

KA MAHANA I TAKU KIRI:

MĀORI PERSPECTIVES ON THE MEASUREMENT OF ENERGY WELLBEING

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Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment
New Zealand

By Haemata Limited

*And I return to my land of my birth,
To the bubbling, warm sacred waters,
Summoned here by the High Priest,
Ngātoroirangi who called upon his sisters,
Te Hoata and Te Pupū to bring from
Hawaiiki
an energy source that caused
the majestic Tongariro to fume,
and this source warms my skin.*

*Kāti au ka hoki ki taku whenua tupu,
Ki te wai koropūpū I heria mai nei
I Hawaiki rā anō e Ngātoroirangi,
E ōna tuahine Te Hoata-ū-Te-Pupū;
E hū rā I Tongariro,
ka mahana I taku kiri.*

Excerpt from *Ka Eke ki Wairaka*, written by Rihi Puhīwahine, Ngāti Maniapoto, Tūwharetoa.

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HE MIHI

Te Whāruarua, Ngāi Taone, Te Hāpori me te Hunga Rāwekeweke Raraunga. Tēnā koutou. Tēnā koutou i whai wāhi mai ki te hāpai me te tautoko i tēnei kaupapa. Me i kore ake tā koutou tautoko mai.

Kua kōrerotia ngā kōrero. Kua rongō. Kāti, nei rā ngā hua e whai ake nei.

Tēnā hoki koutou e te Tima o Hīkina Whakatutuki. Ki a Daniel, ki a Ella, otirā ki a koutou katoa, tēnā koutou. Mō te tautoko mai, me te hopu me te whakarongo ki ngā reo o te hapori – tēnei mātou e mihi ana.

Mā pango, mā whero, ka oti te mahi.

Kāti, kua takoto ake te manuka! Kawea ake!

Mauri ora ki a koutou!

KA MAHANA I TAKU KIRI

BACKGROUND

Between August 2021 and February 2022, the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE) and Haemata Ltd (Haemata) worked together to engage with Māori communities on the measurement of energy wellbeing using data from a variety of public sources.

This report:

- summarises what whānau told us,
- identifies the key common themes; and,
- makes recommendations on how MBIE might respond to this.

THE CHALLENGE

Poorly insulated houses and whānau struggling to make ends meet are well known challenges in New Zealand. What is less well-known is that both these challenges contribute to an acute problem for a large number of whānau - unaffordable power.

A review of electricity prices in 2019 estimates that around 100,000 kiwi households struggle to pay their power bills¹. Given the current cost of living crisis, it is likely that this number has increased. But this estimate is rough. We don't have a nationally accepted definition of energy hardship and all its component parts. Nor is there an agreed method for measuring this. Without these, it is difficult to assess whether energy hardship in New Zealand is increasing or decreasing over time, and we struggle to target areas for support and assess whether this support is effective. This lack of information constrains the ability of government to target and support whānau in need in a timely manner. Good data and meaningful measurement is critical to good policy.

¹ Electricity Price Review, 2019 (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment)
<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/building-and-energy/energy-and-natural-resources/energy-consultations-and-reviews/electricity-price-2018-19/>

ENERGY WELLBEING DEFINITION, FRAMEWORK AND MEASURES

In response to the 2019 Electricity Price Review, MBIE has developed a definition energy hardship in New Zealand coupled with a set of measures.

DEFINING ENERGY WELLBEING

MBIE’s approach to understanding energy wellbeing is a spectrum where energy hardship is at one end, and energy wellbeing is at the other.

MBIE defines energy wellbeing as a state “when individuals, households and whānau are able to obtain adequate energy services to support their wellbeing in their home or kāinga.”

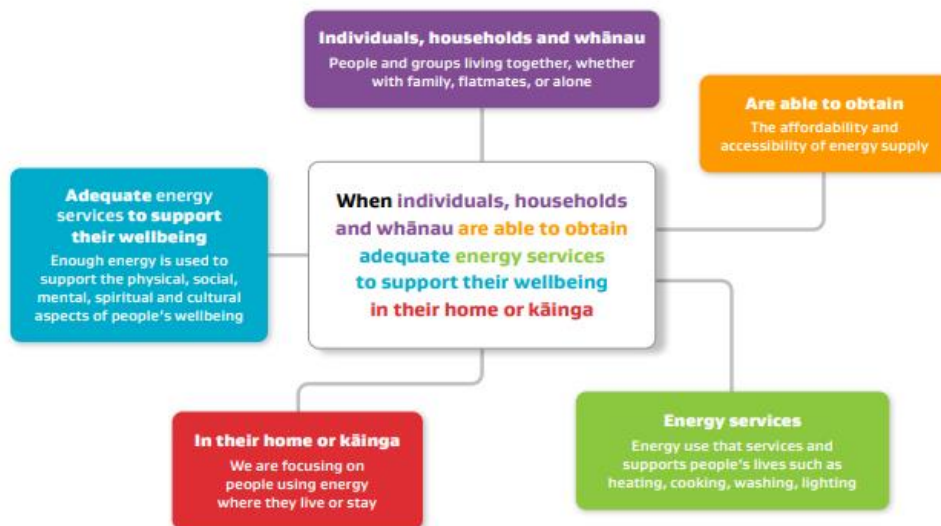


Figure 1: MBIE's proposed measure of energy wellbeing for 2021 consultation

ENERGY WELLBEING FRAMEWORK

MBIE's proposed framework has eight dimensions.

These dimensions range from factors that are external to whānau and over which they have no control such as prices, supply, and environment, to internal factors where they may have some level of control, like household resources, dwelling appliance purchases and use



Figure 2: MBIE's framework for energy wellbeing for 2021 consultation

POTENTIAL MEASURES

MBIE's approach acknowledges that the organisation has role in supporting all New Zealanders to have energy wellbeing. But MBIE needs to understand who needs help, and this means effectively measuring energy hardship. They require good, regular, and robust data on who suffers from energy hardship and why. Prior work has revealed that a lot of useful data exists across government, and this helps to tell some of the story. But they also know there are gaps. This is why MBIE has proposed a set of primary measures of energy hardship using national data sources that are available now, as well as identified gaps where

more research and data is required.

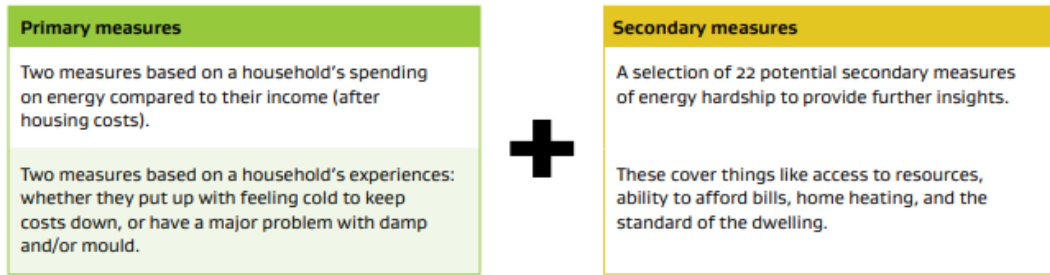


Figure 3: MBIE's proposed suite of energy hardship measures

THE WĀNĀNGĀ APPROACH

Haemata was commissioned to help MBIE engage with Māori on energy wellbeing and measurement.

Haemata has a great deal of experience working with Māori, across a range of sectors like education, the economy and social services. Haemata as a Māori company is from and part of the Māori community. We have experience gathering community stories and insight. We also have experience with quantitative measurement tools and working with data.

We knew we needed to work with Māori with expertise in measurement and data analysis. But we also wanted to capture the voices of everyday whānau and community.

Hence we utilised *kaitakawaenga* or community-based intermediaries who helped us connect with the young and old, urban, and rural whānau, academics, those with strong connections with their marae and their iwi, as well as those who do not, whānau who attend mainstream schools, as well as those who attend kura kaupapa Māori.

We identified 4 groups:

1. *Te Whāruarua* – A small rural Māori community with three marae and three different iwi. A number of elderly people, including big whānau. The group is low to middle income.
2. *Te Reo o te Hapori* – Māori community service providers and researchers from across Aotearoa NZ. A mix of male and female, young and old. The group is middle income.
3. *Ngāi Tāone* – A group of Urban Māori parents and adults who have lived experience with energy hardship. Mostly mothers. This group is low income, mainly beneficiaries.
4. *Ngā Kairangahau* – a smaller group of Māori analysts with experience in quantitative methods. The group is middle to high income.

We originally planned to hold several workshops around New Zealand. However, Covid-19 prevented us from having face-to-face hui. We held our workshops online. We utilised the WĀNĀNGĀ approach as our main method of discovery and research. The approach is based on three key concepts:

- **WĀ** means time, place, and space. Through the process we create a space and time to contemplate, discuss, debate, and explore issues.
- **NĀ** means to create or author. We use this space to enable communities to share their views and opinions.
- **NGĀ** is the plural form of “the”. We use this space to bring the voices of “many” together.

The Wānanga method is a semi structured approach to interviewing. While key questions sit at the core of the process, participants are supported to discuss whatever is meaningful to them and to take the discussion wherever they think is necessary. The role of the facilitator is to enable the discussion to flow, but to eventually bring the discussion back to the core. Those with experience with traditional wānanga will be familiar with this approach.

Our participants that we could record the workshops for note taking purposes only. We also agreed to keep their identities private.

KA MAHANA I TAKU KIRI – KEY INSIGHTS

As anticipated, the wānanga methodology encouraged a wide-ranging discussion. Whānau did discuss the tools and the measurement approach. But they also discussed much more than MBIE's measurement model. This section summarises the feedback we received from whānau.

MAKE GOOD USE OF EXISTING DATA

Whānau were supportive of government using existing data to understand energy wellbeing within the community. Some whānau members thought government did this already. A lot of data is collected from New Zealanders, including Māori. They thought it made sense to make the most of this and to extract as much insight as possible. They considered this approach efficient and sensible.

It is great to use 'existing' data – there is untapped potential, and it doesn't add burden to communities (Ngā Kairangahau)

IT'S ABOUT THE 'WHARE'

Whānau adopted a collective approach in their thinking about energy wellbeing. They tended to consider energy hardship at the household level, rather than the individual level.

... Measuring energy hardship at the household level is the right way to do it. It has to be about the whānau, not just individuals (Ngā Kairangahau)

DON'T JUST COUNT US, TALK TO US TOO

The Māori data experts we spoke with considered that a mixed methods approach to this research is important. A number pressed for the use both quantitative and qualitative methods in order to truly capture whānau lives and realities.

Data collection and analysis in the quantitative sense is reductive. It's full of assumptions and these can be misleading unless you really understand where the data comes from. (Ngā Kairangahau)

You need a mixed method approach....if you want deep insight. Otherwise, it's incomplete and can be misleading. (Ngā Kairangahau)

WHAT ABOUT MANAAKITANGA, MAURI, RANGATIRATANGA, MANA MOTUHAKE?

Whānau took the framework for what it was - an attempt to capture the key elements of energy wellbeing, based on the data that already exists. However, a number thought the framework was too general and that it was not a Māori framework. There should be measures developed based on a Māori world view. Some participants believed this was the purpose of the wānanga – to provide the Māori world view perspective.

Whānau identified a number of cultural concepts they considered were important to a definition of energy wellbeing but were absent from the proposed framework.

The first of these is **Manaakitanga**.

Energy wellbeing is... manaakitanga. It enables us to have guests (manuhiri). We are able to warm our whare and make a cup of tea. Without it, we can't have visitors. (Te Whāruarua)

Manaakitanga is the act of caring for others. Caring for manuhiri or guests is a very important value or tikanga in Māori culture. Having a steady reliable supply of power means whānau have the capacity to care for guests.

The next element is **Mauri** or life force.

Energy wellbeing is... Mauripower flowing through the house. We can see it moving through the whare. (Te Whāruarua)

Me tiaki i te mauri...o te awa, te hau, te rā, aha rāinei, aha rāinei, me tiaki te mauri. We have a duty to protect and care for this power and life force. (Te Whāruarua)

The person said you can see the life force or energy and warmth moving and flowing through a house. You can see it warming the house up during winter.

Rangatiratanga was mentioned many times.

While it traditionally means tribal sovereignty, and is particularly relevant to the Te Tiriti context, sometimes it was used to refer to the Crown-Māori relationship, and other times it was used to refer to the desire to have energy sovereignty.

He whakaaro ōku. Tino rangatiratanga. We were promised equal rights and equity under article three and article two. [Imagine] energy produced for and by communities....[and] the Crown investing in the infrastructure to enable us to fulfil what we set out to when we signed the Treaty in 1840. (Te Whāruarua)

From a Te Ao Māori perspective, it's having some rangatiratanga around how we can control and understand energy wellbeing (Te Hāpori)

Mana motuhake was another key concept.

This concept is about a sense of control over your own destiny.

Sometimes whānau used the term to mean that people who had energy wellbeing had a degree of self-determination and control over their lives that was important.

In other discussions, it referred to the desire to see more Māori involved in the energy supply sector, like for example the *Nau Mai Rā* energy company. Māori owned energy initiatives were seen as examples of modern-day self-determination.

WE HAVE OUR OWN KŌRERO TOO!

Whānau shared traditional Māori narratives or pūrākau related to energy. The point of these kōrero is that energy as a source of warmth, and strength is part of Māori culture.

Our old people had kōrero about energy and its importance to our ancestors. Like Puhiwahine and her waiata Ka Eke ki Wairaka. (Te Reo o te Hāpori)

Someone spoke about Māui, the demigod who according to legend created flaxen ropes and used his grandmother's magic jawbone to capture and slow down the sun.

Another referred to Ngātoroirangi, high priest of the Te Arawa canoe who, during his climb to the summit of Tongariro, called to his sisters, Te Hoata and Te Pupu, in Polynesia to bring fire and warmth to him. Ngātoroirangi's sisters responded to his call and travelled along a geothermal trail from White Island to Rotorua, and then to the North Island volcanic plateau. For this reason, the thermal waters in the Te Arawa region are known as *waiariki* or the waters of the gods.

HE ORA HOKI – ENERGY CREATES WELLNESS

An inner-city parent described energy wellbeing in the simplest of terms. For her, energy wellbeing enabled mental wellbeing, peace, quiet and time to herself.

[It] lets my kids go online...I can listen to my music ...have my own time...[and] helps me address my mental health... (Ngāi Taone)

WHĀNAU WANT BETTER INFO ABOUT OPTIONS!

A large number of whānau wanted simpler and better information about the energy supply choices that are available.

Whānau want to feel confident and empowered to source information across energy companies to find the best option for them. They want to understand what bills are made up of. (Ngāi Taone)

Information on energy options must be user-friendly, it needs to be easily understandable for those who may not be tech-savvy. Such as the older generation. (Ngāi Taone)

There was discussion about how some providers painted their energy solutions, such as solar panel packages, as positive for whānau. But on a closer inspection, the costs for such solutions were, in the long run, not good for whānau.

Everyone wanted to make better decisions to manage their energy use. However, they needed access to the right information such as power company pricing, different energy options, and tips to conserve energy etc.

A number talked about shopping around different electricity providers. Some wanted to support Māori businesses and entrepreneurs in this space such as the *Nau Mai Rā* the kaupapa Māori power company and power sharing scheme².

COST – COST – COST!

The high price of energy was an issue for whānau.

Complaints about the high cost of power were common. Whānau stated that they shouldn't have to consider going without necessities because of price or cost concerns about power.

It's not right for our people to struggle with essentials such as hot water and heating. (Ngāi Taone)

It is common to prioritize rooms to warm, often the children's rooms. This saves money but means other whānau members sleep in cold bedrooms. (Ngāi Taone)

There was an acknowledgment of the winter benefit payment to help pay for the increase in the power bill over the colder months. But the general feeling was that this was not enough.

One person also described how the heat can get unbearable in their town during the summer months. While this whānau lived in a near new state house, and they had a heat pump which also operated as air con, she said they could not afford to use it.

POOR INSULATION IS AN ISSUE!

Whānau members living in older houses discussed how poor insulation contributed to their predicament.

An interesting point was made by a few who lived rurally, on Māori title land. This land is collectively owned, typically by whānau. If individual whānau members want to build on Māori title land, they would need to take out a lease for a period of time. However, their house also needs to be transportable in case the owners want the land back for other

² <https://www.naumaira.nz/> Nau Mai Rā is Aotearoa's first kaupapa Māori energy retailer. Their core purpose is creating power equity through the spirit of manaakitanga – caring for the people. Nau Mai Rā applies a te ao Māori worldview to delivering electricity. This means a commitment to turning no customer away and turning no home's electricity off. They believe power should be a right, not a privilege, and no whānau should be left behind. They also direct a koha from each bill to a kaupapa of the customer's choice. Nau Mai Rā was founded in 2019 by Ezra Hirawani and Ben Armstrong. It is run by a small team of young staff in Hamilton. According to their website, 9/4/22 they have 1,000 customers signed up, approximately 10,000 waiting to join, and are looking at investment options that are beneficial to the cause.

purposes. We heard from whānau how the transportable houses had poor underfloor insulation.

Whānau made a direct plea for more government assistance and support for better insulation.

If MBIE has an influence on policy in terms of addressing financial support, how do we enable Whānau to get double glazing, or their insulation sorted? And if so, what levels of finance are taken into consideration? (Ngāi Taone)

MĀORI ENERGY SOVEREIGNTY

A common point of discussion amongst whānau was the need for more iwi and Māori-led models of either:

- Alternative energy provision models where Māori have more control, or
- More Māori involvement on boards that involve our taonga, like Energy Companies that use the awa (rivers).

A number of whānau expressed dissatisfaction with the market model for energy supply. They said it was failing too many whānau. They believe there is a need for more rangatiratanga or control and say over power generating assets, and information about energy that is relevant to helping whānau, including energy use, who uses energy, how much, and options.

Whānau were keen to see more Māori leaders or Māori companies leading in this area, or at least, participating in this sector.

Equal rights and equity are promised under articles two and three of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. (Te Whāruarua)

We currently have a market approach to energy. It seems to benefit the rich. There are deep gaps between well-being in rural communities and cities that need to be addressed. (Te Hāpori)

Whānau expressed their desire for Māori-led initiatives through these wānanga, and it has been proven through countless Kaupapa Māori research that this is what provides the best outcomes for Māori. Allowing space for and prioritizing whānau voices is the way to move forward.

TE ĀPŌPŌ – WHAT ABOUT TOMORROW?

Whānau also discussed the future of energy.

Some identified rapid changes in technology like electric cars and solar powered homes. Others were concerned about climate change and what this might mean in terms of future energy needs. They wanted to ensure whānau are prepared for the future.

There was some discussion about the importance of Māori having control over their destiny and being part of future energy generation and solutions. Some wanted to see iwi getting more involved in energy options.

Whānau wanted to see more sustainable and renewable energy initiatives to avoid jeopardising Aotearoa's natural resources. Kaitiakitanga is based on sustainability, conservation, and replenishment values and recognises deep connection to the land (whenua). Hydropower is an example - concerns were expressed about decreased water clarity, increased sediment, and erosion. This is not in line with Kaitiakitanga over the wai (water) and whenua.

Some wanted to see the Crown working with Iwi on solutions going forward. They envisaged a more proactive and positive Crown Māori relationship.

There is the potential for a small economy, and to keep the whole thing sustainable and Māori-led. (Te Whāruarua)

This needs to come under the crown's treaty obligations; to ensure that traditional Māori communities like ours, our hapū, and marae, are sustained into the future. (Te Whāruarua)

KA MAHANA I TAKU KIRI – DISCUSSION ON KEY THEMES

As the previous section identified, whānau shared a lot during the wānanga and raised a number of key points. This section focuses on the key themes and offers some comments suggestions on how MBIE might better respond better to these themes.

Based on our assessment of the points and kōrero that whānau shared, and the most common and therefore important themes, we identified four key kaupapa.

ADDRESS COST PRESSURES

The biggest issue that whānau raised was the high cost of energy. Everyone agreed that more support is needed, including support for housing insulation. There was also a general agreement that there should be an increase financial support and resources for whānau in need.

Haemata does consider this is a key priority area. However, we know that this is not an area that MBIE is responsible for.

MEASURE MĀORI THINGS TOO!

A strong theme that came through from whānau was the desire to see measures of kaupapa or things that matter to Māori. This included concepts like: manaakitanga, mauri, mana Motuhake, and rangatiratanga.

Haemata has some experience in this area. The good news is that there are some measures that are relevant to Māori cultural values and energy wellbeing. The measures can be found in the Stats NZ dataset - the 2013 and 2018 Te Kupenga surveys. Te Kupenga measures Māori cultural wellbeing. But in addition, it also contains more general measures from the Economic Living Standards Survey. Consequently, it is possible to both understand Māori cultural wellbeing AND aspects of energy poverty including not having enough money to pay energy bills.

Haemata recommends that MBIE explore what insights into Māori energy wellbeing or hardship can be gained from analysis using the latest Te Kupenga data set.

BUILD ENERGY LITERACY

Whānau raised the need for better and more targeted info to improve community energy literacy. While we understand there are a number of initiatives currently designed to provide useful information to whānau, the whānau we spoke with did not utilise this. This raises important questions - is the existing information simply not targeted at Māori? Is the current system inadequate and out of touch with Māori consumers?

Haemata recommends that MBIE explore the current approaches to improving community energy literacy and test them to ensure they are effective and are reaching communities, particularly those in most need. Based on our experience, we are clear that if they can reach Māori, they can reach anyone.

SUPPORT MANA MOTUHAKE & RANGATIRATANGA APPROACHES

There was a strong Iwi centred discussion about power generation, how these companies use the natural resources like the rivers, and the strong cultural connection that Māori have to the rivers. Whānau wanted to see Iwi exercising more of a rangatiratanga role with regards to power companies that use tribal taonga like the rivers.

Haemata acknowledges that the role Iwi have with power companies with relation to waterways they have a relationship with is for them to pursue. This is not really MBIE's business. However, it is important point to understand the cultural connection between Māori and the waters over which they have kaitiaki responsibilities.

Every group we spoke with had someone who knew about Nau Mai Ra and the work of Ezra Hirawani and Ben Armstrong. It made some of the whānau members very proud to know that young people were being entrepreneurial and kaupapa focused in the energy sector. Whānau supported initiatives like the Māori and Public Housing Renewable Energy Fund that encourage more Māori, including Iwi, to enter the supply chain. One group who attended one of the wānanga had been funded for a particular alternative energy project. They were very positive about MBIE's role in stimulating innovation in the community via this fund.

Haemata is very supportive of these types of funding pools and support for community innovators and entrepreneurs like Callaghan Innovation, and the Crown Research Institutes. But we are aware that the pathways to support and funding can be opaque, and unconnected. We recommend Government explore how they might play a more active role in making sure whānau innovators and entrepreneurs with good ideas have access to the right information, and support.

Finally, there was also a strong desire to have more community voices on government established panels or advisory groups that are energy or power related. While whānau understood the need for economists and accountants on these groups, the argument was made that those types of financial skills are not enough to understand and address community views.

Haemata supports this and acknowledges that during this process, a whānau member was appointed to an MBIE advisory group on energy wellbeing, and that some members of the Energy Hardship Expert Panel appointed by Ministers have Iwi affiliations. We encourage MBIE to continue to think about these types of opportunities to be more inclusive of communities.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the WĀNĀNGĀ approach enabled Haemata to go beyond the usual questions about the use of data and the IDI, or the technical method, to generate unique Māori insights on energy wellbeing based on culture, values, stories, rangatiratanga, and mana.

These insights are important. They are consistent with discussions between Iwi and the Crown on matters like Te Mana o te Wai or Treaty Settlements. Not all these issues are the sole responsibility of MBIE, like the need to recognise rangatiratanga. However, there are always opportunities for government agencies to listen to community more, to think about issues standing in the shoes of others like whānau, and to develop more inclusive policy. We trust MBIE will have found these insights useful and the recommendations instructive.

We thank whānau and experts for sharing their ideas with us. We acknowledge MBIE's support and encourage them to embrace the opportunity that lies before us all to partner effectively with Māori. Tēnā Koutou.