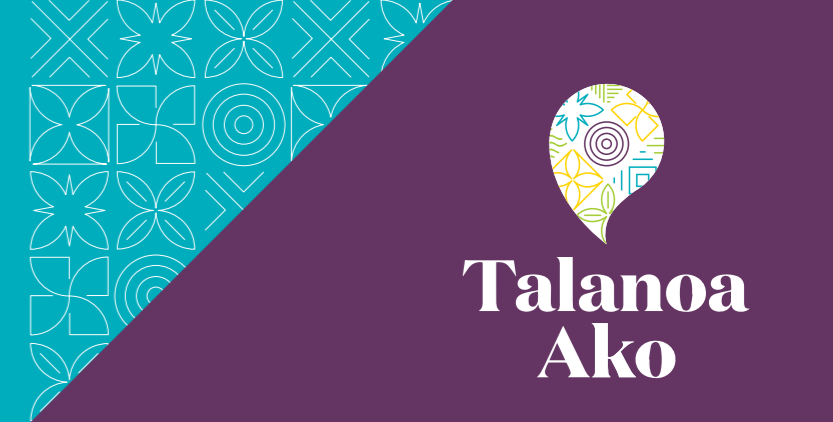




# Talanoa Ako programme innovation

## supported learning in Pacific homes during the COVID-19 lockdown 2020



### What is Talanoa Ako?

Talanoa Ako is a Pacific parent education programme that aims to equip and empower parents, families and communities with the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to champion their children's education.

The Integration and Strategy team of Programme Delivery (Parent Information Community Intelligence - PICI) at the Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga (the Ministry of Education) are responsible for delivering the Talanoa Ako programme (the programme). The PICI team works with churches and community providers called Talanoa Ako partners (the partners) to provide the programme.



### What was the problem?

On 25 March 2020, Aotearoa New Zealand, went into COVID-19 lockdown.

At Alert Level 4, people had to stay home, no gathering was allowed, and all public places were closed.

Realising the partners could not deliver the Talanoa Ako programme face-to-face the PICI team quickly considered alternative delivery options. The PICI team knew Pacific parents and families would want to know how best to support their children's education at home.



### What was the solution?

- » Radio programmes, *Talanoa Ako on Air*
- » *Talanoa Ako mobile app*.

The key principles of the PICI team in meeting Pacific parents' needs were:

- » put Pacific families at the heart of decision-making
- » be prepared to innovate
- » emphasise collaborative ways of working.



### Put Pacific families at the heart of decision making

Pacific parents and communities were supported in lockdown, when the continuity of their children's education seemed uncertain. The *Talanoa Ako on Air* and the *Talanoa Ako App* provided vital information to Pacific parents and families to help keep their children's learning on track at home.

One family, they shared how they set up goals with their family and their daily routines to put on their calendar. The two students shared their goals and how they used the time management for their programme at home.

— Presenter comment

*Talanoa Ako on Air* programmes ran on both the radio and via Facebook (and are still available online). The *Talanoa Ako App* provided Pacific parents easy to access to the Talanoa Ako resources on their phones.

Technology just takes it a step further, it's just crazy. The fact that people can go back to each of the videos as well, the users [numbers] just keep going up and up - even now.

— Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga personnel

The three series of *Talanoa Ako on Air* offered regular, timely advice and guidance to Pacific parents and families, supporting their children's education at home and when they returned to school.

Our families and communities have told us how they value this [Talanoa Ako] programme, and [they] became more confident in being part of their children's learning, armed with information and understanding.

— Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga personnel

### Be prepared to innovate

Within weeks of the first lockdown, the PICI team repurposed some advertising budget to develop *Talanoa Ako on Air* a series of radio programmes and the *Talanoa Ako App*.

### Essential to offer the programme in multiple languages

Pacific parents, learners and families responded positively to the *Talanoa Ako on Air* resources because they were in **seven Pacific languages**: Gagana Samoa, Lea FakaTonga, Reo Maori Kuki Airani, Vosa Vakaviti, Vagahau Niue, Te Gagana Tokelau and `Gana Tuvalu, and in English. In addition, there were radio ad-libs in three extra languages - PMN Kiribati, PMN Solomon Islands, and later Rotuman.

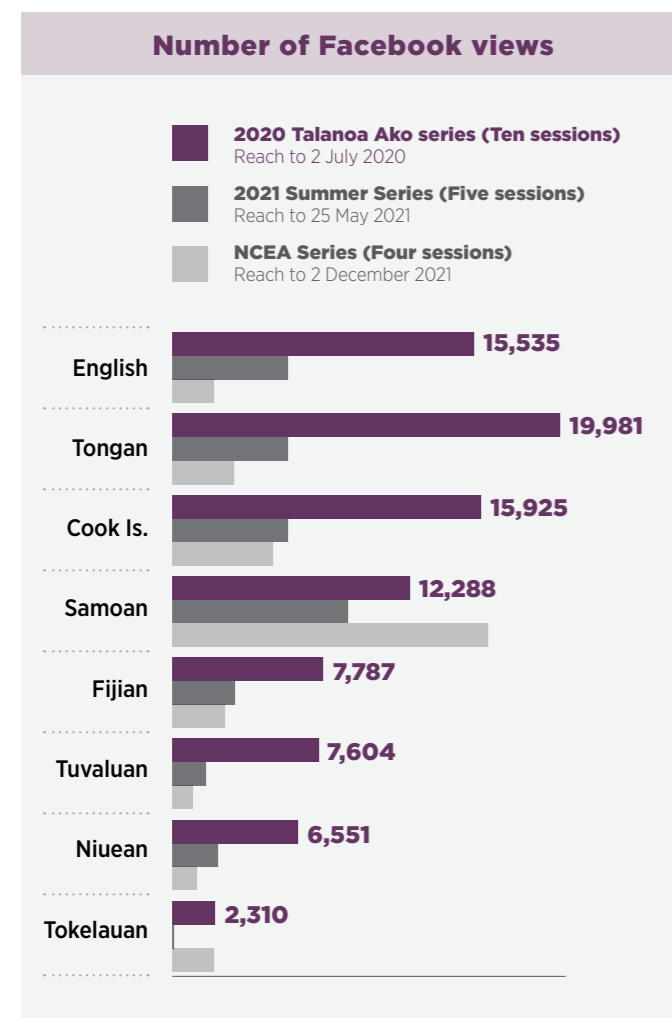
"The really key thing is the absolute joy at **being able to use their own languages and hear this information in their own language**. They're telling us in the supermarket when we meet, "It was really lovely to hear our language."

— Presenter comment

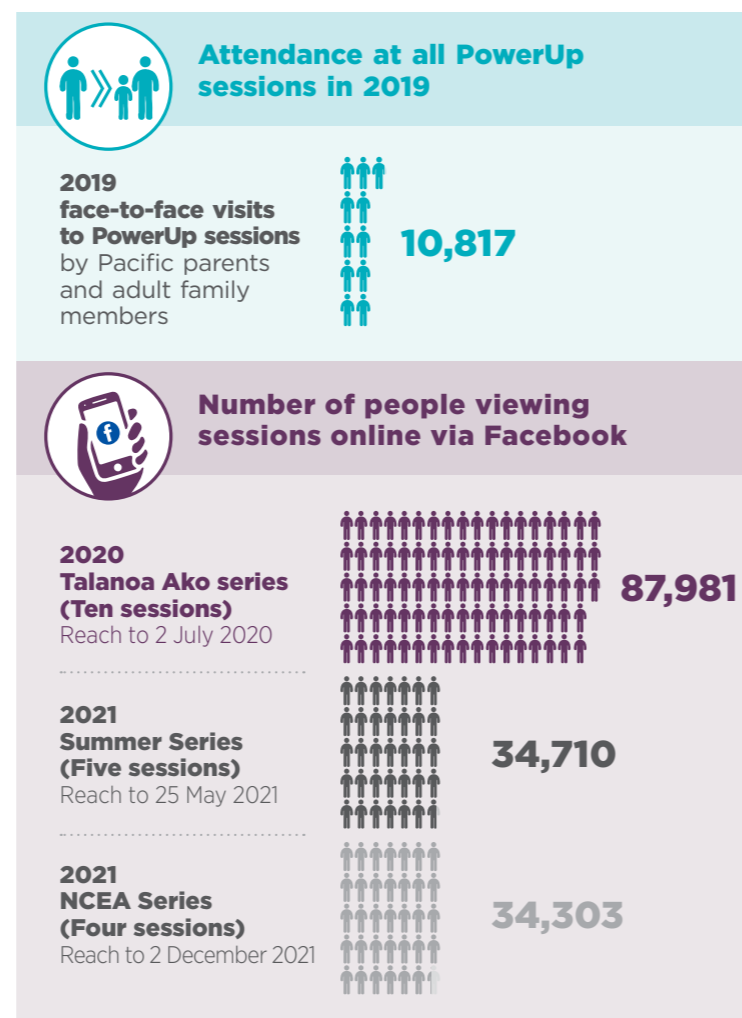
# Talanoa Ako programme innovation supported learning in Pacific homes during the COVID-19 lockdown 2020 *continued...*

## Bigger impact than expected

Thousands of Pacific parents and families engaged with *Talanoa Ako on Air*, listening to the radio or watching the sessions online via Facebook.



The impact and reach of *Talanoa Ako on Air* exceeded anything the PICI team had previously experienced. The first *Talanoa Ako on Air* series in 2020 was so popular that the PICI team later developed a Summer series and a NCEA series in 2021.



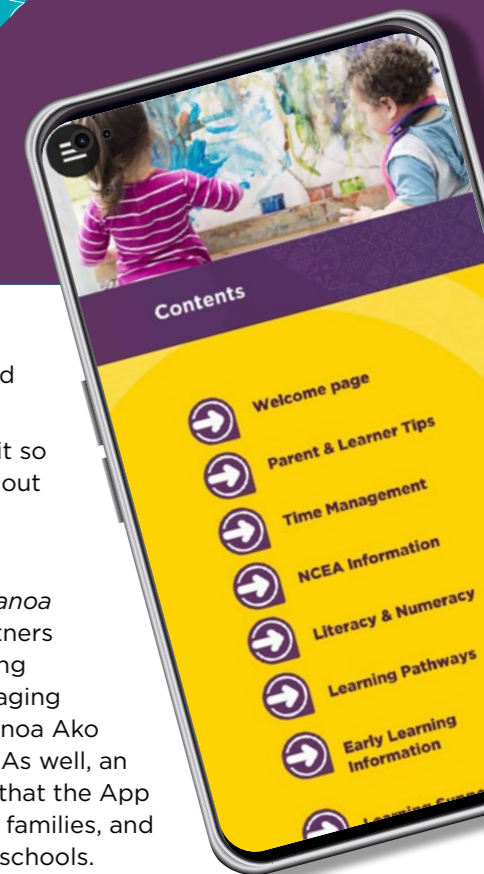
## Developing the Talanoa Ako App

The *Talanoa Ako App* supports and supplements the Talanoa Ako programme and partners. The App takes families through the core topics of the programme. Its technology allows:

- » multiple language options - the written content is in English and 10 Pacific languages: 'Gana Tuvalu, Gagana Samoa, Gagana Tokelau, Gasav Ne Faeag Rotuam, Lea Faka Tonga, Na Vosa Vakaviti, Solomon Islands, Taetae ni Kiribati, Te Reo Māori Kuki Airani and Vagahau Niue
- » interactive use - Pacific parents and families can change the language setting
- » each language to play in audio

- » the visually impaired to use it
- » users to download it so they can use it without Internet.

Pacific families were positive about the *Talanoa Ako App* content. Partners now use the App during their sessions, encouraging parents to access Talanoa Ako resources afterwards. As well, an unintended benefit is that the App is used by non-Pacific families, and by Pacific teachers in schools.



## Emphasis on collaborative ways of working

Because the PICI team wanted to offer *Talanoa Ako on Air* in as many Pacific languages as possible, they contacted known experienced teachers to help to develop the content.

*Because of our relationships, we were able to get 10 teachers with expertise in the different languages. I think it took 24 hours. So we could do that really quickly. And because of the relationships, they said, "Absolutely".*  
— Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga personnel

- » drew on the presenter's deep cultural knowledge of the Pacific community and education to share information effectively on the airwaves
- » sought feedback from presenters to continually improve the delivery of programmes.

In addition, a test focus group included people from various backgrounds, including educators, community leaders and Talanoa Ako partners.

To develop and run Talanoa Ako on Air, the PICI team and partners:

- » used collaborative ways of working to develop content
- » codesigned and delivered the radio programmes with a common purpose

*"I think this is one of the most successful ways to deliver the Talanoa Ako to our Tongan community through radio sessions. This is the opportunity not only for the parents but also the grandparents, uncles, aunties and everyone who can support the children's learning from home... This is a great experience for me, and I have learnt a lot from the journey that I have done."*

— Presenter comment

## Summary

COVID-19 required the PICI team and Talanoa Ako partners to try new ways of engaging with Pacific parents. Both *Talanoa Ako on Air* and the *Talanoa Ako App* benefited from using teachers with language expertise to develop and deliver content.

Through *Talanoa Ako on Air* and the *Talanoa Ako App*, Pacific parents received timely appropriate support to help with their children's learning at home and when they returned to school. The rapid reactions of the PICI team and partners quickly benefited Pacific families and children.

The new ways of reaching the Talanoa Ako parents and communities have encouraged and sustained longer-term change in the way they support their children's learning.

*Thank you for helping. Having an 8-year-old, and the only sibling at home can be frustrating lol, sometimes routines is a bit hard for PI to hold to lol, I love what you are saying about to help us to cope with stress.*

— Pacific family member comment

