KPMG

APRA AMCOS
Te Tautāwhinga
APRA100

Waiata Reo Māori

Social Impact Evaluation Report



2 September 2026

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E whakapono marika ana mātou ko ngā hua ka puta i ā mātou mahi taunaki apataki, ko ngā hua e kaha tautoko, e kaha whakatairanga ana i ngā hiahia o ā mātou apataki, mō te āpōpōtanga o ō tātou hapori, o Aotearoa whānui, te take.

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Hinewehi Mohi
APRA NZ Ltd
23 Edwin Street
Mount Eden
Auckland 1024

2 September 2026

Tēnā koe e te māreikura,

Waiata Reo Māori Social Impact Evaluation

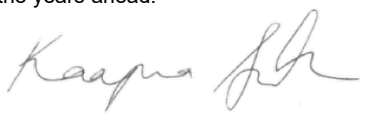
Nei rā te mihi maioha ki a koutou i runga i te kaupapa herenga reo, herenga tangata, ara te waiata reo Māori.

Thank you for the opportunity to work alongside APRA AMCOS on this evaluation of the social impact of waiata reo Māori (waiata). Through its investment in and support of artists, mātanga reo and waiata-focused kaupapa, APRA Aotearoa plays an important role in enabling the creation and sharing of waiata that resonate with audiences, strengthen connections to te reo Māori and te ao Māori, and contribute to the ongoing growth of the waiata reo Māori ecosystem.

This evaluation sought to understand the outcomes being realised through APRA's investment in waiata reo Māori, and to identify opportunities to further strengthen its impact over time. The findings and recommendations contained within this report provide valuable insight into the contribution APRA's kaupapa has made towards artists, mātanga reo, audiences, communities and te reo Māori itself.

We extend our gratitude to the rauringa who have generously shared their experiences, whakaaro and perspectives with us, and to the kaimahi who have helped facilitate this evaluation.

We hope the insights contained within this report provide a foundation for reflecting on the progress achieved to date, celebrating the impact of waiata reo Māori, and guiding the continued evolution of this important kaupapa in the years ahead.



Nāku noa nā

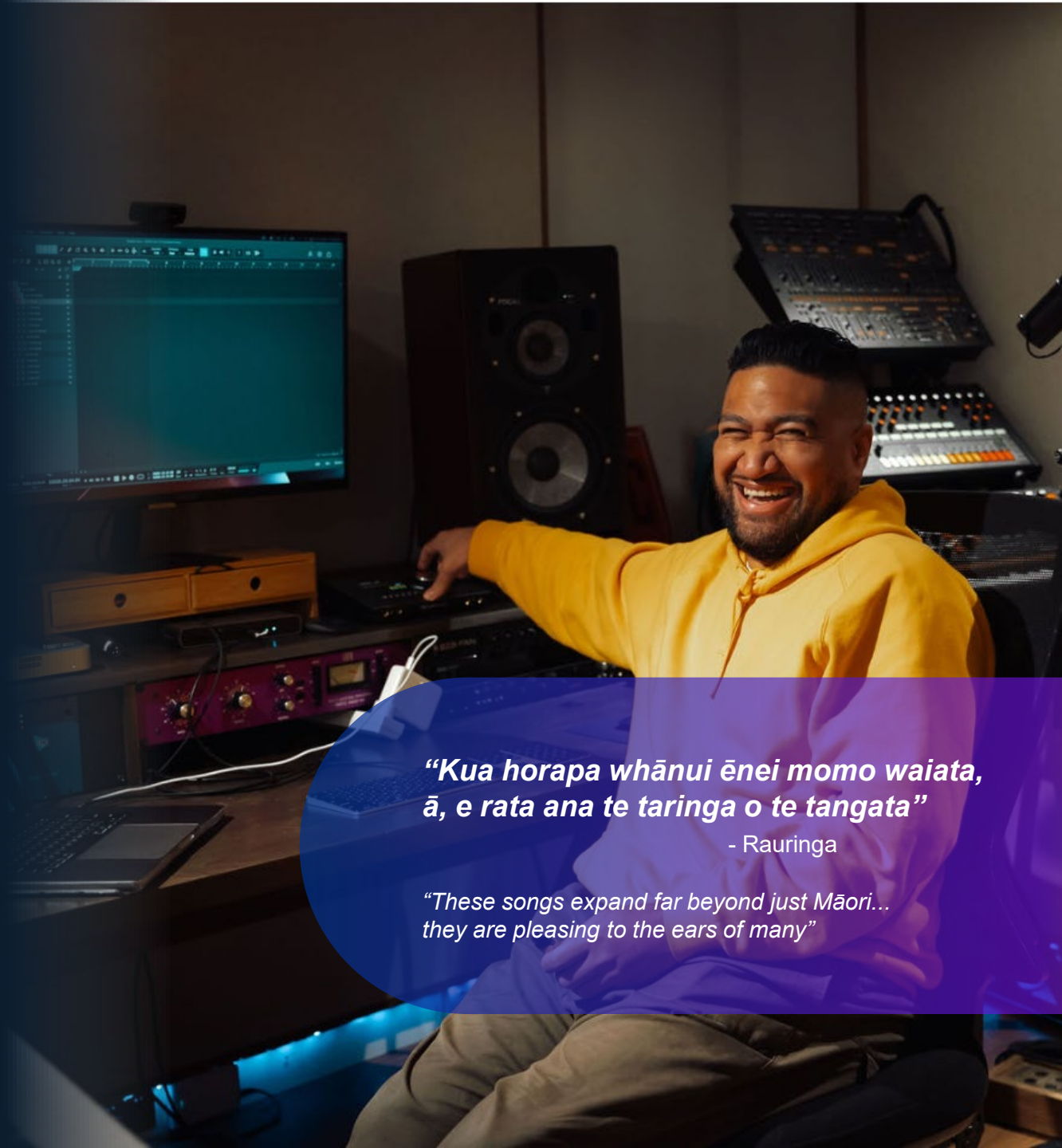
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Rārangi Kaupapa

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Tahi

Executive Summary



“Kua horapa whānui ēnei momo waiata, ā, e rata ana te taringa o te tangata”

- Rauringa

“These songs expand far beyond just Māori... they are pleasing to the ears of many”

Executive Summary

Purpose

KPMG was engaged by APRA AMCOS Aotearoa (APRA) to evaluate the social, cultural, and economic outcomes of waiata reo Māori. Te Māngai Pāho supported the evaluation, reflecting its longstanding investment in waiata reo Māori and its strategic interest in understanding how waiata contributes to language revitalisation, cultural identity, and wider social outcomes.

While APRA and Te Māngai Pāho undertake and support distinct initiatives within the waiata reo Māori ecosystem, both organisations have a common interest in understanding what outcomes these activities generate, how those outcomes are experienced by rauringa (stakeholders), and the factors that strengthen or limit their impact. The purpose of this mahi was to evaluate the extent to which APRA-run initiatives are achieving their desired outcomes, providing APRA with insights into the effectiveness of its initiatives and supporting Te Māngai Pāho's understanding of the broader outcomes and impacts generated by waiata reo Māori.

KPMG sought to:

- Define and assess the breadth of outcomes associated with waiata reo Māori and how these are experienced across rauringa;
- Understand the contribution and impact of waiata reo Māori on reo Māori revitalisation efforts;
- Identify strengths in current approaches and opportunities for improvement; and
- Build a stronger evidence base about the social, cultural, and economic value of waiata reo Māori.

APRA's Context and Initiatives

APRA Aotearoa supports its members and the growth of Māori music by developing programmes for the creation, production, and promotion of waiata reo Māori. This work also extends to support for live performance and music export opportunities for Māori artists.

Over the past six years APRA has worked Aotearoa music artists and Te Māngai Pāho, the NZ Music Commission, Creative NZ, Ministry for Culture & Heritage, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, NZ On Air, British Council, Recorded Music NZ, and Universal Music to release more than 300 waiata reo Māori through kaupapa such as Waiata Anthems, Reo Māori SongHubs, the Aotearoa Songbook, and more.

APRA is evaluating its initiatives to understand what is working well, identify opportunities for improvement, and understand the outcomes experienced by its key stakeholders, including artists, mātanga reo (Māori language experts and co-writers), and audiences, both active and passive.

These insights will help inform future investment decisions, support funding applications, and strengthen efforts to grow and diversify audiences.

APRA is also seeking to better understand the broader contribution of waiata reo Māori to the revitalisation of te reo Māori, cultural identity, the music industry, and the wider economy.

Te Māngai Pāho's Contribution

Te Māngai Pāho’s investment strategy for Māori music focuses on language revitalisation under the Crown’s Maihi Karauna strategy. In addition to its partnership with APRA, Te Māngai Pāho invests significantly across the waiata reo Māori ecosystem, including songwriting collaboration wānanga, the production and promotion of waiata reo Māori, and sustainable career pathways for emerging artists.

Te Māngai Pāho supported the evaluation through the provision of relevant documentation and information, participation in the research process, and distribution of the audience survey through its platforms.

Te Māngai Pāho's involvement reflects its interest in understanding the outcomes generated through its investment and support of APRA initiatives that contribute to the revitalisation and normalisation of te reo Māori. While its initiatives and investment priorities are distinct from those of APRA, the evaluation provides an opportunity to consider the collective contribution of waiata reo Māori and the social impacts that can emerge across different initiatives and investment approaches.

Approach

KPMG undertook both quantitative and qualitative analysis to measure and evaluate the outcomes of waiata reo Māori. Information was collected from:

- **Documentation** provided by APRA and Te Māngai Pāho, with information and findings validated by key rauringa;

For a more detailed explanation of our **Methodology and Approach**, please see Page 11.

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Executive Summary (cont.)

- Quantitative data from the NZ Music Commission, Recorded Music NZ, and other sources;
- Publicly available qualitative evidence (Radio NZ and The Spinoff);
- Interviews with artists, mātanga reo, an audience focus group, and;
- An audience survey distributed through KPMG, APRA, Waiata Anthems, and Te Māngai Pāho platforms

KPMG utilised Hinerauora, our *Tōmua* Outcomes Realisation Methodology to describe and measure the impact of key waiata reo Māori initiatives delivered by APRA (with the support of Te Māngai Pāho).

As part of this evaluation, we co-designed the Oro outcomes framework to identify the primary rauringa of waiata reo Māori, understand the outcomes experienced across each rauringa, and assess areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

The evaluation found that APRA and Te Māngai Pāho's investment into kaupapa waiata reo Māori is contributing to the growth of the waiata reo Māori ecosystem and supporting wider reo Māori revitalisation efforts.

Impact was strongest in areas relating to participation, opportunities, visibility, cultural connection, and normalisation of te reo Māori.

The findings in this report highlight the strengths that are helping to drive these outcomes, while the recommendations are designed to build on this success and support APRA's impact and continued growth in the years ahead.

Overview of current state of impact: While outcomes were experienced differently across artists, mātanga reo, and audience members, we observed saturation across **five core outcomes:**

1. **Waiata reo Māori is helping expand the reach and normalisation of te reo Māori:** Participants consistently described waiata as increasing exposure to and the normalisation of te reo Māori, encouraging further language learning and engagement. Many also viewed waiata as inseparable from te reo Māori and tikanga, with waiata acting as a pathway into both.
2. **APRA's initiatives are helping grow and strengthen the waiata reo Māori ecosystem:** Participants described increased opportunities for artists, growth in the number of mātanga reo supporting APRA's kaupapa, and a greater volume of waiata reo Māori being created and shared. Together, these outcomes suggest APRA's investment is helping strengthen the waiata reo Māori ecosystem as a whole.
3. **Waiata reo Māori is supporting cultural connection and pathways to reclamation:** The evaluation found that waiata reo Māori, APRA led initiatives and Te Māngai Pāho funded initiatives are strengthening Māori cultural pride and connection to te reo Māori and te ao Māori, with streaming data highlighting common themes of cultural identity, reclamation, and uniquely Māori concepts (for example Six60's "Pepeha", Aotearoa Songbook, "Ready to Ride" by Hori Shaw & Te Wehi, "Matariki Hunga Nui" by Rob Ruha, Troy Kingi and Kaylee Bell) among the longest-charting waiata.
4. **Waiata reo Māori is gaining visibility, reach, and recognition:** Evidence of increased listenership and presence across a wider range of genres points to sustained growth in the visibility and recognition of waiata reo Māori.
4. **Cont…** This suggests waiata reo Māori is gaining momentum in the music industry, while also reflecting the wider growth and maturation of te reo Māori revitalisation efforts.
5. **Investment and revitalisation efforts are supporting the progression of waiata reo Māori:** The evaluation found that outcomes for artists, mātanga reo, and audiences are interconnected and continuing to be realised alongside the wider revitalisation movement. While evidence was strongest for increased opportunities, visibility and engagement, emerging Rau Ora (6 – 10+ years) outcomes highlight potential opportunities to strengthen impact over time.

Opportunities for Improvement

While the evaluation found strong evidence of positive outcomes across all three rauringa, participants also identified opportunities to strengthen the impact of APRA's investment in waiata reo Māori.

The high-level recommendations for these are presented in the next page.

The report is structured with key rauringa outcomes realised discussed from **pages 14-16**, detailed findings from **pages 18-22**, and detailed recommendations arising from the key findings presented on **pages 24-26.**

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Executive Summary (cont.)

The following recommendations were developed based on the qualitative and quantitative insights captured through this evaluation, and are intended to build on the strengths of the current model and support the continued growth, quality and impact of waiata reo Māori.



Recommendations

1. **Explore partnerships with other stakeholders within te ao Māori and the wider waiata reo Māori ecosystem.** Participants from all rauringa rōpū (stakeholder groups) identified that stronger connections with other stakeholders such as iwi, hapū, kaumātua, and rangatahi would help ensure artists are culturally supported and remain connected to the people and communities who hold, nurture, and pass on te reo Māori, tikanga and mātauranga Māori.

2. **Strengthen pathways into waiata creation and capability development.** This includes creating clearer entry points for emerging artists and mātanga reo, and helping ensure talented rangatahi can see a pathway into waiata creation knowing there is a place for them within the industry.

3. **Tailor support to maximise meaningful participation.** Outcomes appeared strongest where participants were well-positioned to engage with current APRA activities; however, participants enter these initiatives with varying levels of capability, confidence and experience. A more tailored approach to participant selection (emergent to established artists) and support may help ensure individuals enter spaces that reflect their needs and aspirations, maximising the value they gain from the kaupapa.

4. **Consider how contemporary waiata can endure as cultural touchstones.** There may be opportunities to support contemporary waiata reo Māori to remain authentic, visible and relevant across generations.

5. **Define and formalise the focus on quality in waiata reo Māori.** While quality is widely regarded as important, views on what constitutes a "high-quality" waiata vary considerably. A clearer articulation of quality may help guide the future development of waiata reo Māori and balance aspirations for revitalisation, excellence, and cultural impact.

6. **Strengthen alignment between investment and impact.** The evaluation highlights that professional, cultural, and financial support are enabling factors that facilitate the strongest outcomes. The majority of artists described feeling well supported across most dimensions (creatively, financially, culturally and professionally) of APRA's initiatives. As such, ensuring support remains accessible and proportionate to the growing expectations, complexity and costs associated with waiata creation may help maximise the impact of investment.

Our detailed recommendations are outlined in **pages 24-26**

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Rua

Background, Context & Approach



“Ko te timatanga ko te pirangi, ko te tuarua ko te ako me te ū ki te kaupapa, ko te tuatoru ko te kōrero i te ao i te pō”

- Rauringa

“(Learning te reo) starts with desire, the second is commitment to the subject, the third is to speak day and night”

Background and Context

Objective

In 2026, APRA engaged KPMG to undertake a social impact evaluation to understand, define and measure the social, cultural, and economic outcomes of waiata reo Māori* (defined as waiata comprising at least 50% in te reo Māori).

This work aims to support APRA and Te Māngai Pāho to understand the impact of recent mahi to grow the reach and resonance of waiata reo Māori, on te reo Māori revitalisation, cultural identity, and broader economic and/or commercial benefits. The evaluation focuses on assessing current impact and identifying strengths and opportunities to enhance outcomes.

To support this, an outcomes framework was co-designed to underpin how we evaluate outcomes across the primary rauringa of waiata reo Māori.

Scope

The scope of this evaluation encompasses:

- Refining and confirming the outcomes framework with APRA and Te Māngai Pāho;
- Collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data from interviews with rauringa, a survey, and review of existing documentation and publicly available data (2019-2026).
- Development of a draft social impact evaluation report with draft recommendations for APRA's internal review and feedback, and
- Final report and presentation.

Excluded from this evaluation are:

- The collection of data unrelated to the evaluation; and
- Implementation of any evaluation findings.

Background

With a membership of more than 12,000 New Zealand songwriters, composers and music publishers, APRA manages the rights of both local and international musical works, ensuring creators are fairly rewarded for the use of their music. Through its ORO programme, APRA provides dedicated support for artists creating, producing, promoting and performing waiata reo Māori, helping to elevate the Māori language through contemporary music.

ORO also invests in initiatives that strengthen the Māori music ecosystem, including career development programmes, music export, film and television projects, Indigenous cultural exchange and creative collaborations. Together, these activities foster the growth, visibility and reach of Māori music while supporting the continued success of its creators.

Over the past seven years, more than 300 waiata reo Māori have been produced and released in Aotearoa. This has been made possible with the support of APRA's programmes, funding from Te Māngai Pāho, and ORO team collaborations with other funding agencies including the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Creative NZ, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, NZ On Air, and British Council.

Waiata Anthems: Launched in 2019, Waiata Anthems began with the release of a compilation of popular songs translated from English into te reo Māori. The album debuted at #1 on the music charts, marking a significant milestone for contemporary Māori music. Since then, Waiata Anthems has evolved into a recognised brand and platform dedicated to celebrating and promoting waiata reo Māori.

[Continued on the following page]

**Please note that throughout this report, the terms "waiata reo Māori" and "waiata" are used interchangeably. For the purposes of this evaluation, both refer to waiata comprising at least 50% te reo Māori, or waiata classified as waiata reo Māori by recognised music sector organisations such as the NZ Music Commission.*

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Background and Context (cont.)

Working alongside Notable Pictures and Hiwa Productions, the initiative has produced a wide range of video content, funded by Te Māngai Pāho and supported by integrated marketing, social media and publicity campaigns. These have included artist spotlights, documentaries, coverage of songwriting camps and major events celebrating Māori music. Waiata Anthems has also delivered a range of special projects that have further strengthened the visibility, appreciation and legacy of waiata reo Māori in Aotearoa.

Aotearoa Songbook: A collection of 22 classic waiata, accompanied by professionally recorded audio and video, the Aotearoa Songbook was created as a teaching resource for schools, tertiary institutions, community groups and whānau. Featuring songs composed by some of our most revered Māori composers, the collection preserves a treasured musical legacy while making these waiata accessible to new generations.

Since its release, the Aotearoa Songbook has found a wide audience beyond the classroom, with the recordings achieving commercial success on the New Zealand music charts. It has become both an enduring educational resource and a contemporary celebration of Māori musical heritage, ensuring these timeless waiata continue to be performed, enjoyed and passed on.

Songwriting Camps: The ORO team delivers a range of songwriting initiatives designed to foster creative collaboration and develop waiata through the guidance of mātanga reo and music producers. These wānanga provide opportunities for artists to strengthen their songwriting skills, deepen their use of te reo Māori, and create new works that contribute to the evolving Māori music landscape.

Initiatives include Reo Māori SongHubs (Waimārama, Tāmaki and Pōneke), Kapa Haka SongHubs (Tūranganui-a-Kiwa and Waimārama), Kōkōtea (a songwriting wānanga for wāhine), Ipukarea (bringing together Māori, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander songwriters and producers), Māori x Cymraeg (Wales), Manu Taupunga, and Titotito 1 & 2 (Heretaunga). Together, these programmes nurture new talent, strengthen cultural and international connections, and support the creation of original waiata reo Māori.

Professional Development Programmes: The ORO team delivers a range of professional development initiatives designed to equip Māori music creatives with the knowledge, skills and networks needed to build sustainable careers. These programmes support artists and industry practitioners to navigate the New Zealand music sector, strengthen their creative practice, and pursue opportunities both nationally and internationally.



[Continued on the following page]

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Background and Context (cont.)

These include the Taumata Programme (artist development), Manu Tāiko (producer development), and Matakīrea (professional development for mātanga and kaitiaki reo). Together, these initiatives cultivate leadership, strengthen industry capability, and contribute to the long-term growth and success of Māori music and its creators.

Live Performance: APRA supports the production, promotion and presentation of live performance initiatives that showcase waiata reo Māori to audiences locally and globally. These include live concerts, broadcast and livestream productions, and performance opportunities that celebrate Māori music while creating meaningful platforms for artists to connect with new audiences.

Initiatives include 'Purapura Whetū – Stars of Matariki' (TVNZ and TikTok and funded by Te Mangāi Pāho), the 'Waiata Reo Māori Showcase' (Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air), 'Ake Ake Ake Infinity' sessions featuring artists Anna Coddington, Jordyn with a Why and Greatsouth, 'Waiata Anthems in Concert' with the Auckland Philharmonia; and 'Toitū te Reo', a Māori language symposium featuring panel discussions about waiata reo Māori and live performances. Together, these events strengthen the profile of Māori music, expand audience engagement, and provide valuable performance opportunities for Māori artists.

Music Export, International Festivals and Trade Shows: APRA invests in Māori artist participation at international music festivals and trade events, export initiatives, as well as creating opportunities to showcase waiata reo Māori on the world stage. The programmes strengthen international and Indigenous creative connections, build industry networks, expand global audiences, and position Māori music within the international music market.

Events include WOMEX (United Kingdom), SXSW (Sydney, funded by Te Māngai Pāho), BIGSOUND (Brisbane), WOMADelaide (Australia), WOMAD (South Africa), International Indigenous Music Summit (Canada), and Focus Wales. Together, these opportunities increase the international profile of Māori music, and open new pathways for Māori artists to develop sustainable careers and reach audiences around the world.

Bespoke Creation & Production Projects: The ORO team delivers projects to develop innovative collaborations, explore diverse musical genres, and unique presentations for broader audience reach. Projects include *Pokapū* (the translation and production of more than 50 songs from English into te reo Māori); SIX60 *(Pepeha);* the Te Tairāwhiti album (nine original waiata for East Coast kapa haka); Te Wehi and Hori Shaw *(Ready to Ride);* Corrella *(We Belong / Kua Kotahi Rā);* Stan Walker *(Back to the River / Ki Taku Awa);* Rob Ruha, Troy Kingi and Kaylee Bell *(Matariki Hunga Nui);* Nikau Grace *(He Aha te Aha* for ANZAC*);* the Taumata Programme single release 'Hine Mokemoke'; Pereri King *(Whiti Ana te Rā)*; '50 Years of Waiata' social media promotion in collaboration with Te Māngai Pāho; and the commissioning of orchestral and choral arrangements of contemporary waiata.

Our **methodology and approach** for evaluating the **outcomes** of these initiatives is presented on the following page.

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Methodology & Approach

Hinerauora: KPMG's Outcomes Realisation Methodology

In order to understand, define and measure the outcomes of waiata reo Māori, KPMG utilised Hinerauora to co-design an outcomes framework alongside APRA and Te Māngai Pāho.

Grounded in te ao Māori, Hinerauora recognises that outcomes have a whakapapa, shaped by connected activities, investments, relationships, and organisational purpose. For more information on KPMG's Hinerauora Methodology, please refer to Appendix 1.

Introduction to the Oro Framework

The evaluation framework Reo Oro, Reo Rangona, Reo Kōrero (the Oro Framework) was developed to describe the desired impact of all Māori programmes delivered by APRA (with the support of Te Māngai Pāho) on waiata reo Māori and its primary rauringa.

It seeks to understand how each rauringa rōpū (artists, mātanga reo, and audience) is impacted over time by waiata reo Māori, across:

- Rau Tipu (1 - 3 year outcomes)
- Rau Mātoro (3 - 6 year outcomes)
- Rau Ora (6 – 10+ year outcomes)

Through the gathering of experiences, stories and data from each rauringa rōpū, we have assessed where differing outcomes are currently positioned as well as identifying programme strengths, and recommendations for improvement. Further detail on how we map outcomes is provided on page 13.

Theory of Change – Te reo Māori

A theory of change (TOC) is a tool that supports our understanding of how change takes place. For this evaluation, we developed a supporting TOC that positions te reo Māori as the central kaupapa, and that seeks to understand how waiata reo Māori contributes to the revitalisation of te reo Māori.

The TOC reflects the role of waiata reo Māori in supporting reo revitalisation efforts, and alongside the Oro Framework, is aligned with findings from WAI 11 and the KoPA model. It illustrates the impact of waiata reo Māori as:

- From sound and vibration (reo oro);
- into heard language (reo rangona);
- into spoken language (reo kōrero);
- and ultimately into a living, thriving language (reo ora).

This reflects the depth of impact — from initial exposure through to active use and intergenerational vitality.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for the detailed TOC.



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Toru

3.0 Evaluation

Rauringa Outcome Realisation



"Ko te tino toa i konei ko te reo - he hua nui tērā"

- Rauringa

"The ultimate victor here, is the language – that is a great outcome"

Defining Outcomes and the Oro Framework

Defining Outcomes – How it works

Hinerauora recognises the many ways outcomes can manifest, and the many contributions that can help us to realise them. This approach underpins our understanding of how APRA's activities and programmes contribute to the range of outcomes and impact experienced by artists, mātanga reo and the audience, through waiata reo Māori.

A core component to our approach has been working with APRA and Te Māngai Pāho to understand how targeted resources and activities, such as funding, Waiata Anthems and SongHubs contribute to outcomes and impact, how these are experienced, and the timeframes over which they emerge. Through wānanga with APRA and Te Māngai Pāho, we created a framework for how these can be understood:

Development of the Oro Framework

On 23 March 2026, KPMG held an Outcomes Wānanga with APRA and Te Māngai Pāho to confirm the primary rauringa of waiata reo Māori – that is, those who create and experience the most material change:

1. **Artists** are the primary composers and voices of waiata, these rauringa comprise both emerging and established, Māori and non-Māori singers, songwriters, producers *(See Artists Outcomes Map in Appendix 2).*
2. **Mātanga reo** are engaged in every waiata reo Māori released, contributing through translation, composition, and guidance, acting as kaitiaki of te reo Māori, ensuring that increased exposure and use of reo Māori upholds te ao Māori and tikanga Māori appropriately *(See Mātanga reo Outcomes Map in Appendix 2).*
3. **Audience** are the listeners, learners, platforms and communities who engage with and share waiata reo Māori. In doing so, they contribute to how waiata are experienced, sustained, and carried forward over time *(See Audience Outcomes Map in Appendix 2).*

Each rauringa experiences the impacts of waiata reo Māori in different ways. To define these experiences, we co-designed outcomes maps that describe the pathways between APRA's activities and the outcomes experienced by each rōpū, illustrating how change is expected to occur (see **Figure 1**).

Development of the Outcomes Maps

Logic modelling helps us to describe how inputs and activities are expected to contribute to change over time. Together, APRA and KPMG mapped APRA's various initiatives, identifying the activities undertaken and the Rau Tipu (1-3 years), Rau Mātoro (3-6 years) and Rau Ora (6-10+ years) outcomes they are expected to generate.

These maps formed the foundation for the evaluation, providing a framework for gathering evidence to understand the value of APRA's activities, if the impact is happening, and what is making a difference and why.

Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative evidence, we assessed the extent to which each rauringa is experiencing these outcomes and positioned them across their respective outcomes areas.

The following pages present the findings for each rauringa and illustrate where evidence of change was observed across the outcomes pathways.

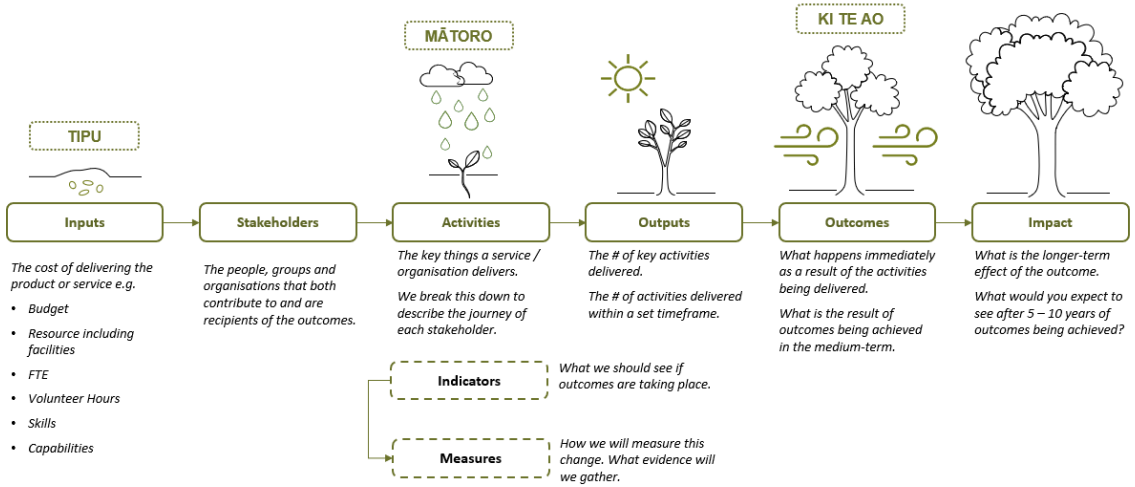


Figure 1. Hinerauora Outcomes Mapping Process

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Artist Outcomes

Rau Tipu 1-3 years | Rau Mātoro 3-6 years | Rau Ora 6-10+ years

Across all outcomes domains there is consistent evidence that APRA is supporting artist outcomes. Figure 2. presents the outcomes that were most consistently evidenced for artists, which are positioned predominantly within the outcome area of Rau Mātoro.

These outcomes capture the key areas of change APRA's waiata reo Māori activities are expected to benefit and support for artists. They are derived from the *full Artist Outcome Map (Appendix 2),* which describes the broader spectrum of outcomes anticipated for artists across Rau Tipu, Rau Mātoro, and Rau Ora, including:

- Greater confidence and number of artists performing and composing waiata reo Māori;
- Improved quality of waiata reo Māori, including increased skill level in relation to music production, and professionalism;
- Increased opportunities and success in the music industry; and
- Strengthened connection to te ao Māori, including cultural identity, belonging, and engagement with Māori culture.

While not every aspect of the Outcome Map is discussed individually here, the analysis focuses on where change was most apparent and APRA's contribution appears strongest. Based on interviews conducted between April – June 2026 with seven artists, KPMG identified the following outcomes:

> *"**Everything comes at a cost,** and its being able to give the most to the projects that can **best represent us**. Me 10 years ago couldn't handle me now, **and that's the growth**. Our people need that **so we can become who we're supposed to become**.* - Artist

Figure 2. Outcomes realised across artists

Confidence to perform and compose waiata reo Māori

- In terms of **composing waiata,** momentum in the waiata reo Māori space has primarily been driven by increased visibility and volume of waiata reo Māori, rather than a deeper shift toward innovation or creative depth.
- Artists are experiencing greater confidence to **perform waiata,** and increased cultural competence in their ahurea Māori, with some artists finding greater autonomy and confidence to compose original waiata reo Māori

Shift in artist and audience profile

- Artists experience increasing recognition and engagement from **diverse audiences** (beyond Māori and domestic).
- Artists are gaining greater **credibility and momentum** in the waiata reo Māori community.

Growth in sustainability and success

- **Growing opportunities, connections, and exposure** have helped waiata reo Māori artists — albeit to varying extents — strengthen their momentum, credibility, and sustainability in the industry compared to before their involvement with APRA.

Connection to Māoritanga

- **Artists are strengthening their connection to te ao Māori,** whakapapa and ahurea, notably through learning te reo Māori and building connections with other Māori creatives.

Key strengths and areas of impact

APRA is realising a majority of Rau Mātoro outcomes in confidence, a shift in their artist and audience profile, and growth in their sustainability and success, with emerging signs of Rau Ora cultural impact.

The concentration of Rau Mātoro outcomes for artists indicates that APRA's kaupapa is contributing to outcomes beyond initial participation and capability-building. Artists commonly described increased confidence to perform waiata reo Māori, stronger connections to te reo Māori and other Māori creatives, and growing audience engagement and opportunities. Artists also demonstrated Rau Ora outcomes within te reo Māori, te ao Māori, and whakapapa, consistently describing a desire to deepen their connection through formal learning and immersion pathways. Importantly, artists described these shifts as enduring beyond their direct involvement with APRA initiatives, suggesting that the cultural transformation experienced is sustained.

Emerging indicators of longer-term impact

Commercial sustainability outcomes are an emerging area of Rau Ora impact: Current Rau Mātoro outcomes relating to long-term commercial sustainability independent of external funding show emerging signs of Rau Ora impact, however are less consistently evidenced through this evaluation. While these outcomes were most evident among a small number of artists further along in their artistic journeys, they reflected that achieving this level of sustainability required sustained investment and support over time.

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Mātanga Reo Outcomes

Rau Tipu 1-3 years | **Rau Mātoro** 3-6 years | **Rau Ora** 6-10+ years

Across all outcomes domains there is consistent evidence that APRA is supporting mātanga reo outcomes. Figure 3. presents the outcomes that were most consistently evidenced for mātanga reo throughout this evaluation, which we have positioned predominantly within the outcome area of Rau Mātoro.

These outcomes capture the key areas of change APRA's waiata reo Māori activities are expected to contribute to for mātanga reo. They are derived from the full *Mātanga Reo Outcome Map (Appendix 2),* which describes the broader spectrum of outcomes anticipated for mātanga reo across Rau Tipu, Rau Mātoro, and Rau Ora, including:

- Increased grammatical accuracy and use of reo and metaphoric conventions in reo Māori;
- Improved creative, linguistic and cultural integrity of reo Māori used within waiata reo Māori;
- Increased number waiata reo Māori being released and number of mātanga reo annually;
- Greater normalisation and exposure of te reo Māori through waiata; and
- Strengthened connection to te ao Māori, including cultural identity, belonging, and engagement with Māori culture.

While not every aspect of the Outcome Map is discussed individually here, the analysis focuses on where change was most apparent and APRA's contribution appears strongest. Based on interviews conducted between April – June 2026 with five mātanga reo, KPMG identified the following outcomes:

> *"**Socially,** where the language is has **not met up to** where **creatively** we can create."* – Mātanga reo

Figure 3. Outcomes realised across mātanga reo

Quality of waiata reo Māori as an artform

- **There are mixed views** on whether the quality of waiata reo Māori is higher. Creativity and innovation are emerging, though perceptions of 'quality' remain inherently subjective.
- **Mātanga reo** commonly voiced that they prioritised intent and integrity of the waiata during the creative process, and balance this alongside other considerations, such as how different uses of te reo may resonate with audiences who have varying levels of reo proficiency.

Visibility and exposure of waiata reo Māori

- Mātānga reo have seen **increased iwi and rohe-specific waiata** being released.
- There is **increased exposure of waiata reo Māori** within media and public spaces, e.g. mainstream radio, television, streaming platforms.
- Some mātanga reo have also observed waiata reo Māori to be emerging across **diverse music genres** and being celebrated by listeners beyond traditional audiences (Māori, domestic).

Growth in commercial and economic opportunities

- **Sustainability of and opportunities** for waiata reo Māori and mātanga reo have increased.
- APRA have reported that the **number of mātanga reo** involved in commercial compositions has increased from 7 to 22 since 2018.

Māori outcomes

- Mātanga reo are proud of the **increased visibility** of waiata reo Māori and the role this plays in the **revitalisation of te reo Māori,** and in connection to whakapapa.

Key strengths and areas of impact

APRA is realising strong Rau Mātoro outcomes in the growth and visibility of waiata reo Māori and mātanga reo.

Evidence points to sustained growth in the visibility and volume of waiata reo Māori, alongside an increased number of mātanga reo contributing to APRA's initiatives. Together, these represent a strong area of momentum identified through the evaluation for this cohort.

The placement of waiata quality within **Rau Tipu** reflects perceptions that, while waiata has played a significant role in the revitalisation and normalisation of te reo Māori, contemporary waiata reo Māori remains a developing artform. Questions relating to innovation, quality, and the distinction between kōrero Māori and waiata reo Māori continue to be explored by mātanga reo.

Emerging opportunities for broader impact

There was less evidence that outcomes for waiata reo Māori and mātanga reo have yet to translate into wider Rau Ora impacts across te reo Māori revitalisation or reo enhancement.

For example, the evaluation did not identify evidence that this kaupapa is contributing to **Rau Ora** outcomes such as increased grammatical accuracy, a greater number of conversational reo speakers, or strengthened connections to whakapapa and te ao Māori among the wider population.

As these initiatives continue, mātanga reo expressed a desire to see continued focus and investment in the evolution of waiata and integrity of the processes that support it.

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Audience Outcomes

Rau Tipu 1-3 years | **Rau Mātoro** 3-6 years | **Rau Ora** 6-10+ years

Across all outcomes domains there is consistent evidence that APRA is supporting audience outcomes. Figure 4. presents the outcomes that were most consistently evidenced for audiences throughout this evaluation, which we have positioned predominantly between Rau Tipu and Rau Mātoro.

These outcomes capture the key areas of change APRA's waiata reo Māori activities are expected to contribute to for audiences. They are derived from the full *Audience Outcome Map (Appendix 2),* which describes the broader spectrum of outcomes anticipated for audiences across Rau Tipu, Rau Mātoro, and Rau Ora, including:

- Increased accessibility, awareness, and exposure to waiata reo Māori;
- Strengthened cultural capital, including cultural pride and connection to te ao Māori, whakapapa and ahurea; and
- Increased representation and reach of waiata reo Māori.

While not every aspect of the Outcome Map is discussed individually here, the analysis focuses on where change was most apparent and APRA's contribution appears strongest. Based on the survey administered from 22 June to 15 July 2026 (2.5 weeks) and a group interview conducted on 9 July 2026, KPMG identified the following outcomes:

> ***"If te reo Māori was strengthened then waiata reo Māori would be strengthened."*** – Focus group participant

Figure 4. Outcomes realised across audiences

Quality of waiata reo Māori and enhancement as an artform

- **Perceptions of the quality** of contemporary waiata reo Māori are mixed.
- **Waiata reo Māori** is being increasingly recognised in awards.
- **Waiata reo Māori** is becoming increasingly visible across a range of genres.

Visibility and exposure of waiata reo Māori

- **Awareness of waiata reo Māori** is growing, particularly through streaming services and social media.

Growth in engagement

- **Waiata reo Māori** has secured a growing and sustained position within Aotearoa's music landscape.

Cultural pride and connection to te ao Māori

- **Greater visibility of waiata reo Māori** is a source of cultural pride and connection, particularly for those who grew up at a time when te reo Māori was rarely heard outside of Māori contexts.

Key strengths and areas of impact

Audience outcomes are concentrated between Rau Tipu and Rau Mātoro, reflecting the growing visibility, reach, and normalisation of waiata reo Māori.

Evidence consistently points to increasing awareness and visibility of waiata reo Māori, supported by its growing presence across genres, streaming platforms, social media and public spaces. Greater visibility is also contributing to cultural pride and connection for some listeners.

The positioning of waiata quality within **Rau Tipu** reflects the relatively early stage of contemporary waiata reo Māori as an evolving artform. While recognition and visibility continue to grow, perspectives on quality remain varied. Audience respondents frequently linked their perceptions of quality to the current state of te reo Māori revitalisation and its ongoing normalisation within Aotearoa. Audience outcomes therefore appear to be influenced not only by individual waiata, but also by the continued maturation of waiata reo Māori as an artform and the broader revitalisation context of which it forms part.

Emerging indicators of longer-term impact

The limited evidence of Rau Ora outcomes does not necessarily reflect a lack of impact, but rather the current stage of the wider revitalisation journey.

While audience members described increased cultural pride, connection, and engagement, there was insufficient evidence to indicate that these outcomes have yet translated into widespread shifts across the wider population in reo use, engagement with te ao Māori, or strengthened cultural capital. Similarly, while some artists perceived that waiata reo Māori is reaching increasingly diverse audiences, there was little quantitative evidence publicly available to validate this view through the evaluation.

The findings suggest that audience outcomes are likely to continue evolving alongside the growth and maturation of waiata reo Māori and the wider reo revitalisation ecosystem, given their interconnected nature.

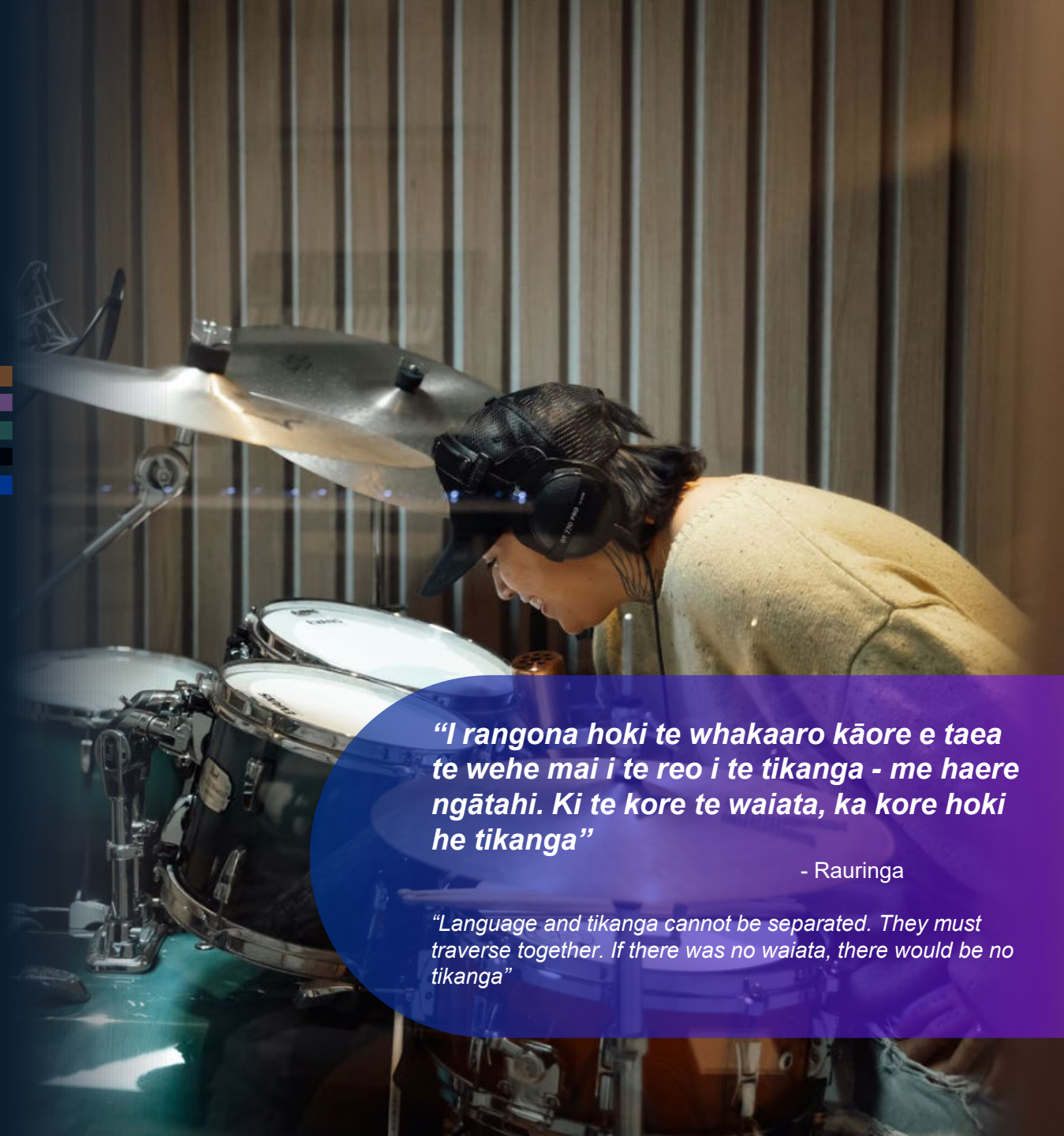
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Toru

3.1 Evaluation

Detailed Findings



“I rangona hoki te whakaaro kāore e taea te wehe mai i te reo i te tikanga - me haere ngātahi. Ki te kore te waiata, ka kore hoki he tikanga”

- Rauringa

“Language and tikanga cannot be separated. They must traverse together. If there was no waiata, there would be no tikanga”

Outcome 1:

Waiata reo Māori is helping expand the reach and normalisation of te reo Māori

"As a mother of a child whose first language is te reo Māori, ***it's hard to fully express how powerful it is for him to hear his reo reflected in the music he listens to and sings along with every day****. His language isn't just something he uses to communicate with his parents —* ***it's alive*** *in the songs he loves, the television shows he watches, and the movies he enjoys."*

– Survey respondent

Strengths

1 Waiata is a vehicle for normalising te reo Māori

Waiata was often described by artists and audience alike as a low-pressure tool or 'universal language' that reaches people in ways formal education often cannot. They attributed this to the fact that it does not require commitment to a wānanga or kaupapa to be able to learn pronunciation, as one participant reflected, "***it reaches people in ways that a classroom doesn't. It allows them to feel something, not just learn something***."

Participants also observed a noticeable shift in the visibility and normalisation of waiata reo Māori beyond traditional spaces of Māori language transmission. Contemporary waiata reo Māori is increasingly extending beyond its own "Māori music" genre, with waiata reo Māori emerging across genres of heavy metal (*Alien Weaponry*), drum and bass (*Mokotron*), neo-soul (*Jordyn with a Why*, *MĀ*), and country *(Marlon Williams)*.

Further, streaming data also suggests that a relatively small group of artists have played a prominent role in sustaining the reach of waiata reo Māori. Stan Walker (*Aotearoa, Tua, Māori Ki Te Ao*) and Six60 (*Kia Mau Ki Tō Ūkaipō, Pepeha*) feature across multiple long-performing tracks, while Te Matatini (*Te Ata Māhina, Kei Wareware i a Tātou*) appears among several of the more recent highly-streamed waiata. This pattern may indicate the important role of artists with established audiences and platforms in broadening exposure to waiata reo Māori.

For most participants, this has contributed to te reo Māori becoming part of everyday listening habits in ways not previously possible, including through greater presence on mainstream media and public spaces. Artists linked this growth to their increasing ability to produce waiata, develop creatively, and continue evolving their artistic expression, developments they credited to APRA's support.

2 Waiata is inseparable from te reo Māori and tikanga

The evaluation found strong evidence that waiata reo Māori is understood as inseparable from te reo Māori and tikanga Māori, with participants describing engagement with waiata as a pathway into both. This was reflected not only in how waiata is heard and experienced, but also in how it is created.

Both artists and mātanga reo viewed waiata reo Māori as a kaupapa grounded in te ao Māori, whanaungatanga, and care for the integrity of both te reo and the wider revitalisation kaupapa. Reflections include clear evidence that tikanga is not just an add-on to waiata reo Māori, but part of how waiata are created, with tikanga such as karakia, mihimihi and wānanga shaping the composition process itself.

At the same time, some aspects of the process were initially an experience of whakamā or were challenging for those who had less cultural capability and confidence, especially when initially engaging in the process. However, all artists described these challenges as part of a broader learning process, with ongoing participation appearing to strengthen their understanding and engagement with it.

This finding was also reflected among audiences, who viewed waiata as a way to reinforce the presence and relevance of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori across different settings and contexts. Some audience respondents described turning to waiata as a source of guidance on te reo Māori, particularly for pronunciation and language use.

In the same vein, even survey respondents who expressed less favourable views toward te reo Māori, reported hearing more waiata in the last six years. While these respondents were not actively seeking to engage with waiata and te reo Māori, their experiences indicate that waiata reo Māori is becoming more visible and reaching audiences beyond those already engaged with the kaupapa.

Opportunities for Improvement

1 Explore partnerships with other stakeholders within te ao Māori and the wider waiata reo Māori ecosystem

While the evaluation found strong evidence that waiata reo Māori supports the visibility and normalisation of te reo Māori and tikanga, artists and audience respondents highlighted the importance of maintaining strong connections to iwi, hapū, kaumātua and rangatahi as those who hold, nurture, and pass on this knowledge.

Focus group participants also identified opportunities to explore stronger iwi and hapū support mechanisms for artists, including greater access to cultural support structures. This highlights how the long-term stewardship of te reo Māori, tikanga and mātauranga Māori through waiata sits much more broadly than APRA. As one audience respondent noted, ***"We need kaitiaki there to make sure our artists are being watched out for. We can't have them going out to represent te ao Māori and we're not there to tautoko them."***

Further detail on potential approaches for building connections is provided in **Recommendation 1 on page 24**.

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Outcome 2:

APRA's initiatives are helping grow and strengthen the waiata reo Māori ecosystem

*"It's **miharo** to know that in 2026 **you can actually be a Māori and platform yourself as tangata kōrero Māori**, tangata i tipu mai i roto i te reo Māori, and **there is a space for you** in the actual music industry."*

– Mātanga reo

Strengths

1 Artists are becoming increasingly confident as representatives of te ao Māori

Participation in APRA's waiata reo Māori initiatives was specifically noted by the majority of artists to have "***ignited something within them***", shaping both their Māori and artistic identities. While some artists indicated they would have pursued their aspirations for waiata reo Māori regardless, they noted that APRA's investment and support has enabled them to progress faster than would have otherwise been possible. This has translated into greater confidence to perform waiata reo Māori for all artists, and for a small number of artists, also compose original waiata reo Māori.

Themes of reclamation featured strongly throughout conversations, particularly in relation to contemporary waiata reflecting and resonating with urban Māori and indigenous experiences. Artists also noted the role of waiata reo rua (waiata with less than 50% reo content) in broadening audience reach, creating accessible entry points for wider audiences to engage with te reo and te ao Māori.

2 Mātanga reo are cultural and creative partners in the process

Acting as kaitiaki of te reo throughout the creative process, the contribution of mātanga reo extends beyond translation or language advice to shaping the intent, meaning, and cultural integrity of waiata while supporting artists to engage authentically with te reo Māori.

Both artists and mātanga reo described the role as requiring a combination of reo expertise, collaborative skills, and musical capability to ensure waiata are both culturally grounded and musically compelling. Mātanga reo also carry enduring responsibility for the integrity of waiata long after their creation.

3 Mahi tahi is a natural enabler and outcome of waiata reo Māori

Mahi tahi (teamwork) emerged as a defining feature of the waiata reo Māori experience. Artists often described a desire to avoid working in isolation and expressed genuine appreciation for the kete of collaborators that support the waiata creation process, including mātanga reo, APRA kaimahi, and other creatives. Both artists and mātanga reo highlighted the importance of trusted relationships, noting that existing connections often facilitated participation in the kaupapa.

Further, artists commonly attributed the alignment between themselves and mātanga reo being a key contributor to what they deemed as "high-quality" waiata, with some participants viewing the collaborative process itself as an indicator of quality. In all cases, these bonds transcended the studio and developed into personal connections.

The theme of mahi tahi also extended beyond the creative process. Across interviews, focus group, and survey responses, participants described waiata as a uniquely accessible and unifying medium that brings people together and creates opportunities for connection.

Opportunities for improvement

1 Strengthen pathways into waiata creation and capability development

Participation in APRA's initiatives was frequently noted as being enabled through existing relationships and trusted networks. While this relational approach was viewed as a key strength of the model, it may be unintentionally perceived as a barrier to participation for emerging artists and mātanga reo who do not yet have established connections within the industry. Artists and audience respondents noted a desire to see increased accessibility into APRA's kaupapa, particularly as some participants have recognised the potential of rangatahi who are engaged in kapa haka and wharekura to grow into this space.

2 Tailor support to maximise meaningful participation

While SongHubs and wānanga were widely regarded as valuable and impactful, participants noted that artists enter these with varying levels of reo capability, industry experience, confidence, and understanding of the process. Some reflected that these initiatives could benefit from a more intentional approach to participant selection and support. This would ensure participants are entering spaces that reflect their artistic aspirations and stage of development, recognising that emerging and established artists have different needs and pathways for growth.

As such, there may be opportunities to more strategically align the design of SongHubs and wānanga with the differing needs, capabilities and aspirations of participating artists. A more intentional approach to participant composition and support may help maximise the value of these spaces, ensuring artists are able to contribute meaningfully while accessing the support most relevant to their needs.

Potential approaches to addressing these opportunities are outlined in **Recommendations 2.1 and 2.2 on page 24.**

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Outcome 3:

Waiata reo Māori is supporting cultural connection and pathways to reclamation

*"**I've stepped into myself** through waiata reo Māori. It's allowed me to be stronger, be more confident, and **give permission and power to other people to do the same things**."*

– Artist

Strengths

1 Waiata reo Māori resonates through its uniquely Māori perspective

Several of the most-streamed waiata reo Māori since 2021 (See Appendix 5) are characterised by strong grounding in te ao Māori, including uniquely Māori concepts and perspectives (e.g. *Tōrea; Poi E*), themes of identity and belonging (*35; Aotearoa*), and references to whakapapa and cultural identity (*Pepeha; Tōku Reo Tōku Ohooho; Kia Mau Ki Tō Ūkaipō*).

The sustained streaming performance of these waiata reo Māori is consistent with broader evidence that audiences experience waiata reo Māori as a source of cultural connection. Additionally, the selection of *Poi E* as the number one song in RNZ's Waiata 100[1] list provides a contemporary indicator of the unique cultural status and ongoing relevance of waiata reo Māori within Aotearoa.

This is supported by survey respondents, with some citing that waiata are a uniquely Aotearoa taonga and 92% agreeing that waiata are an important part of Aotearoa's cultural landscape. One focus group participant noted on the value of waiata reo Māori lying in how much it should "***feel Māori just as much as it sounds Māori.***"

2 Waiata reo Māori supports deeper engagement with te ao Māori

The evaluation found that waiata reo Māori, particularly through the Waiata Anthems and SongHubs processes, is contributing to processes of cultural reclamation among most artists interviewed. They described waiata reo Māori as a vehicle through which they re-engaged with te reo Māori and their Māoritanga.

While artists entered APRA's initiatives from a range of starting points, many described the collaborative process of creating waiata reo Māori as both personally and culturally transformative. The process of working alongside mātanga reo and engaging with the aspects of te ao Māori underpinning waiata in a collaborative and creative way appeared to support deeper forms of cultural connection than language engagement alone. Several artists described feeling challenged and inspired through the process, with some reflecting that waiata reo Māori had "***led them home***."

3 Waiata reo Māori resonates beyond Aotearoa

The evaluation found evidence that the strength of waiata reo Māori is valued not only in its role as a taonga within Aotearoa, but also in its ability to resonate with international audiences. Artists commonly described strong international curiosity about te reo Māori and Māori culture, noting that waiata reo Māori often connects with their international audiences regardless of whether they understand the language itself.

This was also reflected in survey and focus group findings, where some participants suggested waiata reo Māori often gains greater recognition at home once it has been acknowledged internationally. Focus group participants highlighted the recent inclusion of a waiata tawhito *(Pō Atarau)* in the movie *Project Hail Mary* with the waiata reportedly selected to reflect "***the richness of global music and the shared human experience***"[2].

Together, these examples suggest that the international impact of waiata reo Māori is driven by its uniquely Māori character. While streaming performance provides one measure of engagement, the findings indicate that its broader value also lies in its role as a cultural taonga that can foster connection.

Opportunities for Improvement

1 Consider how contemporary waiata can endure as cultural touchstones

Some mātanga reo reflected on the *haepapa nui* (significant responsibility) associated with releasing waiata that authentically reflects te ao Māori. They noted that contemporary waiata often have relatively shorter lifespans than waiata tawhito, which have been passed down through generations. This perspective aligns with audience respondents who described waiata as a taonga for future generations and expressed an expectation that today's waiata may become the legacy waiata of tomorrow.

Thus, there may be opportunity to further consider how contemporary waiata reo Māori can be supported to endure as cultural touchstones that continue to connect future generations with te reo Māori, te ao Māori, and whakapapa. Sustaining the authenticity, visibility and relevance of contemporary waiata may strengthen its impact on long-term cultural connection and reclamation.

These reflections inform **Recommendation 3 on page 25**, which presents key considerations for how this opportunity might be progressed.

1. Bollinger, N. (2026). *Waiata 100: The story behind New Zealand's number one song.* **Source:** https://www.rnz.co.nz/life/music/waiata-100-the-story-behind-new-zealand-s-number-one-song Accessed 20 July 2026.
2. Casey, A. (2026). *How 'Pō Atarau' made it all the way to Ryan Gosling's Project Hail Mary.* **Source:** https://thespinoff.co.nz/pop-culture/26-03-2026/how-po-atarau-made-it-all-the-way-to-ryan-goslings-project-hail-mary?sfnsn=wa Accessed 20 July 2026

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Outcome 4:

Waiata reo Māori is gaining visibility, reach and recognition

*"We need to **aim higher than just keeping the reo alive.** We should be aiming for **excellence, impact, and wider reach."***

– Mātanga reo

Strengths

1 Waiata reo Māori listenership, engagement and awareness is growing

Artists noted that releasing waiata reo rua helped expand their audience reach, creating pathways to engage listeners who may not otherwise engage with waiata reo Māori. This was reflected in survey findings, with respondents overwhelmingly (90%) reporting greater awareness of waiata reo Māori than six years ago. Audience respondents overall consistently describing greater exposure to waiata reo Māori through streaming platforms, social media, and public spaces beyond traditional spaces of Māori language transmission.

Quantitative evidence demonstrates growing listenership and engagement, with several waiata reo Māori demonstrating sustained chart performance over extended periods (see Appendix 5). This suggests audiences continue returning to these waiata long after their initial release. Collaborative releases also feature prominently among charting waiata reo Māori, suggesting collaboration may be an important driver of charting performance.

2 The revitalisation movement benefits from both legacy and contemporary waiata

While contemporary waiata was often compared with waiata tawhito, the evaluation found participants recognised the distinct value that each brings to the revitalisation movement.

Waiata tawhito were widely revered for their cultural significance, longevity, and role in carrying mātauranga across generations. At the same time, survey respondents and artists reflected on how contemporary waiata resonates with the experiences of many urban Māori and provides additional pathways for cultural connection, expression, and engagement.

These findings suggest that contemporary and legacy waiata serve distinct yet complementary roles, with both contributing to the continued relevance, accessibility, and evolution of te reo Māori and Māori culture through waiata.

Opportunities for improvement

1 Define and formalise the focus on quality in waiata reo Māori

The evaluation found that one of the most contested issues across all rauringa was the definition and perception of "high-quality" waiata. While quality was widely regarded as important, there was little consensus on how it should be defined or assessed. This was further reflected in several perceptions of "high-quality" and "low-quality" waiata not consistently aligning with quantitative indicators such as streaming performance or industry awards.

This, in part, appears to reflect the relative infancy of contemporary waiata reo Māori as an artform. Audience respondents and mātanga reo frequently compared contemporary waiata with waiata tawhito and legacy waiata, with some viewing contemporary waiata as lower quality by comparison.

Discussions with mātanga reo and focus group participants also highlighted that perceptions of quality often extended beyond the finished waiata itself. For some, quality was reflected in the process of creation, including the depth of collaboration between artists and mātanga reo, the incorporation of tikanga throughout the creative process, and the extent to which the reo, narratives and concepts reflected te ao Māori values and ways of understanding the world. In this view, the quality of a waiata was determined by the integrity of the relationships, cultural processes and reo that shaped its creation: ***"[Nā te] Mahi tahi a ngā kaitoi me ngā mātanga reo, i puta te whakaaro he tino pai ngā hua inā ū tonu te reo ki te kaupapa matua."*** – *"through working together, the thinking emerged that the best outcomes are achieved when te reo Māori comes first".*

Despite differing perspectives, participants were united in their desire to prioritise quality over quantity. The findings suggest a need to define how quality of waiata reo Māori should be understood, assessed, and developed within a modern revitalisation context. Further, discussions with focus groups and mātanga reo suggest there is an opportunity to articulate a clearer long-term aspiration for waiata reo Māori, balancing goals for language revitalisation with aspirations for excellence, cultural impact, and creative innovation in waiata.

A proposed structured approach to defining and formalising the focus on quality is detailed in **Recommendation 4 on page 25.**

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Outcome 5:

Investment and revitalisation efforts are supporting the progression of waiata reo Māori

*"**We all play our parts** in carrying mātauranga forward. Our artists are part of that."*

– Focus group participant

Strengths

1 Impact is strengthened when support reflects artists' needs

The evaluation found a common view among all rauringa that the impact of waiata reo Māori depends not only on the availability of support, but also on the type of support provided and how it is delivered.

Participants consistently described funding, creative support, and cultural support structures as important enablers of impact, alongside sufficient capability and resources needed to develop and produce waiata. The involvement of mātanga reo was also viewed across all rauringa as critical to ensuring cultural safety throughout the process.

Varied artist and mātanga reo experiences across SongHubs suggest that impact is greatest when support such as funding, participation in SongHubs, and alignment with mātanga reo reflects artists' readiness, experience, and reo capability. Notably, artists experiencing strong indicators of impact (commercial success, cultural competency and confidence) were those who described feeling well supported across most dimensions of APRA's initiatives.

2 Contemporary waiata reflect today's context

Some mātanga reo observed a tension between producing waiata with highly sophisticated or grammatically precise reo and creating waiata that are readily accessible and resonate with audiences. Several noted that waiata reflect the context and circumstances of their time, and that as reo and tikanga evolve, so too does waiata. In this sense, just as waiata tāwhito reflected the realities of earlier generations, contemporary waiata reflect the lived experiences of Māori today: ***"Ko te titiro whakamua, me hāngai tonu ki ngā āhuatanga o te wā."*** *– "The vision is to keep creating to reflect the realities of the time."*

This perspective was echoed by artists, who frequently described waiata as a space for healing, reclamation, and empowerment. As one artist reflected, contemporary waiata ***"feel like [urban Māori] and feel like the background of their lives. There's a flow in having two worlds: the reconnecting world and also being a part of the world where you have to go to work. We chop and change between them."*** Further, several survey respondents also noted that contemporary waiata will serve as a record of this period of revitalisation.

Overall, contemporary waiata itself and its continued growth were viewed as both a product of and contributor to the wider revitalisation movement. Participants regarded it as an important step in the direction of revitalisation and part of the same whakapapa line as waiata tāwhito.

Opportunities for Improvement

1 Strengthen alignment between investment and impact

Building on the finding that investment influences impact, participants noted that expectations regarding the quality and impact of waiata can at times exceed the level of resourcing available to support their development. This was particularly evident where artists were balancing creative aspirations with practical and financial realities.

Several participants also highlighted that the way support is delivered matters, noting that accessible funding can unlock opportunities, while the opposite can create barriers, such as navigating funding settings that could limit flexibility in who they collaborate with and how creative resources are applied. Some noted that this at times required significant self-advocacy and administrative effort that could detract from the creative process.

As artists progress and expectations of quality increase, participants would like to see the level and nature of support matching the growing complexity and cost of producing high-quality waiata.

Key activities to help strengthen this alignment are presented in **Recommendation 5 on page 26.**

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Whā

Recommendations



“Ki te whakamāori kupu noa iho, ka memeha te wairua. Engari mā te noho tahi me te kaitito ka taea te pupuri te ngako o te kōrero”

- Rauringa

“If you just translate words, the spirit fades. But if you sit with the artist, you can holdfast to the essence of what they are saying”

Recommendations

Overall, APRA's kaupapa and investment in waiata reo Māori is realising positive outcomes and generating strong momentum. Feedback from rauringa highlighted opportunities to further strengthen the relationships, pathways and support structures that underpin its success. The recommendations below are drawn directly from rauringa feedback and are designed to enhance, rather than redirect, initiatives that are already delivering meaningful outcomes.

Outcome	Opportunity for improvement	Recommendations
Waiata reo Māori is helping expand the reach and normalisation of te reo Māori	While the evaluation found strong evidence that waiata reo Māori supports the visibility and normalisation of te reo Māori and tikanga, artists and audience respondents highlighted the importance of maintaining strong connections to iwi, hapū, kaumātua and rangatahi as those who hold, nurture, and pass on this knowledge. Focus group participants also identified opportunities to explore stronger iwi and hapū support mechanisms for artists, including greater access to cultural support structures. This highlights how the long-term stewardship of te reo Māori, tikanga and mātauranga Māori through waiata sits much more broadly than APRA. As one audience respondent noted, **"*We need kaitiaki there to make sure our artists are being watched out for. We can't have them going out to represent te ao Māori and we're not there to tautoko them*."**	**1.1. Explore partnerships with other stakeholders within te ao Māori and the wider waiata reo Māori ecosystem.** This could look like: 1. Exploring opportunities/partnerships with iwi and hapū to identify where they wish to contribute to waiata development and distribution, and where their contribution could have the greatest impact. 2. Specific regional and/or iwi based wānanga between iwi, hapū, artists and mātanga reo to explore the way in which contemporary waiata reo Māori can contribute to, and reflect, iwi and hapū based aspirations for te reo Māori, tikanga and identity. This feedback came predominantly from artists and audiences, expressing the possible alignment between contemporary waiata reo Māori aspirations and hapū/iwi/marae cultural aspirations; for example, if an iwi, hapū or marae want to grow the number of future te reo Māori speakers, how can artists, APRA and mātanga reo support this. Rauringa noted the significant coordinated effort currently. The exploration of iwi, hapū and marae partnerships may advance reo revitalisation and waiata quality over time.
APRA's initiatives are helping grow and strengthen the waiata reo Māori ecosystem	Participation in APRA's initiatives was frequently noted as being enabled through existing relationships and trusted networks. While this relational approach was viewed as a key strength of the model, it may be unintentionally perceived as a barrier to participation for emerging artists and mātanga reo who do not yet have established connections within the industry. Artists and audience respondents noted a desire to see increased accessibility into APRA's kaupapa, particularly as some participants have recognised the potential of rangatahi who are engaged in kapa haka and wharekura to grow into this space.	**2.1 Strengthen pathways into waiata creation and capability development.** This could include: 1. Building visible pathways for emerging artists to connect to APRA's kaupapa. Emerging artists may be rangatahi (young people) but may also be artists who simply aren't aware of APRAs programmes. 2. Exploring pathways within existing kaupapa Māori environments, such as kapa haka, wharekura, kura kaupapa Māori, wānanga and other reo-rich environments. These are opportunities to identify emerging talent and increase visibility of opportunities in the music industry. Throughout the evaluation, artists and mātanga reo frequently noted that their involvement in APRA's waiata reo Māori kaupapa was enabled through relationships with key people within the APRA team. Whilst this has been highlighted as a strength of the kaupapa, we recommend reviewing how the relationships and pathways that currently support participation can continue to grow and endure over time.
	While SongHubs and wānanga were widely regarded as valuable and impactful, participants noted that artists enter these with varying levels of reo capability, industry experience, confidence, and understanding of the process. Some reflected that these initiatives could benefit from a more intentional approach to participant selection and support. This would ensure participants are entering spaces that reflect their artistic aspirations and stage of development, recognising that emerging and established artists have different needs and pathways for growth. As such, there may be opportunities to more strategically align the design of SongHubs and wānanga with the differing needs, capabilities and aspirations of participating artists. A more intentional approach to participant composition and support may help maximise the value of these spaces, ensuring artists are able to contribute meaningfully while accessing the support most relevant to their needs.	**2.2. Tailor support to maximise meaningful participation, by:** 1. Developing a more strategic participant selection framework that considers reo capability, industry experience, confidence, development goals and artistic potential, alongside the strategic objectives of each initiative. 2. Carrying this framework through in how initiative such as SongHubs are designed and structured. We recommend taking a strategic approach to each participant's development journey by considering where they are now, the impact they seek to achieve, how this aligns with APRA's vision, and the support required to get there. This would help ensure participants are matched to the most appropriate opportunities and that each investment is aligned with clear, intended outcomes.

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Recommendations (cont.)

Engagement with rauringa reflected a shared aspiration not only to grow waiata reo Māori, but to ensure it continues to endure, resonate and be supported by a clear and intentional focus on quality over time.

Outcome	Opportunity for improvement	Recommendations
Waiata reo Māori is supporting cultural connection and pathways to reclamation	Some mātanga reo reflected on the *haepapa nui* (significant responsibility) associated with releasing waiata that authentically reflects te ao Māori. They noted that contemporary waiata often have relatively short lifespans than waiata tawhito, which have been passed down through generations. This perspective aligns with audience respondents who described waiata as a taonga for future generations and expressed an expectation that today's waiata may become the legacy waiata of tomorrow. Thus, there may be opportunity to further consider how contemporary waiata reo Māori can be supported to endure as cultural touchstones that continue to connect future generations with te reo Māori, te ao Māori, and whakapapa. Sustaining the authenticity, visibility and relevance of contemporary waiata may strengthen its impact on long-term cultural connection and reclamation.	**3. Consider how contemporary waiata can endure as cultural touchstones, including:** 1. Developing alongside mātanga reo, what characteristics, support mechanisms and distribution pathways contribute to waiata remaining visible, relevant and meaningful across generations. 2. Following discussions with mātanga reo, developing a set of uara/principles that define the characteristics associated with enduring waiata, ensuring all of APRAs activities and programmes align with these principles, whilst preserving artistic autonomy. 3. Exploring with artists how commercial success can be achieved alongside APRA objectives towards reo Māori revitalisation, audience growth and waiata quality. While APRA can't (and shouldn't) shape what artists choose to create, they could be more intentional about how they support waiata remaining meaningful over time. Whilst not every waiata needs to be a legacy waiata, there may be merit in considering the characteristics that carry forward aspects of traditional waiata, which have been used to capture and pass on mātauranga, culture, and creativity across generations.
Waiata reo Māori is gaining visibility, reach and recognition	The evaluation found that one of the most contested issues across all rauringa was the definition and perception of "high-quality" waiata. While quality was widely regarded as important, there was little consensus on how it should be defined or assessed. This was further reflected in several perceptions of "high-quality" and "low-quality" waiata not consistently aligning with quantitative indicators such as streaming performance or industry awards. This, in part, appears to reflect the relative infancy of contemporary waiata reo Māori as an artform. Audience respondents and mātanga reo frequently compared contemporary waiata with waiata tawhito and legacy waiata, with some viewing contemporary waiata as lower quality by comparison. Discussions with mātanga reo and focus group participants also highlighted that perceptions of quality often extended beyond the finished waiata itself. For some, quality was reflected in the process of creation, including the depth of collaboration between artists and mātanga reo, the incorporation of tikanga throughout the creative process, and the extent to which the reo, narratives and concepts reflected te ao Māori values and ways of understanding the world. In this view, the quality of a waiata was determined by the integrity of the relationships, cultural processes and reo that shaped its creation: ***"[Nā te] mahi tahi a ngā kaitoi me ngā mātanga reo, i puta te whakaaro he tino pai ngā hua inā ū tonu te reo ki te kaupapa matua."*** – *"through working together, the thinking emerged that the best outcomes are achieved when te reo Māori comes first".* Despite differing perspectives, participants were united in their desire to prioritise quality over quantity. The findings suggest a need to define how quality of waiata reo Māori should be understood, assessed, and developed within a modern revitalisation context. Further, discussions with focus groups and mātanga reo suggest there is an opportunity to articulate a clearer long-term aspiration for waiata reo Māori, balancing goals for language revitalisation with aspirations for excellence, cultural impact, and creative innovation in waiata.	**4. Define and formalise the focus on quality in waiata reo Māori:** 1. Partnering with artists, mātanga reo and other relevant stakeholders to co-develop a shared understanding of quality across key dimensions (e.g. reo quality, cultural integrity, creative excellence, audience connection, and commercial success). 2. Using these insights to develop a shared framework that guides how these dimensions should be weighted and balanced when making investment, programme and participant selection decisions. 3. Identifying where different initiatives may legitimately prioritise different forms of quality and success, recognising that a waiata designed to advance language revitalisation may be assessed differently from one intended to achieve commercial reach or creative innovation. 4. Developing clearer criteria for assessing quality over time, while retaining flexibility to accommodate evolving artistic practice, mita variation, and differing approaches to reo and waiata development. 5. Articulating a longer-term aspiration for waiata reo Māori and ensuring definitions of quality align with that vision. While participants held differing views on what constitutes a "high-quality" waiata, the evaluation indicates these differences often reflect differing definitions of success. A revitalisation waiata and a commercially successful waiata may both be considered "high-quality" for different reasons. Developing a clearer framework for understanding and assessing these would provide a more transparent basis for investment and decision-making.

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Recommendations (cont.)

Overall, these recommendations seek to build on the strengths of the current model, including the systems, relationships and investments that enable its long-term success and contribution to reo revitalisation. As such, there lies an opportunity to examine how current support can better maximise impact.

Outcome	Opportunity for improvement	Recommendations
Investment and revitalisation efforts are supporting the progression of waiata reo Māori	Building on the finding that investment influences impact, participants noted that expectations regarding the quality and impact of waiata can at times exceed the level of resourcing available to support their development. This was particularly evident where artists were balancing creative aspirations with practical and financial realities. Several participants also highlighted that the way support is delivered matters, noting that accessible funding can unlock opportunities, while the opposite can create barriers, such as navigating funding settings that could limit flexibility in who they collaborate with and how creative resources are applied. Some noted that this at times required significant self-advocacy and administrative effort that could detract from the creative process. As artists progress and expectations of quality increase, participants would like to see the level and nature of support matching the growing complexity and cost of producing high-quality waiata.	**5. Strengthen alignment between investment and impact:** 1. Reviewing whether current investment settings remain aligned with the level of impact, quality and capability development APRA is seeking to achieve through its kaupapa. This should include reviewing funding principles and processes to identify opportunities to improve accessibility and allow creative licence, while maintaining accountability and impact. 2. Evaluating thresholds for how and when support evolves alongside participants' development journeys, recognising that the level and nature of support required may change as artists progress. 3. Considering how financial, creative, professional and social support can be coordinated more intentionally, including where responsibility for these supports may be most effectively shared across the wider ecosystem (e.g. iwi, hapū, Te Māngai Pāho and other sector partners) This would support a more intentional alignment between investment, artist needs, and desired outcomes, helping maximise the impact of APRA's investment while ensuring support remains proportionate to the objectives of the kaupapa.

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Rima

Appendices



Appendix 1: Hinerauora – KPMG's Outcomes Realisation Methodology

KPMG utilised Hinerauora to evaluate the impacts of APRA's kaupapa Waiata Reo Māori, drawing on stakeholder engagement, outcome mapping, and reporting approaches grounded in the principles to the right.

Embedded in a Māori worldview, Hinerauora is KPMG's outcomes realisation approach that recognises the infinite ways in which oranga (wellbeing) can be measured, analysed, and communicated.

'Hine' representing the inherent life giving potential of women, and 'rauora', meaning 'rau' (leaves) and 'ora' (life). This name draws on the analogy of leaves enabling the growth of a rākau (tree) and like the many leaves of a rākau, there are many ways in which outcomes can achieve oranga.

Hinerauora is built on the premise that outcomes have a whakapapa of interconnected contributions from a range of activities, investments, stakeholders, and organisations that are grounded in their purpose and strategy.

Exemplified by the whakataukī (Māori proverb) which speaks to the realisation of an organisation's potential and sharing it with the world*: "Tipu Mātoro ki te Ao – Grow towards the full potential of this world".*

Like the growth of a tree ascends towards the sun, Hinerauora is focused on realising the potential of an organisation, with a view to the future and the needs of the next generation.



Tipu Mātoro ki te Ao

Grow towards the full potential of this world.

- Kuini Moehau Reedy

Hinerauora | Outcome realisation

Hinerauora guides organisations to clearly articulate measurable outcomes and impacts through their lens, in their context, and in their language.

Hinerauora encompasses six modules designed to support organisations to measure and communicate the outcomes they contribute to:

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Outcome Mapping
- Data management
- Reporting
- Measurement Operating Model
- Value Analysis.

Our Hinerauora principles provide a strong foundation from which we can design solutions:

- Outcomes have a whakapapa
- Research and evidence-based
- Reporting is future-focused
- Whānau and stakeholder voice is heard throughout
- Data is a taonga and to be protected.

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Appendix 2: Artist Outcome Map

This Outcome Map was co-designed with APRA and Te Māngai Pāho to understand how artists are impacted over time by waiata reo Māori:

Stakeholders

- **Artists (Māori and non-Māori)**
- Songwriters
- Producers
- Emerging artists
- Established artists
- **Inputs:**
- APRA-funded activities
- APRA kaimahi
- Te Māngai Pāho kaimahi
- In-kind contributions (Artist mentors, music industry professionals)
- Te Māngai Pāho funded (Oro Kura Roa) activities

Activities

- SongHubs (e.g. Reo Māori SongHubs, Ipukarea, Kapa Haka SongHubs)
- Live performances opportunities
- Career development programmes – such as Manu Tāiko and Te Taumata
- Ongoing artist support
- Sync opportunities
- End-to-end waiata development
- Social media content creation and promotion
- Connection with mātanga reo
- Export development

Rau Tipu

- Māori artists feel an increased level of confidence in composing and performing waiata reo Māori
- Māori artists enhance and improve their skill level in relation to music production, professionalism and reo Māori production
- Māori artists access support in connecting to te ao Māori, their own ahurea Māori and whakapapa Māori

Rau Mātoro

- Increase in artists composing and performing Māori waiata* (Over 300 new waiata reo Māori released in the past 6 years, more than 140 directly from APRA).
- The quality of reo Māori music is improved, specifically the production, professionalism and reo Māori quality.
- Māori artists strengthen their own connection to te ao Māori, whakapapa and ahurea and continue to compose and perform more reo Māori waiata (reclamation and revitalisation).

Rau Ora

- Māori artists are confident and culturally competent in their ahurea Māori; they have a strong cultural connection to te ao Māori and reo Māori.
- Māori artists compose innovative waiata reo Māori without support from APRA and mentor other artists emerging within the industry.
- Artists experience increased recognition and engagement from diverse audiences (domestic and local) and gain greater momentum, credibility, and long-term growth in the waiata reo Māori community.
- Artists are experiencing increased sustainability and success in the music industry.
- Māori artists are more confident in their ahurea Māori, having stronger cultural connection to te ao and Māori.

** Māori waiata are defined as waiata that are minimum 50% in Māori.*

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Appendix 2: Mātanga Reo Outcome Map

This Outcome Map was co-designed with APRA and Te Māngai Pāho to understand how mātanga reo are impacted over time by waiata reo Māori:

Stakeholders

- **Mātanga Reo**
- Established mātanga reo
- Recent mātanga reo
- Emerging mātanga reo

- **Inputs:**
- APRA-funded activities
- APRA kaimahi
- Te Māngai Pāho kaimahi
- In-kind contributions (Artist mentors, music industry professionals)
- Te Māngai Pāho funded (Oro Kura Roa) activities

Activities

- SongHubs
- End-to-end waiata development
- Support artist development
- Kapa Haka SongHubs
- Mātanga reo wānanga

Rau Tipu

- Increased accuracy of reo Māori compositions that adhere to correct grammar and metaphoric conventions in Māori.
- Increased production of waiata reo Māori being released to the public.
- Increased creative, linguistic and cultural integrity of Māori used within waiata reo Māori.
- Increase in number of mātanga reo annually.

Rau Mātoro

- Authentic reo Māori and metaphoric conventions become increasingly standard practice within waiata reo Māori.
- Increased exposure of waiata reo Māori within media and public spaces e.g. mainstream radio, television, streaming platforms.
- The artform of waiata reo Māori is enhanced through the continued improvement of reo Māori, linguistically, creatively and culturally.
- Increased amount of rohe and iwi specific waiata reo Māori being released.

Rau Ora

- Increased grammatic accuracy of reo Māori in Aotearoa.
- Waiata reo Māori is normalised and celebrated across Aotearoa and internationally.
- Increased % of conversational reo Māori speakers in Aotearoa
- The artform of waiata reo Māori thrives through innovative compositions and artists who creatively weave reo Māori into diverse musical genres.
- Enhanced connection of uri to whakapapa and all New Zealanders to te ao Māori, through waiata reo Māori.
- Increased commercial and financial opportunities for Māori artists and composers within Aotearoa and internationally.

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Appendix 2: Audience Outcome Map

This Outcome Map was co-designed with APRA and Te Māngai Pāho to understand how audiences are impacted over time by waiata reo Māori:

Stakeholders

- **Audience (Listeners)**
- Reo Māori Learners
- Broadcasters
- Streaming platforms
- Radio (both iwi Māori and commercial)
- Concert-goers
- Whānau

- **Inputs:**
- APRA-funded activities
- APRA kaimahi
- Te Māngai Pāho kaimahi
- In-kind contributions (Artist mentors, music industry professionals)
- Te Māngai Pāho funded (Oro Kura Roa) activities

Activities

- Aotearoa Songbook, Volume I
- Waiata Anthems YouTube
- Spotify – Reo Rotates, waiata anthems & waiata reo Māori playlists
- Theme songs for broadcasting of sporting events (NZ Cricket, FIFA world cup.
- Live Performances (including waiata reo Māori showcase)
- Broadcasted shows (Matariki, etc)
- Social media content and campaigns

Rau Tipu

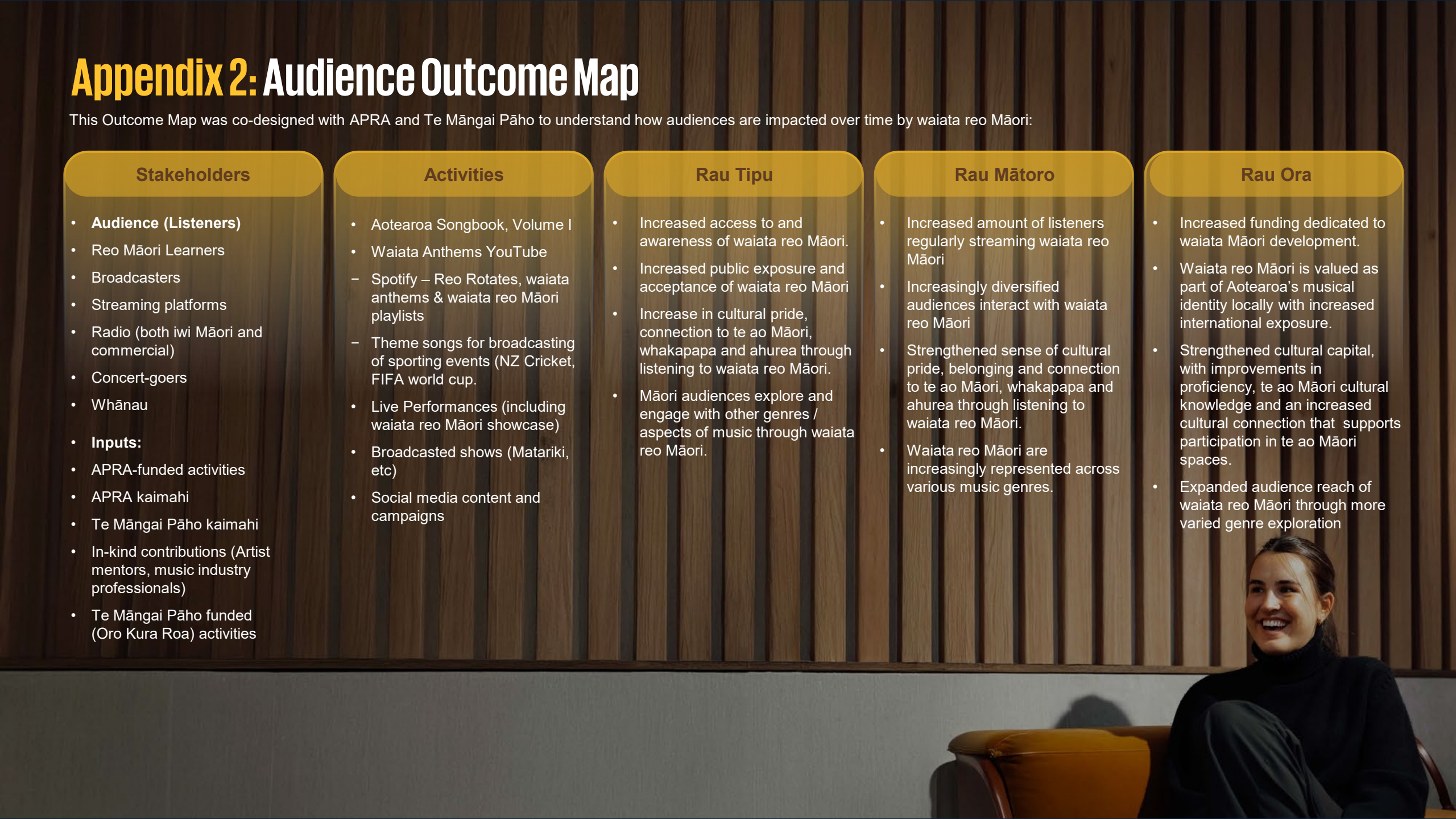
- Increased access to and awareness of waiata reo Māori.
- Increased public exposure and acceptance of waiata reo Māori
- Increase in cultural pride, connection to te ao Māori, whakapapa and ahurea through listening to waiata reo Māori.
- Māori audiences explore and engage with other genres / aspects of music through waiata reo Māori.

Rau Mātoro

- Increased amount of listeners regularly streaming waiata reo Māori
- Increasingly diversified audiences interact with waiata reo Māori
- Strengthened sense of cultural pride, belonging and connection to te ao Māori, whakapapa and ahurea through listening to waiata reo Māori.
- Waiata reo Māori are increasingly represented across various music genres.

Rau Ora

- Increased funding dedicated to waiata Māori development.
- Waiata reo Māori is valued as part of Aotearoa's musical identity locally with increased international exposure.
- Strengthened cultural capital, with improvements in proficiency, te ao Māori cultural knowledge and an increased cultural connection that supports participation in te ao Māori spaces.
- Expanded audience reach of waiata reo Māori through more varied genre exploration



Appendix 2: Reo Oro - Reo Rāngona - Reo Kōrero Summary

This Theory of Change (TOC) summarises the role of waiata reo Māori in supporting reo revitalisation efforts, with desired impacts detailed across the following pages.

Kaupapa

Te Reo Māori

Activities

- **Reo Oro –** the sound and vibration experienced and felt through waiata reo Māori
- **Reo Rangona –** the language that is heard
- **Reo Kōrero –** the language that is spoken
- **Te Reo Ora –** the language that is thriving

Rau Tipu

Nā te Reo Oro ka rongo te Reo Rangona.

- Through the sound, reverberations and echo of waiata reo Māori, te reo Māori is felt and heard.

Rau Mātoro

Nā te Reo Rangona ka puta ko Reo Kōrero.

- Through feeling and hearing te reo Māori, people begin to recite, remember and speak the language.

Rau Ora

Nā te Reo Kōrero ka puta ko te Reo Ora

- Through the spoken word, reo Māori exists within people and lives through the whakapapa of future generations.

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Appendix 2: Reo Oro - Reo Rāngona - Reo Kōrero: Theory of Change

The TOC below reflects the **Reo Oro** and **Reo Rangona** stages of the TOC:

Kaupapa	Activities	Rau Tipu	Rau Mātoro	Rau Ora
Te Reo Māori	• **Reo Oro** – the sound, vibration and echo experienced through waiata reo Māori.	• **Increased access to te reo Māori through reo oro.** • Te reo Māori is increasingly felt and engaged with by Māori artists and whānau Māori through reo oro. • Te reo Māori is exposed to new audiences, emotionally connecting through reo oro.	• Te reo Māori is used to express a multitude of kare-a-roto, helping artists and listeners feel seen and connected. • Te reo Māori brings comfort and contentment to audiences through reo oro. • Te reo Māori evokes a sense of pride, connection and cultural identity	Te reo Māori is strengthened as a language of emotion, connection and expression felt through reo oro being shared and experienced through generations.
	• **Reo Rangona** – the language that is heard	• **Increased exposure to te reo Māori through Reo Rangona** • Te reo Māori is increasingly heard through Māori artists and non-Māori artists through varied musical genres, diversifying reo rangona. • Te reo Māori is increasingly heard through both mainstream and Māori mediums, normalising reo rangona in public spaces.	• Te reo Māori becomes a familiar and expected sound / language in everyday environments through repeated exposure to waiata reo Māori. • Audiences demonstrate increased comfort hearing te reo Māori across different genres, contexts, and settings	Te reo Māori is normalised as an audible part of everyday life, heard regularly across generations through reo rangona.

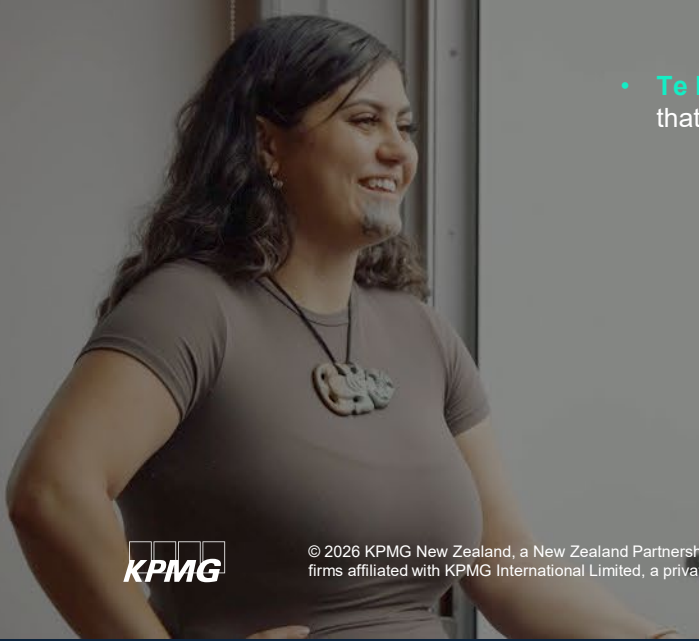
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Appendix 2: Reo Oro - Reo Rāngona - Reo Kōrero: Theory of Change

The TOC below reflects the **Reo Kōrero** and **Te Reo Ora** stages of the TOC:

Kaupapa	Activities	Rau Tipu	Rau Mātoro	Rau Ora
Te Reo Māori	• **Reo Kōrero –** the language that is spoken	• **Te reo Māori experiences increased users of reo kōrero:** • Listeners are prompted to speak, sing, or repeat te reo Māori words and phrases through waiata reo Māori. • Increased confidence to attempt te reo Māori pronunciation and basic reo kōrero in informal settings.	• Te reo Māori is increasingly used in everyday, informal kōrero, supported by familiarity gained through waiata reo Māori • Waiata reo Māori reinforces retention of te reo kōrero, supporting more frequent and confident spoken use.	• Te reo Māori increasingly spoken with confidence across generations in everyday kōrero, supported by sustained engagement with waiata reo Māori. • Waiata reo Māori increasingly contributes to normalising te reo kōrero as part of daily life, strengthening language continuity.
	• **Te Reo Ora –** the language that lives	• **Te reo Māori is sustained through being felt, heard, spoken, being alive and well as te reo ora.** • Waiata reo Māori is recognised as an important contributor to te reo Māori revitalisation and everyday language use.	• Waiata reo Māori contributes to sustained use and transmission of te reo Māori across multiple contexts (home, kura, community, media). • Te reo Māori is increasingly experienced as a living and thriving language through contemporary waiata.	• Te reo Māori is strengthened as a living and thriving language, supported by intergenerational engagement with waiata reo Māori. • Waiata reo Māori supports the long-term revitalisation, normalisation, and sustainability of te reo Māori in Aotearoa.



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Appendix 3: Rauringa Engagement

KPMG engaged a total **446** participants across artists, mātanga reo, and audience members to gather qualitative evidence on the impact of APRA's kaupapa waiata reo Māori. To support transparency and encourage candid feedback, all participants engaged have been anonymised. While individual identities are not disclosed, the participant characteristics presented below demonstrate the breadth of participants represented across each rauringa.

KPMG would like to thank all rauringa who generously shared their experiences and perspectives as part of this evaluation, and the kaimahi at APRA and Te Māngai Pāho who, while not participants in the evaluation, played an important role in supporting and facilitating the engagement process.

Rauringa	Number engaged	Characteristics	Engagement approach
Artists	• **Seven**	• At varying levels of establishment in the industry • Six of seven identified as Māori • Mix of predominantly Māori vs non-Māori audiences • Range of reo Māori capability • Range of international exposure	• 1-1 interviews
Mātanga reo	• **Five**	• Mix of contributors who had been involved since the beginning of the kaupapa, alongside more recent entrants • Range of backgrounds (artists, involvement in kapa haka, kaupapa reo)	• 1-1 interviews

Audience	• **Six** focus group participants and **430** survey respondents	• **Focus group:**
		  • Mix of Māori and non-Māori participants (4 Māori, 2 non-Māori)
		  • Mix of active and passive listeners of waiata reo Māori (3 active listeners, 3 passive listeners)
		  • Range of gender, ages and professional backgrounds (4 male, 2 female, age range of 25-50+)
		• **Survey:**
		  • 87% were Māori and/or Pākehā (respondents could select multiple ethnicities).
		  • 59% Women, 36% Men, remaining were either non-binary, gender fluid, preferred not to say, or other.
		  • 70% of survey respondents were 35 or over, with the remaining being under or preferred not to say.
		  • Respondents from Auckland and Wellington accounted for just over half (51%) of all responses.
		  • Outside these centres, response numbers were relatively similar (between 4-8%) across Waikato, Canterbury, Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, and Northland. Participation was lower (2% or less) in Gisborne/East Coast, Manawatū-Whanganui, Nelson-Marlborough, West Coast, and Southland.
			• Focus group interview
			• Online survey distributed via social media

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Appendix 4: Audience Survey

In addition to a focus group interview, KPMG, APRA AMCOS and Te Māngai Pāho distributed a Microsoft Forms survey between 22 June and 15 July 2026 (approximately 2.5 weeks) to capture audience perspectives.

The purpose of the survey was to gather perspectives from a larger and more diverse audience cohort. The survey explored audience perspectives on the visibility and accessibility of waiata reo Māori, its contribution to and connection with te reo Māori and te ao Māori, and perceptions of how its presence in everyday life has changed over time. To encourage open and honest participation, the survey did not collect names or contact details.

Survey design

The survey comprised **12 questions in total:**

- **10 compulsory questions** used predefined response options to capture demographic information and understand audience exposure and awareness, including a series of statements where respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on a five-point scale ranging from *Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.*
- **The remaining two questions** were optional open-text questions that allowed respondents to share reflections and experiences in their own words.

Survey reach

Survey promotion occurred across multiple digital channels, including the APRA AMCOS and Waiata Anthems Instagram pages, Te Māngai Pāho's website and Instagram account, and KPMG's LinkedIn and Instagram channels, with responses peaking approximately one week after launch.

Respondent profile

A total of **430 respondents** completed the survey. Responses were received from across Aotearoa New Zealand, with Auckland (**155 respondents**) and Wellington (**66**) together accounting for just over half **(51%)** of all responses.

The survey reached respondents who identified as Māori (**46%**) and Pākehā (**41%**)**,** MELAA (**13%**), noting that respondents could select multiple ethnicities. The majority of respondents were aged 25–54 (**67%**).

Overall, the respondent profile suggests the survey primarily reached **engaged consumers of waiata reo Māori**. Nearly three-quarters **(74%)** reported listening to waiata reo Māori at least weekly, including **43%** who listened daily.

Respondents also reported relatively high levels of exposure to te reo Māori, with **81%** indicating at least moderate proficiency and **49%** reporting they could hold simple or comfortable conversations.

This is consistent with the survey being distributed primarily through APRA AMCOS and Te Māngai Pāho platforms, which are more likely to engage audiences with an existing interest in waiata reo Māori.

Impact on findings

Consequently, the findings provide stronger insight into the experiences of audiences already engaged with waiata reo Māori, particularly its contribution to connection with te reo Māori and te ao Māori.

While less suited to assessing population-level visibility, reach, or normalisation, the survey offers valuable evidence on how waiata reo Māori is perceived and experienced by its audiences.

The survey findings are presented and analysed in the following pages.

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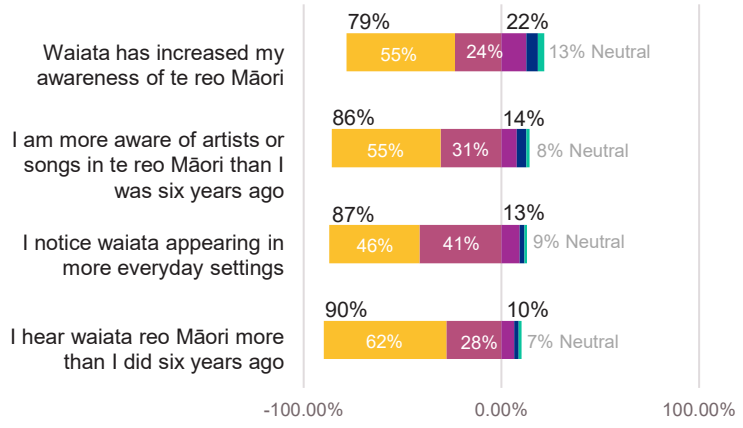
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Appendix 4: Audience Survey - Analysis

Key: Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree

The graphs below present audience responses to a series of statements, with respondents indicating their level of agreement on a five-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. For ease of interpretation, results are split by the combined proportion of respondents who selected Agree/Strongly Agree, alongside those who selected Neutral to Strongly Disagree.

Statement Set 1. Audience perceptions of the visibility of waiata reo Māori in their everyday lives

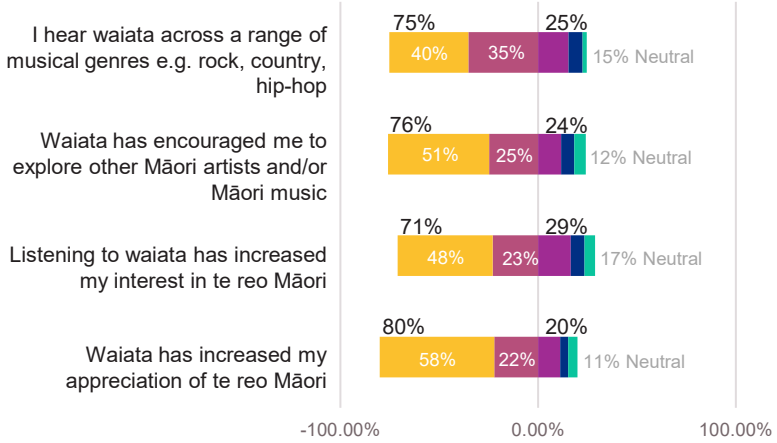


Responses were strongly weighted towards agreement across all visibility statements, indicating that respondents perceive waiata reo Māori as more visible in their everyday lives:

- Respondents most strongly agreed **(62%)** that they hear waiata reo Māori more now than they did six years ago, and that it is increasingly encountered in mainstream settings, pointing to growing normalisation among respondents **(87%).**
- Greater visibility appears to be accompanied by increased familiarity with te reo Māori and Māori **(86%).** This suggests that while waiata reo Māori is more visible, increased exposure does not necessarily translate evenly into deeper awareness of the language or the wider Māori music ecosystem.

"I work in palliative care and we often sing waiata for our patients as they approach the end of their lives. It is quite profound to see the comfort this can bring our patients and their whānau, often irrespective of whether they're Pākehā or Māori."

Statement Set 2. Audience perceptions on their engagement with waiata reo Māori and te reo Māori

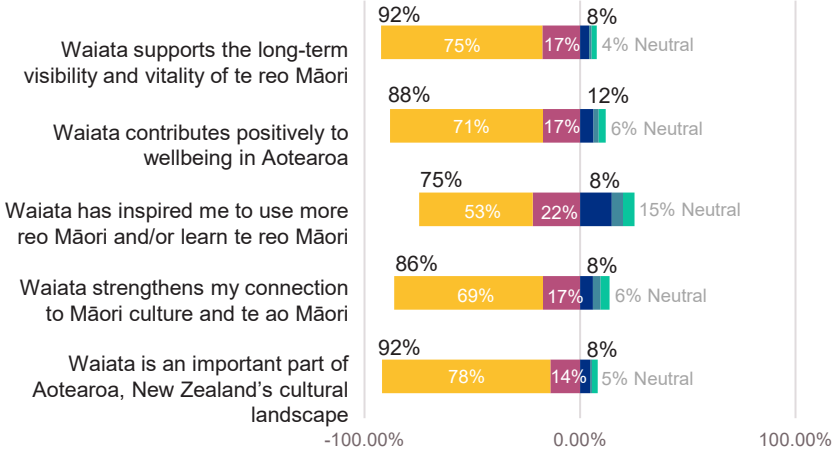


Waiata appears to be supporting appreciation of te reo Māori, and interest in waiata reo Māori within other music genres:

- Appreciation of te reo Māori attracted the strongest positive response (**58%** strongly agreed), while increased interest in te reo Māori showed greater variation, with more neutral responses and fewer respondents strongly agreeing **(48%).** This indicates that waiata reo Māori may be particularly effective at deepening appreciation for te reo Māori, while its influence on language interest may depend more on respondents' existing connection to the language.
- Respondents also reported broadening their engagement with waiata, although this was more commonly expressed through exploring other Māori artists and music **(51%)** than through exploring waiata across different genres **(40%).**

"It's awesome to see singers and musicians who don't whakapapa Māori integrating reo into their songs. I'm so proud that this taonga is reaching people who it possibly wouldn't have reached, say, a decade ago."

Statement Set 3. Audience perceptions on the broader role waiata reo Māori in Aotearoa, New Zealand



Respondents are largely aligned on the collective benefits of waiata reo Māori on language revitalisation and cultural connection, than on its influence on personal behaviour change.

- Respondents most strongly agreed **(75%)** that waiata reo Māori supports the long-term visibility and vitality of te reo Māori and is an important part of Aotearoa's cultural landscape, indicating broad consensus around its wider cultural and language revitalisation value.
- Responses were more varied around whether waiata had inspired respondents to use more reo Māori and/or learn te reo Māori, with a larger neutral response **(15%)** than the broader cultural statements.

"I work in a rongoā Māori community clinic in West Auckland. I've observed that when whai ora hear te reo Māori waiata during their sessions it begins to heal whakapapa disconnection. The oro and rangi in waiata reo Māori can disarm whakamā."

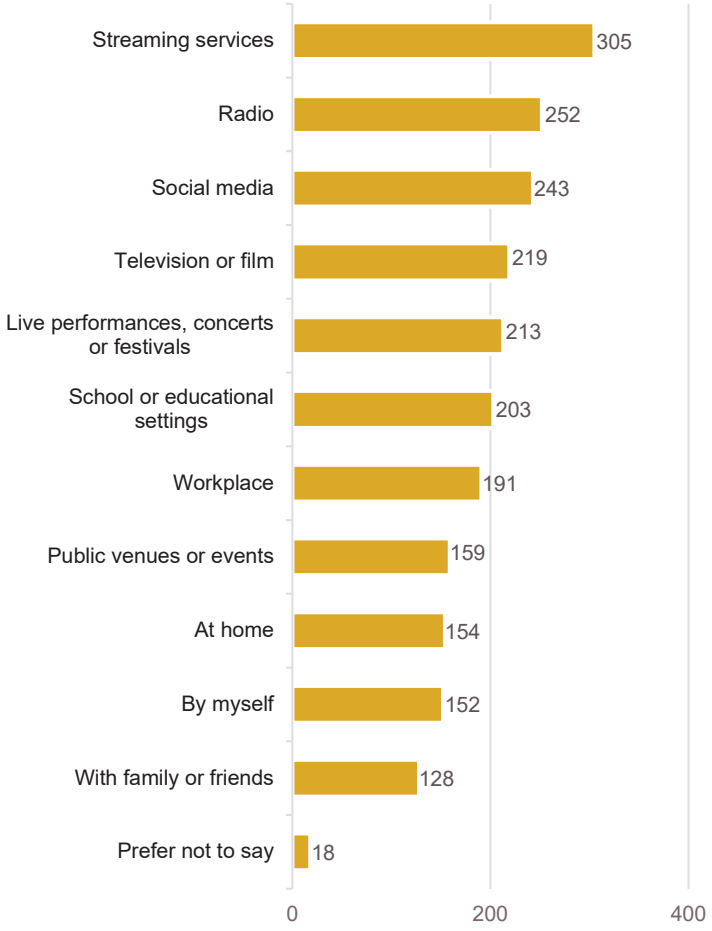
"Waiata Māori help us feel more at home here in Aotearoa. They are uniquely ours. They sound like us, they are us."

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Appendix 4: Audience Survey - Analysis

Figure 5. How do you usually listen to waiata reo Māori? (Multi-choice)

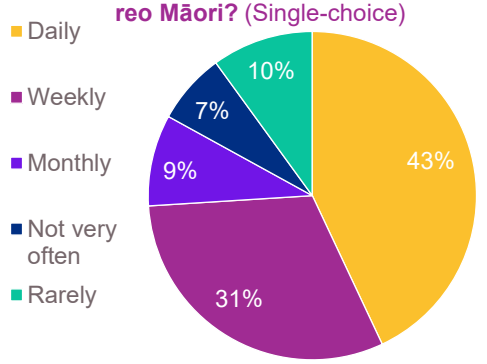


Overall findings

This analysis provides insight into the experiences and perceptions of **430 respondents**, whom largely have some level of exposure to waiata reo Māori. As participation was voluntary and respondents were disproportionately regular listeners and people with some existing reo capability, findings should be interpreted as reflecting the views of engaged audiences rather than being representative of all New Zealanders. While the survey cannot claim causality, several clear patterns emerged across the findings:

1. **More frequent engagement is associated with stronger perceived outcomes:** The strongest pattern in the survey was the relationship between listening frequency (Figure 6) and reported outcomes:
    - Among daily listeners (**43% of respondents**), **77%** strongly agreed that waiata had inspired them to use or learn more te reo Māori,
    - While **88%** strongly agreed that waiata strengthens their connection to Māori culture and te ao Māori. Weekly listeners (**31%**) also reported highly positive outcomes.
    - In contrast, respondents who listened rarely (**10%**) reported weaker outcomes across measures of language, cultural connection, and awareness
2. **Respondents perceive waiata reo Māori as increasingly visible and accessible:** There was strong agreement that waiata reo Māori is more prominent than it was six years ago:
    - Overall, **90%** agreed that they hear waiata reo Māori more often than six years ago, while **87%** agreed they notice it appearing in more everyday settings.
    - Respondents (Figure 2) most commonly accessed waiata reo Māori through streaming services (**305 responses**), followed by radio (**252**), social media (**243**), television and film (**219**), and live performances or festivals (**213**), suggesting exposure is occurring through mainstream and widely accessible channels.
3. **Adults aged 25-54 appear to be the core audience for waiata reo Māori,** representing 67% of respondents and a large proportion of both daily and weekly listeners:
    - This cohort consistently reported strong outcomes relating to awareness of te reo Māori, cultural connection, and appreciation of waiata reo Māori.
    - Support was highest among those aged 35-44, with **92%** strongly agreeing that waiata is an important part of Aotearoa's cultural landscape.
    - However, agreement remained high across all age groups, including **88%** of 18-24 year olds strongly agreeing and very little disagreement recorded overall.

Figure 6. How often do you listen to waiata reo Māori? (Single-choice)



Streaming services (Figure 5) were the most common way respondents engaged with waiata reo Māori. The following **Appendix** builds on this finding, using the NZ Music Commission's streaming data to further explore audience engagement and identify waiata and artists that have sustained visibility over time.

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Appendix 5: Streaming Data

The NZ Music Commission is an Aotearoa music industry organisation that supports music sector development. **Figure 7** illustrates the waiata reo Māori that have most commonly appeared in the NZ Music Commission's quarterly Top 10 Most Streamed waiata reo Māori since Q3 2021. Its data provides a useful source for understanding patterns in waiata reo Māori listenership over time, with the data below having been extracted from their quarterly streaming reports[1].

Top-streaming waiata reo Māori

A small group of waiata reo Māori have sustained strong streaming visibility over time. Five waiata (***Kia Mau Ki Tō Ūkaipō, Pepeha, 35, Aotearoa,*** and ***Tōrea***) appear in every quarter shown from Q3 2021 to Q1 2026, while ***Poi E*** appears across almost all quarters. This suggests that these waiata have maintained audience engagement well beyond their initial release period.

Changes In waiata presence

The data also shows some movement in which waiata feature most prominently over time. Waiata such as ***Tua*** and ***Te Ata Māhina*** had periods of strong visibility before becoming less prominent, while ***Māori Ki Te Ao, Tōku Reo Tōku Ohooho***, and ***Kia Wareware i a Tātou*** feature more prominently in recent years, indicating that newer waiata are also able to enter and sustain a presence with streaming audiences.

Artist influence

The streaming data also highlights the influence of a relatively small group of artists. Stan Walker (***Aotearoa, Tua, Māori Ki Te Ao***) and Six60 (***Kia Mau Ki Tō Ūkaipō, Pepeha***) appear across multiple long-performing tracks, while Te Matatini (***Te Ata Māhina, Kia Wareware i a Tātou***) features among more relatively recent entries. This pattern may highlight the influence of artists with established audiences and profiles in supporting the visibility and reach of waiata reo Māori.

Overall, the data provides evidence of sustained audience engagement with both contemporary and legacy waiata reo Māori.

The data and documentation reviewed to inform this evaluation are outlined on the next page.

Waiata	Artists	2021*	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026**
Kia Mau Ki Tō Ūkaipō	Six60	✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1
Pepeha	Six60	✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1
35	Ka Hao ft Rob Ruha	✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1
Aotearoa	Stan Walker feat. Ria Hall, Troy Kingi And Maisey Rika	✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1
Tōrea	Makaira Berry, Hamiora Tuari, Mere Arihi Pipi Takoko And Pere Wihongi	✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1
Poi Ē	The Patea Māori Club	✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1
Tua	Stan Walker feat. Ibanez Maeva	✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2	✓ Q3		
Māori Ki Te Ao	Stan Walker				✓ Q1 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1
Te Ata Māhina	Te Matatini			✓ Q1 ✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2	
Tōku reo Tōku Ohooho	Te Tira Waiata O Te Pukawai				✓ Q4	✓ Q1 ✓ Q2	✓ Q1
Kia Wareware i a Tātou	Te Matatini, Te Kuru Marutea					✓ Q2 ✓ Q3 ✓ Q4	✓ Q1

Figure 7. Most common waiata reo Māori that feature in the quarterly Top 10 Most Streamed waiata reo Māori each year.

**No data was available for waiata reo Māori prior to Q3 in 2021 at the time of this report.*

***No data was available after Q1 in 2026 at the time of this report.*

1. NZ Music Commission (2026) *Music Commission News.* Source: https://nzmusic.org.nz/nz-music-stats/

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Appendix 6: Documentation & Data Reviewed

KPMG reviewed the following documents to inform our current state impact analysis:

Source	Documents reviewed
APRA AMCOS	1. Theory of Change (developed internally) 2. Outcomes Logic Map (developed internally) 3. Kaitiaki Reo Involvement in Commercial Compositions (not dated) 4. Sample of Waiata from Pre and Post-Waiata Anthems 2019-2026 5. Waiata Anthems 2025 Producers Drawdown Three | Narrative Report (July 17, 2025) 6. Waiata Anthems 2025 Producers Drawdown Four | Narrative Report (August 22, 2025) 7. Waiata Anthems 2025 Producers Drawdown Five | Narrative Report (October 17, 2025) 8. Waiata Anthems 2025 Producers Drawdown Six | Narrative Report (December 12, 2025) 9. Waiata Anthems 2025 Producers Drawdown Seven | Narrative Report (March 9, 2026) 10. Waiata Anthems Te Awenga o Te Reo – Full Proposal (not dated)
Te Māngai Pāho	1. 2018-2025 Waiata Reo Māori Statistics
Publicly Available	1. NZ Music Commission: Quarterly Streaming Reports (Q2 2021 – Q1 2026). 2. RNZ Article: Waiata 100: The Story behind New Zealand's number one song (July 2026) 3. The Spinoff Article: How 'Pō Atarau' made it all the way to Ryan Gosling's Project Hail Mary (March 2026) 4. Aotearoa Music Charts: Top 10 Te Reo Māori Singles (2021 - 2026) 5. Aotearoa Music Awards, run by Recorded Music NZ (2021 - 2026) 6. APRA Silver Scroll Awards (2021 - 2026)



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