

Long Term Insights Briefing

Improving Pacific Data Equity 2022



New Zealand Council Of
Christian Social Services

Contact Name:	Nikki Hurst Melanie Wilson
Organisation Name:	New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS)
Ko wai au Who we are:	<p>The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Long Term Insights Briefing (LTIB) – Improving Pacific Data Equity.</p> <p>NZCCSS has six foundation members; the Anglican Care Network, Baptist Churches of New Zealand, Catholic Social Services, Presbyterian Support and the Methodist and Salvation Army Churches.</p> <p>Through this membership, NZCCSS represents over 250 organisations providing a range of social support services across Aotearoa. We believe in working to achieve a just and compassionate society for all, through our commitment to our faith and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Further details on NZCCSS can be found on our website www.nzccss.org.nz.</p>

Tirohanga Whānui | Overview

We support the kaupapa by the Ministry of Pacific Peoples to improve Pacific data equity. In their work alongside Pacific people, NZCCSS members recognise the need for improvements to current systems that are government-driven and culturally lacking. We view this as an integral component of delivering on the Pacific Wellbeing Strategy in enabling a thriving, resilient and prosperous Pacific Aotearoa.

Our main points are:

1. Greater integration of a Pacific worldview

A Pacific lens must be applied to the purpose and practice of government data processes if equity is to be achieved.

2. Improved accessibility of data for Pacific people

The collection and use of data relating to Pacific Aotearoa must be accessible for Pacific people and their communities.

3. Greater focus on qualitative approaches

An increased focus on qualitative data is consistent with Pacific approaches to understanding communities and their priorities.

4. Strengthen partnerships with those who work alongside Pacific communities

Government must more effectively leverage the learnings of social service providers to better understand the needs and priorities of Pacific people.

Taunakitanga | Recommendations

We raise the following points and recommendations for consideration:

1. Greater integration of a Pacific worldview

A Pacific lens must be applied to the purpose and practice of government data processes if equity is to be achieved. We support the findings of the LTIB which indicates that past and current practices are largely driven by government priorities and must integrate Pacific worldviews into the design, analysis, and dissemination of data about Pacific Aotearoa.

We observe the relevance of the BADDR Outcome versus Indigenous Data Needs Analysis and strongly support approaches that will reflect Pacific values and methodologies, address the deficit positioning of Pacific people, “measure beyond problems” (pg. 23). It is equally important that methods and systems reflect the diversity of the Pacific community in Aotearoa New Zealand, rather than identifying Pacific people as a homogenous group.

We agree that integration of Pacific worldviews can best be achieved by enabling Pacific-led data processes and investing in cultural and technical capability both within the Pacific community and the public sector.

Recommendation 1: We encourage investment in Pacific-led approaches to data and capability building.

2. Improved accessibility of data

The collection and use of data relating to Pacific Aotearoa must be accessible for Pacific people and their communities.

Improving cultural capability and consistency across government systems should be prioritised to enable a more accessible, robust, and trusted data framework. Consideration must be given to intersectionality within this community, such as barriers that may exist due to disability, education, health, or economic factors etc.

We support the Pacific Data Sovereignty understanding of data as a taonga and encourage government to hold a stewardship, rather than ownership, approach to data. The LTIB highlights the need for improved data stewardship, where those who collect and analyse data are accountable for both sharing findings in a culturally appropriate manner with those who have contributed and taking onboard feedback from contributors to evolve their findings. We consider this two-way partnership approach to data as essential for enabling genuine change.

Recommendation 2: We recommend a multifaceted approach to improving the accessibility of Pacific data.

3. Greater focus on qualitative data

An increased focus on qualitative data is consistent with Pacific approaches to understanding communities and their priorities. This is highlighted in the LTIB both in terms of the dominance of quantitative measures used by government and the importance of qualitative methodologies within Pacific culture. Without the rich story-telling that results from qualitative data we continue to capture an incomplete picture of Pacific Aotearoa. NZCCSS supports the design and use of data methodologies that integrate a 'talanoa' approach and balance qualitative and quantitative measures.

Recommendation 3: We recommend greater inclusion of culturally appropriate qualitative data methodologies.

4. Strengthen partnerships with those who work alongside Pacific communities

Government must more effectively leverage the learnings of social service providers, such as our members, to better understand the needs and priorities of Pacific people. In working alongside Pacific communities across Aotearoa New Zealand, our members are well-placed and trusted sources of both qualitative and quantitative data. Whilst contractual obligations require rich evaluation and reporting by providers, we observe that this information is not always used by government to its fullest extent to exemplify the strengths and priorities of the communities our members serve.

Participants lamented the missed opportunities by government and other agencies in establishing meaningful partnerships with churches, to help deliver programmes and initiatives. (Pacific Aotearoa Lalanga Fou, pg. 17)

We suggest that there is ample opportunity for government to strengthen its partnerships with our faith-based social services to support this kaupapa.

Recommendation 4: We encourage strong partnerships with community providers to leverage existing data opportunities.