

# Process Evaluation of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy



**Final report**

February 2022



**ALLEN+CLARKE**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ABOUT ALLEN + CLARKE

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## CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>4</b>
Background and context	4
The evaluation	4
<b>1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT</b>	<b>9</b>
1.1. The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy	9
1.2. Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy ecosystem	10
<b>2. THE EVALUATION</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1. Evaluation purpose and scope	12
2.2. Evaluation questions and criteria	12
2.3. Evaluation methodology	13
2.4. Methodological strengths and limitations	15
<b>3. EVALUATION FINDINGS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>KEQ1: WAS THE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED AS INTENDED?</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1. Stakeholder support and buy-in	17
3.2. Strategy governance and implementation infrastructure	19
3.3. United and holistic implementation	21
3.4. Implementation for Māori	24
<b>KEQ2: IS THE STRATEGY FUNCTIONING AS INTENDED?</b>	<b>32</b>
3.5. Framework that can be used by anyone	32
3.6. Drives government policy	33
3.7. Harnesses community action	35
3.8. Accountability for improving wellbeing	37
3.9. Accountability to Māori	39
<b>4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>42</b>
4.1. Alignment of implementation and functioning with intended outcomes	42
4.2. Evaluative judgements	44
4.3. Recommendations	47
<b>APPENDIX A: DATA COLLECTION METHODS</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>52</b>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background and context

The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy was launched by the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction in August 2019. The Strategy was developed with the vision to make New Zealand the best place in the world for children and young people. The Strategy is an overarching framework developed to provide a shared understanding of what children and young people (aged 0-25 years) need and want to be well, and to set out what the Government has committed to doing and how others can help. Its core purposes are to provide an accessible framework to improve child and youth wellbeing which can be used by anyone; to drive government policy in a unified and holistic way; to clearly outline policies which are to be implemented; to harness public support and community action; and to increase political and public sector accountability for improving wellbeing.

Consistent with the government's commitment to recognising and giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) the Strategy recognises the special status of tamariki and rangatahi Māori as tangata whenua and that government should meet their needs. According to the Strategy this means "transforming systems, policies and services to work better for Māori, supporting Māori to deliver solutions for Māori and empowering local communities to make the changes that work best for them" (p11).

### The evaluation

The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's (DPMC) Child Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction Group (CWPRG) has commissioned this evaluation, the purpose of which is to:

- understand the effectiveness of the implementation and functioning of the Strategy
- understand the effectiveness of the implementation and functioning of the Strategy in relation to improving wellbeing for tamariki and rangatahi Māori
- identify successes associated with implementation and functioning of the Strategy during its first two years, what has not worked so well and why, and opportunities for continuous improvement
- assess whether the Strategy is setting the foundation for achieving its intended medium- and long-term changes and outcomes.

The evaluation is framed by two key evaluation questions (KEQs), under which sit a series of criteria against which Strategy was evaluated. These are:

- KEQ 1: Has the Strategy been implemented as intended?
  - The criteria are stakeholder support and buy-in, Strategy infrastructure, united and holistic implementation, implementation for Māori
- KEQ 2: Is the Strategy functioning as intended?
  - The criteria are a framework that can be used by anyone, drives government policy, harnesses community action, accountability for improving wellbeing, accountability for Māori.

## Evaluation methods

This mixed methods process evaluation focused how well the Strategy has been implemented and how effectively it is functioning. The evaluation was guided by kaupapa Māori principles and generic principles for robust research in Aotearoa New Zealand. These included: tino rangatiratanga (self-determination); taonga tuku iho (cultural aspiration); whakapapa (interconnectedness and collectivism); ngā pūtake whānui (determinants); āta (respectful and reciprocal relationships); equity; community empowerment and quality.

Data collection methods included:

- **A review of 24 contextual documents**, including legislation, the full and summary version of the Strategy, Cabinet papers, and annual reports.
- **15 key informant interviews with 18 stakeholders** including people within government departments, members of the Strategy Reference Group, academic experts and people representing iwi or Māori organisations and NGOs. Five of the interview participants identified as Māori.
- **9 cross-agency focus groups and small group interviews with 68 individuals.** The focus group participants included members of working groups established to implement key Programme of Action deliverables, plus governance and oversight groups. All focus group participants were public sector employees across a range of agencies and included a range of roles from analyst to Deputy Chief Executive level.
- **An online stakeholder survey**, which received 143 responses from central government agencies, local government, non-government organisations, iwi and Māori entities, academic and philanthropic organisations.

## Key findings

### **Most stakeholders support the vision, outcomes and principles of the Strategy**

There was particularly strong buy in from central government stakeholders, who consider that the Strategy provides a good foundation for building understanding across government of what good child and youth wellbeing 'looks like'. A key mechanism for gaining buy-in from central government stakeholders was the efforts made to capture the child and youth voice, in a way that felt authentic. Non-central government stakeholders<sup>1</sup> also supported the aspirational nature of the Strategy, its vision, and its principles. However, these stakeholders expressed concerns that key groups, particularly Māori as well as Pasifika, disabled and migrant children and youth, are not accorded adequate priority within the Strategy. Some non-central government stakeholders reported limited awareness of the Strategy in their networks.

### **The governance and advisory infrastructure could be enhanced by including iwi and independent Māori leaders**

Strong governance infrastructure was established to oversee the development and early implementation of the Strategy. Cross-agency forums were developed at multiple tiers of government and the public sector, including a Ministerial group and Chief Executive, Deputy Chief

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'non-central government stakeholders' is used throughout the report to collectively refer to stakeholder organisations that are not central government agencies. This group includes NGOs, community organisations, local government, iwi and Māori entities, Pasifika entities, academics and philanthropic organisations.



Executive and General Manager forums. However, the Strategy implementation does not include Māori participation in governance structures. To fulfil the Crown's Tiriti o Waitangi obligations, implementation of the Strategy should include partnership with iwi in governance and decision making where appropriate.

An important aspect of the initial infrastructure was the establishment of a Strategy Reference Group. Membership included iwi and community development leaders and specialists in the education, child health, justice and social sectors, Māori organisations and Pasifika representatives. The group provided advice and expertise to the officials developing the Strategy. It ceased operating after the launch of the Strategy, leaving a gap in formal mechanisms for independent expert advice and direction from Māori and Pasifika and other community thought leaders and experts.

### **The Strategy is being used to drive cross-government collaboration through working groups on key issues**

As well as the cross-agency governance forums, which continue to meet regularly, the Strategy has also driven cross-agency collaboration through the establishment of joint agency working groups and cross-agency taskforces such as the First 1000 Days, Debt to Government, Youth Plan and review of Working for Families working groups. Delivering these initiatives under the umbrella of the Strategy's Programme of Action has been instrumental in prioritising participation for government agencies.

### **To meet te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations it is necessary for Māori to be accorded priority status within the Strategy**

The legislation the Strategy arises from, the *Children's Act 2014*, does not specify Māori as a priority group. Māori evaluation participants considered that this means that the Strategy is not giving effect to the Crown's obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi to act to the fullest extent to enable the achievement of equitable outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi Māori. While Māori are overrepresented in the groups defined by the Act as 'priority', Māori are not specifically and separately prioritised which means that the Strategy does not focus on the unique and specific needs, preferences and aspirations of tamariki and rangatahi Māori and their whānau. This undermines the ability of the Strategy to make meaningful change for Māori. Most evaluation participants that spoke from a Māori perspective considered that the Strategy is too broad in its application and expressed a desire to see a strategy that specifically focuses on the distinct needs and aspirations for tamariki and rangatahi Māori and their whānau.

### **Achieving systemic change for tamariki and rangatahi will require a partnership approach with iwi and other Māori entities**

Some activities delivered under the Strategy were identified as positive by Māori. These were generally delivered under Crown-iwi partnerships, such as the Mokopuna Ora initiative and papakāinga developments. Although the Strategy articulates a principle that 'change requires action by all of us', most Māori evaluation participants considered that genuine transfer of power and resources had not yet occurred. There was a strong call for the government to capitalise on the expertise and networks of iwi and other Māori organisations by transferring decision making powers, tools and resources to lead tamariki and rangatahi-focused initiatives.

### **The Strategy framework is sound and understandable, but implementation could be enhanced by guidance on government priorities**

The Strategy framework is considered by most stakeholders to be an easy-to-use framework for improving child wellbeing. The six outcomes provide a taxonomy of focus areas for child and youth wellbeing. While recognising that the Strategy is aiming to create substantial change, stakeholders consistently described the Strategy as being too broad and ‘trying to do too much’. Evaluation participants from central government agencies reported that they are seeking clarity on what the government sees as priority outcomes, and what actions should be accorded importance.

### **The Strategy is not yet playing a substantial role in driving policy, investment or actions**

The child poverty reduction aspects of the Strategy have been effective in driving policy and investment decisions, spurred by the legislative requirement to measure and report on child poverty reduction and the specific, numeric targets. The evidence collected during this evaluation suggests that the Strategy is not yet driving policy and investment in other areas. Government stakeholders primarily saw the Strategy as a way to organise and structure agency work programmes, and reported a perception that agencies would be working on similar actions regardless of whether or not the Strategy was in place. This was not necessarily seen as negative; the Strategy provides a framework for where work sits strategically. It has been useful to confirm the value of the work that agencies are doing, how it fits with what others are delivering, and acts as a confirmation that they are ‘doing the right thing’.

### **There is a need to increase knowledge of the Strategy amongst the community to harness action**

Stakeholders that were aware of the Strategy had strong buy-in to its vision. However, some prominent stakeholder organisations and groups in the child and youth wellbeing sector do not often discuss or reference the Strategy, nor advocate for it within their organisation. More needs to be done to increase awareness, understanding and buy-in from non-government sectors if the anticipated outcomes are to be achieved. Evaluation participants considered it important to identify and support champions within the child and youth sectors who can connect with relevant communities and generate excitement and momentum for the Strategy.

### **The Strategy is performing well as a mechanism for Ministerial and central government agency accountability**

The Strategy is a publicly articulated and publicised intent to improve child and youth wellbeing and is transparent about its intended outcomes and plan of action. This acts as a lever for accountability. Other accountability mechanisms include the legislative requirement to publicly report annually against the Strategy’s outcomes and indicators, the requirement to report to Ministers against a monthly ‘tracker’, and the structures that have been established to govern and implement the Strategy, including the Ministerial group, the Social Wellbeing Board, the Deputy Chief Executives group and the General Managers meeting in which governance and delivery of the Strategy are core functions.

### **The indicator framework could be refined to ensure it reports meaningful data on child and young wellbeing**

The evaluation found a perception that some of the indicators and measures are considered to be well constructed, useful, and based on robust scientific evidence. In particular, measures under the ‘have what they need’ outcome were highlighted as sound. Other measures, particularly those relating to early childhood development, educational achievement, and the experience of children younger than 12 years old, were reported to be either missing or not ‘measuring what matters’.

The published Strategy identifies that there are significant gaps in available data on children and young people and notes an expectation “that the indicators and measures will be built on and improved over time; some indicators may be added or replaced where better data and measurement methodology becomes available” (pp 78-79). Two academic experts that were interviewed stated that additional evidence has become available since the indicator set was developed, including the OECD publication *Measuring What Matters for Child Wellbeing and Policies* and research in areas such as early childhood. They suggested that this could be an important input to refining the indicator framework.

**The focus of accountability to Māori is on individuals, not institutions’ effectiveness for Māori**

The indicator framework has been successful in capturing many child and youth wellbeing concepts that were identified by Māori as important during the Strategy consultation period. However, the measures primarily focus on the behaviour of individuals (for example, whether mothers smoke during pregnancy). There are currently no measures that examine institutions’ effectiveness for Māori, and their capacity and capability to respond to needs of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau. This was seen as a critical accountability gap by Māori evaluation participants. Many of the indicators were also identified as being deficit focused, and there is a need to include more strengths-based measures that focus on protective factors and what wellbeing means to Māori.



# 1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

## 1.1. The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy

In late 2018 the New Zealand Parliament passed the *Children's Amendment Act* requiring successive Governments to adopt a strategy to address:

- improving the wellbeing of all children
- improving, as a particular focus, the wellbeing of children with greater needs
- reducing child poverty and mitigating impacts of child poverty and of socio-economic disadvantage experienced by children
- improving the wellbeing of the core populations of interest to Oranga Tamariki-Ministry for Children (under the Children's Act 2014)<sup>2</sup>.

The Minister for Child Poverty Reduction, the Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, launched the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy ('the Strategy') in August 2019. The Strategy was developed with the bold vision to make New Zealand the best place in the world for children and young people.

The Strategy is an overarching framework developed to provide a shared understanding of what children and young people (aged 0-25 years) need and want to be well, and to set out what the Government has committed to doing and how others can help. Its core purposes are to provide an accessible framework to improve child and youth wellbeing which can be used by anyone; to drive government policy in a unified and holistic way; to clearly outline policies which are to be implemented; to harness public support and community action; and to increase political and public sector accountability for improving wellbeing.

Consistent with the government's commitment to recognising and giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) the Strategy recognises the special status of tamariki and rangatahi Māori as tangata whenua and that government should meet their needs. According to the Strategy this means "transforming systems, policies and services to work better for Māori, supporting Māori to deliver solutions for Māori and empowering local communities to make the changes that work best for them" (p. 11).

In line with the priority populations referenced in the legislation and in order to achieve greater equity, the Strategy also prioritises policies and initiatives to improve the wellbeing of children and young people with greater needs (with an initial focus on mental health and learning support needs), those who are living in poverty and disadvantaged circumstances, and those of interest to Oranga Tamariki.

The Strategy commits to a number of intended short, medium- and longer-term outcomes. The theory of change outlines how the Strategy is intended to generate the intended changes and achieve the identified short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes.

The Programme of Action is the implementation mechanism of the Strategy and includes more than 100 actions from over 20 government agencies to drive progress towards achieving the Strategy's intended outcomes.

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<sup>2</sup> [Children's Amendment Act 2018 No 58, Public Act – New Zealand Legislation](#) (Part 1 Section 6(1)(a-d))

## 1.2. Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy ecosystem

The figure overleaf (Figure 1) provides an overview of the ecology of the system in which the Strategy is being delivered. It identifies:

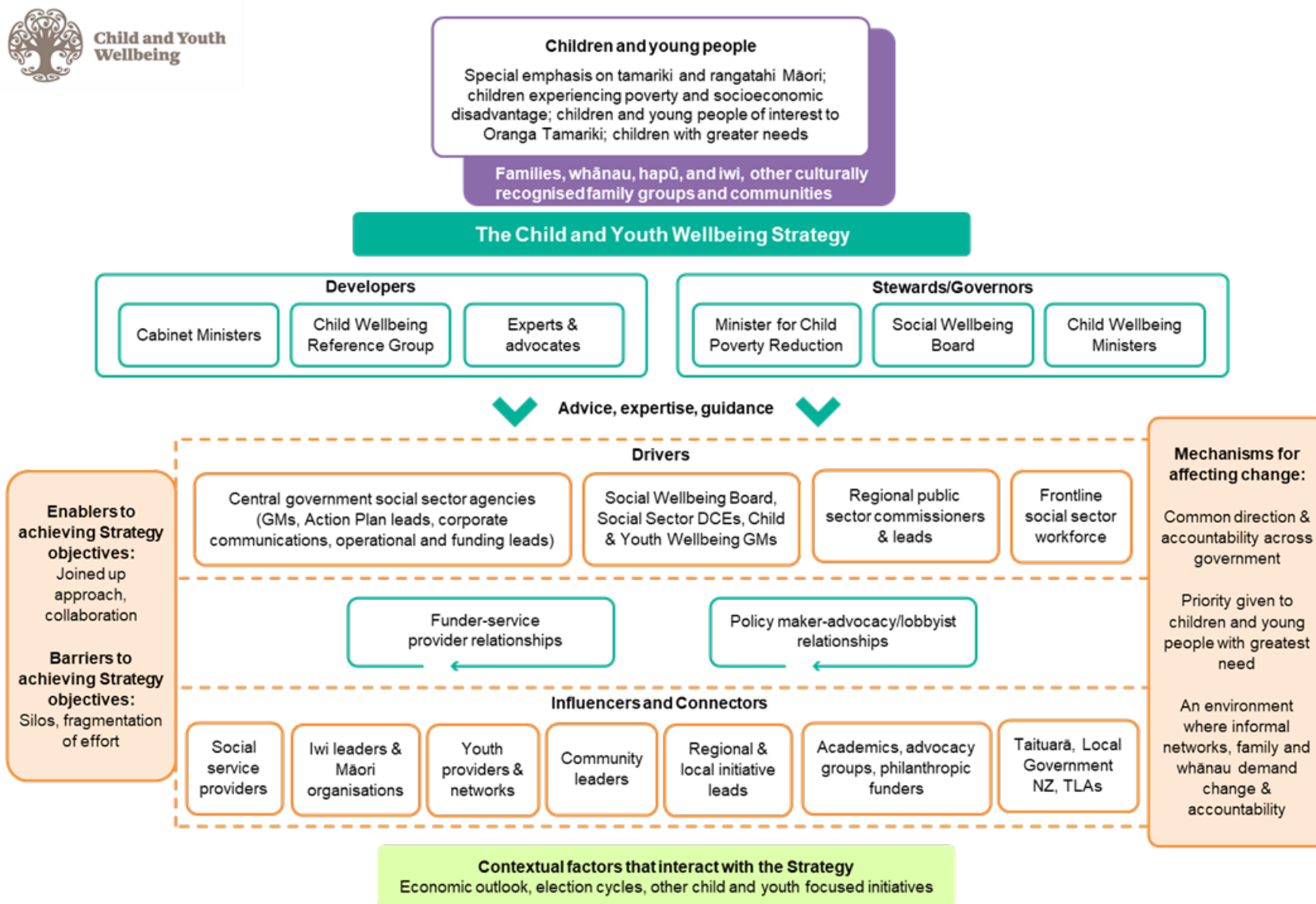
- the key stakeholder groups for the Strategy evaluation
- the roles of the various stakeholder groups
- relational factors which could act as barriers or enablers to effective delivery of the Strategy
- mechanisms for affecting change
- contextual factors that may shape implementation of the Strategy.

The system ecology map provided a framework for selecting the sample of stakeholders that participated in the evaluation. To evaluate the extent to which the specific legislative requirements to recognise and give practical effect to te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>3</sup> have been met through the Strategy, the evaluation sought the views of Māori stakeholders and organisations within the various groups within the system ecology.

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<sup>3</sup> [Children's Amendment Act 2018 No 58, Public Act – New Zealand Legislation](#) (Part 1, Section 4A)

Figure 1: System ecology of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy



## 2. THE EVALUATION

### 2.1. Evaluation purpose and scope

The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's (DPMC) Child Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction Group (CWPRG) has commissioned this evaluation, the purpose of which is to:

- understand the effectiveness of the implementation and functioning of the Strategy
- understand the effectiveness of the implementation and functioning of the Strategy in relation to improving wellbeing for tamariki and rangatahi Māori
- identify successes associated with implementation and functioning of the Strategy during its first two years, what has not worked so well and why, and opportunities for continuous improvement
- assess whether the Strategy is setting the foundation for achieving its intended medium- and long-term changes and outcomes.

The evaluation focused on the implementation and functioning of the Strategy. The scope of the evaluation included:

- examination of the processes associated with the implementation and functioning of the Strategy
- engagement with those who have been involved in the development, delivery, and governance of the Strategy and its Programme of Action
- examination of the Strategy's success in driving prioritisation of policies and actions to improve equity of outcomes for children and young people with the greatest needs
- use by the evaluators of specific approaches<sup>4</sup> to ensure Māori voices, views and experiences are heard.

Out of scope for this evaluation was:

- direct engagement with children, young people, and their whānau
- exploration of the achievement of the intermediate and long-term outcomes of the Strategy
- analysis of population level outcome data related to child and youth wellbeing
- development of recommendations for future Strategy design or content.

### 2.2. Evaluation questions and criteria

The process evaluation of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy is framed by two key evaluation questions (KEQs). To answer the KEQs, the evaluation team and the CWPRG created a series of criteria against which Strategy was evaluated. These represent the key theme areas which the

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<sup>4</sup> Including but not limited to grounding the process evaluation in Māori principles; proactive recruitment of Māori experts, organisations and stakeholders; Māori-led interviews and focus groups with Māori participants; Māori analysis of data by culturally skilled Māori evaluation team members.

CWPRG is interested in exploring under each question, and identify the key aspects of successful Strategy implementation and functioning. The KEQs and criteria are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Key evaluation questions and criteria

Key evaluation questions	Criteria
1. Has the Strategy been implemented as intended?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder support and buy-in</li> <li>• Strategy infrastructure</li> <li>• United and holistic implementation</li> <li>• Implementation for Māori</li> </ul>
2. Is the Strategy functioning as intended?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Framework that can be used by anyone</li> <li>• Drives government policy</li> <li>• Harnesses community action</li> <li>• Accountability for improving wellbeing</li> <li>• Accountability to Māori</li> </ul>

## 2.3. Evaluation methodology

### 2.3.1. Evaluation focus

This process evaluation focused how well the Strategy has been implemented and how effectively it is functioning. It explored the processes associated with the design and rollout of the Strategy, aiming to identify what has worked well, what has not worked so well, and what changes could be made to enhance its delivery. The evaluation also investigated the extent to which the Strategy's delivery is on track to achieving its intended long-term outcomes.

### 2.3.2. Data collection methods

A summary of the data collection methods used in the evaluation is provided below, with further details about each method provided in Appendix A. Data was collected between November 2021 and January 2022.

- **A review of 24 contextual documents**, including legislation, the full and summary version of the Strategy, Cabinet papers, and annual reports.
- **15 key informant interviews with 18 stakeholders** including people within government departments, members of the Strategy Reference Group, academic experts and people representing iwi or Māori organisations and NGOs. Five of the interview participants identified as Māori.
- **9 cross-agency focus groups and small group interviews with 68 individuals.** The focus group participants included members of working groups established to implement aspects of the Strategy and governance and oversight groups. Most focus group participants were public sector employees from a range of agencies and included roles from analyst to Deputy Chief Executive level.

- An **online stakeholder survey**, which received 143 responses from central government agencies, local government, non-government organisations, iwi and Māori entities, academic and philanthropic organisations.

### 2.3.3. Analysis of interview and focus group data

Qualitative data were sorted and analysed by participant group, including their role in the Strategy ecology (e.g., developer, driver, connector); and by the organisation or sector they represent (e.g., government, NGO, iwi/Māori). These data were analysed thematically against the evaluation criteria to identify emerging themes and sub-themes.

The evaluation team then reviewed the viability of each emerging theme, with greater weighting placed on themes that were raised or agreed with by a majority of participants (75 percent or more) in the full participant cohort and/or specific participant groups. Where a theme was raised by a minority of those interviewed, this has been stated in the report. Data generated from evaluation participants that were identified as providing a Māori perspective have been analysed and reported both within the main findings and in the Māori-centred sections of the report. As part of the analysis process, the emerging themes and draft recommendations were presented to the CWPRG. The evaluation team sought feedback to ‘sense check’ the emerging findings and recommendations.

### 2.3.4. Analysis of survey data

Survey results were analysed by question and produced simple total counts and percentages for the closed response option and Likert-scale questions. Verbatim answers provided for open-ended questions were analysed by the themes identified in the qualitative evaluation analysis.

### 2.3.5. Evaluative judgements

The evaluation team worked with the CWPRG to develop standards of performance, and measures of success (i.e., what good ‘looks like’) under each criterion. These are provided in Appendix B.

The data gathered through the evaluation fieldwork was assessed against the criteria, desired achievements and standards of performance. For each criterion, the data have been assessed against a rubric developed by the evaluation team (Table 2) to identify where each aspect of the Strategy is sitting in terms of its maturity. These overall ratings form the basis of evaluative judgements on the maturity of various aspects of the Strategy, provided in section 4.2.

**Table 2: Rubric for the process evaluation of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy**

Emerging	Enabled	Established	Embedded
Evidence of emerging performance. Evidence is patchy or not clear overall. This may be because it cannot be seen yet (that is, has not yet had time to emerge) rather than the performance being unsatisfactory.	Evidence of fair performance. Some positive achievements; some weaknesses but these are not ‘deal breakers’. Heading in the right direction.	Evidence of good performance overall. May have some weaknesses which are easily rectified.	Evidence of very good to excellent performance on this aspect; which is embedded as ‘business as usual’. No weaknesses of any consequence. Some examples of exemplary performance.



### 2.3.6. Recognising Māori in the evaluation approach

A guiding principle of the Strategy is the recognition that Māori are tangata whenua and the Māori-Crown relationship is foundational. Improving wellbeing for tamariki and rangatahi Māori requires “transforming systems, policies and services to work better for Māori, supporting Māori to deliver solutions for Māori and empowering local communities to make the changes that work best for them”<sup>5</sup>. While this process evaluation is not a kaupapa Māori evaluation<sup>6</sup> project, kaupapa Māori principles, alongside generic principles for robust research in Aotearoa New Zealand, provide useful touchstones that guide our approach.

The evaluation is underpinned by the following principles:

- Tino rangatiratanga (self-determination): the evaluation examined the extent to which Māori have been engaged in the design and implementation of the Strategy to date.
- Taonga tuku iho (cultural aspiration): the evaluation examined the extent to which mātauranga Māori is recognised and valued.
- Whakapapa (interconnectedness and collectivism): the evaluation examined how the Strategy recognises the legitimacy and importance of Māori collectives.
- Ngā pūtake whānui (determinants): the evaluation examined the extent to which the Strategy recognises and seeks to address the systemic conditions that drive inequity.
- Āta (respectful and reciprocal relationships): researchers with Māori cultural competencies led fieldwork with Māori stakeholders.
- Community empowerment: cultural expertise was valued and stakeholders with Māori expertise were recruited into the evaluation.
- Quality: the evaluation met Māori ethical standards.

### 2.4. Methodological strengths and limitations

Our approach to the evaluation of the Strategy offers several strengths. These include a mixed-method approach to triangulate findings; the application of Māori and Western research principles to guide the evaluation; clear evaluation questions and standards of performance; and our teams’ experience and expertise to ensure a high quality and ethically sound evaluation. Our approach was strengthened by the following aspects:

- We used mixed methods to seek evidence from a variety of sources. This included both context-rich, qualitative information from stakeholders in various roles within the child and youth wellbeing system, and with varying relationships to the Strategy. The interviews provided rich data which enabled the evaluation to consider feedback on the Strategy through a range of lenses. This was complemented by quantitative data collected through an online survey. The mixed-method approach allowed data to be triangulated to provide for robust evaluative judgements.

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<sup>5</sup> [Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy | Child and Youth Wellbeing \(childyouthwellbeing.govt.nz\)](#) (p11)

<sup>6</sup> Kaupapa Māori approaches are Māori-led action to transform themselves and are rooted in a political movement initiated by Māori to re-develop Māori education and schooling in the 1970s. Over time the foundational principles of that movement, articulated by Graham Smith, were further developed and led to kaupapa Māori principles for Māori-controlled research and evaluation and other activity.

- The desired achievements and performance standards (see Appendix B) provided a consistent basis against which the responses of different stakeholders were compared, and used as a basis for transparent, evidence-based conclusions about the Strategy.
- We focused on ‘explanation building’ to allow for investigation of not only ‘the what’, but also ‘the how’ and ‘the why’. The semi-structured style of interviewing enabled the evaluation team to respond fluidly as interviews progressed to build explanations for the findings.
- A Māori lens has been applied to all aspects of the evaluation through the inclusion of culturally skilled Māori researchers in our evaluation team.

The methodology also has some limitations:

- The findings from the qualitative interviews provide data only on the perspectives of those interviewees – the findings are not generalisable more broadly. The individuals and groups selected for the interviews and focus groups represent a range of characteristics (e.g., involvement in the Strategy, role in the Strategy ecosystem, type of organisation). This strengthens the relevance of the findings, but nonetheless those engaged are only a small portion of those who interact with the Strategy. Given the resourcing and timeframes of this work, the evaluation provides a reasonably detailed ‘snapshot’ of the implementation and functioning of the Strategy at this time.
- Those involved with the design, management, governance and delivery of the Strategy, as captured by the qualitative interviews, are likely to have an interest in its continuation. Whilst their perspective is valuable, and critical for the evaluation, it is not neutral. An unbiased perspective is difficult to capture from the stakeholder engagement almost by definition. To mitigate this, the online survey captured perspectives from parties other than those who have a direct role in the Strategy.
- The online survey had a lower than anticipated response rate. The survey timing, from early December to mid-January, may have limited the number of responses as people may have been on annual leave.
- The non-random sampling approach means that the survey results are not generalisable to the entire range of organisations involved in the Strategy. This limitation is mitigated by setting the survey results within the context of the findings from the overall evaluation.
- Overall, the evaluation team spoke to 86 individuals and gathered 143 responses to the online survey. Of these, five of the individuals interviewed and 11 of the survey respondents were from a Māori or iwi organisation. The evaluation findings related to Māori should therefore be read in the context of the small sample size. In addition, no individuals from the ‘governors/stewards’ group in the system ecology model (which includes Ministers) were included in the interview sample. This limits the evaluation’s ability to consider the Strategy from the perspective of this group.
- While the evaluation aimed to reach as many individuals as possible within the available timeframe and resources, it is worth noting that only a very small proportion of child and youth wellbeing system stakeholders were included in the evaluation.

### 3. EVALUATION FINDINGS

This section details the findings of the evaluation, structured under the evaluation criterion.

#### KEQ1: WAS THE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED AS INTENDED?

##### 3.1. Stakeholder support and buy-in

###### **The aims and intent of the Strategy have strong support but mixed buy-in from stakeholders**

All stakeholders expressed support for the aims and intent behind the Strategy, particularly its vision, principles, and outcomes. This support was particularly strong from central government stakeholders. During the qualitative interviews we heard that the Strategy provides a good foundation for building awareness across government of what child and youth wellbeing 'looks like', putting forward a set of outcomes that feel inspiring and energising to work towards. A key mechanism for gaining buy-in from central government stakeholders was the efforts made to capture the child and youth voice, in a way that felt authentic.

*The framework sets out what good looks like, and what children have said is important. It gives them a voice in their own Strategy.*

- Government official

Central government stakeholders also reported that the Strategy fills an important gap in providing cross-agency clarity around what children and young people need to be well, which was previously lacking.

Non-central government stakeholders,<sup>7</sup> particularly NGOs, also expressed support for the overarching framework for the Strategy, its vision, and its principles.

*The Strategy is a great document and I applaud the aspirational sentiment.*

- NGO representative

*The Strategy principles are core to the kaupapa of most in our industry. We strive to have an Aotearoa with the nine principles realised.*

- NGO representative

However, while there was strong support for the aspirations of the Strategy, non-central government stakeholders reported that buy-in and action to implement the Strategy is hampered by some groups not perceiving it as relevant to them, and a lack of awareness about the Strategy in their networks.

Pasifika stakeholders interviewed were aware of the Strategy and supported its aims and intent but their buy in was limited by the lack of input from Pasifika people in Strategy implementation. Although Pasifika are mentioned in the Strategy framework, some stakeholders advocated for Pasifika children to be accorded more priority given the wellbeing challenges faced by this group.

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<sup>7</sup> This includes NGOs, community organisations, local government, iwi and Māori entities, Pasifika entities, academics and philanthropic organisations.

*The monitoring report highlighted high Pacific numbers in poverty, and that the Strategy hasn't shifted the dial for Pacific people.*

- Pasifika representative

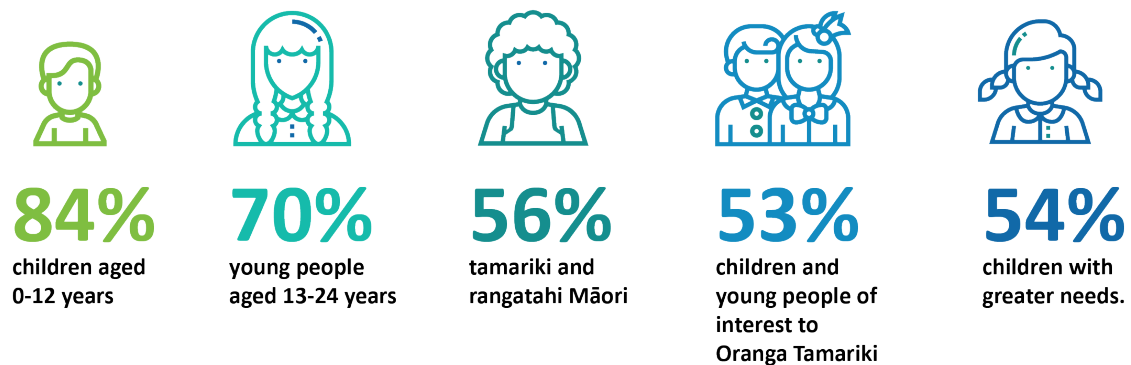
Evaluation participants representing iwi and Māori entities also stated that their buy-in to the Strategy is limited due to Māori not being identified as a priority group. They also noted low levels of awareness of the Strategy among iwi, Māori organisations and more widely. These issues are discussed in sections 3.4 and 3.7.

### **The Strategy is helping stakeholders to understand what most, but not all, children and young people need and want in order to be well**

There was agreement among survey respondents that the Strategy framework provides a clear understanding of what most children and young people need and want to be well.

Figure 2: Percentage of survey respondents who agree the Strategy provides a clear understanding of priority groups' needs and wants

### **Percentage of the 142 survey respondents who agree or strongly agree the Strategy provide a clear understanding of what the following groups need and want in order to be well:**



As shown in Figure 2, there were high levels of agreement that the Strategy captures what children aged 0-12 years and youth aged 13-24 years want and need, but lower levels of agreement for children and young people within other priority groups and tamariki and rangatahi Māori. Qualitative interviews with stakeholders also found a perception that some groups, particularly tamariki and rangatahi Māori, are not well served by the Strategy. This is discussed in section 3.4.

The qualitative interviews and survey responses revealed that about half of the evaluation participants consider that the Strategy provides clarity about what their organisation needs to do to support children and young people.

*It really helps people to understand the needs of different groups of children and whānau. And how to better support those at the more vulnerable end.*

- Government official

*I think the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy is a good step towards recognising the multiple contexts in children's lives that shape their wellbeing, and what actions we can take to enhance wellbeing.*

- Academic

Mirroring the findings described above, there is a strong desire, articulated by both government and non-central government stakeholders, for more clarity and greater direction on how to achieve wellbeing for tamariki and rangatahi Māori. Interviewees from a range of organisations also wanted more clarity on how to support Pasifika wellbeing. An independent statutory body and interviewees from an NGO considered that the Strategy does not place enough emphasis on children and young persons with disability, and two NGOs stated more emphasis was needed on migrant children.

*I don't think this framework is necessarily best tailored to the unique needs of different populations of children, such as tamariki Māori, Pasifika and children with disabilities.*

- NGO representative

### **Stakeholders are accessing the Strategy materials on the website**

Survey respondents reported accessing or receiving a range of materials that have been helpful in supporting their understanding of the Strategy. The most commonly reported materials or methods were the Strategy website (60%), the full Strategy (55%) and A3 (54%) Strategy documents, and the Programme of Action (38%). The summary document in English had been accessed by 29 percent of respondents, and 1 percent had accessed the te reo Māori summary document.

Thirty-eight percent of respondents reported using four or more materials. Fourteen percent of respondents reported that champions or advocates were helpful in supporting their understanding of the Strategy.

## **3.2. Strategy governance and implementation infrastructure**

### **Strong governance and advisory processes were established during Strategy development**

The evaluation found that the governance infrastructure established to develop the Strategy was well regarded by most stakeholders. A Cabinet paper discussing the Strategy development process<sup>8</sup> notes the importance of Ministers and relevant agencies working together to develop the Strategy. In line with this intent, the Strategy was established under a co-sponsorship model, shared by Oranga Tamariki and DPMC. This decision was made so that duplication of work focused on children between these agencies was limited. The Chief Executives of Oranga Tamariki and DPMC were supported by a cross-agency Chief Executives governance group. This cross-agency approach was replicated at various tiers of the public sector, with Deputy Chief Executives and General Managers in relevant agencies also meeting regularly to drive the development of the Strategy.

The engagement of Ministers, Chief Executives, Deputy Chief Executives and General Managers was considered positive. There was a general agreement that the various groups were high functioning, focused and effective in overseeing the development of the Strategy.

*Governance around the [Strategy development] process was excellent. The Ministers and the CEs were really engaged, which was vital for driving action.*

- Government official

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<sup>8</sup> Office of the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction and Office for the Minister for Children. 2018. *Process for Developing the First Child Wellbeing Strategy*.

An important aspect of the Strategy development infrastructure was the establishment of a Strategy Reference Group of thought leaders in areas relevant to child wellbeing and child poverty reduction. This was comprised of iwi and community development leaders and specialists in the education, child health, justice and social sectors, Māori organisations and Pasifika representatives.<sup>9</sup> The group provided advice and expertise to the officials developing the Strategy, including the outcomes and evaluation framework, indicators, policy and research work and public engagement planning. Some members of the group saw their role as an important one to represent the views of their communities.

*I saw myself as a conduit for iwi input about what would work: is the Strategy addressing the real issues? Is it tangible for iwi in terms of making a difference? Does it identify the fundamentals that iwi want to change for rangatahi?*

- Member of the Strategy Reference Group

Interviews with Strategy Reference Group members and government officials involved in the Strategy development process considered that the membership of the group included people whose skills and experience were very well regarded, and that the advice they provided was valuable in shaping the Strategy. Comments did, however, indicate that some of the members considered the contribution of the group was not fully realised in the final content of the Strategy. It is noted that the group had no decision-making role and was not responsible for implementation of the Strategy.

### **Governance and advisory arrangements have weakened in the implementation phase, particularly in relation to Māori representation**

Now that the Strategy has moved to the implementation phase, the evaluation team heard some views that suggest governance and advisory arrangements may be less robust. Although the Strategy's work continues to be driven by the Social Wellbeing Board, Deputy Chief Executives and General Managers, stakeholders perceive there is a lessening of focus on the Strategy within these groups.

*For example, to inform and drive the Strategy development and early implementation, there was a 'Child Wellbeing' DCEs Group which drove a strong focus. But over time this has transitioned to a 'Social Wellbeing' DCEs Group – where children and young people are one of several priorities.*

- Government official

Non-central government stakeholders were particularly concerned that the Strategy implementation does not include Māori participation in governance structures. To fulfil the Crown's Tiriti o Waitangi obligations, Māori expect implementation of the Strategy to be characterised by partnership with iwi and strong independent Māori leadership in governance and decision making where appropriate.

There is also a need to strengthen advisory arrangements. Since the Strategy Reference Group ceased operating after the launch of the Strategy, there has been no formal mechanism to provide

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<sup>9</sup> DPMC. 2019. Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy. Pg. 23.

<https://childyouthwellbeing.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2019-08/child-youth-wellbeing-strategy-2019.pdf>



independent expert advice, outside of Ministers and government agencies. Of particular concern was the lack of input from Māori, Pasifika, NGO and academic leaders and experts.

*[Strategy] infrastructure needs to include people working from a cultural construct of Māori, Pacific, and those most affected if it's going to work. The Government lacks understanding due to not being close enough to the issues.*

- NGO representative

*Having Pacific people at the leadership table to champion and advocate Pacific needs is important.*

- Pasifika representative

### Recommendations

- Ensure strong Māori participation in Strategy leadership at all levels, including as an independent voice in governance.
- Consider reinstating the Strategy Reference Group, or a similar group, to provide independent advice and expertise from Māori, Pasifika and NGO representatives to guide Strategy implementation.

### 3.3. United and holistic implementation

#### The Strategy provides a good foundation for collective action

The evaluation found that interviewees and survey respondents from a range of entities, including government agencies and non-central government entities, expressed excitement about the potential of the Strategy to act as a vehicle to drive collaboration.

Features of the Strategy that have the potential to support collaboration are that it articulates a shared vision which was strongly supported by the majority of evaluation participants; and that it offers a 'common language' that supports personnel from different entities and sectors to have a shared understanding of the key issues affecting children and young people.

Interview participants highlighted the success of the Strategy in clarifying how their organisation's work fits in what the government and other entities are doing. This allowed them to see areas of potential collaboration.

*I remember being very excited about the degree of alignment we had with the Strategy, and how our mahi can really support what the government wants to achieve. We are ready and willing to collaborate, and the Strategy provides a framework for that.*

- NGO representative

This is reflected in the survey results. Approximately half (52%) of the survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Strategy framework clearly articulates what the government is doing to support child and youth wellbeing. A similar percentage (53%) agreed or strongly agreed that the Strategy guides how their organisation can contribute to supporting child and youth wellbeing.

Māori and other interviewees, however, expressed concerns that the Strategy has a general population focus that undermines focussed and collective efforts to make a difference for tamariki and rangatahi Māori. Similar concerns were raised for Pasifika and other vulnerable groups.

### **There is evidence that the Strategy is being used to drive cross-government collaboration**

There are several examples which demonstrate the Strategy's success in driving cross-agency action. Interviewees from government agencies highlighted several joint agency initiatives driven by the Strategy. This included the First 1000 Days, Debt to Government and Youth Plan working groups, and cross-agency taskforces such as the group established to lead the review of Working for Families.

These groups include representatives from a range of government agencies, and they focus on a common issue related to child and youth wellbeing. For example, the Debt to Government working group includes representatives from agencies to which citizens may be indebted, including Inland Revenue, the Ministry of Social Development, and the Ministry of Justice. The intent is to enhance child wellbeing by recognising that debt diminishes the ability to parents and whānau to provide material items for their children, causes stress, and can diminish the ability to parent well. The establishment of the group was driven by the CWPRG to support the Strategy's aims.

Individuals that participated in these working groups reported that being under the umbrella of the Strategy had been instrumental in prioritising participation for their agency. A policy advisor in a government agency noted that the establishment of such groups may have happened anyway, regardless of the Strategy, but the fact that it was seen as 'driven by the Prime Minister' meant participation was accorded priority in their team's work programme.

Other mechanisms for cross-government collaboration that were driven by the Strategy include cross-agency groups representing different tiers within the public sector (i.e., the Social Wellbeing Board, and groups at the Deputy Chief Executive and General Manager level).

However, interviews with individuals in government agencies and/or roles that were not part of these formal vehicles typically stated that they focused on delivering their own work programme and assigned actions under the Strategy. While the Strategy provides an understanding of how their activities fit with other agencies' work, the Strategy was not driving them to work in a more holistic way.

*It has been good for consolidating how [my agency's] activities fit with other agencies' work. But I can't say it's driving collaboration.*

- Government official

The evaluation team notes that the Strategy is operating within a system where there are barriers to greater public sector collaboration, and that overcoming 'silos' within and between government departments have long been identified as a challenge. Three evaluation participants from government agencies, who sat at different tiers within the public sector, suggested that the CWPRG could capitalise on the demonstrated success of the existing cross-agency working groups and push for more interagency work along the lines of this model.

*DPMC need to go harder on pushing joint work programmes and initiatives... combining effort and resourcing and creating better, stronger relationships*

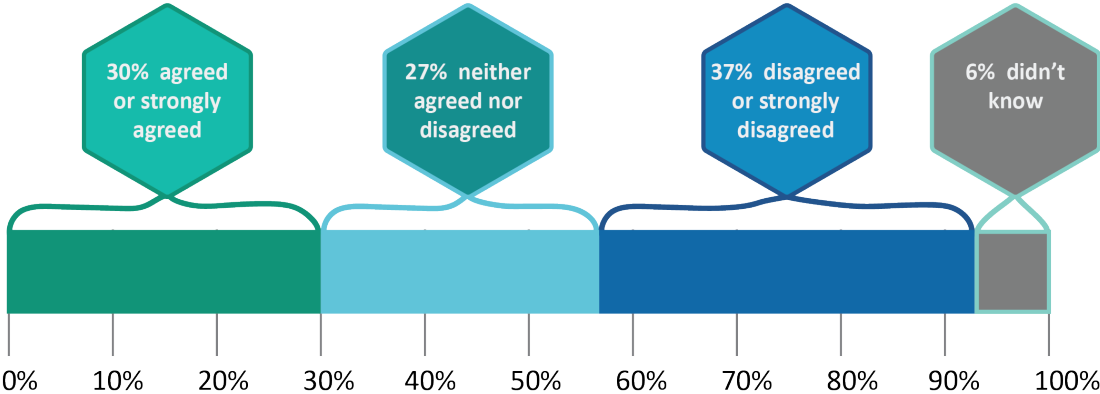
- Government official

**NGOs and community entities are eager for stronger collaboration with central government**

The evaluation found that there were mixed views regarding the extent to which the Strategy is being implemented in a holistic way with non-central government entities. The survey showed that 30% of survey respondents from non-central government entities (including NGOs, iwi and Māori organisations, local government, and philanthropic organisations) agreed that the government is working well with them on child and youth wellbeing. A further 37% disagreed or strongly disagreed (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

Figure 3: Non-central government survey respondents' views on whether government agencies are working well with their organisation

**Of 81 non-central government survey responses to the statement 'government agencies are working well with my organisation to improve child and youth wellbeing':**



The evidence from interviews suggests that there are a small number of examples of government collaboration with non-government entities to deliver initiatives under the Strategy. For example, the Paiheretia te Muka Tāngata initiative aims to deliver a Whānau Ora approach to supporting young Māori in the corrections system. This is led by Te Puni Kōkiri, Ara Poutama Aotearoa (Department of Corrections) and Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora (Ministry of Social Development) in partnership with hapū and iwi.

However, collaboration and partnership with non-central government entities to deliver Strategy initiatives appears to depend on the motivations, ways of working and delivery model of individual government agencies.

The majority of interviewees that represented non-central government entities, as well as survey respondents, indicated that there is a strong desire to work with government towards child and youth wellbeing.

*The narrative in the Strategy is good and sound. It is aligned with the approach that we are building in our sector. We need to be collaborating with government and on an aligned path if we wish to make a difference.*

- NGO representative

*We are really excited about what the Strategy could look like when implemented collaboratively with government, philanthropy and the local community.*

- Philanthropic organisation

Stakeholders from non-central government entities stated that they were in a unique position to assist the government to achieve its aims in child and youth wellbeing. Representatives from community organisations and iwi and Māori entities emphasised that they have established networks with the groups that the government is seeking to support and provided examples of whānau-centred, locally led initiatives that were having an impact, but were not formally linked to the Strategy. They expressed a desire to work with the government to achieve its objectives, and advocated for a more devolved, collaborative approach to achieving the Strategy's aims.

*Our work concentrates on the things the Strategy is trying to make a difference to, with amazing people who have the ability to start tackling these issues, but no way in the system of partnering or enabling that collaboration.*

- NGO representative

Some stakeholders from non-central government entities expressed frustration that the Strategy principles emphasised that “change requires action by all of us” and that “government needs to enable more community-led design and delivery”, but they were yet to see systemic changes in central government's willingness to collaborate.

*If they don't build the partnerships or the infrastructure to execute it then it will end up being simply a nice piece of paper. If [the government] wants to do something different it has to configure itself differently.*

- NGO representative

Stakeholders from both government agencies and non-central government organisations advocated for the CWPRG to play a larger role as a broker of government partnerships with non-government entities which work towards shared goals.

### Recommendations

- Investigate ways to drive further cross-agency collaboration and more interagency work on delivering the Strategy
- Prioritise government efforts to enable more community-led design and delivery of child and youth wellbeing initiatives.

## 3.4. Implementation for Māori

### The Strategy includes Māori voice, but lacks Māori leadership

The evaluation found that efforts were made to include Māori voices in the Strategy development process. The Strategy Reference Group was co-chaired by an iwi leader and included Māori academics and representatives of Māori organisations. The Māori engagement summary report<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. 2019. *Māori Engagement Summary Report: National Engagement on Tamariki Tū, Tamariki Ora, New Zealand's First Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy*. <https://childyouthwellbeing.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2019-08/maori-engagement-summary-report-cyw.pdf>

states that regional hui were held throughout the country to consult on the proposed outcome framework and focus areas for the Strategy, as well as seek broader views on what the Strategy needs to contain, what it needs to do for Māori, and ideas for improving the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi. Eleven hui were held attended by 175 people representing iwi, Māori organisations, hauora Māori providers, kaupapa Māori health and social services, district health boards and local government. In addition, the national engagement summary report<sup>11</sup> notes that around 2,500 of the 10,000 submissions across all forms of engagement were from individuals or organisations who identified as Māori.

Despite these efforts, the process of involving Māori in the Strategy development fell short of Māori expectations. Māori interviewees were critical of the top-down, government-led approach taken to Strategy development. Two interviewees considered that the consultation with Māori should have happened earlier. The engagement hui and broader consultation occurred after the draft outcomes framework had been approved by Cabinet, and a list of indicative focus areas for the Strategy had been developed. These interviewees stated that Māori engagement should have happened at the earliest possible point, to inform a 'ground up' approach to the framework development. On the other hand, two interviewees stated that it was good to have something to 'bounce ideas off'.

Most Māori stakeholders considered that Strategy development and implementation should be done in partnership with iwi, given the status of Māori as Tiriti o Waitangi partners, the Strategy principle that 'Māori are tangata whenua and the Māori-Crown relationship is foundational', and the wide and enduring inequities between the wellbeing of Māori and non-Māori children and youth. They expressed disappointment that there was not stronger Māori leadership within the group of Ministers, government agency Chief Executives and officials that were leading the Strategy development.

*The leadership was a 'wall of whiteness' – and this is not the right way to start off a strategy that disproportionately affects Māori. [I] turned up to national hui to start creating the Strategy to a Pākehā, male, leadership group; it's not a good look.*

- Māori representative

According to Māori interviewees, Māori members of the Strategy Reference Group, particularly those immersed in communities, should have been leading development of the Strategy rather than providing input in an advisory capacity. As noted earlier in the report, as the group has ceased operating following the launch of the Strategy, there is no other mechanism in place to provide ongoing advice and direction from Māori leaders and experts.

Māori stakeholders highlighted the importance of the participation of Māori from outside of government agencies in governance structures in order to ensure Māori voices are heard. It is important that this includes decision making powers. Further, it is important that individual Māori members of governance groups are not a lone Māori voice at the table.

*If the government wants to have a governance structure that has ability to influence change for Māori, this is not going to come from within the agencies.*

- Member of the Strategy Reference Group

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<sup>11</sup> Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. 2019. *Have Your Say Summary Report: National Engagement on Tamariki Tū, Tamariki Ora, New Zealand's First Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy* <https://childyouthwellbeing.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2019-08/summary-report-national-engagement-wellbeing.pdf>

## The legislation and Strategy do not specify Māori as a priority group

The evaluation recognises that the Strategy is required to meet the provisions set out in its founding legislation, the *Children's Act 2014*.<sup>12</sup> This legislation does not specify Māori as a priority group. Section 6(1) of the Act states that the Strategy must address:

- (a) improving the well-being of all children;
- (b) improving, as a particular focus, the well-being of children with greater needs;
- (c) reducing child poverty and mitigating impacts of child poverty and of socio-economic disadvantage experienced by children; and
- (d) improving the well-being of the core populations of interest to the department (i.e., Oranga Tamariki).

The legislation also states that consultation with representatives of Māori, such as iwi and Māori organisations, must be undertaken before the Strategy is adopted or changed (section 6D(d)); and that annual reporting must provide analysis of wellbeing outcomes for identified populations, including Māori (section 7C(2)). Part 1 section 4A of the Act states that these duties are imposed in order to recognise and provide a practical commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi. The development and implementation of the Strategy met these legislative requirements.

This legislation does not specify Māori as a priority group. Māori interviewees described a perception that government is reluctant to target strategies for Māori and identify Māori as a priority group.

*There seems to be a worry from government about people who do not understand what being colonised and Indigenous means throwing themselves into the media saying 'we are becoming divided' and 'Māori get special treatment'. This tends to mean that there is an overly cautious approach to highlighting and targeting strategies for Māori. This means it [the Strategy] is less effective.*

- Māori representative

According to Māori interviewees, the legislation does not adequately give effect to Article Two (Rangatiratanga) or Article Three (Ōritetanga) as defined in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Reducing Māori input to 'consultation' diminishes the intent of the te reo Māori version of the Treaty. Māori interviewees stated that the legislation is flawed in not specifying Māori as a priority group.

*If the Act doesn't say that Māori are the priority, it's not meeting Treaty obligations.  
End of story.*

- Māori representative

There is longstanding overrepresentation of tamariki and rangatahi Māori in each of the four priority groups defined by the Act, and the Strategy has a stated purpose of improving wellbeing outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi Māori. However, the fact that Māori are not explicitly prioritised means that the Strategy does not bring to the forefront the unique concepts of wellbeing, needs, preferences, and aspirations of tamariki and rangatahi Māori. This may lead to a suite of actions and outcomes that are not optimal for tamariki and rangatahi Māori, or fail to address the fundamental issues that create and maintain inequity for Māori. This is inconsistent

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2014/0040/latest/whole.html>



with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and compromises the potential of the Strategy to make meaningful change for Māori and address inequity.

### **The Strategy is not an effective mechanism for driving government action for Māori**

Government officials in a range of agencies stated that the legislative requirement to report on outcomes by population group, including Māori, was a driver of government action for Māori. Further, the child poverty reduction targets, which set specific numeric and time-bound expectations for reducing the proportion of children living in poverty, were highlighted as a driver of action. While the targets do not specify expected outcomes for Māori, officials within government agencies stated that, given Māori bear a greater burden from poverty, the targets act as a prompt to focus on identifying what works for Māori in this area. However, as discussed in the previous section, Māori interviewees expressed a view that most effective way to create change for tamariki and rangatahi Māori is to directly target Māori.

*Government needs to stand up and say 'There is a priority here. And the priority is for Māori'.*

- Māori representative

Government officials that participated in the interviews stated that Māori are a priority population for most agencies but work in this space is not driven or framed by the Strategy. They reported a broader movement within the public sector to analyse policy through a te Tiriti o Waitangi lens and engage and consult with Māori. This was also reported to be an increased focus on Māori as a priority population in entities outside the public sector; one academic expert had observed an increasing requirement for research funding grants to consider how the research will benefit Māori communities. However, interviewees from government agencies reported limitations of the Strategy.

*It's not a te ao Māori framework. Some actions have a focus on Māori, but overall the Strategy would not be the thing we would look to guide actions for rangatahi and tamariki Māori.*

- Government official

### **There is a desire for a Māori-centred and kaupapa Māori Strategy**

Most Māori survey respondents (eight of the 11 respondents that were associated with an iwi or Māori organisation) agreed that the Strategy aligns with Māori aspirations for the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi. Around half (six) agreed that Māori stakeholders support the Strategy and its Programme of Action, and that the Strategy reflects the Crown's Treaty of Waitangi responsibilities to tamariki and rangatahi Māori.

However, when there was an opportunity for more in-depth discussion with Māori leaders and experts through stakeholder interviews, different views emerged. During interviews, these representatives indicated a desire for the Strategy to have a strong Māori focus and be transformational, addressing the fundamental systemic factors that drive inequities and undermine tamariki and rangatahi wellbeing.

*The Strategy provided an opportunity to be future-focussed and visionary, to be bold and address some fundamental issues for our people. The aim was to shift the needle for rangatahi, really push government to be brave and bold.*

- Māori representative

The interviewees noted that there are basic tenets that impact on tamariki and rangatahi wellbeing that are not given adequate consideration in the Strategy framework or Programme of Action. This includes the effects of colonisation, intergenerational trauma, and racism, which have been 'diluted or missed' in the Strategy. Most considered that the Strategy is too broad in its application and argued for the need for a strategy that specifically prioritises and targets Māori.

*The key difference is that the Government needs strategies to have generic application, whereas there is a desire from Māori stakeholders to have a strategy that works for Māori. The generic strategies are never going to respond to the needs of Māori and won't be effective.*

- Māori representative

One interviewee, in response to the question as to whether the Strategy is setting a foundation to improve the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi Māori, responded '*The key question is, is this the right strategy?*'

Māori interviewees described a 'hierarchy' of preferences regarding what an appropriate Strategy for Māori would look like. Ideally, the interviews found a desire among Māori stakeholders for Māori-centred or kaupapa Māori strategy that could be applied to all.

A Māori-centred strategy puts Māori individuals and collectives at the centre of strategy and programme of action. It is tailored to the needs and preferences of Māori, is based on Māori concepts and values, and involves Māori at every level, though control ultimately tends to rest with mainstream organisations. A kaupapa Māori approach is located within a Māori worldview. Therefore, Māori beliefs and values take precedence; mātauranga Māori informs planning and action, and control rests with Māori. Decolonisation is a central foundation of both approaches, and therefore unpacking the intergenerational trauma of colonisation and the need to address institutional and other forms of racism are embedded. Both approaches give expression to Māori rights as Tiriti o Waitangi partners, are concerned with addressing the systemic factors that maintain Māori marginalisation and inequity, and embrace Māori concepts of wellbeing grounded in Māori worldviews and inclusive of secure cultural identity.

*We need a strategy with a specific focus on addressing the systemic issues that affect Māori. If not, there is no way the government will achieve the outcomes they are seeking.*

- Māori representative

The focus of both Māori-centred and kaupapa Māori approaches, as they relate to the Strategy, is the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi in the context of whānau. Therefore, the ultimate outcomes sought are the achievement of lasting wellbeing for tamariki and rangatahi Māori as Māori and whānau ora.

*...if whānau are looked after, their babies will be well looked after.*

- Māori representative

Māori stakeholders considered that a strategy that draws on kaupapa Māori principles and emphasises a devolved, family-centred and community-led approach would work for other groups, including those accorded priority under the legislation as well as Pasifika, disability groups, and migrant children.

An alternative approach would be to have a separate Māori strategy, which outlines outcomes and actions that specifically apply to tamariki and rangatahi Māori. A concern raised about a standalone Māori strategy is that it may be marginalised in preference for the wider population strategy.

At a minimum, Māori should be highlighted as a priority group within the current Strategy and the specific needs, preferences and aspirations of tamariki and rangatahi Māori and their whānau should be better integrated so that Māori see themselves within the Strategy.

### **Specific activities delivered under the Strategy were well received by Māori stakeholders**

Māori interviewees identified some activities delivered under the Strategy that had made a difference to tamariki and rangatahi. In particular, initiatives that are delivered under Oranga Tamariki partnerships with iwi were identified as having potential for positive impact.<sup>13</sup> The Mokopuna Ora initiative to assist whānau to navigate the care and protection system, delivered in partnership with Waikato-Tainui, was highlighted as an example of a positive action for Māori. The partnership and power sharing with iwi to co-design and deliver this initiative was described by a Māori interviewee as a ‘game changer’.

*In the child protection sector, I see a lot more shift to iwi-directed conversations and involvement of whānau voice across decision making. I applaud the move to have more mana whenua involved in caring for rangatahi.*

- Māori representative

Crown-Māori partnerships to invest in papakāinga and housing repairs were also identified as an area of success under the Strategy. Māori consulted during the development of the Strategy<sup>14</sup> had identified the need to ensure everyone has the ‘basics’ including food, clothing and shelter. Ka Ora, Ka Ako/Healthy School Lunches and papakāinga partnership developments are contributing to meeting the basics, to which iwi had previously contributed funding. An iwi representative stated that this has freed up funding that the iwi can now invest in areas such as literacy and numeracy support for their tamariki and rangatahi. While these activities do not grapple in an expansive way with the fundamental drivers of inequity and compromised wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi Māori, it is useful to note that interviewees attributed success to the partnership relationship formed with iwi and collaboration with Māori communities.

### **There has been limited traction on delivering by-Māori-for-Māori initiatives**

There was little evidence that engagement with iwi and Māori organisations to seek input into Strategy implementation top-of-mind for government stakeholders.

*Māori input and expertise in guiding implementation of Strategy? Can't answer – not sure.*

- Government official

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<sup>13</sup> Partnerships with iwi are specific legislative provisions of the *Oranga Tamariki Act 1989* section 7AA <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1989/0024/latest/whole.html#LMS216331>

<sup>14</sup> Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. 2019. *Have Your Say Summary Report: National Engagement on Tamariki Tū, Tamariki Ora, New Zealand's First Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy* <https://childyouthwellbeing.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2019-08/summary-report-national-engagement-wellbeing.pdf>

The survey found mixed views on this topic. Six out of the eleven survey respondents that were associated with iwi or Māori organisations indicated agreement that Māori expertise and input informs Strategy implementation, and that Strategy implementation is supporting Māori to deliver solutions for Māori. One out of eleven iwi and Māori survey respondents agreed that government is working well with Māori entities to deliver the Strategy.

In more in-depth discussion, Māori interviewees stated that achieving systemic change for tamariki and rangatahi will require the Crown to further devolve funding and leadership to iwi and other Māori organisations. Their observations suggest that the government remains reluctant to give up power and resources to iwi and Māori community organisations, but that there is growing trust.

*The pandemic has shown that a top-down, centralised way of delivering policy does not work in a crisis, or at other times. There is an opportunity to rethink the current approach...and take a much more devolved approach in terms of where the money goes, where services get delivered, taking seriously local intelligence and lived experience.*

- Māori representative

*To tackle what really makes strategies work [for Māori] requires developing a trust relationship with the community, those at the flaxroots, and giving them the resources they need. The Strategy talks about 'working with', but doesn't put in place tools and resources to actually make this happen...actually transferring decision making and financial resources.*

- Māori representative

Māori interviewees appreciated the emphasis in the Strategy principles that 'change requires action by all of us.' They supported the Strategy narrative that government needs to partner with iwi and hapū to improve tamariki and rangatahi wellbeing. One representative of a national Māori entity saw this as part of a growing awareness amongst government that Māori organisations are best placed to achieve outcomes for whānau, that a by-Māori-for-Māori approach is the way to go, and that government cannot provide solutions without leadership from Māori communities. An iwi representative saw the Strategy as having strong potential as a lever for Crown-iwi collaboration.

*The Strategy has been a good trigger to get the government to think about partnerships.*

- Māori representative

However, all interviewees that spoke from a Māori perspective considered that, although the Strategy was well intentioned, genuine transfer of power and resources had not yet occurred. Aside from a few examples of partnership, as described earlier, Māori stakeholders reported seeing a continuation of entrenched patterns in which the Crown held decision making power, and iwi and other Māori organisations held advisory and/or delivery roles. This was frustrating for Māori interviewees, who considered that there was ample evidence – including the recent success of Māori-led COVID-19 vaccination programmes – that demonstrated that iwi and other Māori entities are effective in reaching their people. There was a strong call for the government to capitalise on the expertise and networks of iwi and other Māori organisations by transferring decision making powers, tools and resources to lead tamariki and rangatahi-focused initiatives.

*Iwi can do things differently, and people have trust in iwi. The government needs to bring in Māori leaders, get iwi and hapū involved if they really want to succeed – and they need to start planning for this now.*

- Māori representative

*We are a kaupapa Māori organisation that works with tamariki. We already do what the Strategy intends to do for Māori tamariki and their whānau, and could scale this up if we had more support.*

- Māori organisation

Māori interviewees identified the need to have a partnership approach that engages and invests in iwi and Māori entities to achieve results for local communities, and that responds to the unified and holistic approach articulated by the Strategy.

### Recommendations

- Ensure that the legislation underpinning the Strategy designates Māori a priority group.
- Establish partnerships with iwi and ensure strong Māori participation in Strategy leadership at all levels, including as an independent voice in governance.
- Better integrate Māori needs, aspirations and concepts of wellbeing into the Strategy to increase Māori buy-in and ensure the Strategy works for tamariki and rangatahi Māori. The hierarchy of preferences indicated by Māori stakeholders were as follows:
  - a kaupapa Māori strategy that could be applied to all. This would be founded on kaupapa Māori principles, and therefore consistent with Māori beliefs and values and informed by mātauranga Māori.
  - a standalone Māori strategy, with outcomes and actions that specifically apply to tamariki and rangatahi Māori
  - at a minimum, Māori highlighted as a priority group within the current Strategy and actions focused on the specific needs, preferences and aspirations of tamariki and rangatahi Māori and their whānau.
- Resource iwi and Māori organisations to lead and deliver initiatives to support tamariki and rangatahi wellbeing.

## KEQ2: IS THE STRATEGY FUNCTIONING AS INTENDED?

### 3.5. Framework that can be used by anyone

#### The Strategy framework is clear and understandable to stakeholders

Government stakeholders described the Strategy as “sound” and the framework as a “good organising framework”. The Strategy framework was also used to help think about where work sits strategically across government. The six outcome areas were considered useful as providing the overall structure to the Strategy and offer a helpful taxonomy of focus areas for child and youth wellbeing. The Strategy framework enables understanding of outcome areas, and where government work programmes fit within those outcome areas.

*It does provide clarity on government policies and priorities ... Ministers will be focusing on the actions in the Strategy. It's a good framework for articulating government policies.*

- Government official

This is consistent with the survey findings, where two-thirds (67%) of survey respondents agreed that the Strategy framework provides an easy-to-use framework for improving child wellbeing. Open text survey responses indicated that non-government stakeholders appreciated that the Strategy framework provides clarity on the outcomes sought by government, and how the various policy actions fit together. One survey respondent praised the framework's recognition of wellbeing as multi-faceted:

*It shows understanding that children's development and wellbeing needs to be viewed more holistically...their wellbeing is determined by a range of domains, such as how their parents are doing and whether they are living in safe neighbourhoods.*

- Academic

#### The actions within the Strategy framework need prioritisation

While recognising that the Strategy is aiming to create substantial change, stakeholders consistently described the Strategy as ‘trying to do too much’.

*The Strategy's attempt to stretch across the age-span and incorporate all tamariki and taiohi makes it less useful. It's too detailed and specific.*

- NGO representative

The broad nature of the Strategy was attributed to the demands of the development process, including the requirements in the legislation, ministerial drivers, and the collaborative nature of the process. On one hand, this contributed to achieving buy-in, but on the other it weakens the Strategy's ability to provide clarity about where to focus and what actions to prioritise.

*It's not clear about which are the particular outcomes the government really needs to prioritise and do more work on. Yes, we've got the six [outcome] areas, but under this what do we really need to focus on that will make a difference?*

- Government official

Government stakeholders stated they would like guidance about which are the particular outcomes the government want to focus on, and what actions are linked to these outcomes. They



suggested it is important to identify a small number of the priority areas to focus on in the short-term.

*Can we do everything? Probably not. So therefore, we need to prioritise certain things, but what are these things?*

- Government official

Some interviewees provided examples in which the CWPRG has stepped in to guide stakeholders to identify a priority area and take action. This includes the working groups established for the First One Thousand Days and Debt to Government. They would like to see the CWPRG support further prioritisation work during the next phase of Strategy implementation.

### Recommendation

- In partnership with key stakeholder groups, identify a small number of areas within the outcome framework and Programme of Action to prioritise over the short term.

## 3.6. Drives government policy

### The child poverty reduction targets have driven policy and investment decisions

The evaluation found that the child poverty reduction aspects of the Strategy have been effective in driving policy and investment decisions. Interviews with government officials indicated that the legislative requirement to measure and report on child poverty reduction<sup>15</sup> and the specific, numeric targets have spurred policy action. There was awareness of the targets amongst government officials interviewed at a range of tiers in the public sector, from analyst to Chief Executive level.

*The Strategy meaningfully lists the aspirations for wellbeing for children in poverty and this has been a focus of policy discussion in my agency.*

- Government official (policy analyst)

*We got the targets right in the child poverty space and therefore we're getting good policy making from this. If this was just an alleviating child poverty strategy, it would be doing extremely well.*

- Government official (senior leader)

Interviewees pointed to specific policy decisions that had been driven by the child poverty reduction targets, including increases to all main benefits, the Families Package, and initiatives to cover basic costs such as lunches in schools and doctors' visits. They considered that including numeric targets has been useful for driving investment, due to the public visibility of the government's commitment to child poverty reduction and the requirement for annual reporting on progress. This "*sharpens the focus on making observable progress through policy*" (government official).

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<sup>15</sup> This requirement is established under the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018 <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2018/0057/18.0/LMS8294.html>

**The Strategy is not yet playing a substantial role in driving policy, investment or actions**

Interviews with those involved in the development process revealed that the development of the Strategy and the Programme of Action took the approach of building on work already underway in child and youth wellbeing. This was seen as pragmatic, allowing the Strategy to ‘hook into’ existing government activity commitments and providing coherence and structure to the government child and youth wellbeing agenda.

Government officials involved in the Strategy development also reported that there was a large amount of new policy and initiative development that was done in parallel to the Strategy development, and that the Strategy extended and captured new initiatives; not just ‘what the government was already doing’.

Now that the Strategy is in implementation phase, the evidence suggests that the Strategy is not driving policy and investment; rather, it is acting as an organising framework for work programmes. The survey findings (Figure 4) show that a small number of respondents are using the Strategy to guide policy development, new strategies/programmes/services or to re-prioritise resources. Analysis shows that those within central government and NGOs were the two largest groups that had made these changes.

Figure 4: Actions taken by survey respondents to implement the Strategy

**Out of 143 survey respondents:**



For most interviewees, however, the Strategy is not shaping policy thinking and decisions. Government officials reported that they did consider the Strategy during the process of policy development, particularly in its application to the Budget process by having 'Reducing Child Poverty and Improving Child Wellbeing' as a Budget Priority. However, it was reported that this activity tends to focus on aligning activities with the Strategy, rather than a detailed consideration of how to achieve the Strategy’s intended outcomes.

Government stakeholders primarily saw the Strategy as a way to organise and structure agency work programmes, and reported a perception that agencies would be working on similar actions regardless of whether or not the Strategy was in place. This was not necessarily seen as negative; the Strategy provides a framework for where work sits strategically. It has been useful to confirm the value of the work that agencies are doing, how it fits with what others are delivering, and acts as a confirmation that they are heading in the right direction.

*The Strategy is a 'cherry on top' that confirms the value of our work programme. It's confirmation that we're doing the right thing and reinforces that the work is important.*

- Government official

Government officials also reported that the Strategy has been useful in policy discussions as a lever to consider potential initiatives and actions from the child and youth perspective. However, several interviewees, from both government agencies and non-central government entities, were disappointed that they were not yet seeing the transformational change that they had hoped from the Strategy.

*The idea of being a change agent, going beyond the business-as-usual approach....what we've seen so far feels like compiling all the government initiatives and then implementing it. It'll take more than that to shift the dial.*

- NGO representative

There was acknowledgement that the Strategy has been operating for two years, and that at this stage of its lifecycle 'aligning' work to the Strategy may be appropriate. Interviewees expressed anticipation that the next phase of the Strategy implementation will see a stronger focus on policy and actions being driven by the expected Strategy outcomes.

### 3.7. Harnesses community action

#### There have been some actions taken in the community to implement the Strategy

As was discussed in section 3.5 and 3.7, community stakeholders support the vision of the Strategy and are eager to partner with government to work towards achieving its outcomes. Of the 46 survey respondents who were from community, NGO and philanthropic organisations, 26 stated that they had taken no action, the question was not applicable, or answered 'no' to all questions regarding action. The remaining 22 respondents indicated that they had taken at least one action. Details of the actions taken are displayed in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Action taken by survey respondents from community, NGO and philanthropic organisations

#### Of the 46 survey respondents who were from community, NGO or philanthropic organisations:



10

had aligned their strategic objectives or work programmes with the Strategy



9

had created new policy with guidance from the Strategy



9

had invested in new strategies, policies, programmes or services to contribute to implementing the Strategy.

These survey responses are consistent with the levels of involvement reported by respondents from community, NGO and philanthropic organisations. Thirty percent reported using the Strategy as a high-level guide, 20% for help planning and decision-making, and 15% reported that implementing the Strategy was a core part of their work.

Two open text survey responses stated that the Strategy had provided a platform for discussions with other agencies in the community.

*My organisation was already focused on child and youth wellbeing prior to the development of this Strategy so it hasn't made much of a difference to our work. But it has helped us to have conversations with other providers about the importance of child and youth wellbeing.*

- NGO representative

### **A barrier to community action is that some community stakeholders don't perceive the Strategy is relevant to them**

Some stakeholders indicated that their organisations don't necessarily view their work as being aligned with the Strategy. Some already had child and youth wellbeing programmes of work in place and were either not aware of the Strategy or did not see the Strategy as a core influence on their work. The view that the Strategy is a government document that talks about government activity was one reason for this.

*The Strategy is largely silent on community-led strategy, action and investment to enhance child and youth wellbeing. A lot of the focus in the Strategy and action plan has been on government action.*

- Community organisation representative

*We strongly support the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy. It could be useful to consider whether there could be specific action plans for issues which are more inclusive of a broader range of stakeholders than the current Programme of Action.*

- NGO representative

### **There is a need for community champions to increase knowledge of the Strategy and harness action**

Interviewees from NGOs, iwi and Māori entities and academic institutes stated that child and youth wellbeing-focused groups they are involved with not often discuss or reference the Strategy.

*At national hui there is not much reference to or awareness of the Strategy. Yet many of the people there would have been involved in its development.*

- Māori representative

*I'm a member of [child and youth-focused sector group]. They are all respected professionals, do lots of good stuff for children, but they never mention the Strategy. It needs to be more visible to people like this, so they become advocates.*

- NGO representative

There was also concern that the momentum generated so far in the community might be lost in emerging priorities, including COVID-19. The ability to sustain action was a present issue with non-central government stakeholders.

A range of stakeholders considered that more needs to be done to increase awareness, understanding and buy-in from non-government sectors if the anticipated outcomes are to be achieved. Stakeholders identified examples of 'champions', such as former Children's Commissioner Andrew Beecroft, who have been strong advocates for the Strategy and actively profiled it to their sector and stakeholders. Interviews with some members of the Strategy Reference Group also indicated that they had played this role within their organisations. Evaluation participants considered it important to identify and support champions within the child and youth sectors who can connect with relevant communities and generate excitement and momentum for the Strategy.

### Recommendation

- Identify and support champions within the community sector, to increase awareness of and buy-in to the Strategy.

## 3.8. Accountability for improving wellbeing

### **The Strategy is performing well as a mechanism for Ministerial and government official accountability**

The fact that the Strategy is a publicly articulated and publicised intent to improve child and youth wellbeing and is transparent about its intended outcomes and plan of action, acts as a lever for accountability. Similarly, the legislative requirement to report annually on progress of the Strategy's six outcomes and indicators provides public accountability.

*Like any Strategy, it is a written commitment, so in this way it does well in holding the government to account.*

- Māori organisation representative

Accountability is also embedded in the structures that have been established to govern and implement the Strategy, including the Ministerial group, the Social Wellbeing Board, the Deputy Chief Executives group and the General Managers group in which governance and/or delivery of the Strategy are core functions. Several interviewees from within government agencies stated that the fact that there is a strong Ministerial commitment and leadership of the Strategy drives action in the public sector: *"there's nothing like being put on the spot by Ministers to get things happening"*(government official).

Government officials also stated that the requirement to report to Ministers against a monthly 'tracker' is an important accountability mechanism. Interviewees described this as a way to make visible how delivery of the Programme of Action is progressing in each agency and across government.

However, government officials from across a range of agencies perceived that the focus of accountability is on delivery of the Programme of Action. They stated that reporting against the monthly tracker and to inform governance group meetings is mainly related to whether the

workplan is being delivered. To these interviewees, this indicated that the focus of accountability discussions is on operational issues, rather than strategic issues.

*Currently, the focus of this advice is – are we delivering the workplan? Rather than – is this the right workplan? Does it all add up to what we are trying to achieve?*

- Government official

However, as noted in section 2.3.6, the evaluation data collection did not include engagement with Ministers. It is therefore not possible to report their views on how the tracker data and other information provided by officials is used, including in decision-making.

### **Some indicators and associated measures focus on data that is available, rather than what is meaningful**

As discussed above, the annual requirement to report on progress against outcomes is an important accountability mechanism. A review of Cabinet papers<sup>16</sup> as well as interviews with those involved in the Strategy development show that there was an effort to develop a set of indicators and measures that were evidence based, relevant, and easy to understand. Government officials and experts involved recognised that indicators would be a key mechanism for communicating with the public regarding the Strategy’s progress. Interviewees that participated in the indicator development said that there was discussion and debate, and a strong desire to get the indicators right.

The evaluation found a perception that some of the indicators and their corresponding measures are considered to be well constructed, useful, and based on robust scientific evidence. In particular, indicators under the ‘have what they need’ outcome were highlighted as sound. Other indicators, particularly those relating to early childhood development, educational achievement, and the experience of children younger than 12 years old, were reported to be either missing or not ‘measuring what matters’. The published Strategy identifies that there are significant gaps in available data on children and young people and notes an expectation “that the indicators and measures will be built on and improved over time; some indicators may be added or replaced where better data and measurement methodology becomes available” (pp 78-79). Two academic experts that were interviewed stated that additional evidence has become available since the indicator set was developed, including the OECD publication *Measuring What Matters for Child Wellbeing and Policies*. Other interviewees mentioned emerging research in topic areas such as measuring wellbeing for young children.

The evaluation also found that concerns were raised regarding the appropriateness of the indicators for Māori. This is discussed in section 3.9.

### **Recommendation**

- Refine the indicators and measures in line with emerging evidence

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<sup>16</sup> Briefing: Update on the Indicators for the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (DPMC-2018/19-1107); Briefing: Proposed Indicators for the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (DPMC-2018/19-1195); Briefing: Final Suite of Indicators and measures for inclusion in Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (DPMC-2019/20-27)



### 3.9. Accountability to Māori

#### **Some of the indicators have a deficit focus and new indicators are needed that are meaningful from a Māori perspective**

Interviewees involved in the Strategy development stated that the criteria for selection of indicators included a preference for those that are strengths-based. Despite this intent, feedback from government officials, Māori interviewees and survey respondents found that many of the indicators were perceived as inherently deficit-based, focussed on problems and risk rather than protective factors.

The working group charged with providing expert advice in developing the indicators had little Māori representation and according to Māori stakeholders this resulted in indicators that did not resonate with Māori concepts of tamariki and rangatahi wellbeing. Interviews with those involved in indicator development found that the indicator set was constrained by the data that was readily available and collected by government. For example, data was available in the areas of child poverty, health, justice and reports of concern to Oranga Tamariki. There was a view that pragmatism in selecting indicators for which data were available had been prioritised over Māori views of what constitutes tamariki and rangatahi wellbeing and what should be measured. This limits the ability to monitor how well the Strategy works for Māori and to measure change.

*Pragmatism at the expense of what matters for Māori is not a good thing.*

- Māori representative

*The variables [i.e., indicators] are inherently deficit based. When you think about how this evidence base and data informs agency action [you] can see how Māori voices are lost. This [data] is used to monitor the Strategy – but it is fundamentally flawed.*

- Māori representative

Those involved in the indicator development stated that there was an attempt to frame measurement in a strengths-based way. However, there were concerns raised that this was mainly ‘faffing with labels’ and did not change the primarily deficit focus. Māori interviewees expressed disappointment that this is reinforcing the deficit thinking that had previously characterised the government relationship with Māori.

Review of the measures within the indicator framework show that there are a number of indicators that are strengths based and prioritise the youth voice. The new ‘What About Me?’ Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey is a key input for many of these indicators. However, there are also measures that were criticised by Māori stakeholders as reinforcing deficit and blaming narratives, including rates of criminal offending, maternal smoking in pregnancy, and reports of concern to Oranga Tamariki.

It is noted that contextual factors, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic, have resulted in the delayed collection of data to inform the more strengths-based measures, including the What About Me? survey. The data that were reported in the 2019/20 Annual Report<sup>17</sup> in the analysis of outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi Māori section therefore was primarily deficit focused. The report notes that there is a need to improve data collection by ‘including more strengths-based indicators and measures grounded in te ao Māori perspectives of wellbeing’. This is supported by

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<sup>17</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). 2021. Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy Annual Report for the Year Ending 30 June 2020.

evaluation participants who stressed the importance of indicators that are able to measure some of the more innovative aspects of the Strategy and progress towards addressing critical factors that shape tamariki and rangatahi wellbeing, such as access to secure Māori identity, whānau cohesion, and experiences of racism.

*We need to move away from focus on 'science-y' measurements that look robust but are not shining a light on what actually matters.*

- Māori representative

### **The focus of accountability is on individuals, not institutions' effectiveness for Māori**

Māori interviewees were highly supportive of the statement in the Strategy that change requires “transforming systems, policies and services to work better for Māori, supporting Māori to deliver solutions for Māori, and empowering local communities to make the changes that work for them”.<sup>18</sup> However, there is a disconnect between the intent of this statement, and the fact that there are few actions or performance measures that examine institutions' effectiveness for Māori, and their capacity and capability to respond to needs of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau.

Māori interviewees raised concerns that this indicated a government mindset of needing to change the behaviour of tamariki/rangatahi, parents or whānau (for example, reduce maternal smoking); but ignoring the necessity to change institutions' responsiveness to Māori. This was seen as a critical gap in ensuring accountability to Māori for transformative changes.

*Agencies that have a responsibility for tamariki Māori need to hold themselves to account. This is not visible anywhere in the Strategy. In the next version of strategy there is an opportunity to increase focus on this.*

- Māori representative

*From the perspective of whānau that I work alongside it hasn't made any difference at all. They continue to encounter barriers and racism within our statutory and governmental agencies. This should be the focus of accountability.*

- Māori representative

An interviewee pointed to the *Youth Plan 2020-22*<sup>19</sup> as an example of a strategy that incorporates a focus on government responsiveness to its target population (in this instance young people aged 12-24 years). It includes specific actions related to how government agencies will work collaboratively (with each other, the youth sector, communities and rangatahi) and supporting government agencies to increase capability and responsiveness to communities, in order to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 for rangatahi and contribute to transformative change.

There are also existing frameworks which set out what a capable organisational relationship with Māori looks like, particularly the *Te Arawhiti Māori Crown Relations Capability Framework for the*

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<sup>18</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, August 2019, page 11

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.myd.govt.nz/documents/young-people/youth-plan/youth-plan-2020-2022-turning-voice-into-action-rebuilding-and-recovering.pdf>

*Public Service - Organisational Capability Component*<sup>20</sup>. This could provide an input into measuring government agency responsiveness to Māori.

### **The focus of measurement is on the individual, not collectives that matter to Māori**

There is a legislative requirement that the Strategy consider children within the context of their whānau (section 6C of the *Children's Act 2014*) and this is reflected in the principle that “Children and young people’s wellbeing is interwoven with family and whānau wellbeing”.<sup>21</sup> Further, the critical role of whānau in enabling the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi was consistently expressed by Māori interviewees. One of the Māori experts interviewed highlighted the need to ensure the unit of measurement includes not only the individual, but collectives that matter to Māori, in particular whānau.

*If you really want to understand tamariki and rangatahi aspirations you need to understand and make visible, monitor changes in the collectives that matter in te ao Māori.*

- Māori representative

This interviewee advocated for the government to work with Māori to develop measures that focus on the whānau as the unit of measurement and on what whānau value. They recognised that data systems are not currently set up to capture this, and there would need to be investment in the establishment of new data collection systems to allow for regular collection of these data. The Growing Up In New Zealand longitudinal study data was given as an example of a dataset that enabled measurement at the whānau level. The Te Kupenga survey was also referred to as a providing a dataset with a whānau focus. It remains important to include individual measures, noting that some of the individual measures were asked for by Māori during the round of consultation hui<sup>22</sup> to develop the Strategy.

### **Recommendations**

- Include measures that assess government institutions’ capacity and capability to respond to the needs of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau Māori as part of the Strategy reporting processes, and ensure this data informs decision making regarding the Strategy.
- Develop new strengths-based indicators that are grounded in Māori concepts of wellbeing.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.tearawhiti.govt.nz/assets/Tools-and-Resources/Maori-Crown-Relations-Capability-Framework-Organisational-Capability-Component.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, August 2019, page 29.

<sup>22</sup> Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. 2019. *Have Your Say Summary Report: National Engagement on Tamariki Tū, Tamariki Ora, New Zealand’s First Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy* <https://childyouthwellbeing.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2019-08/summary-report-national-engagement-wellbeing.pdf>

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out overall conclusions related to the implementation and functioning of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, framed around the extent to which the Strategy is on track to achieve its intended outcomes for children and young people, and tamariki and rangatahi Māori specifically. It also provides evaluative judgements on the maturity of the aspects of the Strategy identified as evaluation criteria. Finally, this section offers recommendations for consideration in the continued development and implementation of the Strategy.

### 4.1. Alignment of implementation and functioning with intended outcomes

#### Is the Strategy on track to achieve its intended outcomes?

The evaluation concludes that the implementation and functioning of the Strategy have good potential to achieve its intended outcomes, pending amendments as it goes into the next phase of its delivery.

There is agreement from most government and non-central government stakeholders that the Strategy provides a solid foundation to guide efforts to enhance child and youth wellbeing. Its vision, principles and outcome areas have good buy-in from government and the community. It performs well in articulating what children and young people generally want and need, informed by their own voices. It also plays an important function in clearly stating the actions that the government will take to enhance the wellbeing of children and young people.

The Strategy is also working well in harnessing action from the government. This has included the development of cross-agency working groups to address issues of significance to children and young people's wellbeing, such as the First 1000 Days and Debt to Government working groups. The establishment of these groups has also signalled to government officials that these aspects of children and youth wellbeing are of priority to government.

The implementation of the Strategy has built in accountability mechanisms, including groups tasked with overseeing governance and delivery at various levels of the public sector, and regular reporting to Ministers. This accords high priority to the delivery of the work programme within government agencies.

At present, government policy and investment decisions are primarily 'aligned' with the Strategy, for example by assessing Budget bids against the 'Reducing Child Poverty and Improving Child Wellbeing' priority area. Government officials considered that agencies would be working on similar actions regardless of whether or not the Strategy is in place. In the next phase of Strategy implementation, a stronger focus on ensuring policy making is being driven by the Strategy would support the achievement of its anticipated outcomes. The Strategy's ability to drive government policy would also be enhanced by providing guidance on which aspects of the Strategy are a priority, what outcomes the government want to focus on, and what actions are linked to these outcomes.

The evaluation identified some processes that are acting as barriers to achieving outcomes. The Strategy's responsiveness to the needs of Māori, and other groups that are overrepresented in adverse wellbeing outcomes including Pasifika, is hampered by the lack of representation in governance and in independent (i.e., non-government) advisory roles.

The evaluation also found that the implementation of the Strategy has been less effective in harnessing action amongst non-government stakeholders. There is an eagerness from the community, iwi, NGO and philanthropic sectors to be involved in Strategy implementation. These stakeholders consider that they have built connections and trust with populations and are well placed to assist the government to achieve the Strategy's intended outcomes, but to date have not seen a shift to more community-led design and delivery of initiatives.

### **Is the Strategy on track to achieve improved wellbeing outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi Māori?**

The evaluation found that there have been some actions delivered under the Strategy that have been positive for tamariki and rangatahi Māori. This includes initiatives that are being co-designed through Iwi-Crown partnerships which are seen as having strong potential to achieve positive change for tamariki and rangatahi.

However, as a mechanism to achieve transformational change in the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi, the Strategy is obstructed by the fact that it does not specify Māori as a priority group. While the *Children's Act 2014* requires the Strategy development to "recognise and provide a practical commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi" through consultation with iwi and Māori and provide analysis of wellbeing outcomes for Māori, this falls short of what Māori expect to see from the Crown to fulfil its Treaty obligations. Māori expect implementation of the Strategy to be characterised by partnership with iwi and strong Māori leadership at all levels, including in governance and decision making.

Māori communities were involved in the development process of the Strategy, through regional consultation hui and in accessing the advice of Māori leaders and experts through the Strategy Reference Group. Since the Strategy moved to its implementation stage the group is no longer meeting, and there has been no formal method of seeking independent Māori advice on the implementation of the Strategy or the interpretation of outcome data.

Achieving meaningful change for tamariki and rangatahi will require a strategy that provides for transformational partnerships with iwi, hapū and Māori communities. At a minimum, that will require Māori to be identified as a priority population within the current Strategy, and consideration given to the unique needs and aspirations of tamariki and rangatahi Māori and which specifies actions that specifically apply to tamariki and rangatahi Māori. A more effective means of achieving the desired outcomes for Māori would be the development of a kaupapa Māori strategy, which prioritises Māori concepts of wellbeing, draws on mātauranga Māori, is grounded in Māori worldviews and inclusive of secure cultural identity

The Strategy principle of 'change requires action by all of us' and the acknowledgment that iwi and hapū need to partner with government to improve tamariki and rangatahi wellbeing were strongly supported as a means to achieve outcomes for Māori. The establishment of ongoing and meaningful relationships with Māori to promote partnerships has occurred infrequently, but when it does it is reported as having strong potential for impact. The Strategy's anticipated outcomes for Māori could be supported by transferring decision making powers, tools and resources to iwi and Māori organisations.

More work is needed to ensure that the accountability mechanisms, particularly the indicators and measures, are fit for purpose for Māori and adequately cover domains of wellbeing that matter for tamariki and rangatahi. The evaluation concludes that there is an important gap in the current set of indicators and measures.

The Strategy acknowledges that achieving outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi will require transformation of systems, policies and services to work better for Māori. However, there is no measurement or reporting of institutions’ effectiveness for Māori, and their capacity and capability to respond to the needs of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau. This was seen a critical gap in ensuring accountability to Māori. In addition, the current indicator set includes deficit-based measures and therefore does not capture the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi Māori in Māori terms. Strengths-based measures are required that are meaningful to Māori. It will also be important that a Māori lens is applied in the interpretation of Māori data.

**4.2. Evaluative judgements**

This section sets out the overall conclusions related to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 2.2 and Appendix B.

**Stakeholder support and buy-in**

<i>Embedded</i>	<p>The vision, outcomes framework, and principles of the Strategy have achieved strong buy-in and support from stakeholders, including those within central government agencies and those in the community and NGO sector. The Strategy provides a well-articulated statement of what child and youth wellbeing looks like, and a clear Programme of Action describing what the government will do to support wellbeing. However, the Strategy has not received strong buy-in from Māori, who do not see themselves in the Strategy and consider that it does not include the unique and specific needs and aspirations of tamariki and rangatahi that align to Māori concepts of wellbeing.</p>
<i>Established</i>	
<i>Enabled</i>	
<i>Emerging</i>	

**Strategy governance and delivery infrastructure**

<i>Embedded</i>	<p>The governance and delivery ‘scaffolding’ set up to oversee Strategy implementation has some key strengths. The multi-layered oversight model, with a Ministerial group and forums at the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and General Manager level allows the Strategy to benefit from the experience and knowledge of public sector leaders from a variety of agencies. It also gives priority to the Strategy through directly engaging public sector leadership at all levels. The creation of a specific department within DPMC to act as the ‘engine room’ for Strategy implementation has ensured that there is a sustained focus on delivery. However, the governance and delivery infrastructure is comprised of personnel from within government. There is an absence of advice and guidance from independent Māori, Pasifika and NGO leaders and experts. Increased maturity in this criterion could be achieved through ensuring that the status of Māori as Treaty partners is reflected in governance structures and that other key stakeholder groups, particularly NGOs and Pasifika, have an advisory role.</p>
<i>Established</i>	
<i>Enabled</i>	
<i>Emerging</i>	



## United and holistic implementation

<b>Embedded</b>	<p>The Strategy offers a good foundation for collective action, articulating a shared vision which was strongly supported by the majority of evaluation participants; and offering a common understanding of what children and young people need and want to be well. The implementation of the Strategy has seen the formation of cross-agency groups to drive action in key areas identified by the government as priorities. Outside of central government agencies, holistic implementation with entities such as iwi, local government and NGOs has not been implemented in a systematic way. There is an opportunity to capitalise on the enthusiasm in the sector to partner with government, and leverage the established links of community organisations, iwi and Māori entities.</p>
<b>Established</b>	
<b>Enabled</b>	
<b>Emerging</b>	

## Implementation for Māori

<b>Embedded</b>	<p>The ability of the Strategy to create transformational change for tamariki and rangatahi is limited because Māori are not accorded priority status. This means that the specific needs, preferences and aspirations of Māori communities and the factors that impact on tamariki and rangatahi wellbeing such as colonisation, are not adequately reflected in the Strategy. There is inadequate partnership with iwi and Māori leadership in Strategy implementation, and independent Māori voices are not represented in the Strategy governance. Better integration of Māori needs and aspirations into the Strategy will increase Māori buy-in. Transformation of systems to work better for Māori will require developing partnerships with iwi and collaboration with Māori entities, including sharing decision making powers and resources.</p>
<b>Established</b>	
<b>Enabled</b>	
<b>Emerging</b>	

## Framework that can be used by anyone

<b>Embedded</b>	<p>The Strategy framework is widely viewed as a sound framework, that provides a useful taxonomy of focus areas for child and youth wellbeing. It provides clarity on the outcomes sought by government, and how the various policy actions fit together. The framework's holistic approach to understanding wellbeing needs was praised. The Programme of Action collates over one hundred activities and its broad nature weakens its ability to function as a device for targeting government action. Government officials suggested that their implementation of the Strategy could be enhanced by identifying a small number of priority areas to focus on in the short term.</p>
<b>Established</b>	
<b>Enabled</b>	
<b>Emerging</b>	

## Drives government policy

<b>Embedded</b>	<p>The child poverty reduction aspects of the Strategy have been effective in driving policy and investment, due to the setting of specific, numeric and time-bound targets that must be reported on. In other areas, Government stakeholders use the Strategy mainly as a way to organise and structure agency work programmes. This is useful, as it confirms the value of the work that agencies are doing and how it fits with what others are delivering. However, the Strategy has not yet prompted transformational</p>
<b>Established</b>	
<b>Enabled</b>	
<b>Emerging</b>	

change in driving government policy, with investments and actions being ‘aligned’ with the Strategy, rather than driven by the outcomes it is seeking.

### Harnesses community action

<i>Embedded</i>	While the Strategy offers strong potential as a vehicle to harness community action, this has not yet been realised in practice. The Strategy is not functioning as a tool for guiding action outside of central government; representatives of community entities, including Māori organisations, stated that the Strategy is not often discussed or referenced at child wellbeing focused forums and that they had observed little action driven by the Strategy. Community engagement could be enhanced through identifying and supporting champions within the child and youth sectors who can connect with the relevant communities and generate excitement and momentum for the Strategy.
<i>Established</i>	
<i>Enabled</i>	
<i>Emerging</i>	

### Accountability for improving wellbeing

<i>Embedded</i>	Accountability is embedded in the structures that have been established to govern and implement the Strategy. This includes having the Strategy as a standing agenda item on cross-agency governance groups, reporting to Ministers against a monthly ‘tracker’, and the requirement to report annually on wellbeing outcomes. The indicators and measures framework is an important accountability device. While many of the indicators are well constructed and relevant, others should be improved or replaced during the next phase of Strategy implementation. Stakeholders representing non-central government and Māori organisations highlighted early childhood development, educational achievement, the experience of children younger than 12 years old, and Māori perspectives as areas requiring improvement of measurement.
<i>Established</i>	
<i>Enabled</i>	
<i>Emerging</i>	

### Accountability for Māori

<i>Embedded</i>	Accountability for Māori requires ongoing measurement of the things that matter. Some indicators in the framework align with what was identified as important through consultation with Māori during the Strategy development process. However, despite the Strategy’s stated intent to transform systems, policies and services to work better for Māori, there is no specific and measurable public accountability of institutions’ effectiveness for Māori, and their capacity and capability to respond to needs of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau. As well, new strengths-based indicators are required that are grounded in Māori concepts of wellbeing, including measures at the whānau level.
<i>Established</i>	
<i>Enabled</i>	
<i>Emerging</i>	

### 4.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings outlined in this report, the evaluation makes the following recommendations.

#### **To ensure robust Strategy governance and delivery infrastructure:**

1. Ensure strong Māori participation in Strategy leadership at all levels, including as an independent voice in governance.
2. Consider reinstating the Strategy Reference Group, or a similar group, to provide independent advice and expertise from Māori, Pasifika and NGO representatives to guide Strategy implementation.

#### **To support united and holistic implementation of the Strategy:**

3. Investigate ways to drive further cross-agency collaboration and more interagency work on delivering the Strategy
4. Prioritise government efforts to enable more community-led design and delivery of child and youth wellbeing initiatives.

#### **To strengthen implementation and accountability for Māori:**

5. Ensure that the legislation underpinning the Strategy designates Māori a priority group.
6. Establish partnerships with iwi and ensure strong Māori participation in Strategy leadership at all levels, including as an independent voice in governance.
7. Better integrate Māori needs, aspirations and concepts of wellbeing into the Strategy to increase Māori buy-in and ensure the Strategy works for tamariki and rangatahi Māori. The hierarchy of preferences indicated by Māori stakeholders were as follows:
  - i. a kaupapa Māori strategy that could be applied to all. This would be founded on kaupapa Māori principles, and therefore consistent with Māori beliefs and values and informed by mātauranga Māori.
  - ii. a separate Māori strategy, which specifies outcomes and actions that specifically apply to tamariki and rangatahi Māori
  - iii. at a minimum, Māori should be highlighted as a priority group within the current Strategy and actions focused on the specific needs, preferences and aspirations of tamariki and rangatahi Māori and their whānau.
8. Resource iwi and Māori organisations to lead and deliver initiatives to support tamariki and rangatahi wellbeing.
9. Include measures that assess government institutions' capacity and capability to respond to the needs of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau Māori as part of the Strategy reporting processes, and ensure this data informs decision making regarding the Strategy.
10. Develop new strengths-based indicators that are grounded in Māori concepts of wellbeing.

#### **To ensure the Strategy framework can be used by anyone:**

11. In partnership with key stakeholder groups, identify a small number of areas within the outcomes framework and Programme of Action to prioritise over the short term.

**To harness community action:**

12. Identify and support champions within the community sector, to increase awareness of and buy-in to the Strategy.

**To support government accountability for child and youth wellbeing:**

13. Refine the indicators and measures in line with emerging evidence.

## APPENDIX A: DATA COLLECTION METHODS

This evaluation was conducted through a mixed methods approach, including qualitative engagement with Strategy stakeholders, focus groups with those involved in Strategy implementation, a quantitative survey, and document review.

### Data collection and fieldwork

We collected a mix of qualitative and quantitative data through fieldwork and a document review between 15 November 2021 and 16 January 2022, which has been used to inform the findings of the evaluation.

Further information about each of these activities is provided below.

#### Key informant interviews

The evaluation conducted 15 key informant interviews with 18 key stakeholders in the development, implementation and governance of the Strategy. This included:

- members of the Strategy Reference Group
- public sector leaders involved in the development of the Strategy
- representatives of iwi and Māori organisations
- academic experts.

The key informant interviews followed a semi-structured interview guide based on the KEQs and criteria described in Appendix B. The interviews sought to uncover how the Strategy is implemented and functioning, views on the extent to which it is progressing towards its intended outcomes, and its strengths and areas for improvement. The interviews took between 30 and 75 minutes.

Almost all interviews took place using Zoom or Microsoft Teams video conferencing software, which allowed for changes in COVID-19 Alert Levels during the data collection period.

Each interview was carried out by two members of the evaluation team (one to interview and one to take notes). Participants were interviewed individually or in small groups, and informed consent was obtained prior to the start of each interview. We also ensured that interviewees remained confidential in this evaluation report and specific quotes have generic descriptors to protect the identity of participants.

#### Focus groups and small-group interviews

We conducted nine cross-agency focus groups and small group interviews with groups involved in the development and/or implementation of the Strategy. The groups included:

- cross-agency working groups established to deliver aspects of the Strategy or initiatives that contribute to child wellbeing
- cross-agency forums related to child and youth wellbeing, who are involved in the governance or management of the Strategy
- public sector personnel involved in the development and ongoing implementation of the Strategy

- groups with a monitoring or advisory role in the Strategy.

In total, 68 individuals participated in the focus groups and small-group interviews.

The focus groups and small-group interviews were based on a semi-structured interview guide which covered the KEQs and criteria. Each group had a different role in the Strategy, and varying levels of involvement with its implementation. Therefore, we ensured that the content of the focus groups was tailored towards the participants' involvement of the Strategy.

### Online survey

The purpose of the survey was to investigate stakeholder perceptions on the effectiveness of processes related to the implementation and functioning of the Strategy.

The sample was a non-random convenience sample, using existing contacts of those who had been involved in Strategy working groups and other activities, subscribers to the Strategy newsletter mailing list, and contacts from within government agencies. Recipients of the survey link were also asked to invite other colleagues who had been involved with the Strategy's work.

The survey was delivered using LimeSurvey, an online survey tool. Questions were developed based around the key evaluation questions. The questionnaire received feedback from DPMC and was piloted with a small subset of the target respondents to ensure the flow and duration of the survey was acceptable to participants.

The survey was in the field for three working weeks over the period 8 December 2021 to 13 January 2022. Invitations to participate in the survey were sent to 1801 email addresses. The invitation included an introduction and a survey weblink. Participants received a reminder email prior to the end of the working year. Where email recipients were no longer connected to the email address, invitations were forwarded if an alternative email address was provided.

In total, 143 respondents were included in the survey analysis. A further 184 respondents were excluded from the analysis for the following reasons: 51 were excluded because they did not answer any questions at all; and 133 were excluded because they answered only the demographic questions or because they reported they were not aware of the Strategy.

Results were analysed by question and produced simple total counts and percentages for the closed response option and Likert-scale questions. Verbatim answers provided for open-ended questions were analysed by the themes identified in the qualitative evaluation activities.

### Analysis of documents

We reviewed 24 key documents related to the Strategy. This review provided contextual information on the Strategy development, and supported our analysis of the processes associated with its implementation and functioning.

The documents included the following grouped list of documents:

- the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy in its full and summary versions
- legislation related to the Strategy, including the *Children's Amendment Act 2018* and the *Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018*
- published documentation related to the Strategy development process, including reports on public engagement processes



- Cabinet papers documenting the Strategy's early implementation process and the development of the indicators and measures framework
- the annual monitoring report for the Strategy
- publications provided by interviewees during the data collection process.

The information collected in the document review was used to compare and contrast against fieldwork data results, and to provide contextual information where relevant.

## APPENDIX B: STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

Table 3: Criteria, standards of performance and measures of success for the process evaluation of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy

Criteria	Standard of performance	Measures of success	Data sources
<b>Key Evaluation Question 1: Has the Strategy been implemented as intended?</b>			
<b>Stakeholder support and buy-in</b>	The implementation of the Strategy has had the support of key stakeholder groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key stakeholder groups are aware of the Strategy and support its aims and intent</li> <li>• Key stakeholders understand the relevance of the Strategy to their work, including its implications for work to support the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi Māori</li> <li>• Mechanisms to communicate with stakeholders about the Strategy and its actions are effective</li> <li>• Stakeholders report that the Strategy provides a clear understanding of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ what children and young people need and want in order to be well</li> <li>○ what tamariki and rangatahi Māori need and want in order to be well</li> <li>○ what the government is doing to support child and youth wellbeing</li> <li>○ what they need to do to support child and youth wellbeing, in particular the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi Māori</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey, interviews, focus groups, document review</li> </ul>

<b>United and holistic implementation</b>	Central government and key stakeholders have worked in a united and holistic way to implement the strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective mechanisms have been established to support working collaboratively across central Government, including effective collaboration with Māori</li> <li>• Central government effectively engages Influencers and Connectors group (including iwi and Māori organisations, local government, business, non-government organisations and the philanthropic sector) to implement the strategy</li> <li>• Stakeholder groups report that they are working together to deliver the Strategy in a unified and collaborative way, that is inclusive of Māori stakeholders</li> <li>• Key stakeholders are working collaboratively to transform systems, policies and services to work better for children and young people</li> <li>• Actions are coordinated, minimising duplication and increasing efficiency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review, interviews, focus groups</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy infrastructure</b>	The necessary infrastructure and governance to implement the Strategy is in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The governance model for the Strategy is appropriate, and includes strong Māori representation</li> <li>• Strategy implementation is supported by relevant policy and procedural documentation</li> <li>• The Strategy has received appropriate resourcing (financial and personnel) from central government agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews, focus groups, document review</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation for Māori</b>	Strategy implementation is giving effect to te Tiriti o Waitangi and is taking a whānau centred approach to improving wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi Māori	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Māori leadership within stakeholder entities play a key role in the implementation of the Strategy</li> <li>• Implementation approaches align with Māori aspirations for the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey, interviews, focus groups, document review</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Māori stakeholders are aware of, understand and support the Strategy and Programme of Action</li> <li>• Māori expertise and input informs Strategy implementation</li> <li>• Central government is engaging and partnering with Māori entities to implement the Strategy</li> <li>• The policy, actions and activities that are implemented under the Strategy support Māori to deliver solutions for Māori and empower whānau, iwi and hapori Māori to make the changes that work best for them</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Evaluation Question 2: Is the Strategy functioning as intended?</b>			
<b>Framework that can be used by anyone</b>	The Strategy sets out a framework to improve child and youth wellbeing that can be used by anyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders at all levels of the system report that the Strategy is accessible and understandable</li> <li>• Stakeholder organisations are applying the framework to their planning and service delivery for children and young people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey, document review, interviews, focus groups</li> </ul>
<b>Drives government policy</b>	The Strategy is driving Government policy and is being used to guide decisions about actions and investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency policy development, actions and investments are prioritised to improve child wellbeing</li> <li>• The wellbeing of children with greater needs is a particular focus of policy development, actions and investments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of output data, document review, interviews, focus groups</li> </ul>

<b>Harnesses community action</b>	Non-government stakeholders are supported by the government to apply the Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-government stakeholders report that they are supported by the Government to align policy development, activities, and investments with the Strategy framework</li> <li>• Non-Government stakeholders report that the Strategy has supported changes in practice within their organisation</li> <li>• Māori organisations are being actively supported to deliver solutions for Māori</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of output data, document review, survey, interviews, focus groups</li> </ul>
<b>Increases accountability for improving wellbeing</b>	The Strategy is driving agencies to focus on actions at multiple levels to improve the wellbeing for all children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The policy interventions and actions listed in the Strategy have been implemented, or are underway</li> <li>• Monitoring processes collect and report timely and useful data that drives public accountability</li> <li>• Stakeholders perceive that the Strategy has increased political and public sector accountability for improving child and youth wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of output data, document review, survey, interviews, focus groups</li> </ul>
<b>Increases accountability for Māori</b>	The Strategy is measuring and reporting on the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi Māori and their whānau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The indicators and measures used to monitor the Strategy are fit for purpose for Māori and adequately cover the domains of wellbeing for tamariki and rangatahi Māori</li> <li>• Māori expertise is drawn on to apply kaupapa Māori principles to analyse Māori data</li> <li>• The results of analysis are regularly reported and used to inform decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of output data, document review, interviews, focus groups</li> </ul>

<p><b>On track to achieve improved wellbeing outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi Māori</b></p>	<p>The Strategy is transforming systems, policies and services to work better for Māori</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strategy is driving agencies to focus on actions at multiple levels to improve tamariki, rangatahi and whānau Māori wellbeing</li> <li>• Policy, actions and activities have been informed by an understanding of the impacts of social, economic, political and other determinants (e.g., the ongoing impacts of colonisation and structural racism) on the wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi Māori</li> <li>• Māori stakeholders report that the Strategy is on track to transform systems, policies and services to work better for tamariki and rangatahi Māori and their whānau and communities</li> <li>• Māori stakeholders see the Strategy is driving prioritisation of and progress towards their aspirations for tamariki and rangatahi Māori</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of output data, document review, survey, interviews, focus groups</li> </ul>
<p><b>On track to achieve intended outcomes</b></p>	<p>The Strategy has prioritised improving the wellbeing of children experiencing poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage, children and young people of interest to Oranga Tamariki and children with greater needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A synthesis of all evaluative data and evidence suggests the Strategy is setting the foundation for improving the wellbeing of children experiencing poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage, children and young people of interest to Oranga Tamariki and children with greater needs</li> <li>• Stakeholders report that the Strategy is driving transformation of systems, policies and services to work better for priority groups, and are able to articulate their role and provide examples of progress towards transformation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey, interviews, focus groups, output data, document review</li> </ul>