



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 speaks to the importance of working together - acknowledging the importance of both the leader and the followers, for both are essential and co-dependent.

This mātauranga is what motivated Inspiring Communities to convene a collective change conversation. There is growing recognition of the need for significant shifts in how we live and work, and a growing range of initiatives developing and testing new approaches, but the risk remains that these threads are not connected in this ecosystem, they are not amplified and thus remain undervalued.

Part of what Inspiring Communities does is notice, and as best as is possible given the often-multifaceted nature, name what we observe. We are noticing lots of pockets of marvellous mahi around the motu (check out Inspiring Communities' [magnificent manaakitanga](#) summer series). Strong new leadership prioritising collaboration; greater use of indigenous knowledge to shape the mahi, more investment in initiatives developed by whānau or community groups and growing openness in some government agencies for a more effective approach to navigating complexity.

Our collective experience working with that complexity tells us developing a grand master plan is futile, rather, an organic approach that will allow for the spontaneity, self-organising and fostering connections between actors that can, if the need arises, transform into partnerships. This was the intent that led Inspiring Communities to collaborate with a group of agencies to curate the Collective Change Conversation.

Starting small, Inspiring Communities, Hui E! Community Aotearoa, the Innovation Unit and TSI's Co-Design Lab invited about 30 people from across the country into two conversations; the first in Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington) and then Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland). These conversations allowed for everyone to hear from each other, notice what is taking place, why and how. The group didn't claim to be representative of the full diversity of actors but it did represent a stake in the ground – a starting point to explore from. There were people from the Community and Voluntary sectors, Whanau Ora, rural and community-led groups, co-designers, social entrepreneurs, small businesses, educators, intercultural educators and public servants - really this just names half of the experience and expertise that was in the 'rooms'.

The energy vibe was in situ - ideas, expertise and stories flowed. We did some mapping, explored how to paint a picture of what is happening, asked what a good life means, whānau-ora, wellbeing that is informed by a shared framework or key pou. Eclectic indeed.

Here's a sample of the insights, as you can but imagine they barely touched the surface. We just thought we'd offer you a taster, so you get a bit of an appetite for what is possible as we explore this commitment to collective change:

Paul Dalziel, on behalf of the [Wellbeing Economy Alliance](#) notes collective change necessitates that the voices of civil society are heard in conversations, since wellbeing is ultimately about people leading lives they value and have reason to value.

Michelle Kitney, Kaihautū - Chief Executive of [Volunteering NZ](#) says the value of this kaupapa/kōrero is in itself the essence - connected, collaborative and community building. The process has huge potential to be a catalyst for creating connections and change.

Helen Leahy, Pouārahi – Chief Executive of [Te Putahitanga o Wai Pounamu](#) speaks of how they are transforming lives because all their mahi is centred on the philosophy that whānau must be placed at the centre of service design and delivery, to realise their own solutions. Such potential if more faith was placed in families.

Arama Mataira, Intercultural Facilitator and Director of [Walk Together NZ](#) shared her thoughts about the potential of working with equity as a process, rather than as an outcome, which acts as an acceleration and elevation strategy towards equity/justice in the various realms we work within.

Nicola Patrick, from [Flaxroots](#) and [Thrive](#) recognises that coming together with a broader network of people working towards a common purpose is energising because while some of us are connected already, the huge number and meeting new people is further support to continue.

Rochelle Stewart-Allen, Pou Kaiārahi (General Manager) at [Hui E! Community Aotearoa](#) says it's time to take our learnings and really drive some long-term, systemic changes. We can only do that together.

Jade (Poh Gaik) Tang-Taylor, Director of Innovation & Partnerships at the [Innovation Unit](#) believes holding this collective change kōrero is just the start of the mindset shift we need to see. If we're ever to solve some of these complex "wicked" problems, we're going to need new ways of working, of doing and of being in this world.

Richard Whatman, Kaiaki, [Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – \(HUDs\)](#) asks what if all parts of the system embrace holistic approaches and put te ao Māori and Pasifika knowledge in the centre of that?

There is no doubt a space has been created from which good things come, already bi-lateral discussions and initiatives are underway but more than that as we head into 2022 starting with loose but regular *kawhe and kōrero* sessions, magic will unfold because when you curate and commit to collective change magic happens.

We welcome others to step into our collective changemaking space – if you are interested, and want to know more

- get in touch with Inspiring Communities' [Rachel Roberts](#)

- get in touch with Innovation Unit: [Jade Tang-Taylor](#)
- feel free to add to the OPEN [Jamboard](#)

So who is we? Here's a list of those participating in the Collective Changemaker Kōrero to date:

[Wesley](#)

[Hui E! Community Aotearoa](#)

[Innovation Unit](#)

[TSI/ Co-design Lab](#)

[Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu](#)

[Social Wellbeing Agency](#)

[Reap Aotearoa](#)

[Volunteering NZ](#)

[Todd Foundation](#)

[Te Tihi Alliance](#)

[Wellbeing Economy Alliance](#)

[Ākina](#)

[Catalyse](#)

[Collaborate CIC](#)

[Flaxroots](#)

[Thrive](#)

[Walk Together](#)

[Inclusive Aotearoa Collective](#)

[Thinkplace](#)

[The Connective](#)

[Unity House NZ](#)

[Emerge Institute](#)

[Foundation North](#)

[Dovetail](#)

[Sustainable Finance](#)

[The Lever Room](#)

[Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – \(HUDs\)](#)

[Independent Changemaker](#)