



**NZ
Human
Rights.**

Te Kāhui Tika Tangata
Human Rights Commission

He Whakamana Tāngata A Life of Dignity for All

Strategic Direction 2020–2024



Te Kāhui Tika Tangata
Human Rights Commission

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Introduction

I am delighted to present the Human Rights Commission Strategic Direction **He Whakamana Tāngata – A Life of Dignity for All**.

As a nation, we make a strong commitment to fairness and egalitarianism. This is laudable. However, it is not always supported by tangible action in some of the areas that make a huge difference in people's day-to-day lives.

The same is true for the Commission. We have been strong on non-discrimination and civil and political rights – and we must continue to do this. But we must also do more in the area of workers' rights, such as the right to a fair wage, social rights such as the rights to a decent home, access to healthcare and protection and education, as well as indigenous peoples' rights. These human rights are part of the international code that successive governments have both shaped and signed up to.

Our message is that human rights can empower and dignify individuals, whānau, iwi and communities, and they can also help governments deliver fair and robust policies.

In **He Whakamana Tāngata – A Life of Dignity for All**, we are setting an ambitious new agenda – both for ourselves and for the country. While we can learn a great deal from what has already been done overseas, in some cases, our context is unique, and this needs to be reflected in our approach. We want to work with duty bearers – government and business – to make real positive change.

We are also committed to walking our talk, solidifying and confirming our commitment to be a Tiriti-based organisation and a human rights exemplar. We may not always get it right, but we will learn, improve and strive to demonstrate that this foundational approach can make a real difference.

(insert signature)

Paul Hunt
Chief Commissioner



Purpose, mission, vision

Purpose

Ka whakamana tāngata
A life of dignity for all

Mission

We create continuous meaningful improvement in the realisation of human rights for all people in Aotearoa New Zealand by:

- » promoting better understanding of the human rights dimensions of te Tiriti o Waitangi
- » practising kaitiakitanga in our stewardship of human rights in New Zealand
- » challenging breaches of human rights by voicing opposition and demanding change
- » standing with and supporting those whose human rights have been violated
- » brokering evidence-informed human rights solutions
- » holding government and business to account for respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights for all people in Aotearoa New Zealand
- » supporting human rights advocacy and advancing action at community, local, regional and national level
- » urging government and all those in positions of power and influence to demonstrate human rights leadership in practice in a global context

Vision

A **credible, effective, connected** and **highly valued** organisation that makes human rights real and relevant within and outside the organisation, confident in its Tiriti-based aspiration and making a positive impact for all individuals, whānau, hapū, communities and iwi in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Our pou (pillars)



Grounded in community

Visible, relevant and responsive to what communities tell us



Built on partnership

Works with people, iwi and organisations to achieve our purpose



Informed, relevant and credible

Provides a unique human rights perspective that is informed by evidence



Makes a difference

Is measurable, holds to account, improves lives



Our values

Mana tangata – human dignity

We believe in the inherent dignity, mana and rights of all people and that all people deserve respect, even if we do not agree with them.

Dignity and mana are at the heart of human rights, as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which underpins all international human rights.

Māia, tika, pono – courage and integrity

The benefits of our work should be equally accessible to all.

We have a history and experience, including a knowledge base that gives us direction that we can use to advance what we know and believe in.

Courage helps the Commission be heard on the hard and important issues.

We have to stand up for peace and harmony and disarm people of prejudice and hatred.

Our work will be trusted and credible, honest, effective and efficient. This is about maintaining the trust of those who need us.

We are true to our mandate, as found in documents such as the Human Rights Act 1993, the Paris Principles, the Crown Entities Act 2004 and te Tiriti o Waitangi.

‘Walking our talk’ – we do internally what we are charged with promoting.

Whanaungatanga – relationships

We believe in the interconnectedness and indivisibility of all things – unity is not uniformity, diversity is not division. This reflects the idea of kotahitanga.

Whānau are a base institution for communities and nationhood, and whānau are integral to the enjoyment of human rights. This reflects the importance of whakapapa.

Relationships are a medium for achieving our goals – kaupapa. How we form and conduct our relationships is informed by the concept of manaaki.

We believe in protecting the most vulnerable so they become the protectors of the next generation. Our relationships are intergenerational.

We believe in encouraging and empowering people and communities.



Outcomes framework

Outcomes we seek

- » Everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand knows what their human rights and responsibilities are and feels empowered to advocate on their own behalf.
- » Communities are welcoming, inclusive and empowered to engage with each other and with government to enhance human rights and harmonious relationships.
- » Government and other duty bearers are held to account for improving performance against domestic and international human rights commitments.
- » Effective remedies are available to individuals and communities for breaches of their human rights.

How we deliver

- » Articulate clearly what human rights are.
- » Ensure everyone is aware of their rights and responsibilities.
- » Build and maintain an evidence base for the extent to which people are enjoying and being able to claim their human rights.
- » Identify areas where the human rights framework needs to be strengthened to ensure sustainable enjoyment of human rights.
- » Develop tools to empower individuals and communities to advocate for and claim their human rights.
- » Develop tools and mechanisms to restore dignity, wellbeing and human rights where breaches have occurred.
- » Influence policy makers and enhance processes to improve human rights outcomes over time.
- » Hold government and business to account, publicly and privately, for their human rights performance.

Thematic work

Situational analysis

- » Key players
- » Existing activity
- » Evidence base
- » Gap analysis

Research and engagement

- » Literature review
- » Quantitative survey
- » Focus groups
- » Consultation

Forming a Commission view

- » Report
- » Guidelines
- » Inquiry
- » Public campaigns
- » Recommendations

Accountability: monitoring and review

- » International reporting
- » Strategic advocacy
- » Public statements

Responsive work

Public outreach

- » Media enquiries
- » Community engagement
- » Supporting crisis response

Submissions

- » Cabinet papers
- » Select Committees
- » Draft legislation
- » Royal Commissions

Legal interventions

- » Intervenor in court proceedings
- » Applications

Enquiries

- » Enquiries
- » Complaints
- » Dispute resolution (including mediation)

International

- » Engagement
- » Advocacy
- » Monitoring and review

Inclusion, equality and belonging

The Commission wants Aotearoa New Zealand to be a fully inclusive society where the human rights of all people are respected, understood and upheld.

Rationale

All people in Aotearoa New Zealand should enjoy a sense of belonging and be welcomed, respected and valued for who they are, and they should have equal opportunity to participate in society.

Communities, workplaces and institutions should be free from discrimination and bias, including structural discrimination.

We want to live in an inclusive society where we genuinely value diversity, where we consider the human rights of others before we change things and where we treat each other with kindness, compassion and respect.

Interventions

The Human Rights Commission will:

- » ensure government is aware of and held to account for its performance on social inclusion and human rights
- » ensure policy practitioners understand how to develop policy that explicitly recognises and actively enhances New Zealanders' enjoyment of human rights
- » identify and develop tools and techniques for responding to and repairing breaches of human rights
- » gather and present evidence about experiences of discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment and other forms of bias and 'othering'
- » advocate for better/more robust data on experiences of all forms of discrimination and bias.

Impact

- » Gender and ethnic pay gaps are reduced.
- » Experiences of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment are reduced.
- » The policy community's awareness, engagement with and understanding of human rights and the implications of human rights for policy development are enhanced.

Measures

In order to effectively evaluate our work in this area, we need to identify and/or develop appropriate indicators – both at a priority-wide level and for individual projects and activities within the priority. Some of this can be done in advance, but much of it will need to be developed as the work is clarified.



Popularising human rights

We will work towards making human rights better known and more widely understood, relevant and meaningful among the whole population of Aotearoa New Zealand. We wish to convey and demonstrate that human rights can be made real, practical, operational and meaningful.

Rationale

People are more likely to exercise their human rights and to respect the human rights of other people when they know what these rights are and feel empowered to expect them. Human rights language can be legalistic and technical at times, so we have an obligation to use language and media that are accessible to the widest possible range of people and to do our very best to make sure they know it is there.

Awareness of the Human Rights Commission and the services we offer is relatively low, especially among communities most likely to experience discrimination or harassment.

Interventions

The Human Rights Commission will:

- » help all people in Aotearoa New Zealand know and understand their human rights and to do this in ways that are meaningful to them
- » help all people in Aotearoa New Zealand know their human rights responsibilities to each other
- » help communities and individuals to be empowered to advocate, action and claim their human rights at an individual, community, local government, central government and national level
- » promote public understanding of human rights and the Commission's role encompassing civil, political, economic (i.e. workers'), social and cultural rights, including the right to a healthy environment and indigenous peoples' rights
- » help to build human rights communities.

Impact

- » Increase in the number of people who know what their human rights (and responsibilities) are and who advocate, action and claim them.
- » Increase in community and individual engagement with a holistic understanding of human rights.
- » Level of uptake of community empowerment initiatives using human rights, including within local government.

Measures

In order to effectively evaluate our work in this area, we need to identify and/or develop appropriate indicators – both at a priority-wide level and for individual projects and activities within the priority. Some of this can be done in advance, but much of it will need to be developed as the work is clarified.



Reducing poverty

The Commission is intent on making a meaningful contribution towards the reduction and elimination of poverty in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Rationale

The experience of poverty creates real barriers to social inclusion and the enjoyment of human rights for individuals and communities.

In our external stakeholder engagement, 50 percent of respondents listed the right to an adequate standard of living as one of their top three issues.

Poverty is a human rights issue. It undermines the realisation of other rights, including the right to a decent home, access to healthcare and protection, participation in cultural life, equal access to justice, the right to education, the right to privacy and the right to rest and leisure. Disadvantaged communities tend to experience higher levels of crime and violence than more affluent communities.

Interventions

The Human Rights Commission will:

- » raise awareness that poverty is a human rights issue with a particular focus on the right to a decent home and employment
- » present evidence to government about the impact of poverty on human rights
- » raise public awareness of the impact of poverty on human rights and among the policy and business communities
- » contribute to policy making that reduces poverty and advances implementation of the right to a decent home
- » monitor and review government's performance on reducing poverty and hold government to account for that performance.

Impact

- » Greater awareness that poverty is a human rights issue.
- » Awareness of the impact of poverty on the enjoyment of human rights is increased.
- » Greater visibility of human rights, especially the right to a decent home, in poverty-reduction initiatives.
- » More familiarity with and respect for the right to a decent home.

Measures

In order to effectively evaluate our work in this area, we need to identify and/or develop appropriate indicators – both at a priority-wide level and for individual projects and activities within the priority. Some of this can be done in advance, but much of it will need to be developed as the work is clarified.



Reducing violence and abuse

Violence and abuse is never acceptable. We will work to better understand and raise awareness of violence and abuse of particular population groups in Aotearoa New Zealand with particular emphasis on those groups that are not well served by current interventions. This understanding will help identify ways to help reduce this problem, in particular, the physical and emotional violence and abuse towards people in their communities, families and residential and care services.

Rationale

All people in Aotearoa New Zealand have the right to be free from violence and abuse. Aotearoa New Zealand has some of the highest rates of reported domestic violence and family violence in the world. People living in fear for their personal safety or that of their loved ones are unlikely to participate fully in their community and society.

During our external stakeholder engagement, 44 percent of respondents listed the right to be free from violence (including family and sexual violence and violent hate crimes) as one of their top three issues.

Interventions

The Human Rights Commission will:

- » gather and present evidence about the prevalence of violence and abuse for people in Aotearoa New Zealand not being well served by existing government data collection, for example, disabled people, older people, the rainbow community, migrants and multicultural communities
- » advocate for better/more robust data on experiences of violence and abuse
- » contribute to policy making that:
 - » prevents and/or reduces the frequency and seriousness of violence and abuse
 - » improves the quality and effectiveness of responses to violence and abuse
 - » restores dignity for those affected by violence and abuse

Impact

- » contribute to policy development responding to violence and abuse from a human rights perspective
- » monitor and review duty bearers' (government and business) performance on reducing poverty and hold them to account for that performance.

Measures

- » Violence and abuse is reduced, especially for disadvantaged individuals and communities.
- » Quality of data about the prevalence of violence and abuse is improved.
- » Awareness of the impact of violence and abuse on the enjoyment of human rights is increased.

In order to effectively evaluate our work in this area, we need to identify and/or develop appropriate indicators – both at a priority-wide level and for individual projects and activities within the priority. Some of this can be done in advance, but much of it will need to be developed as the work is clarified.



Organisational excellence

This foundational priority highlights that the Human Rights Commission strives to be a human rights exemplar that fosters excellence and expertise in our people and our work. Our work programmes are targeted and informed by human rights issues that are important to New Zealanders. The people who work for the Commission have strong backgrounds and experience in human rights and have in-depth knowledge of the issues we are collectively working to address.

We also seek to be a safe, supportive, respectful and diverse workplace that embeds our values and te Tiriti o Waitangi in all we do, ensuring the Commission is an innovative and flexible workplace and a Tiriti-based organisation.

Rationale

In order to deliver effectively against our purpose and strategic priorities, it is essential that the Commission is an effective resilient high-performing organisation. We will need an organisational culture that supports and encourages our employees to engage effectively with each other and with our stakeholders. We must make progress towards being a Tiriti-based organisation and a human rights exemplar. There is no roadmap for either of these journeys, so we will need to navigate and correct our course together, building on the work outlined in our Haere Kotahi plan.

It is essential that the Commission has in place robust systems, processes and support mechanisms that can be operated effectively by the Board, Commissioners, Chief Executive, managers and all employees of the organisation.

Interventions

The Human Rights Commission will:

- » proactively engage in an internal and external conversation about what it means to be a Tiriti-based organisation
- » proactively engage in an internal and external conversation about being a human rights exemplar

Impact

- » A confident capable organisation that works together with iwi Māori in a manner consistent with te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- » An organisation that can engage effectively with all people in Aotearoa New Zealand on sensitive and difficult topics, advancing their human rights.
- » Increased public trust in the organisation.
- » The organisation has a leading employment brand where talented passionate people want to come and work.

Measures

In order to effectively evaluate our work in this area, we need to identify and/or develop appropriate indicators – both at a priority-wide level and for individual projects and activities within the priority. Some of this can be done in advance, but much of it will need to be developed as the work is clarified.

