*

Opportunities

– There is no local radio station in Rangitīkei; they need to look into this.
– Better awareness and push to join local clubs.
– Finding ways to try and bridge that gap of unity or social cohesion in the community.
– Getting to know people, building relationships and building trust.

"*I wonder if all of our people should at least be asked to join one club?*
"*If councils are trying to take over all of these things, why don't they do it in a regional way?*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **The Taihape Telephone Tree -** administered through Mokai Patea.

"It (the Telephone Tree) has doctors etc, on it, and announces things like if so and so is not well give them a ring. So out of this, they have formed a network to self-look after each other.

A strong foundation has been built with and by iwi across the region, with growing opportunities for participation and engagement, while acknowledging there are still some issues influenced by history and mistrust that are being worked through. The good work by iwi groups in the region was noted by many.

Framework Tags

Reduced Inequalities   Decent Work & Economic Growth   Sustainable Cities & Communities

Industry Innovation & Infrastructure   Partnerships for the Goals

Financial & Physical Capital   Human Capability

Self-managing and empowered leaders   Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation   Responsible stewards of their natural and living environments

RANGITĪKEI'S **MĀORI POPULATION** IS ESTIMATED TO **GROW BY 11% IN THE FIVE YEARS TO 2023**.

STATS NZ POPULATION ESTIMATES 2023

11%

Strengths

– Some view working with iwi as just as important as working with government agencies.
– Some at the Council have the view that the data and information gathered by some iwi, and iwi collectives has been massively helpful.
– Some have experienced improved engagement with iwi by identifying and engaging with the right people; "It all comes down to relationships".
– There is a sense of excitement for some around more Māori treaty settlements and beginning to build and accumulate resourceful assets within and for the community.
– Many see and value the work being done by iwi organisations and providers across the region, in particular by Ngāti Apa and Mokai Patea Services.

"Working with Ngāti Apa and the iwi is just as important as working with governmental agencies.

" *In terms of co-governance, we're well on the road there.*
" *I'm really excited, as more Māori settle their treaty... Ngāti Apa settled in 2009 and got $15 million. They've since taken that asset to $50 million.*
" *We (Council and iwi) have got to a better place, we are able to communicate a lot more effectively, we were able to share information, and data as well.*
" *Our ability to engage with iwi at the right time and for the right matters. It was challenging at the start to be able to create that space to engage. And then to access some of the information from iwi that would be relevant for us at the Council.*
" *I had to identify who am I talking to, what group do you represent. Once we got to that point.. (it) has been great, and it's actually been beneficial for even today's engagement and communication.*

Barriers

– Some iwi are navigating sensitive issues in relation to what stage of the treaty settlement process they are in, which impacts communication lines and their ability to engage due to having limited capacity.
– Some Pākehā are defensive and feel a lot of fear around co-governance with iwi.
– Māori and iwi like to share and tell stories, however, are hesitant to share their stories due to ownership concerns in relation to where these stories may end up.
– For non-Māori, engaging with iwi can be more difficult.

"Some Pākehā are really defensive about this (co-governance). I don't know whether they feel it's been imposed on them by the central government or what, I'm not sure. But there is a lot of fear.

" *What it (the treaty settlement) has done, is created some tension and a bit of unease amongst our people in the North. That, unfortunately, impacted my communication lines.*
" *I'd love to find out what local iwi are doing, but I'm struggling to engage with them.*

Opportunities

– Coming up with ideas to mitigate some of the fears around sharing stories amongst iwi.
– Telling stories of Māori and Pākehā as ONE story; they both have two different stories to tell and they're both valuable for the people of this region and this community.

"One story that we're trying to tell here in the Rangitīkei is about the relationship between Māori and Pākehā or Māori and Europeans, and telling that story as one story.

" *Maybe that's an angle we could take, telling that story of two groups of people, Māori, and then the European community. Because they both have two different stories to tell and they're both valuable for the people of this region and this community.*
" *We haven't kind of realised that we should be capturing some of this work and some of this mahi.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Ngāti Apa -** provided COVID-19 support, have a health centre and have initiated the Harakeke Berry Farm at Kaitoki Prison.
– **Mokai Patea Services -** they are doing amazing things in Taihape right across the board.
– **Ngā Puna Rau o Rangitīkei -** an iwi environmental cleanup group doing awesome things.
– **Rangitīkei District Council -** have an iwi liaison who has built great relationships with iwi.
– **Te Ranga Tupua -** have been very helpful with data for Council and it seems to be reasonably accurate.

"On a whole, they (Mokai Patea) do a lot for the community, they do a lot for everyone.

" *Ngāti Apa has been brilliant around COVID-19, they were able to open up their resources in terms of people etc. You've probably seen some of it through the media, in particular the Harakeke Berry Farm up in Kaitoke.*
" *Iwi are doing some awesome work on the ground when it comes to the environmental space and I think these stories to be told there we just haven't talked about them because there's so much work going on.*
" *Mokai Patea tends to drive everything in Taihape.*
" *It doesn't matter if you are black or white, they (Mokai Patea) just get in and help everyone.*

Theme 48

There are increasing challenges to maintain community group membership and volunteer workforces due to people aging out (getting too old to volunteer in the same way) and barriers attracting younger members and volunteers.

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities

Social Cohesion   Human Capability

Participating fully in society   Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

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APPROXIMATELY 21.5% OF NEW ZEALANDERS **UNDERTAKE VOLUNTEER WORK.**

Volunteering Statistics, Volunteering New Zealand, 2022[21].

21.5%
VOLUNTEER

NEW ZEALANDERS CONTRIBUTE A TOTAL OF AROUND **159 MILLION HOURS OF FORMAL VOLUNTEER LABOUR EACH YEAR.**

Volunteering Statistics, Volunteering New Zealand, 2022[21].

159 MILLION HOURS

Strengths

– Some noted that emergency response volunteer roles were doing better with attracting younger people.
– Some feel that Marton community groups are alive and appear to be going well; with still a lot going on in the township.
– Some felt there has been some additional government funding allocated to employ people, so some community organisations no longer need to rely on volunteers, which some are experiencing benefits from.

"Marton Rotary doesn't do too bad at holding our numbers and getting younger people into service clubs, we've got an 18 year old youth leader keen to come and talk to us in two weeks time.

"*The fire service has a waiting list and they're all under the age of 30.*
"*Marton Rotary doesn't do too bad at holding our numbers and getting younger people into service clubs, we've got an 18 year old youth leader keen to come and talk to us in two weeks time.*
"*As a club we have tried really hard at attracting young people and new people and we are quite pleased.*

Barriers

– Many community organisations and groups are struggling to get volunteers due to people working full time and being time poor, especially when two parents are both working with a sense that 'people have less and less time and energy to volunteer'.
– Due to there being so many more demands on people's time now, as opposed to what there may have been a few years back, some have noticed a cultural shift in volunteer attitudes; 'my time is precious', 'what can this give me?'.
– Some volunteer dependent organisations are struggling because they can't get people to take on positions of responsibility, resulting in some even having to close down.
– Some employers now can't afford to have staff off during work hours for volunteer call-outs.
– Many community and volunteer organisations find it challenging engaging with the younger generation; some have the perception that it is no longer 'cool' to volunteer.

"That shift happened over the last decade, particularly the early 2000s where it shifted away from what's good for the communities and what's good for me.

"*It's one of those issues that are only going to get worse.*
"*There are so many more demands on people's time now, as opposed to what there may have been a few years back. We are more time poor now than we used to be.*
"*It's not only the people working in the district, but it's also the employers that are hesitant to release their staff to go to something like a response. The average job time for the fire service is 48 minutes. So can you afford to lose that employee for 48 minutes?*
"*It's changed too, there is a cultural shift from, I'm doing this for the betterment of the community to what can this give me? There's a big cultural shift there.*
"*That's probably the one downside of Forest and Bird is the membership, it is our retirees.*

89.2% OF THE COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS NATIONALLY **DO NOT HAVE ANY PAID EMPLOYEES.**

Volunteering Statistics, Volunteering New Zealand, 2022[21].

Opportunities

– Re-setting expectations of what is required from volunteering to better align with people's busy lives, and paying more attention to succession planning.
– Better connecting with newer generation groups, to get them to appreciate what volunteers do and what it gives back.
– Better recognition of volunteerism.
– The 60+ age group still has a lot of value to bring and add.

"They are looking for recognition, value. I'm finding that now, if I'm going to volunteer for things, I want to be getting something out of it. And I've been volunteering all my life.

"*I don't expect too much of anyone for too long, instead opting for a rolling programme of responsibility for example.*
"*We do give them those pieces of paper (qualifications etc.) but we need to point out to people just what you can get out of volunteering.*
"*It's probably only since retirement that we've been so heavily involved and been able to come out and give a lot more time to doing the things we do out in the bush.*
"*You also have to consider succession planning to keep the ideas sustainable. I.e. community gardens.*
"*We need to find the next generation of people who are going to come in and think this is a valuable place just as valuable as we are, and hopefully more valuable, and we'll do an even better job.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– A number of community groups were mentioned as still really strong including Lions Club Hunterville, Marton Rotary and some rugby clubs.

"Our Lions Club in Hunterville is still incredibly strong, and Marton Rotary, and the rugby club, even though it is probably struggling in what it is trying to do, it is still really supported by the community.

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital

Participating fully in society

Across the Rangitīkei there is a strong need and community drive for shared multi purpose community hubs, but skepticism exists over the Council's ability to deliver hubs in alignment with community needs.

Barriers

– Some are unconvinced that community hubs are what their communities need, with additional concern about the costs, and better leveraging run-down buildings or facilities that already exist.
– Some view the new Bulls Community Centre, Te Matapihi, as a mistake, with concerns around its ability to cater appropriately for and to the community. Some think it is too small, poorly designed, unfinished, lacking facilities such as changing rooms due to costs overrunning, and still costing the rate payer money whilst it is being completed. Some however, feel the library and toilet block aspects of the hub are well done.
– Taihape is currently without a community hub due to the closure of the town hall; this has the community divided in relation to whether it gets pulled down vs. refurbished and earthquake strengthened. Regardless, the community is in desperate need of a central community hub.
– There is also no community hub in Marton, meaning they struggle with the lack of meeting facilities and some feel there is nowhere for conferences.

"The Council, it seems, has just let buildings disintegrate.

" *Marton struggles with the lack of meeting facilities, there is nowhere for conferences.*
" *Not entirely convinced about the hub idea, I haven't had it explained well to me and I am yet to see where it is working.*
" *With low rates they (Council) can't re-invest in the community.*
" *They're still spending money on it (Te Matapihi), and will continue to spend money on it because it is not finished, but they haven't told the public that.*
" *Look at all the green grass there (at Te Matapihi), they could have built a single level building for a lot cheaper that would have better catered to the community.*
" *I just have very little faith and I think we're going to get a raw deal with the (Taihape) school.*

Opportunities

– Decent community centres set up in all the townships, providing that social infrastructure.
– Refurbishing and earthquake strengthening the Taihape Town Hall, so it can get up and running again; using it as an opportunity for Council to go, what does the community need?
– The new civic centre planning is in progress for Marton, with ambition to be a space not just for Council staff, but for the community.

"I'd like to see a decent community centre set up too, that social infrastructure.

" *It needs an upgrade but for example, the Community Market is trying to operate outdoors. We used to have a type of community market that could be run indoors and the town hall because it was big enough, like there's so many more opportunities if we kept the amazing space and just upgraded it and it would probably cost the same as building new.*

Some feel that the location of Bulls and the expanding Ohakea Air Base transient community, influences their ability to bond and connect as a community and develop appropriate community resources.

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities | Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Social Cohesion

Participating fully in society | Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

Strengths

– Some feel that Bulls have some spots of brilliance in relation to some strong leaders in the community that are pulling people together.

"Bulls has some spots of brilliance, strong leaders who can pull people together and get them working together.

Barriers

– Some feel there is a small town mentality amongst many locals who have been living in the town for decades, who do not like change.
– Some feel that for Bulls, being a small community is a significant challenge and that they are sometimes disadvantaged compared to towns with bigger organisations and resources. Some feel that Bulls therefore struggles and it is hard to please some of their community.
– Some feel there are not as many job opportunities in Bulls due to not having as many services and organisations as you would in a larger centres.
– Many feel Bulls is heavily dependent and influenced by the neighbouring Ohakea Air Base and that growing, transient community.
– Many feel that Bulls' close proximity to Palmerston North may also be contributing to all of the above, with some sharing the view that it feels more like a suburb than a town.

"Bulls is such a little transient town, it wasn't really a community but I think that is changing.

" *I believe one of our biggest challenges is that we are a small town, which means we're disadvantaged, disadvantaged from bigger centres with organisations and resources.*
" *Also the close presence to Palmerston North means it is almost a suburb.*
" *Historically has been challenging with the nature of the Ohakea staff, come here for three years then go.*
" *Bulls are a bit compromised because they are attached to Ohakea which has a very fluid population there.*

MORE THAN 50% OF THE BULLS POPULATION REPORTED LIVING IN ANOTHER PART OF NEW ZEALAND OR OVERSEAS IN THE FIVE YEARS PRIOR TO 2018.

NZ Census 2018

MORE THAN **50%**

Opportunities

– Council to find ways to encourage the Ohakea staff to keep building, connecting with and establishing themselves as a part of the Bulls community.

"I think we need to prove ourselves when it comes to being in a small community.

" *Our challenge as a Council is to encourage them to stay on our side of the river and not go to Fielding.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– Some have expressed excitement around having a new elected member for council, who is passionate about, understands and lives in the Bulls community.

" *This time a young guy is coming in, who will be really great.*

While retirees feel Marton is a desired place to live, there is some widespread lack of enthusiasm due to perceived neglect of buildings and community resources and a "we're only Marton" mentality.

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities   Decent Work & Economic Growth   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Social Cohesion   Financial & Physical Capital

MARTON TOWNSHIP'S POPULATION IS ESTIMATED TO HAVE **GROWN BY 240 PEOPLE IN THE FOUR YEARS 2018-2022**.

Stats NZ Population Estimates 2022

+240

MARTON'S **MEDIAN AGE IS 44**.

Stats NZ Population Estimates 2022

44
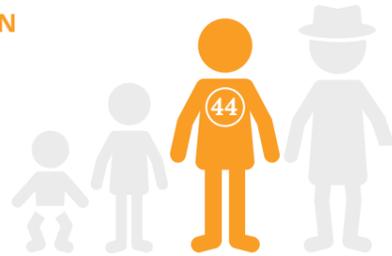
Strengths

– Some feel the newer and younger Marton residents moving to the township are strong contributors to community driven projects and outcomes, i.e. the new playground.
– Marton is viewed by some as quite an attractive place for people to retire to; it is in close proximity to larger towns, but you're not in a large town.
– There is still a sense from some that Marton has the 'rural community helps one another out' mentality present in the town.

"The community in Marton, we have had a lot of young people coming into the town, being able to work from home, and they seem to be networking really well and getting some things done.

" *Marton is quite an attractive place for people to retire to as well. I guess it's in close proximity to larger towns, but you're not in a large town.*
" *Marton is bimodal. There are retired farmers, there are comfortable small middle class business owners and so on.*
" *Marton has great support for elderly.*
" *In Marton, there is quite good support for the elderly, through all those sorts of organisations, the church groups and the Marton Friendship Club is very strong too.*
" *I found it a wonderful welcoming supportive community with so many things to get involved in.*

Barriers

– Whilst it has the potential, some feel Marton has never taken off as a town because there are just not enough people.
– There is a sense by some that the Marton community is lacking motivation at the moment and have a "we're only Marton" mindset and therefore have low expectations of the town.
– Marton was traditionally a really rich town, but because of the reduction in farming type employers, some feel that has changed.
– There are a number of empty and neglected council-owned heritage buildings in Marton; with some feeling that the lack of action from the Council is "a gross misuse of ratepayers money" and that this is Council setting precedent for the region around how to look after the buildings.
– Some feel Marton has a gap between the wealthier farmers and small middle class business owners and the more socially economically challenged, which is a significant proportion of the community.

Whilst the following has been identified as barrier, it has also been identified as a strength:

– Some feel the town had a decline due to industry and economic change, but that it is now shifting in a positive direction.

"I had a very strong sense that Marton itself was down on itself. Unfortunately, it's this, you know, 'what do you expect, it's only Marton'. It was really quite stark to me coming in from the outside, just how people felt about it.

" *All we saw from 1986 onwards, was a steady decline, and people's attitudes changed.*
" *When you have got a reputation, it is very hard to undo that reputation.*
" *Lots of big things that pulled the wool from beneath peoples feet, and all the big farming units got divided up, closing all the country schools.*
" *We've got all these heritage buildings, mostly privately owned, that need earthquake strengthening and then some are owned by the Council that are in desperate need of something. But there's no cohesion when Council is telling private owners to take care of their buildings and be proud of our district, when Council can't look after their own shit.*
" *It's actually a gross misuse of ratepayers money to have bought those buildings and to let them get into a position where they will be demolished by neglect. Right now that's happening before our eyes.*
" *There are 96 earthquake prone buildings in the Rangitīkei... 96! Most of them are in the CBD of Marton.*
" *There is this real issue. Because if the Council is treating their buildings like they are... That's the precedent that the Council is sitting for the whole district. We actually have a real problem, I believe, that's actually been created by that organisation.*
" *Some of the buildings in the old street are a bit old, there is just not the money to upgrade them.*

Opportunities

– How to leverage the unused resources in Marton to bring people to the area and break the 'we're only Marton' perception.
– The community veggie garden (in Marton) could be better done and become a vibrant new community hub, until the proper one is built.
– The community would love a 'really cool building' in Marton that youth can use.
– Something needs to be done about the degrading, empty, heritage buildings on the main street, and Council needs to lead the way with this.

" *The people that have control are not heritage New Zealand because I made some enquiries. The only person that can tell you whether you can knock them down or not is the Council.*
" *That's part of the reason why we've got to increase culture to break that perception.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Marton Rotary -** doing what they can to help the town thrive including building a vegetable garden, giving the local high school a beehive and teaching them about bees, funding the community skateboard park and running 'new to Marton' tours.
– **PEC technology -** a big tech employer in the area and a global success story.
– **Marton Development Group -** this is the group behind the Marton Playground which was "community driven" and incredibly successful.
– **Active Mobility Strategy by Council -** a new strategy that is underway around encouraging safer biking and walkways across the town, which the Council is driving.

"*It cost a lot, but it (the playground) paid off. The return, not in an economic sense, but community wellbeing and even the shops will tell you that - the dairies, cafes, during the holidays, things pick up. People are coming from all over the country to this playground.*

" *PEC has a massive history and it is a significant place in New Zealand's technological story. The security system that came out of here, that's used all around the world now. You know, this is technology that was created here in Marton.*
" *Most payment terminals that are operating on petrol pumps through America right now, there are hundreds of thousands, that are using technology that was created here in Marton.*

" *The conversation then became about, how do we encourage safer biking in the community so that our children can ride on the roads and parents don't have to worry about it.*
" *We're going to pick back up the walking and cycling strategy called the "active mobility strategy" and then start to embed those principles and planning processes into infrastructure. That way we can capitalize while we're doing work to put in networks, everything should be linked.*

While the growing Samoan community in Marton is becoming well established, there are perceived challenges by some around connecting to this community due to limited communication channels and a sense that they want to keep to themselves.

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities   Decent Work & Economic Growth

Social Cohesion

Participating fully in society

RANGITIKEI'S PASIFIKA POPULATION IS ESTIMATED TO **GROW BY 250 PEOPLE OR 17% IN THE FIVE YEARS TO 2023**.

STATS NZ POPULATION ESTIMATES 2023

+17%

Strengths

– Some have observed that the Pasifika community are becoming well rooted in Marton, are relatively well accepted and are really beginning to thrive.
– The church is everything for Samoan communities; when you look at how they live they are generally community based, and the church is where they get all of their information from.

Whilst the following has been identified as strength, it has also been identified as a barrier:

– Some have observed the Samoan community as culturally very close people, who don't want anyone else interfering with their family or their children.

"They are quite well rooted here. They are really starting to thrive in Marton and are relatively well accepted.

" *The children also do very well at school, they have good support at home and achieve well.*
" *It's a new dynamic too, as they are new migrants as opposed to Palmerston where the Pacific community is third or fourth generation.*

Barriers

– There is a sense that the large Samoan community in Marton keep to themselves and have been difficult to connect with for some.
– Some feel that as a community, they need to do more to be inclusive of the Samoan community, they had Samoan independence day, but they need more insight into that community to do more.
– The single funnel for communication through Samoan pastors can come with challenges for some community groups or organisations.
– Community organisations have been trying to get the Samoan community involved in other services, but that is still a work in progress.

"Sadly that has been our experience, we have reached out and invited them to things, but maybe it is going to take a generation or two.

" *They're more in the community to do with church, their values, they are still very closed off I feel.*
" *We found in lockdown, it was really difficult to communicate with the Samoan community because they would go through the Pastor. But the churches were closed and pastors weren't getting paid, there was no communication.*

Opportunities

– Figuring out how to integrate and better connect with the Samoan community? And working with them to figure this out.

"As a community we need to do more, we had Samoan Independence Day, but we don't have as much insight into that community.

" *How we integrate and help our new Samoan community is a big topic the last five years.*
" *As a community we need to do more, we had Samoan Independence Day, but we don't have as much insight into that community.*
" *Some of this is perception around certain communities wanting to keep to themselves. But if you know them, I know they want to be involved in everything. But there are struggles on the way to connection but once connected it's all go.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Pastor Va -** a Samoan Pastor who has been integral in connecting with his community, however, he has now had to move on to do something else.
– **The Pasifika Community Group -** driven by the Pasifika Youth Advisor at WINZ.
– Rangitīkei District Council is looking at putting together a District Pacifica Working Group.

"A local Pastor who is now employed by the local iwi just kind of mitigated a lot of those barriers because they trusted him, they know him and they can communicate with him.

" *Pastor Va has been absolutely exceptional in our community. He has had to go and do something somewhere else. That's what you do as a part of the church - you are asked to move on.*
" *She's looking at putting together a district Pacifica Working Group.*

Many feel that Hunterville is a self-sufficient and close-knit community with a 'do it themselves' attitude to meet community needs, by providing their own resources and funding.

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital   Social Cohesion   Human Capability

Self-managing and empowered leaders   Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

Strengths

– Some feel the greatest thing about Hunterville is that it has great community facilities, i.e. their fire brigade, a strong rugby club, the new hockey turf and the tennis courts.
– Hunterville has a great reputation with young shepherds; lots really want to work in Hunterville as a result.
– Hunterville is a very close knit rural community with a real sense of community togetherness; many believe only having one school is core to this and a good way to get people together over anything.
– The Hunterville community has a real "okay, let's make this happen" mindset and attitude, which is attributed to their sense of belonging, and making it 'that place' they want to live and play in.

"They're a pretty close knit community here which is nice... it's a very rural township.

" *Hunterville is an exempla of community togetherness. What is the key? There is only one school, so that's a good way to get people together over anything.*
" *A lot of young shepherds really want to work in Hunterville. It's got a great reputation.*
" *It's a fantastic community they've got there. It's a great little spot.*

Barriers

– Some have observed there is a more transient population beginning to emerge in Hunterville, which has caused some issues at the school for example, with less of a togetherness mindset.

"Hopefully, I'm not out of touch here, but, when my kids were at school, there wasn't a 'them and us', it was we were all in this together and that was huge.

" *There is a way more transient population than we have traditionally, which has caused issues at the school, whether it's behaviourally or perhaps not that strength of connectedness.*

Opportunities

– Getting an ambulance station sorted for St John.

"We've got the land, the Council gave us the land, and the goals for the space are an earthquake proof garage with a sleeping space, because we currently have people who live too far out and currently the ambulance is stored in someone's garage.

" *We have been really good at training up ambulance officers that have gone on to be professionals. Five or six have gone on to be remarkable in that space so we need to foster that.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– The Hunterville Hockey Turf.
– The Hunterville Swimming Pool.
– The renovation and restoration of the Town Hall.
– The Shemozzle and other events run in the town.

"There is a huge willingness to give back and real value of our township. The town hall, for example, one family got together and renovated, restored and painted it.

" *I'm really proud of the Hunterville Turf. It's 20 years old so it needed re-turfing, and they were just able to go out and raise so much money in a relatively short time as they have a really good cross section in the community, some at school, some on farms, some from the tennis club that use the turf.*
" *Hunterville has the Shemozzle, we're really proud of that, that's coming up 25 years. That was just a couple of people in a pub wondering how we can attract people to Hunterville. Now they get up to 5000 people attending the day and it's a great way to put Hunterville on the map.*

Taihape comes together strongly as a community when needed (i.e. through COVID) but acknowledges that they are a community that can be divided when big decisions need to be made.

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities

Social Cohesion

Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

Strengths

– Many feel that if anything goes wrong, the Taihape community is there in times of need and there's enough knowledge between the right people to figure things out.
– Some feel that despite Taihape being geographically isolated, it can be a strength as it makes the community more resilient and self-sufficient.

"If anything goes wrong, this community is here and there's enough knowledge between the right people.

" *Because we are isolated, our community is quite resilient, and that is a great strength.*
" *New Zealand Health, couldn't get PPE gear to the people who were doing the home care. A Taihape woman was part of the conversation and had plenty, she shared some, our mayor was part of the conversation and had plenty, he shared some. It was sorted. This phone base group will sort it. It's easy.*
" *A tree falls on the road and a fence down, they just go along with their tractors and fix it up.*

Barriers

– Some feel Taihape is a vocal and divided community where they are either for a project or against a project. Some others feel this is because they have some big personalities in the community with strong opinions and perspectives on what is right for the town.
– Many feel the new school has been a disaster and divided the community - half the community was for it, half the community was against it, and it has caused a lot of bitterness, which is still present in the township.
– Some feel that sometimes their own community lets them down, not always taking the opportunities that are out there, any further.
– Some feel the club loyalty in the town is causing the 50/50 divide with loyalties meaning people sometimes won't work together.

"There is also a sense that Taihape people can't and won't agree, which makes decisions and action hard.

" *That 50/50 split is really bad for the town, and the mayor takes advantage of that, and goes to each group, and will only listen to the ones that align with a Council plan or decision.*

" *That's a recurring theme in Taihape, we seem to get this 50/50 split with any community consultation.*
" *This community has its own strength. But we don't always take the opportunities that are out there any further. We let ourselves down.*
" *It's really interesting because I think we just have really strong opinions, and don't like to be pushed.*
" *It's a very independent community. It's a community and used to doing things on its own.*
" *When that new school was built, that divided the community big time... Half the town was for it and half wasn't and it was bitter, so bitter.*
" *It's a multimillion dollar school in the middle of Taihape. Now that school has been written off, they basically have to re-build it, 26 million was spent! It's a leaky building, and not fit for purpose.*
" *The new school in the town, the children don't play, and that would have been an ideal location for pensioners housing you know...*
" *That happens in any small town but yeah. There are lots of frictions and fractions about little things in small towns that are just ridiculous.*
" *An eternal problem for us at Council is how we engage with the Taihape community, and get a valid response, to get a cross-section, so you're not just getting the loud voice, and it is incredibly expensive.*
" *You will hear people say "Council don't see us, we feel disconnected', there is an element I agree with, but it is geographical, and you can't change that.*

Opportunities

– The Taihape community would like processes with Council to be smoother, with clarity around outcomes.

"I would just love for it to be a bit easier, and to be done with a definitive answer.

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Mokai Patea Services -** they are doing an amazing job right across the board at supporting the Taihape community.

"The work Mokai Patea is doing in Taihape is amazing, particularly through COVID-19.

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities Industry Innovation & Infrastructure
Financial & Physical Capital

Whilst they acknowledge they can be an indecisive township, Taihape feels there is dysfunction in their relationship with the Council, feeling let down and neglected in numerous community building projects; some feel they are the region's "poor cousin".

Barriers

– Taihape is viewed by some as a very independent community that is used to doing things on its own, which may be contributing to a fractured relationship with Council.
– Many feel Taihape is a community that has tremendous resentment towards the Council.
– Some felt that Marton based projects were often prioritised over Taihape ones, and that the Council amalgamations are felt to have influenced this.

"It's a community that tremendously resents and is angry with Council, because it feels a Council has abandoned it, or is not responsive to its wishes. People feel betrayed in many ways, by the decisions that are being taken by the Council.

" *They do have a huge mistrust of Council, there is still a feeling that when the council amalgamated, that the wealth of Taihape was taken to Marton.*
" *I do get the sense that Taihape feels like the forgotten child of the district.*
" *Marton projects are done first, and they are done better, and people can scoff at that, but it does have truth in it, but I think we are just turning the corner.*

Opportunities

– More transparency, and a more equal approach by Council to ensure the whole region is feeling they are being listened to.

"I can see some really good initiatives if we could just get the financial backing.

There is a sense that Taihape as a township, is feeling tired and run-down, and is in need of a rejuvenation in order to thrive socially and economically into the future.

Framework Tags

Sustainable Cities & Communities   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital

Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation

FROM 2018 TO 2022 IT IS **ESTIMATED THAT TAIHAPE'S POPULATION GREW BY 120 PEOPLE**.

Stats NZ Population Estimates 2022

+120 PEOPLE

Strengths

– Many feel that Taihape is close to the mountain and a good place to stop on your journey.
– Some have noticed that the sports clubs in Taihape are strong and getting even stronger.
– Some share a sense that it is the farming community that keeps the town going.

"It's the farming community in Taihape that keeps it going really. If it wasn't for farming, the town would have died a long time ago.

" *You have three different rural stockists, all the businesses in Taihape are very much rural related.*
" *Taihape sports clubs are all really really strong and getting stronger and stronger.*
" *It's on the State Highway 1, it's close to the mountain, and it's a good place to stop on the way to Wellington.*
" *It's the only other place between Wellington and the mountain where you can hire ski hire, otherwise it's up the mountain.*

Barriers

– Many have noticed that the town is looking very tired and needing an upgrade, with a sense that none of that has been done over the last two or three years.
– Some have observed that there are a number of shops on the main street that are not occupied, empty, and the owners aren't interested in renting them out or doing anything about them.
– Some feel that 'out of town' property ownership may be contributing to the rundown state of the main street in Taihape.
– Some also feel the need for upcoming earthquake proofing could add to this, however this is an issue many old rural townships across New Zealand are facing.
– Some have observed an increased gang presence in Taihape, with the gang beginning to dominate and create some fear in the town.
– There have been a number of failed developments in the town that are now just sitting there half finished, contributing to a perception that 'the town is looking like a moth ball'.
– Some feel the large roading network Rangitīkei District Council has to maintain contributes to the neglect of older Council owned buildings in the township; as resources need to go towards roading and cannot be spent elsewhere.
– Some feel that finding suitable land and the consent processes for Taihape are slower than elsewhere in the region and a barrier to new houses being built.

"If we don't do something about our main street, it's going to be the death of Taihape.

" *There was also a new block started about three years ago but that teetered out half way through. And the Council started the new amenities block but work stopped on that three weeks ago. So we're looking a little like a moth ball.*
" *Earthquake proofing is a big issue (in Taihape) too. Some feel the expense may shut down some remaining stores.*
" *I mean, we might be getting a bit tired. We certainly won't be the only town in the country like that.*
" *All of rural NZ has buildings that are run down, you could knock them down, or wait a few years for people to resurrect them, it happens slowly.*

Opportunities

– Taihape could be 'a service centre for the travelling public'.
– There is a need to knock down the Main Street, 'now is the time'.

"I can see quite a future for Taihape and being a service centre for the travelling public is key.

" *We need to knock down old buildings and get new buildings in there.*
" *If you look at the service centres up in Auckland, they are just jam-packed with people spending money.*
" *A high number of vehicles come through the town like skiers going through in the early hours of the morning in Winter.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **The Taihape Development Trust -** looking at social infrastructure and filling the gaps.

" *Formed the Taihape Development Trust 15 or so years ago... looking at social infrastructure and filling the gaps.*
" *We have a trust, the Taihape Development Trust that has a similar role (to Project Marton).*

Framework Tags

Peace Justice and Strong Institutions   Sustainable Cities & Communities

Social Cohesion

Many feel that being a small, close knit community means crime is low, and when crime is present, the community generally "knows" who is responsible.

Strengths

– Many feel that the smaller Rangitīkei communities are self policing, as everyone knows one another and deals with issues as they present themselves.
– There is a strong community sentiment that the police are present and responsive; 'they are around, and friendly, and show their presence.'
– Many feel that the benefit of a small community is that there is less crime in the townships within the Rangitīkei and they generally feel quite safe.

Whilst the following has been identified as a strength, it has also been identified as a barrier:

– As a result of low crime, some feel there is little work for local cops as they generally know who is committing the crimes when it is present.

" *If a shop gets burgled, everyone knows about it, (compared to) if it happens in Palmerston... There is the sense that everyone knows everything here.*

" *I used to live next door to a detective here, he said doesn't know why he is employed here, 'there is no work'.*

" *I work in a smaller community now, so you hear everything. In Marton you tend to hear about everything.*
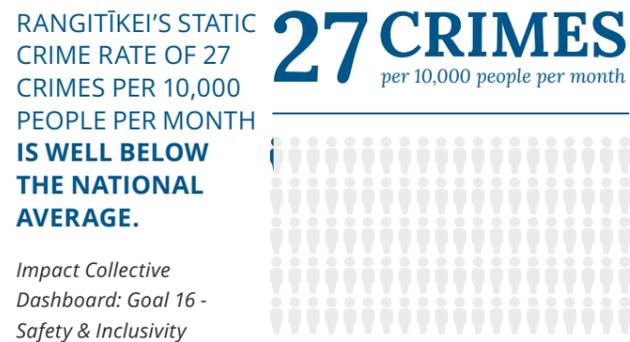
RANGITĪKEI'S STATIC CRIME RATE OF 27 CRIMES PER 10,000 PEOPLE PER MONTH **IS WELL BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.**

27 CRIMES
per 10,000 people per month

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 16 - Safety & Inclusivity

Barriers

– Some feel crime on farms such as theft of stock, motorbikes, equipment and tools, tends to be under reported or 'greyed out', due to a perception that rural policing can be thin on the ground.
– Some members of the Taihape community have noticed an increased gang presence in the town, noticing a few more 'unsafe' people to be around.
– Some feel that crime, as a result of drug abuse and/or alcoholism, is the main issue that comes up in the Rangitīkei.
– Some share a sense that crime in the region tends to come in waves, with a period of nothing, and then a period of three or four things happening in a short space of time.

" *I feel the level of crime now is getting to a (higher) level, and the infiltration of gangs is way more prevalent.*

" *Rural policing goes through patches where they are pretty thin on the ground and you get situations where people aren't very happy with the police.*

" *You'll get multiple crimes, then things will be quiet for a while, then suddenly you will get three to four crimes within a district.*

" *Alcoholism very commonly comes up in the Rangitīkei area.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– Strong community networks and support in the region.
– **Māori wardens in Marton -** doing a really good job at keeping crime under control in the town.

" *We had a time in Marton where the Māori wardens weren't operating which was a disaster. So they were very quickly reinstated which had a huge impact.*

" *We do have this strong support for our community and family connections, so if somebody gets light fingers, it will be stomped on or assisted pretty quickly.*

There is a sense that most businesses across the Rangitīkei have fared well and generally remained resilient through COVID-19, however, the local shops and hospitality businesses in the townships have struggled.

Framework Tags

Decent Work & Economic Growth   Sustainable Cities & Communities   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital

Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation

Strengths

– Apart from the restaurant and food/drink trade, there is a sense that most businesses across the region haven't been too badly hit by COVID-19.
– Essential services including farmers, food production and the labor markets just 'boxed on' and fared positively through COVID-19.
– There was a lot of change experienced locally, with people changing what they are doing, adapting or flipping into something else, which is viewed as a real strength to have come out of COVID-19 across the community.

"Provincially, we are generally reliant on farming, we didn't have to shut-up shop. For our business, it (COVID-19) was a huge benefit. We all of a sudden had three extra hands to work on the farm. So our business benefited from COVID-19.

" *Our bigger employers Nestle and PEC. Nestle was largely able to carry on, as they are highly automated. PEC also carried on, but it has been difficult, split the workforce and shifts.*
" *Some businesses like Farmlands, a big electrical company, those deemed to be essential services are doing okay.*
" *That's a significant fact about the resilience of farming, you know, the government trained a lot of people and spent a lot of money to get ready for COVID-19 in farming, but we didn't need it. We just boxed on, under difficulty I have to say, but we did.*

" *During COVID-19, they (farmers) were able to carry on. Farming was an essential service, but by and large, they've been busy right the way through.*
" *Our township fared positively, people went out of their way to say hello, how are you.*
" *Yes, some businesses have struggled, but there are fewer empty shops than 10-15 years ago.*

COMPARED WITH 2021, RANGITĪKEI'S TOTAL CONSUMER **SPENDING IS UP BY 9.9%.**

+9.9%

compared to 2021

Eftpos NZ, Dot Loves Data Bizmomento

Barriers

– Retail and hospitality were certainly the hardest hit, with some observing skeleton-looking and empty shops on the main streets and a few closures.
– COVID-19 has meant tourism has diminished across the region, impacting local businesses reliant on visitors, meaning they have had to deal with huge amounts of uncertainty around future staffing and investment.
– Global supply chain shortages and hold-ups have had impacts on larger processing and manufacturing plants, however, this is now beginning to get back to normal.

– Some felt earthquake regulations were a more pressing issue 'killing small towns' in comparison to COVID-19, as they have led to the closure of a number of core buildings across the region's townships.
– Some farmers, whilst having experienced minimal impacts from COVID-19 at the time, are now experiencing barriers getting stock into the works to get processed, due to staffing shortages brought on by COVID-19.

"The passing traffic wasn't there, which they really rely on. Traffic is really the life blood of the businesses on the main street.

" *A number of places in retail had to close down, and our freezing works, we lost a lot there due to COVID-19. I'm hoping it is just going to be short term.*
" *Those (businesses) that are dependent upon good foot traffic and are supported by, not just locals, but visitors who are coming through, tourism has really, really diminished.*
" *From a more detailed point of view right now, global supply constraints are really problematic and they are creating a great deal of frustration and wasted energy.*
" *(Dealing with) the unknown of what was in front of us with COVID-19, we had an immediate downturn in business, we had to shrink a lot because the immediate outlook was pretty damn grim. If you look back to 2020, the world was ending.*
" *Parts of it have been uplifted but others not so much. There are some shops closing down.*
" *I think our industries (hospitality/tourism) are really low on staff and everyone is scrambling because now we are opening. We have just been kind of treading water.*

" *COVID-19 hasn't helped, we've seen a dying off of the provision of...food, restaurants and cafes.*
" *People stopped traveling, companies stopped investing in infrastructure. So, our business stopped.*
" *We (the farming sector) are starting to get affected by the ability to get stock processed, it creates issues with stock still on farms if weren't planning for this.*

Opportunities

– Council are now trying to re-establish business get-togethers to build business and community connectedness back into the townships post COVID-19.

" *Council after five, they are trying to coordinate after five, getting together sessions right across the district for businesses to get-togethers.*

Rangitīkei Farm Stay

"*I had an experience with a girl from Palmerston North who had been in New Zealand for two years and gave her a taste of our life. She said it was the best day she'd had in New Zealand. It cemented that thought; that what was ordinary to us, was extraordinary to others.*

" *We were really lucky with our location. Instead of going to a cafe or something they can get lunch in our gardens and have an experience, and in a really short space of time.*

" *They're pulling up to our woolshed. We have to then transport them up to our house. We will show them a shearing and mustering demonstration.*

"*Others are literally here to meet some farmers, to have lunch, to see some animals, to walk around the gardens.*

" *We created a new cottage, it's a kilometre away, but I never saw my guests, I never had any interaction with them, I just read the comments in the guestbook.*

" *We got the contract with the international travel agents to do buses a week before COVID-19 hit.*

" *It had been a decade building these relationships, proving that what we deliver is awesome, big enough for these companies out of Auckland, and Australia to trust us, that we will look after the agricultural experience for a coach of passengers.*

"*I really struggled with the border shutdown. I had spent 10 years creating a business that 90% relied on international guests.*

" *We were like, are tourists going to come back? Like, what happens if the driver gets COVID-19?*

"*So many people just got out. And there are people going; 'oh, we used to go to this farm? Can we come to yours? You're still open.*

" *We didn't think until maybe a month ago we would even be doing it, and now we've got our first bus coming on the sixth of October. Now it's a real scramble for how we are going to manage all these people.*

"*I can see the light at the end of the tunnel. But it's a busy tunnel.*
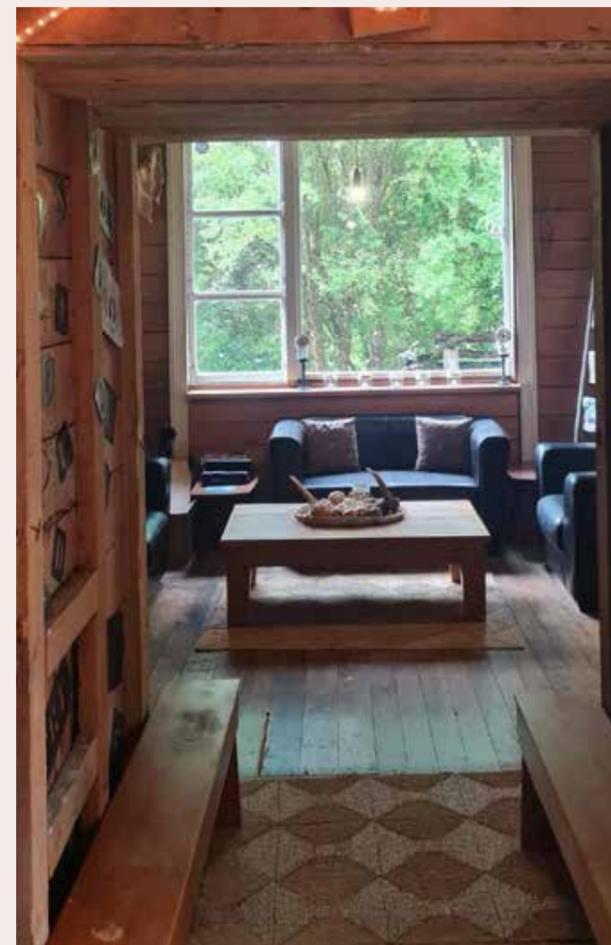
Photos supplied by Rangitīkei Farm Stay

Due to the traditional nature of the local economy having limited skilled work opportunities, employers that are now beginning to offer skilled employment, are struggling to attract people to the region, which is limiting economic growth.

Framework Tags

Decent Work & Economic Growth   Sustainable Cities & Communities   Industry Innovation & Infrastructure

Financial & Physical Capital   Human Capability

Economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation

RANGITĪKEI'S FIVE LARGEST EMPLOYMENT SECTORS ARE **AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY, MANUFACTURING, RETAIL, HEALTH AND EDUCATION.**

Dot Loves Data, Bizmomento

24% OF RANGITĪKEI'S WORKERS ARE IN THE AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY SECTORS, COMPARED WITH A NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 13%. **DESPITE GROWING FORESTRY, AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION REMAINS A STRONGPOINT OF THE RANGITĪKEI DISTRICT**.
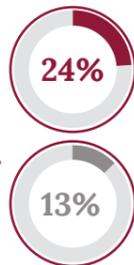
24%

13%

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 1 End Poverty and Goal 8 Decent Work & Economic Growth

Strengths

– Some view the local economy as buoyant due to growth, distribution, processing, exports and the presence of some large firms in the region.

  "We're also a predominantly rural district. As you all know, a lot of land, a very small population, lots of animals, and for that reason, the economy is buoyant because we have some very, very large firms.

" *A good deal of what's produced is export oriented and commodity prices have been very high and look to remain high for the foreseeable future. In that regard, things are doing quite well.*

" *It's also a district with niche agricultural production. It's a very large manuka honey producer. There's an expanding carbon credit business taking place.*

Barriers

– Some view Rangitīkei as a 'bare minimum economy', with little economic activity to offer the community.

– It is a struggle for some to get skilled people to come to the region, meaning the skill shortage is potentially limiting the level of business growth the region can experience.

– Some feel there are negative perceptions of Rangitīkei from some visitors, residents, the broader community and government, that often means Rangitīkei are viewed as the 'South Auckland' to Manawatū and Whanganui.

– Some feel the district has changed, with a perception that what was once a very well developed region with sports going on and lots of economic development, now seems to be a region where there is no longer a lot coming into the district, but a lot going out.

  "It's freaking hard to find highly skilled people.

" *We are a bare minimum economy.*

" *If we're not going to invest in things, and put resources into our community and town centre, then why would they come here?*

" *What it was like 20 years ago, to where it was now, and then when I was a child growing up here... it was a very well developed region and there were sports going on. There was lots of economic development and then after being away 20 years, it's a totally different world altogether.*

" *We need skilled people with the technical skills to service and work in these industries that are growing here.*

" *We need skilled people, not just trades people. There's a huge lack and that's impacting the ability of our district to build enough houses to accommodate the people who are moving here... and also to satisfy current demand for the organic growth that's taking place.*

Opportunities

– Many felt that new jobs in Rangitīkei are needed to build capability and skill base across the region's workforce.

– Looking at how locals can be trained and upskilled within the region, rather than solely relying on attracting skilled workers from outside of the region.

– Skilled workers are needed to service growing industries.

– Exploring Pasifika business opportunities in the district.

  "Is there an opportunity from a business point of view, to create or for them (Pasifika) to create businesses that support their culture? Because there's a whole opportunity there for them to be engaged as part of the business community as well.

" *We're a district that's in the process of a lot of change. That change is going to result in a lot of new people moving here, and we're going to be recruiting staff from throughout the whole southern part of the North Island, and possibly nationally to find the skills that are needed to service these new companies that are going to be starting up here.*

" *We seem to have a mentality that we have to attract people not train people.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **The Marton Rail Hub -** this is in the process of being signed off by Council, and could bring 300 potential jobs to the region.

  "It's a relatively cheap place for national and international big players to set up, so I'm really hopeful about this. I think it'll change the area which is what people are probably worried about, but we need employment, jobs and growth to prosper in my view.

" *If this gets through, there are incredible GDP gains, with up to 300 people potentially being employed.*

Framework Tags

Industry Innovation & Infrastructure   Good Health & Wellbeing   Sustainable Cities & Communities

Financial & Physical Capital   Social Cohesion

Whilst housing has traditionally been cheap, and home ownership is generally high in the Rangitīkei, the nationwide housing crisis has now trickled down to the region, creating challenges and barriers for local and newer residents, especially those on lower incomes.

Strengths

– Many still have the view that houses are cheaper in the Rangitīkei than some other more urban areas in New Zealand.

Whilst the following have been identified as strengths, they have also been identified as barriers:

– There has been a lot of housing development observed in Marton, as a result of lots of people moving down to the area from the cities and the airforce base growing. The downside of this is it is pushing prices up, meaning those on lower incomes in the region are really struggling, with some even getting 'pushed out' in some instances.
– Some have the view that there may be lots of empty homes in Bulls that belong to the airbase, for staff and their families, with many yet to move down from Auckland.
– For those looking to move to Rangitīkei, the more affordable housing is an attraction; however, there are lower wages.
– It was noted by some that some of the older housing stock in the region needing renovations and maintenance was being purchased by out-of-towners and done up; improving the quality of the houses in the townships, but further contributing to pushing locals on lower incomes out.

"Our properties are more affordable here, which may be one of the reasons why people are attracted to come.

" *Someone (from outside of the region) can walk in, set up, buy a nice house and still have money in the bank, which has attracted a lot of retirees, or they are coming back because (they) had a previous connection to the district.*
" *They moved from Auckland, because they got a job down here and they have moved the family down. It's not uncommon, I've noticed a lot of people are moving to the district, particularly Marton and Bulls.*
" *I have also seen that the old houses have been cleaned up, because people have been able to afford to paint etc.*
" *The southern end of Marton, those properties have probably gone up over 200%.*

67% OF RANGITĪKEI RESIDENTS OWN THEIR OWN HOME, ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 64%.

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 1 End Poverty and Goal 8 Decent Work & Economic Growth
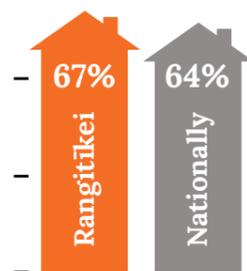
67% Rangitīkei   **64%** Nationally

Barriers

– Many feel that housing is a nationwide issue that is now trickling down to rural communities like the Rangitīkei.
– Many feel the demand for housing in Rangitīkei is now greater than what's available, or being built. With some also expressing concerns that the housing being built is not meeting specific housing needs i.e for an ageing population or single workers looking to move to the district for work.
– The cost of housing is also increasing dramatically, which is pushing some people in the region into social housing situations.
– Getting a mortgage has become increasingly difficult, as there are more barriers to accessing finance now (especially on a single income). Some feel there is a sense you have to really cut down, as banks tend to pick people apart, which can be really soul destroying.
– Many feel that the lack of housing in the region is limiting economic development, as there are no homes for the people wanting to move to the region for work I.e. The Timber Mill wants more workers, but there is no housing for their workers.
– Some feel that the rapid growth and lack of housing is causing communities to fragment and loosening the bonds that hold people together.
– Some are starting to notice a more transient community aligned with temporary employment or housing investment.
– Many people live in the region for the lifestyle, but this is declining due to the rising financial burden of the cost to live in the Rangitīkei.
– Some feel that the lengthy and complicated consent process for new builds with Council, is an additional barrier for housing development in the region, to meet the growing demand.

"If we don't have housing, we're not going to get these people to settle in our district and with that, we lose the multiplier effect that they can provide to the economy.

" *The lack of housing makes it even more challenging when you already have a limited labour pool.*
" *If you want a truck driver, and you have found one, which is a miracle in itself, where are they going to live?*
" *Many people live in the region for the lifestyle, but this is declining due to the rising financial burden of the cost to live here.*
" *I don't know how we managed to buy two rentals, because now a bank would look at our income and go 'get out'.*
" *When I came here ten years ago, you could buy a house for 60k, now you can buy the same house for 400k and it will be in the same, if not worse, condition.*
" *We have a builder trying to build four townhouses and it has taken him three years just to get the consents, and (cost) over $100,000.*
" *I am amazed at the number of empty/vacant properties in this town. A church-based housing group came into town recently, (and they are)*

building a house in Marton which will take them 12 months from start to end. 12 months in Taihape is nothing when you are waiting for consent.

" *If you were lucky enough to be a homeowner.... people were coming down from Auckland and they didn't actually care where they lived. It was a house for $150k. The dynamic of the town has changed as a result of that.*

" *Taihape got a dose of Auckland and Wellington moving in, also Tauranga who were offered too much money for their houses so were looking for a cheap place to go.*

Opportunities

– Cabins - Some people are beginning to opt for cabins, and have them on either family land, or have got permission from a landlord to do it.
– Communal housing; Is there a need for more communal type housing and is that something that we should potentially be looking at in terms of when we're building houses?
– Single men's quarters in order to better accommodate them in the region, so they can plug some of the skills shortages in some big industries.

"What we're trying to do is put forward solutions to those that are a little bit out of the ordinary. We're saying to large investor groups, really big corporations, you need to be focused on providing housing for your own staff if you want your business model to work here.

" *Some farmers have always provided accommodation, but the freezing works in Marton need to jump up and provide single man's quarters.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Hereford Heights property development -** 80 sections for new builds have been sold, and the same guy has three other projects underway in the region, with up to 400 new builds in the pipeline.
– There are multiple housing developments going on in Marton (however, there is a sense that you won't get a house for under $600-700k).

"There are 400 new houses in the pipeline. Some young guy sold his farm and went into property development, sold 80 sections in Hereford Heights really quickly, so moved on. That's someone that's been brave enough to do it and has three other big projects underway.

Whilst some still have affordable rentals, due to the low income nature of the region and rising rents, many are struggling to find affordable, safe and healthy rentals. This is creating a number of negative downstream impacts such as overcrowding, homelessness and an increased need for emergency housing across the region.

Framework Tags

No Poverty   Zero Hunger   Good Health & Wellbeing   Sustainable Cities & Communities

Social Cohesion

Leading healthy lifestyles

33% OF RANGITĪKEI RESIDENTS RENT, WHEREAS **NATIONALLY 36% OF PEOPLE LIVE IN A RENTAL PROPERTY**.

Impact Collective Dashboard: Goal 1 End Poverty and Goal 8 Decent Work & Economic Growth

33% Rangitīkei

36% Nationally
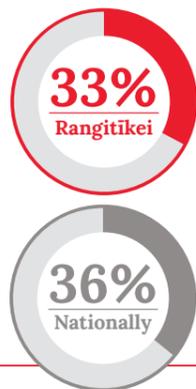
Strengths

Whilst the following have been identified as strengths, they have also been identified as barriers:

– Some are yet to experience rent increases and still view their rent as affordable; however they know they are in a better place compared to others.
– There are a lot of good renters where landlords won't put the price up, because they don't want to lose them, because of the risk of acquiring bad tenants that may cause damage.

"I've seen it, I know what we have got compared to others, and I know we are in a better place."

" *I pay pretty good rent, a four bedroom house, $400 a week compared to $700 to $1000 a week (for the same type of house) in Palmy.*
" *A high number of long term rental arrangements are pretty happy. If you have a good tenant you don't let them out of your sight because of the risk of acquiring bad tenants that may cause damage.*

Barriers

– Many are experiencing on-going rent increases, with a sense that property investors are pricing renters out of the rental and housing market. Some noted new housing standards may also be contributing to landlords increasing rents.
– Many feel rental prices are not more affordable compared to other non-urban areas across New Zealand.
– With increasing prices, finding a home to rent is particularly tough on single parents and/or those on low incomes; there is a sense that for some single men and women, the welfare support isn't even covering rent.
– Housing standards have been raised for rental accommodation meaning some houses are no longer able to be rented today, or are being rented for cheap, with some tenants dealing with poor living conditions, and staying silent about it as it is all they can afford.
– Some farmers have spare houses but they aren't interested in renting them as a result of a bad experience, or they don't want the tenant to have the right to stay in the house, particularly if they need it for the farm later on.
– Some have experienced that getting housing for existing locals with a bad housing record is difficult because they are 'known' in the community.
– Some are choosing to (or having to) sleep at each other's houses to cope with cost and low housing stock; leading to overcrowding in homes.
– Some have noted that 'overcrowding' is not being captured in homelessness statistics, and share concerns that homelessness is being under-represented as a result.

– Many feel that rental prices have increased, but the houses or benefits haven't changed; housing support for WINZ is low across the region with a sense that some landlords may take advantage of what Work and Income do provide, if they know they are paying.
– As a result of the above, there is high demand for emergency housing across the region, yet there is none as it is all taken. Some have experienced that hotels are having to put people up, however, they are beginning to say no, due to poor experiences.
– There is a sense that many homeless people 'expect' to be able to access emergency housing, but they are encountering many hoops they are having to jump through. There is also a sense that the system is falling over in this space, with no wrap-around support provided to these families to help them get out of their tricky situations.
– Some young single men who come to Taihape for work are struggling to find accommodation to accommodate them.
– Rental price increases also mean people are now having to make compromises, or sacrifices, in order to make ends meet. In some cases, they are having to choose what they prioritise; 'do I pay power, do I pay my rent or do I go get food?'.

"You can't rent a property for love nor money, they have all gone!

" *I'm living in a house that I am not comfortable in and it is not up to standard, but I can't afford to leave because rents are too high (elsewhere).*
" *Run down places are being bought for a lot of money and done up to a level that renters, we're not welcome (anymore).*

" *It requires a lot of effort to get into a rental. My experience as a single parent with four children, is that you're at the bottom of the list, I just keep getting no's, I got to 20 (no's) and gave up.*
" *Rentals are definitely not more affordable than other parts of New Zealand. What other parts are you referring to? You're talking about urban areas like Auckland or Wellington? Definitely. Many other areas? No.*
" *Even if their mortgages aren't as much, they can charge that much (rent), because people are desperate.*
" *Because the houses were relatively cheap, here's a lot of absentee landlords ... they would rather leave it empty and they're hoping to cash in on the capital gains rather than actually be a landlord.*
" *Young men are coming into this area to work but we don't have the accommodation to accommodate them.*
" *Rent, power and food ... our clients can't even afford the basics.*
" *Like a lot of other communities, a lot of our hospitality, like our hotels, have been taken up with the emergency housing, a lot of those people have come from other areas and shifted up to Taihape.*
" *It has definitely risen significantly over the last three years. There are so many people in emergency housing.*
" *We have no emergency housing at all, none, these are only hotels that might take people.*
" *Getting into a house in rural places is hard, there's not many options.*
" *Now in town we are getting these absorbent rents. People buying houses and deciding they can charge Palmerston North rent in Taihape; $600 for a single mom for a two bedroom place.*

Framework Tags

No Poverty Zero Hunger Good Health & Wellbeing Sustainable Cities & Communities

Social Cohesion

Leading healthy lifestyles

Whilst some still have affordable rentals, due to the low income nature of the region and rising rents, many are struggling to find affordable, safe and healthy rentals. This is creating a number of negative downstream impacts such as overcrowding, homelessness and an increased need for emergency housing across the region.

" *There are farmers with empty houses on their farms who are reluctant to get involved in rentals due to legislation etc .So often, farmers have houses they don't wish to rent.*

" *Is it because a lot of people will live communally to avoid being homeless? Their whānau will look after them, so they're not homeless but in a sense they are.*

" *If things don't change in the next two years, we will find a lot more (people) will be homeless and that will be (whole) families (affected).*

" *A lot of families when they do get those census, they just say "it's just our family living here" and they don't really say "oh, yeah, but we've got other families living with us too". So it doesn't show that full picture of homelessness.*

THERE ARE 72 PEOPLE ON THE RANGITĪKEI HOUSING WAITING LIST WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SOCIAL HOUSING, **BUT CANNOT BE PLACED. THIS IS AN INCREASE FROM 9 PEOPLE IN JUNE 2017**.

Ministry of Social Development Housing Register, June 2022

Opportunities

– A need for education around how to keep buildings healthy and dry, and rolling out more renting workshops across the region.
– Accommodation supplement increases to match rent increases.
– Single man's quarters/accomodation for single workers - potentially use the Marton flats for this or look at some of the older homes that have three or four bedrooms to purchase, to provide accommodation for young men to work and live locally.
– Re-defining the definition of 'homeless' to include situations like overcrowding.
– Better wrap-around support for those that are requiring, or are in emergency accommodation, to provide them with a plan moving forwards.

"*It is about taking action now. Homelessness isn't an issue yet, but overcrowding is, but both could be if action isn't taken.*

" *This (keeping a building healthy and dry) has always required effort and know-how, it just doesn't always happen.*

" *Their rents increase, so shouldn't their accommodation supplement increase? No, they're at the maximum of their accommodation.*

" *You've got to have a plan - if you've got a plan you are more likely to get some emergency housing for that very short period of time.*

" *One of the things we're starting to change is when people talk about the homeless, it's not about whether they are not living in a property or if they're outside or in a motel.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– Renting workshops provided by MSD.

"*The ministry here, they do some workshopping around rentals, what you have to do and how you've got to be. That needs to be everywhere.*

Barriers within the System

This phase captures the barriers within the system that are impacting the ability for organisations to work with and effectively meet the needs of the Rangitīkei community.

Barriers

Barrier 1—Communities and organisations feel disconnected and unsure of the best way to work with Council to achieve successful needs-driven outcomes. This is of particular concern in the northern townships.

Barrier 2—There is a strong sense of consultation fatigue and apprehension within community groups and organisations in the region as a result of numerous community consultation processes that have not been seen to have delivered actionable outcomes.

Barrier 3—Despite efforts being made by the 'rule makers' to consult with communities, there is a strong feeling of disconnect between rural communities and government bodies. There is a sense in rural communities that decisions are weighted towards a predetermined outcome, despite the consultation process.

Barrier 4—Many feel there is considerable effort and skill required to gain funding, and community organisations are now having to target resources to 'fight the funding fight' rather than focusing on their key work and meeting their community's needs.

Communities and organisations feel disconnected and unsure of the best way to work with Council to achieve successful needs-driven outcomes. This is of particular concern in the northern townships.

VOTER TURNOUT IN THE RANGITĪKEI DISTRICT WAS 46% FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN 2022.

Rangitīkei District Council 2022

46%
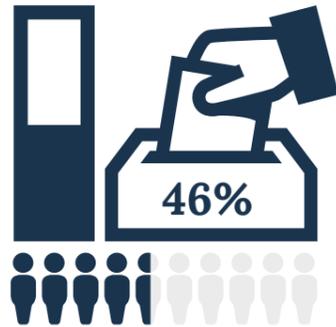
Strengths

– Some have expressed that Horizons is pretty well received by the farming community and doing some positive things to help them in that space.
– Some in the southern townships I.e. Marton and Bulls, feel they have a good relationship with the Council and that Council are approachable.

Whilst the following have been identified as strengths, they have also been identified as barriers:

– Some feel that many of the successful projects across the region are community driven, not Council driven.
– Some have the view that the Council's willingness and openness to new ideas is conservative, with a sense that sometimes they may pick and choose the communities they decide to help, however, some feel it has improved more recently.

"*What made the playground happen? It's community driven and not Council driven. The other part too, was that there were really good people in this group.*

" *I think that in a positive sense, over the year and a half that I've worked here, I've seen a greater willingness to engage in those type discussions and a greater openness to looking at new ideas.*
" *Horizons is pretty well received, that goes back to the majority of these farming communities being involved in Horizons for such a long time.*
" *The risk averse nature of the Council. The councillors reflect the risk averse nature of the ratepayers in the district.*
" *The Council, I think, has been very conservative. It's understandable as it was a conservative population, a conservative district.*

Barriers

– One of the biggest challenges that many in the region face, is that they experience a disconnect and don't realise, or know how to work with Council to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. This leads to many in the community feeling fed up or frustrated with Council.
– Some feel there is often confusion and issues around who is responsible for an area such as the railway corridors, with Council saying it is not them.
– There is quite a divide between the north and the south at Council and there is a perception that Council don't care and don't listen to the northern communities I.e. Taihape, even though there is quite a big rate taken from this northern area. On the other hand, Council acknowledged they find it challenging engaging with the Taihape community, with a sense that it is really challenging to get a definitive answer from the community.
– Some feel that Whanganui District Council and Rangitīkei District Council have not worked well together through COVID-19 and that they need to do better.
– Some noted that there is a lot of pressure on Council from the central government around things they have to do, meaning that finding the balance around where money can be spent is challenging as they can't please everyone.
– Some have observed and shared concerns that some of the top management at Council are not from, or do not live in the region, leading to a perception that they have a disinterest, or lack of lived experience knowledge of the region.

" *I don't think the Council is particularly forthcoming with the communities they help, I think they pick and choose.*

" *We are kind of like this little lost region in the middle. Our lack of identity and the vastness of our community, you know, from Taihape to Bulls, we don't have a lot of centralisation.*
" *I get a strong feeling there is a strong disconnect between everyone and the government.*
" *There is a real disinterest in the whole district by top management in the Council, only 5% of ELT (the Executive Leadership Team) live in the district, they live in Whanganui, all of them.*
" *There is a lot of pressure on local government coming down from central government around the things they have to do.*
" *We've reached a zero sum game on rates, we aren't able to raise much more money from ratepayers.*
" *There's a small town mentality, they hear the price of what this building is going to cost and 'oh, that's too much money'.*
" *Council is really busy, our Council has a really tight budget, so individuals coming to them complaining is water off a duck's back.*
" *I've rung a couple of councils about old man's beard and they are quite difficult to engage with.*

Opportunities

– Council and community organisations need to be better at working together on, and collectively funding certain community driven projects.
– To find ways that the three main communities (Taihape, Marton and Bulls) can get a lot smarter in working together.
– Central (and local government) need to focus on better prioritising money towards community needs driven initiatives and proposals, and exploring alternative ways to fund those that will have a positive impact on the community.
– There are many generous people in the community willing to fundraise and donate - as long as they can see sense in a proposal or project.

"*Central government needs to stop throwing money around in the wrong places, as it is not working, and instead they need to focus on community needs driven initiatives and proposals.*

" *So there are many ways the Council can fund its activities that are not being pursued. And there are ways that Council can raise money that are not being pursued, but potentially they might have an interest in or an appetite for, if they know about it.*
" *They (community members) don't understand or realise that what they need to do is say to them, do you know that Paul agrees with you, and maybe you should have a little group, get together, have coffee, talk about it, and form a group and send an email to the Council saying this is your newly formed group, your vision, your contact, and that from now on you expect Council to work with you.*
" *The people will put their hands in their pockets and donate, it would make it a lot easier if they donate to something that they could see the sense of.*

Good Mahi in the Community

– **The Rangitīkei Youth Council -** "an inspiring bunch of youth" representing the youth voice and needs within the community.

"*We've got a good youth Council for the Rangitīkei district. They are an inspiring bunch of youth. It has representation from Ngā Tawa and Rangitīkei College.*

There is a strong sense of consultation fatigue and apprehension within community groups and organisations in the region as a result of numerous community consultation processes that have not been seen to have delivered actionable outcomes.

Strengths

– Some have the view that the government has recently begun to consult with communities, with productive conversations being had, and are now experiencing some good outcomes.

"Only recently the government has begun to consult. Traditionally, they have never consulted on anything that is mandated, there are a lot of decisions that have been made in health and education, and finally conversations are being had and we are getting some good outcomes.

Barriers

– Many have the view that there have been so many reports (as a result of community consultation), with little to no action or follow-up, which has led to consultation fatigue in the community.
– Some have experienced that getting people to work together to create change is difficult, and there is a view that many professionals driving consultation processes do not properly understand change.
– Many feel that creating a report that is compelling enough to create change from the top is a huge challenge.
– Some farmers feel that the timing of, and pressure to respond quickly to community consultation processes, is often not possible, nor is it in alignment with their working calendar.

"I've always believed it is helpful when you work with other people, everyone struggles, and getting people working together is difficult.

" *The challenge is to get a report that the government and leaders would think, 'we have to do something'.*
" *There have been so many reports over the years, but what actually happens to the people we have sought all the information from?*
" *I've just seen so many reports, I just can't get enthused, my people are still just so lonely, nothing has changed.*
" *This to me, I can tell you stories til the cows come home and it would make you weep, but who listens to us here in good old Bulls and Marton?*

" *They consult but they don't listen.*
" *That's (the) local contention. They (Council) went out for public consultation, but went ahead with it anyway, even though a lot of people didn't like the idea, it still went ahead.*
" *You're teaching these people to suck eggs, they have already sucked them and hatched chickens from them..*
" *Consultation fatigue is an issue, the pressure and short amount of time to respond for farmers is often not possible.*

"They don't make any changes as a result of what a majority say so why bother.

Despite efforts being made by the 'rule makers' to consult with communities, there is a strong feeling of disconnect between rural communities and government bodies. There is a sense in rural communities that decisions are weighted towards a predetermined outcome, despite the consultation process.

Barriers

– There is a sense that the government makes decisions based on high urban populations and are ignorant of, or don't understand, the needs within rural communities, meaning the decisions are often detrimental to these communities.

– Many feel as though they 'just don't have the power', in relation to the big decisions for the community, and when decisions get made anyway, they wonder why they bother building a case (I.e. getting signatures on a proposal).

– Some feel that buildings, facilities and infrastructure in the regions townships in particular, seem to be the projects and proposals that are handled in isolation of one-another and are often where decisions are getting made against the communities wishes and needs.

– There is a sense by some that submissions are not listened to and are disregarded, and that regulation is often now written prior to putting the effort into finding out what the issues are in the first place.

"Rural communities have been playing the game, but they are getting to the point where they can't see the point of playing the game, because there is only one winner.

" *There was a contentious building, the grandstand, which had 640 signatures, and it went the other way, so people go, ' well, why do we bother?'.*

" *Council did away with and cancelled the big 'Oh Taihape' building... We spent $45k on plans, and they just cancelled it in one meeting.*

" *They are all based in cities, and it has been heard that the issue of understanding how the rural population works, which is only 14% of the population, is largely overlooked.*

" *It's like being on the moon going into the country, and many don't go beyond the urban boundaries because they are too afraid.*

" *Look at the low turnout for local government voting, is it a sign that they are happy? Or is it a sign that their opinion doesn't count?*

" *There's that sense of you might vote on something, fill in your bit of paper, and nothing seems to come of it, you'll never hear of anything ever again.*

" *If you have 88,000 submissions to the three waters, and you're still not interested in changing anything particularly, it is challenging.*

" *But also it is a new way of writing regulations... Let's write it, throw it out there, and see what happens... That seems a new way of doing it compared to ten years ago.*

Opportunities

– Rule makers need to spend more time in the rural community to open their eyes to where the budget goes and what the implications are (of their decision making). They need to ensure they find out what the issues are first.

"10 years ago, so much effort would have gone into finding out what the issues were first.

Many feel there is considerable effort and skill required to gain funding, and community organisations are now having to target resources to 'fight the funding fight' rather than focusing on their key work and meeting their community's needs.

Strengths

– Many community organisations now have people who know how to apply for funding and know how to access resources; many feel that this 'funding know-how' makes all the difference.
– Some have experienced that when working with government organisations, it means you often don't have to fight for funding.

"We have people who know how to apply for funding and know how to access resources. It's something going really well.

"We have a point of difference here, as because we are with MSD, we don't have to fight for funding… which is kinda helpful.

Barriers

– Many feel that funding barriers are getting in the way of many great community-driven ideas succeeding.
– Many feel that 'fighting the funding fight' is a tough fight, which only some individuals know how to do.
– The lack of funding means many community organisations are unable to do what they want to be doing, instead, they have to compromise or find other ways of having an impact.
– The fight for funding often results in, and amplifies duplication, resulting in multiple providers in the community often overlapping with their services and working in isolation of, and in competition with, one another.

"Very rarely will they (other organisations) refer, there's a lack of cooperation because we are all fighting for the same funding, which is unfortunate because we could probably achieve a lot more if we worked together.

" While we continue to get funding pots from local and central government, if I leave, who is going to take over and continue that fight?
" It is a fight, and it is just going to get worse.
" There are lots of great ideas that other people have started that unless you get the funding etc, can't succeed.
" It's getting past that red tape, some of those projects can be funded by the local council for a community to get it off the ground. But it's a whole lot of red tape to get to that point.
" [The fight for funding means] you get a lot of the same services, which is not always helpful because you need something a little bit different sometimes.
" We are going through the funding fight ourselves, it requires a lot of effort, time and skill.
" You can only apply for so much funding per year.
" Unfortunately, none of the funding that we've had is actually for practical projects, i.e. fencing. And with farmers being practical people they are always like 'hey let's do some fencing, do some planting' but none of that is funded.

Opportunities

– Council have considered the role of community groups and are encouraging them to be more proactive in seeking funding opportunities from local government.

"The Council needs to be driven from the community. I can only support so much, but they have to drive it because my arms are tied with funding already.

Good Mahi in the Community

– **Rangitīkei District Council -** provide a service to support funding applications.
– **JBS Dudding Trust** - has a large targeted fund for the Rangitīkei region that is applicable to anyone across a broad number of named areas of benefit for the community.

"Our region has the Dudding Trust, it is only applicable to the Rangitīkei, which pumps (out) hundreds of thousands, and is applicable to anyone, and sometimes they have money left over.

" If people need help with their applications, Council offers a service.

Summary of
Findings
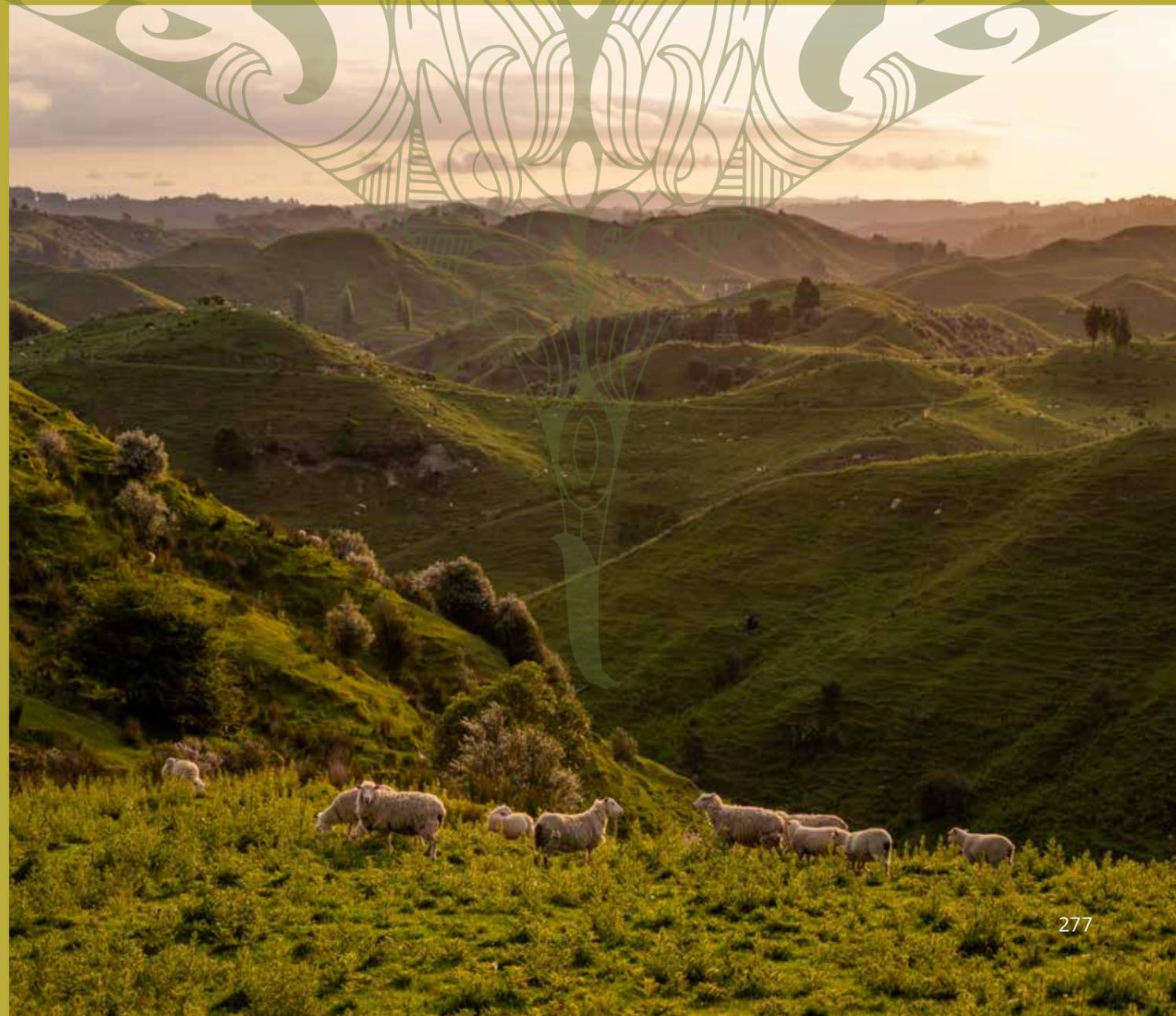
The purpose of this section

This section aims to summarise all of the themes and insights captured in this report, into an easily digestible, and actionable format. It is designed to be used as a tool to enable active discussion and prioritisation of future focus areas for community-led initiatives and services.

Strengths and Barriers System Map Variations

Building on the system map introduced earlier in this report, this section presents two further variations. The first is to highlight the elements of the map that are strengths in the Rangitīkei community (see figure 20), the second to highlight the elements of the map that are barriers in the Rangitīkei community (see figure 21).

Figure 20 — Impact Collective Equity and Wellbeing Framework - Rangitīkei Strengths

Figure 21 — Impact Collective Equity and Wellbeing Framework - Rangitīkei Barriers

Strengths

This section summarises all of the current strengths in the Rangitīkei community; the lived experience, what they are impacted by and what they then have downstream impacts on. The size of the circle indicates the respective size of this strength, in comparison to the others, in the Rangitīkei community.

Barriers

This section summarises all of the current barriers in the Rangitīkei community; the lived experience, what they are impacted by and what they then have downstream impacts on. The size of the circle indicates the respective size of this barrier, in comparison to the others, in the Rangitīkei community.

Opportunities

This section aims to encapsulate all of the fantastic ideas we heard throughout the research from members of our community into a digestible and relevant format.

We hope this section, in particular, can act as a springboard for community-led creation of services and initiatives to either build on enhancing the existing strengths, or help to overcome the existing barriers.

Strengths

Figure 21 — Impact Collective Equity and Wellbeing Framework - Rangitīkei Strengths

Sustainable Cities & Communities

All

- Many feel there are many benefits to living rurally in Rangitīkei, including ease of access due to being centrally located in the North Island, cheaper housing, good climate, and the small community culture.

- Community driven groups across the region are perceived to be passionate connectors, funders and are key to addressing specific community needs. Many feel they are currently the main drivers of solutions and positive outcomes for their communities.

- Some feel that COVID-19 has triggered some positive changes to address the perceived gaps in community connectedness.

- Many retirees feel Marton is a desired place to live, with lots to offer for seniors.

- The growing Samoan community in Marton is becoming well established and beginning to thrive.

- Many feel that Hunterville is a self-sufficient and close-knit community with a 'do it themselves' attitude to meet community needs, often providing their own resources and funding.

- Taihape is a community that comes together strongly as a community when needed (i.e. through COVID-19).

- Many feel that being a small, close knit community, means crime is low, and when crime is present, the community generally "knows" who is responsible.

Life on Land

All

- Many acknowledge that farmers are doing their best to address and reduce ongoing environmental impacts and meet increasingly complex obligations.

- There is a growing awareness and effort from some in the community around growing, harvesting, sharing and learning about food, and a sense of togetherness and fulfilment that naturally comes through these experiences.

- There have been some huge gains and progress made in the upkeep of the region's scenic reserves.

Good Health & Wellbeing

Youth

- Some feel that due to its rural nature, there are many active and healthy children in the region.

All

- There is a sense by some that iwi health providers are stepping up to bridge the gaps in the health system across the Rangitīkei.

- There are huge mental and physical health benefits being experienced by some in the region in relation to returning to and reconnecting with the land.

Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure
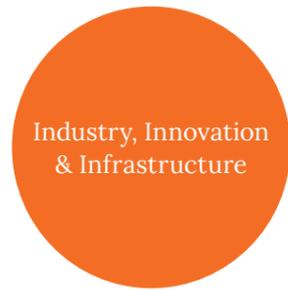
All

- [ ] Many feel that housing has traditionally been cheap, and home ownership is generally high in the Rangitīkei.

Quality Education

Infant

- [ ] There is a real appreciation and presence of early childhood education facilities in the region.

Youth

- [ ] Many feel there has been a definite shift in the local schools to cater for more practically minded children.
- [ ] Some feel there are some good education options across the Rangitīkei.
- [ ] Many feel there have been some steps forwards in relation to Māori achievement.

Decent Work & Economic Growth

Adult

- [ ] There are a few big employers in the region, who are seeking skilled workforces.

All

- [ ] There is a sense that most businesses across the Rangitīkei have fared well and generally remained resilient, through COVID-19.

Reduced inequalities

Adult

- [ ] There is good progress being made in specific industries for women in managerial roles including with Iwi, community organisations, the rural sector and health.

All

- [ ] A strong foundation has been built with and by iwi across the region, with growing opportunities for participation and engagement.
- [ ] The good work by iwi groups in the region was noted by many.

Life Below Water

All

- [ ] There is a heightened awareness and a number of initiatives around protecting the wellbeing of the rivers and waterways in the region.

Barriers

Figure 21 — Impact Collective Equity and Wellbeing Framework - Rangitīkei Barriers

Sustainable Cities & Communities

Youth

☐ There is a strong concern in the community that there are a lack of targeted spaces and activities for youth to engage in when not at school.

All

☐ Some are concerned around the changing demographics of rural communities.

☐ There is a growing feeling by some that the rural community has become less connected, more individualised and it is harder to access clear information.

☐ There are increasing challenges to maintain community group membership and volunteer workforces due to people aging out (getting too old to volunteer in the same way) and barriers attracting younger members and volunteers.

☐ Some feel that the location of Bulls and the expanding Ohakea Air Base's transient community, influences their ability to bond and connect as a community and develop appropriate community resources.

– Some feel there is some widespread lack of enthusiasm in the Marton community, due to perceived neglect of buildings and community resources and a "we're only Marton" mentality.

All (continued)

☐ There are perceived challenges by some around connecting with the Pasifika community in Marton, due to limited communication channels and a sense that they want to keep to themselves.

☐ Many from Taihape acknowledge that they are a community that can be divided when big decisions need to be made.

Good Health & Wellbeing

Youth

☐ There is a lack of mental health support services available in the Rangitīkei for youth meaning that youth and their families who need help, are hitting multiple barriers. COVID-19 has made this need even greater.

☐ There is a sense that for children in the region who are obese, it is a result of deprivation, cost of food and an intergenerational lack of food knowledge.

Adult

☐ There is a perception that there is a lack of specific rural mental health services in the Rangitīkei, meaning that many members of the community, particularly farmers, who are already reluctant to access services, are encountering further barriers due to the way the system is set up.

Elderly

☐ The perception that certain community groups are only for 'the old', dwindling numbers and a lack of community spaces for these groups to meet, are all contributing to less opportunity for elderly connection, socialisation and activity.

Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure

Elderly

☐ The lack of appropriate housing for elderly is leading to many continuing to live in large homes they can no longer look after, leading to declining health and financial vulnerability for some and contributing to the lack of available housing stock in communities.

All

☐ It is clear there is some water infrastructure in the region that is not fit for purpose.

☐ Many feel the nationwide housing crisis has now trickled down to the region, creating challenges and barriers for local and newer residents, especially those on lower incomes.

☐ Across the Rangitīkei, there is a strong need and community drive for shared multi purpose community hubs, but skepticism exists over the Council's ability to deliver hubs in alignment with community needs.

– Whilst the Taihape community acknowledge they can be an indecisive township, they feel there is dysfunction in their relationship with the Council, feeling let down and neglected in numerous community building projects; some feel they are the region's "poor cousin".

All (continued)

☐ There is a sense that Taihape as a township, is feeling tired and run-down, and is in need of a rejuvenation in order to thrive socially and economically into the future.

☐ While there are some great sporting events within the region, there is a perception that there is a lack of coordination and limited provision towards providing and maintaining sports facilities due to the constraints of geographical isolation and the cost burden to smaller communities.

Reduced Inequalities

Elderly

☐ A lack of trust, access and knowledge of how to use the internet, is causing increased barriers for elderly as essential services progressively move online, such as online banking and telehealth. COVID-19 has amplified this further.

All

☐ While there is an acknowledgement of greater travel times living in a rural community, a lack of public transport, declining rural road conditions and increasing fuel prices are creating further barriers to accessing services, employment, education and recreation. This is impacting lower income families disproportionately.

☐ Whilst there is a level of acknowledgement that living rurally will mean a more limited access to certain services, the additional decline of many essential services in these areas is now no longer meeting community needs.

☐ Many farmers are experiencing stigma and discrimination, with many accusations accusing them of not caring for the environment.

☐ Many experience issues and barriers to consistent and affordable internet and cell phone connectivity in the region, which is having a number of downstream Allmpacts

All (continued)

☐ There is an acknowledgement that there are still some issues for iwi, influenced by history and mistrust, that are being worked through.

Quality Education

Infant

☐ Some are experiencing barriers accessing early childhood education facilities due to busyness, cost, regulations and more rural locations.

☐ For many parents, the pressure to go to work and send their children to early childhood education, can mean that they are missing essential bonding and social milestone opportunities with their children, and the broader community.

Youth

☐ There are still some concerns around the balance between vocational and academic pathways and ensuring students gain an appropriate educational achievement best suited to them.

☐ There is an undercurrent of intergenerational disconnect and appreciation of the education system in the region, meaning some children are leaving school early and missing out on learning vital skills.

☐ There are some concerns in specific communities around their local schools and their unique journeys.

Youth (continued)

☐ Many are concerned that COVID-19, and the sudden need to shift to online learning, means children are spending even more time online, heightening issues around suitability (to different learning needs), accessibility and the negative effects of spending hours online.

☐ Many feel that COVID-19 has also had huge impacts and disruption to the education and social journey for many children, with the ripple effects only just being felt, and acknowledged now.

☐ Educational attainment in Rangitīkei is low, and many feel this is due to children with academic and sporting potential seeking schooling outside of the region.

☐ There is still a sense that there are challenges around how the current education system aligns with and is relevant to Māori.

☐ Many feel the rural location, lifestyle and parental influence, combined with the lack of tertiary education facilities, can limit Rangitīkei youth from exploring further education pathways.

Decent Work & Economic Growth

Youth

☐ With limited skilled employment options in the region, many youth leave to pursue employment pathways elsewhere, with the majority of those that stay, lacking confidence or having limited pathways.

Adult

☐ The traditional nature of the low skilled employment market and a lack of suitable housing in Rangitīkei is creating barriers for both employers and job seekers.

☐ The perception of a lack of career progression and pathways in Rangitīkei is creating barriers to finding skilled employees.

All

☐ Many have observed that the local shops and hospitality businesses in the townships have struggled through COVID-19.

☐ Due to the traditional nature of the local economy having limited skilled work opportunities, employers that are now beginning to offer skilled employment, are struggling to attract people to the region, which is limiting economic growth.

No Poverty

Adult

☐ Many feel that insufficient support services and systems are disconnecting people from the resources they need to get out of bad situations, leading to further poverty and hardship.

☐ The issues associated with the low wage Rangitīkei economy are being heightened by the increasing costs of living.

☐ Many feel that the increasing social and financial complexity of life, coupled with the lack of transparency of financial obligations, is making it really easy for the vulnerable to get into debt.

☐ Many feel that intergenerational deprivation and associated behaviours, are perpetuating issues around unemployment, crime and disconnection.

All

☐ Whilst some still have affordable rentals, due to the low income nature of the region and rising rents, many are struggling to find affordable, safe and healthy rentals. This is creating a number of negative downstream impacts such as overcrowding, homelessness and an increased need for emergency housing across the region.

Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

Youth

☐ Whilst youth offending is low across the region, what does occur is very visible in the smaller communities and seen to be linked to youth boredom (due to a lack of spaces and activities for youth), gang affiliations or prospecting, and a perceived lack of consequences for criminal behaviour.

☐ The complex trauma caused by family violence has many detrimental downstream ripple effects on children in families.

☐ Due to the increasing accessibility and affordability of drugs in the region, and a lack of things to do, youth who stay are at high risk of engaging in recreational drug use.

Adult

☐ Some feel that sexual assault and family violence, despite an increase in reporting, is still prevalent and under-reported in the community.

Zero Hunger

All

☐ Many feel there is increasing food insecurity in the region, particularly amongst lower income families, with an increasing need to access food banks and alternative food providers.

☐ It is noted by many that there is a stigma around needing, and being seen to need support with food.

Opportunities

Sustainable Cities & Communities

Good Health & Wellbeing

Elderly

☐ Finding more reliable, consistent and quality locations for community groups to meet up.

☐ Many need facilities that cater for varying interests, with acknowledgement by groups that participation will vary depending on the activity.

☐ The "allure of a good feed" to bring older groups together was a benefit, bringing people together and making it easier to facilitate connection.

All

☐ Council taking the time to get Project Marton up and running again.

☐ There is no local radio station in Rangitīkei; they need to look into this.

☐ Better awareness and push to join local clubs.

☐ Finding ways to try and bridge the gap of unity or social cohesion in the community.

☐ Re-setting expectations of what is required from volunteering to better align with people's busy lives, and paying more attention to succession planning.

☐ Better connecting with newer generation groups, to get them to appreciate what volunteers do and what it gives back.

☐ The 60+ age group still has a lot of value to bring and add to the community.

☐ Council to find ways to encourage the Ohakea staff to keep building, connecting with and establishing themselves as a part of the Bulls community.

☐ How to leverage the unused resources in Marton to bring people to the area and break the 'we're only Marton' perception.

☐ The community veggie garden (in Marton) could be better done and become a vibrant new community hub, until the proper one is built.

☐ Figuring out how to integrate and better connect with the Samoan community and working with them to figure this out.

All (continued)

☐ The Taihape community would like processes with Council to be smoother, with clarity around outcomes.

☐ More transparency, and a more equitable approach by Council to ensure the whole region is feeling they are being listened to.

Youth

☐ Active youth programmes that provide them with pathways.

☐ Reconnecting youth to the natural environment.

☐ More accessible information around support services available to youth (national and local).

☐ Youth need support close to where they live.

☐ Tapping into transport and active movement to help fight obesity.

Adult

☐ Providing farmers with a plan forwards that takes into account the complexity of their lifestyle.

☐ Consistent counsellors for farmers with lived experience knowledge.

☐ How do we support families to eat healthily on a limited budget?

Elderly

☐ Help and intervention to encourage elderly residents to get out and participate in the community, and have a good laugh.

☐ Providing aged care and related medical support services where people live.

☐ Equal and fairer access to mental and physical healthcare for elderly.

Elderly (continued)

☐ Greater acknowledgment from the central government of what the lived experience is like for elderly, and how bad the situation really is.

☐ More homecare options to be provided for the elderly in their homes.

All

☐ There is a strong feeling that there is an increasing need for nurses, hospitals and retirement facilities where people live, particularly in Taihape.

☐ Repairing the holes in the healthcare system is felt to be urgent.

☐ Creating opportunities and pathways within the workforce in order to grow and retain staff in palliative care.

☐ End of life providers are seeking community feedback to have a better understanding of issues, gaps and service provision and how it affects specific community groups and to ensure equity of access.

☐ Ensuring the workforce of palliative care providers is more diverse; 'people want to be treated by people like them'.

☐ Finding ways to escape the system and reconnect with ourselves, our strengths and our family.

☐ Finding ways to encourage the community to get out into nature more often, living and experiencing it.

☐ Reinstating a sport co-ordinator or lead agency to be more active in the region.

All (continued)

☐ A dedicated sports coordinator for the region; someone that is able to spend 40 hours on the ground a week, to collaborate and bring all of the region's resources together to create more of a collective approach.

☐ There is a need for the health guidelines to be revised and updated in order to ensure they reflect scientifically proven outcomes.

☐ Re-establishing the health coordinator position in the region.

Life on Land

All

- [ ] Environmental workshops as an opportunity to share successes and for building communities around creating good environmental outcomes.
- [ ] There needs to be further clarity and clear timelines from central government and agencies so farmers can plan and designate resources appropriately (with support if needed) to meet obligations and prevent overwhelm. This will also support mental health and wellbeing in farming and rural communities.
- [ ] Rural and farming communities need to come together and get better at telling the rural story to the rest of the country.
- [ ] Foodscaping in local parks.
- [ ] To upgrade reserve signage (off main roads etc) to signal to the community that 'there is something special here'.
- [ ] Introducing green corridors between the region's reserves, to ensure there is a continuum (for wildlife).
- [ ] To build awareness and be better connected with the community in order to educate and provide opportunities for them to actually engage, or go out into a piece of bush or scenic reserve.
- [ ] To engage with busy parents and ask them what it would take to get them to visit and engage with the scenic reserves.

All (continued)

- [ ] Finding the next generation of people who value the scenic reserves and wish to continue their maintenance and upkeep.
- [ ] Educating school students around the history of the region's scenic reserves.
- [ ] The creation of an environmental collective oversight group.

Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure

Youth

- [ ] Better public transport for youth to allow them to get around the region with ease and to interact with one another.
- [ ] The creation of spaces that integrate youth.

Elderly

- [ ] The desire to have, and benefit of having aged care facilities in townships to maintain community connection and keep clubs going.
- [ ] Communal Housing such as the Abbie Field concept; 'flatting for seniors'.
- [ ] The Spatial Plan by Council - hopefully leads to some units for elderly being put on the flats in some townships, close to healthcare facilities.
- [ ] A new rest home in the region 'so we don't lose our grey-haired heroes'.

All

- [ ] Shuttles to access health services and sports.
- [ ] Allowing the public to access private shuttle services when seats are available.
- [ ] Reinstating rail links across the region as soon as possible to help address the lack of public transport in the region.
- [ ] General water infrastructure upgrades across the region.
- [ ] The Taihape water plant capacity needs to be upgraded to process water faster to meet demand.

All (continued)

- [ ] The Marton water issues need to be addressed.
- [ ] Communal housing; Is there a need for more communal type housing and is that something that we should potentially be looking at in terms of when we're building houses?
- [ ] Single men's quarters in order to better accommodate them in the region, so they can plug some of the skills shortages in some big industries.
- [ ] Cabins - Some people are beginning to opt for cabins, and have them on either family land, or have got permission from a landlord to do it.
- [ ] Decent community centres set up in all the townships, providing that social infrastructure.
- [ ] Refurbishing and earthquake strengthening the Taihape Town Hall, so it can get up and running again.
- [ ] The new civic centre planning is in progress for Marton, with ambition to be a space not just for Council staff, but for the community.
- [ ] The community would love a 'really cool building' in Marton that youth can use.
- [ ] Something needs to be done about the degrading, empty, heritage buildings on the main street in Marton, and Council needs to lead the way with this.
- [ ] Getting an ambulance station sorted for St John in Hunterville.

Quality Education

Infant

- [ ] Access to early childhood education needs to be more fair across the board.
- [ ] The high demand for early childhood education means the region needs more providers.
- [ ] Bringing back the rural mobile kindergartens for those who live further out - they are of huge benefit.
- [ ] Reminding parents of the value of early childhood education in relation to building connection and socialisation.

Youth

- [ ] Teaching children the fundamentals in school including learning 'soft skills' as a priority i.e. how to adapt, how to problem solve, and to develop a way to be resilient.
- [ ] Creating and building greater awareness around educational options and pathways, to help students choose the pathway they have the most potential in.
- [ ] Finding ways to make academic pathways more fun and interactive.
- [ ] The truancy service needs to be much more proactive.
- [ ] Connecting older, isolated and retired residents with some of the region's youth, as mentors.
- [ ] Revitalising school cultures, as school culture is everything.
- [ ] Trying to root schools in the community, encouraging schools to have place-based curriculums and becoming part of the Rangitīkei.
- [ ] Professional development for the teachers.

Youth (continued)

- [ ] Collating screen time data to understand the impact it may be having on children.
- [ ] Big Brothers, Big Sisters type programmes to provide support to students who have lost connection through COVID-19.
- [ ] Education around how to use the internet and social media positively.
- [ ] Encouraging children to have a better balance and spend time outdoors (without access to wifi).
- [ ] Duke of Edinburgh Award schemes, getting those sorts of groups in the schools.
- [ ] A more relevant and tailored curriculum for Māori children i.e. some have observed that Māori children love to work with their hands and create, how can this be better nurtured?
- [ ] The progression and ongoing implementation of iwi and hapū education programmes.
- [ ] Reconnecting Māori children with their whenua, whānau and identity.
- [ ] Allowing youth to dream big and explore what they want to do.
- [ ] More funding allocated to allow youth to identify appropriate future pathways.
- [ ] Universities to incorporate more real life work experience into degrees.
- [ ] A satellite campus in alignment with the skills building needed for the Rangitīkei region.
- [ ] Having public transport in the region, and between regions, to allow youth to have better access to tertiary education.

Decent Work & Economic Growth

Youth

- ☐ There is a sentiment that some youth need to be more proactive in seeking information around job opportunities in the region, however, how do we make this information easier to find?
- ☐ Rangitīkei needs to develop industries so that they can better attract young people back to jobs.
- ☐ Workplaces need to create more time to support youth transition into work and build their confidence.
- ☐ There are farm cadet programmes offered in the region that are often overlooked and have been going for a very long time.
- ☐ What employment can we offer youth who go out of the region to get educated, so that they come back?

Adult

- ☐ Attracting more high-value employers to the region.
- ☐ Attracting more skilled employees to the region through pushing the lifestyle benefits.
- ☐ Providing 'single men's quarters' type housing to allow more single men to move to the region for work.
- ☐ Opening up our borders again to enable skilled migrants to enter the country.
- ☐ Finding pathways for people to acquire skills that will enable them to be able to move up in their careers, and life.
- ☐ Businesses in the region need to be more willing to take on and invest in training employees.

All

- ☐ Council are now trying to re-establish business get-togethers to build business and community connectedness back into the townships, post COVID-19.
- ☐ Many felt that new jobs in Rangitīkei are needed to build capability and skill base across the region's workforce.
- ☐ Looking at how locals can be trained and upskilled within the region, rather than solely relying on attracting skilled workers from outside of the region.
- ☐ Skilled workers are needed to service growing industries.
- ☐ Exploring Pasifika business opportunities in the district.

Reduced Inequalities

Adult

- ☐ Looking more deeply at who is putting themselves forward for roles and who is not, and why and how this is affecting the placement of women into leadership/management roles.
- ☐ Better acknowledgement of the vast number of skills women acquire in their day to day lives that are transferable to their career progression.

Elderly

- ☐ Bringing the youth and elderly together could create great learning opportunities (i.e internet) and could also create more trust between the age groups.
- ☐ Many felt grandchildren are a key resource in training elderly and helping them access the online world.
- ☐ Seniors helping seniors, leveraging those in their community who are good with technology to help others, and give them a sense of purpose.
- ☐ Banking hubs set up to provide elderly with the face to face service they require.

All

- ☐ Equity of internet and cellphone access; better access across the whole country 'everyone should be on an even playing field'.
- ☐ A cell phone directory, especially in farming communities that have transitory populations.
- ☐ Coming up with ideas to mitigate some of the fears around sharing stories amongst Iwi.

All (continued)

- ☐ Telling stories of Māori and Pākehā as ONE story; they both have two different stories to tell and they're both valuable for the people of this region and this community.

No Poverty

Youth

- ☐ Introducing financial literacy into the school curriculum, however, some feel this puts a tremendous amount of pressure on schools in relation to all the things they are expected to cover.
- ☐ More investment upfront with young people to stop them transferring into the benefit cycle.

Adult

- ☐ Improve the information around available support services and what they provide.
- ☐ Processes to access support need to be made simpler, so that people don't have an overwhelming or frustrating experience.
- ☐ There needs to be a stronger physical presence in the community by service providers to reduce misinformation around services and what is available to support people in need.
- ☐ Reducing stigma and encouraging people to reach out for help more proactively, before they get into financial trouble.
- ☐ Businesses (financial lenders or buy now pay later schemes) need to take more accountability for their vulnerable clients.
- ☐ Better role models, empowering those in challenging situations and building resilience; "helping people to help themselves".

Adult (continued)

- ☐ Challenging the inter-generational perception of what is just normal life for those stuck in this cycle; they only know what they know.
- ☐ Providing extra wrap-around support services to help the generational unemployed transition into work.

All

- ☐ Providing more seamless, 'no questions asked' food support services for those in need.
- ☐ A need for education around how to keep buildings healthy and dry, and rolling out more renting workshops across the region.
- ☐ Accommodation supplement increases to match rent increases.
- ☐ Re-defining the definition of 'homeless' to include situations like overcrowding.
- ☐ Better wrap-around support for those that are requiring, or are in emergency accommodation, to provide them with a plan moving forwards.

Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

Life Below Water

Youth

- [ ] It is felt strong mentors and positive role models are needed for youth in the community, particularly for young boys and men.
- [ ] Many feel there is a strong need for the provision of youth specific community spaces that enable youth to learn more about themselves and who they are.
- [ ] Some feel youth potential can be harnessed through environmental based mentoring.
- [ ] A youth worker is needed, attached to the police station in Taihape.
- [ ] More police and aligning resources are required in the youth drug space.
- [ ] Better connecting and networking between youth service providers.

Adult

- [ ] Some feel that as a smaller community there is a greater opportunity to come together and offer support in relation to those who are victims of sexual assault or family violence.
- [ ] Changing parenting styles through "gentle parenting" courses.

All

- [ ] Schooling programmes and projects - working with the children to monitor the water; putting the hard work in now so future generations don't have to.
- [ ] Continuing to work collectively in projects such as the fencing off of waterways and planting to stop nutrients going into waterways.
- [ ] Better waste water management; to be able to go to the region's swimming spots and there is not a sign there saying 'you can't swim'.
- [ ] Some feel that river care outcomes could be improved by working more collaboratively.
- [ ] Providing facilities at jet boat launching spots to allow them to wash their boats to prevent bringing in pollutants.

"The world is like a big treadmill. And it just goes round and round and it's not stopping. And people are getting flung to the side. That's how I see it. So for me again, there we go. When I come back to this little country place, the treadmill stops and I'm off. I throw my feet up on the couch, plop back on my chair. The noise is all settled. I can look at the stars. I can see the moon rising above the hills. That's me. And that's a sad thing that there is no noise that settles for people in the city. Never. It's constant.

Workshop participant
Rangitīkei

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