

Engaging Diverse Voices in Policymaking: *Report*

August 2019



Belong
Aotearoa

Inclusion • Connection • Wellbeing

Creating Policy that Promotes Belonging

The Context

Currently, 213 ethnic groups and new citizens from 203 different countries embrace New Zealand as their home.

New Zealand's population has changed dramatically over the last 15 years and our ethnic diversity continues to grow, where multicultural ethnic communities are active citizens of New Zealand and contribute to building the nation's social capital. Our society, economy, institutions, and political system could not exist without social capital.

Our society can and will thrive because of this diversity when everyone, including ethnic communities, feel a strong sense of belonging and inclusion. So how do we ensure policymaking draws on and includes the voices and perspectives of our diverse communities?

Cross-sector collaboration

Cross-sector leaders and experts joined a roundtable discussion on effectively Engaging Diverse Voices in Policymaking, to mobilise expertise and to share evidence-based insights. Together, they pushed for collective action.

The think-tank addressed two fundamental questions:

1. How do we ensure multicultural ethnic voices, including people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, are systematically and effectively engaged in the design of policy to strengthen belonging?
2. What are your recommendations / actions for positive change?

The discussion valued and recognised the importance of diversity of thought.

Why Convene?

This discussion follows on from a successful sector hui *Belong Aotearoa*, with support from Foundation North and the Centre for Social Impact, held in April on *Creating an Inclusive Aotearoa New Zealand*. Over 50 participants, working in our communities, were brought together and came up with actions to achieve long-lasting change post Christchurch terror attacks. Together they identified a need for policy development that supports and promotes belonging.

Belong Aotearoa committed to the call for action from the community and convened this discussion on *effectively Engaging Diverse Voices in Policymaking*, to reflect the diversity of cultures and perspectives that make up Aotearoa New Zealand.

The discussion was an opportunity to:

- have inspiring policy discourse based on cross-sector knowledge sharing.
- openly discuss how policymaking can be more community-led to build a thriving and inclusive New Zealand.
- strengthen cross-sector relationships to create opportunities for collaboration.
- collectively, create momentum for positive change.

The time was right

With New Zealand's world first Wellbeing Budget, we have Government that places wellbeing at the centre and is focussed on social policy. Belonging is the heart of wellbeing. It was time to leverage this opportunity for the community sector.

We have a community that was shocked by the Christchurch terror attacks who want to make a change. It was time to harness the feeling for change.

Think-Tank

The round table was joined by, in surname order

Teena Abbey	Principal Policy Analyst - Community Policy	Auckland Council
Kenneth Aiolupotea	Head of Citizen Engagement & Insights	Auckland Council
Chinwe Akomah	President	African Communities Forum Inc
Jason Chand	Relationship Manager	MBIE
EeMun Chen	Senior Consultant	Martin Jenkins Consultants
Bernard Gomes	Senior Diversity & Engagement Advisor	Office of Ethnic Communities
Aklilu Hibtit	Cultural Director	RASNZ
Najira Khanam	Systems Change Activator	Belong Aotearoa
Malu Malo-Fuiava	MarComms & Fundraising Manager	Belong Aotearoa
Jay Marlowe	Associate Professor, Counselling, Human Services and Social Work	Auckland University
Mohamud Mohamed	Diversity & Engagement Advisor	Office of Ethnic Communities
Camille Nakhid	Associate Professor in Social Sciences	AUT
Shalini Pillai	Senior Advisor Policy - Evaluation & Learning	Foundation North
Priyanca Radhakrishnan MP	Parliamentary Private Secretary for Ethnic Affairs	
Anjum Rahman	Founder	Inclusive Aotearoa Collective
Deborah Russell MP	Labour MP for New Lynn	
Ayan Said	Executive Board Member	Waitakere Ethnic Board
Nazreen Shaban	Senior Adviser - Refugee and Migrant Support	Ministry of Education
Rochana Sheward	CEO	Belong Aotearoa
Aroha Te Namu	Community Developer	Community Waitakere
Megan Tyler	Chief of Strategy	Auckland Council
Rahul Watson Govindan	Chair	Belong Aotearoa
Abann Yor	General Manager	ARCC

Driving Systems Change through Collaboration

“Systems change is about shifting the conditions that are holding the problem in place.”

(The Water of Systems Change, FSG 2018)

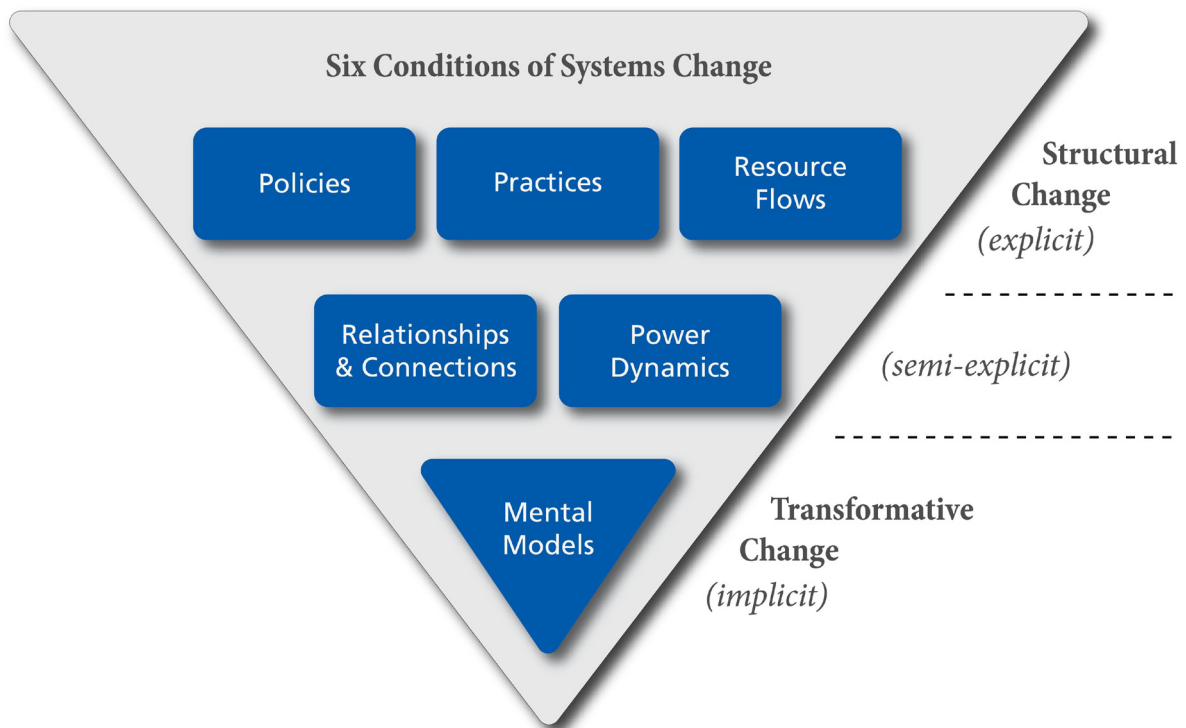
Following the Christchurch terror attacks, nationwide people were ready for transformative change where we could all live in an inclusive Aotearoa New Zealand free from racism and discrimination. The significant shift in the country’s mindset triggered a need for policy change, for developing and implementing relevant policies that are supported by the people they are designed to serve.

These sentiments were echoed at our sector hui held in April, when participants came up with a shared vision for inclusion in New Zealand:

**Aotearoa New Zealand
is a caring, inclusive nation
where many cultures are woven
together in celebration of
diversity, connectedness and
belonging.**

They called for policymaking that puts their vision into action.

Conditions of Change



Top Takeaways

- Systems change is about advancing equity by shifting the conditions that hold a problem in place.
- To fully embrace systems change, we should be prepared to see how our own ways of thinking and acting must change as well.
- Shifts in system conditions are more likely to be sustained when working at three different levels of change: explicit, semi-explicit, and implicit.

(The Water of Systems Change, FSG 2018)

The Discussion

What does success look like?

To open the conversation, we asked the think-tank

“What is the one key outcome you want out of today?”

From the feedback around the table, two key themes were identified:

1

Action to drive transformative change

- Action on a personal, collaborative and community level
- Actions with accountability
- Disrupting current systems that are not working
- Creating momentum to effectively engage the multicultural ethnic voice in policymaking

2

More cross-sector collaboration

- A strong community based network to advise, influence and inform policy
- Better collaboration and effective sharing of cross-sector knowledge
- Strengthening the collective voice

Keynote Opening



Diversity is our Strength

To help shape the discussion, keynote speaker Priyanca Radhakrishnan MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary for Ethnic Affairs, shared her insights on how multicultural ethnic voices were being integrated in government deliberations and policy creation as well as her vision for the near future, 2025.

Priyanca agreed that the diversity of our community is our strength and everyone has the right to belong. She felt there was a sense of relief to the Prime Minister's "They Are Us" response post Christchurch terror attacks, as many in the community felt they did not belong.

Based on the diverse needs of the community, Priyanca highlighted that there was no one generic action to implement change for all. She had seen change but knew we needed to see more.

Priyanca highlighted that government consultations were underway to address systemic challenges in New

Zealand, including racism and discrimination. The consultations were engaging diverse voices and included:

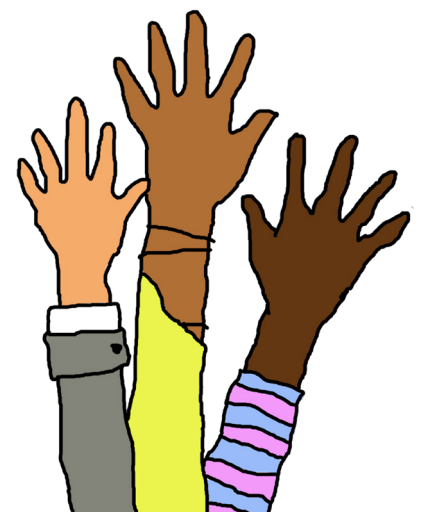
Education Consultations

- By the Minister of Education, Chris Hipkins, to inform changes in the sector – including changes to the curriculum and teaching.
- It was identified that youth and youth adjacent communities struggled with identity and belonging and racism was an issue in schools.

Christchurch Terrorism Attacks Engagement Update

- Report to be released soon.

Priyanca encouraged the community to participate in our transparent democracy so that we can have a direct say on issues that matter to us, to have our voices heard, via petitions and select committees. She closed her keynote speech by saying that the government does not have all the answers, however, there is a political will for change and this is the momentum we need to harness.



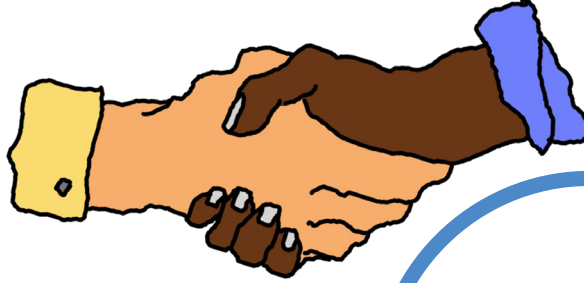
Participate in our democracy

Priyanca Radhakrishnan MP

Parliamentary Private Secretary for Ethnic Affairs

Priyanca's
Vision for
2025

There's no belonging without each other

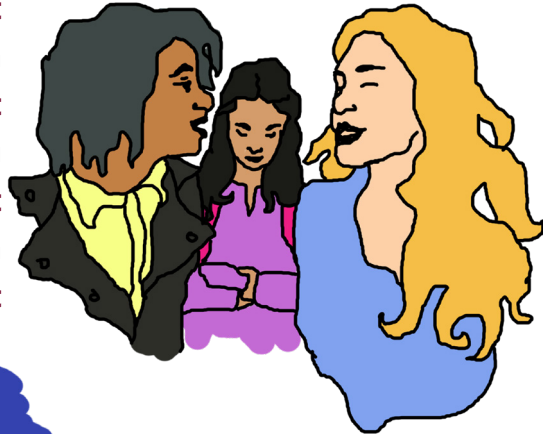


We have diversity
inclusion networks
across sectors



They Are Us

We can't talk
about
inclusion
without
talking
about
exclusion
first



We have a
multicultural strategy
in place



There is a
political
will for
change

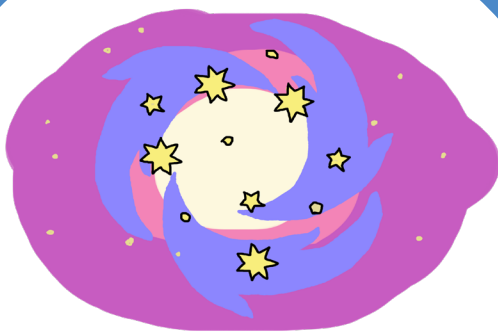
We continue to keep
talking to each other,
across sectors, so that
together we can create a
sense of belonging.

Cross-Sector Insights Sharing

Four speakers each representing a different sector (the community, academia, business and local government) shared their insights around engaging the multicultural ethnic voice in policymaking; sharing what is working, what is not working and their vision for 2025.

Anjum Rahman Founder, Inclusive Aotearoa Collective (IAC)

Vision 2025



- IAC is established and provides a framework for cross-sector collaboration and coordination.
- Policy solutions developed by the community

What is working:

- Minister Salesa is responsive and funding from OEC has supported community progress
- Community has HRC & IWCNZ support
- Gun crackdown

What is not working:

- Lack of transparency and accountability around community consultations
- Having to continually repeat community issues to agencies; speaking but not being heard
- Competitive funding model hinders progress of NGO sector

Kenneth Aiolupotea Head of Citizen Engagement & Insights, Auckland Council

What is working:

- More consultations and submissions with greater digital uptake
- Good practices for engagement becoming standardised
- Internally better coordinated engagement

What is not working:

- Quantity over quality for submissions
- Diversity internally not an answer to community engagement
- Better management of community data to prevent repeat consultations

Vision 2025



- Greater ethnic diversity in council
- Leading challenge to other organisations to have a diversity strategy
- Engagement budget for innovation to support richer data collection and management

Vision 2025



- Better ethnic representation within central and local government
- Improved policy capability and capacity of diverse groups
- Improved intercultural capability of central and local government

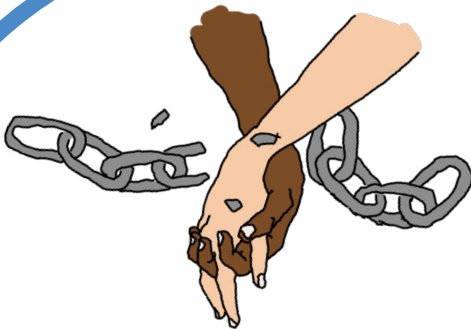
What is working:

- Increased gender representation
- More research showing emergent thinking and initiatives

What is not working:

- Under representation of ethnic diversity in public service workforce, senior roles in government and business
- Diversity in business is not on the policy agenda
- Lack of putting research into action and practice

Vision 2025



- Colonisation history and political discourse of white supremacy ideology acknowledged that challenges status quo
- Education on belonging, that highlights exclusion issues are not with Māori or newcomers as these communities want to belong and be a part of Aotearoa

What is working:

- More ethnic faces seen at a participatory level (e.g boards and committees) and in education
- Policymakers are involving more ethnicities in consultations particularly South Asian and SEA groups but not so much MELAA

What is not working:

- Under representation of ethnic diversity at policymaking and decision making level
- No shift in leadership, management and government thinking
- Status quo remains the same

Moving Forward Together

To close the roundtable discussion, we moved to a facilitated exploration session. The think-tank were invited and supported to co-design ideas for activating change in smaller break-out group discussions.

The groups prioritised their actions for positive change with five key outputs and recommendations identified to effectively engage diverse voices in policymaking.

The ideas are summarised below:





Welcoming communities policy to be lead and guided by tangata whenua values and practices.

Immigration New Zealand sets up an integrated Māori advisory body that guides the mandate of immigration in Aotearoa, to foster inclusion and respect the mana of every person.



Create culturally conscious policymakers

Public servants receive cultural competency training delivered by the community.



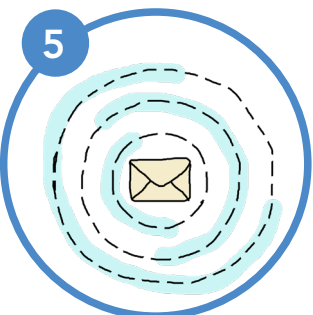
Develop the cross-sector collective voice

Work together on a “collective ask” in the lead up to public election forums (i.e. local and national elections) to bring up a range of issues that matter to multicultural ethnic communities.



Disrupt community engagement processes

Co-design a new process / prototype to support effective engagement with multicultural ethnic communities, at a central and local government level, that is more relationship driven and less corporate / formal.



A collective mapping of community services, programmes and organisations

Create a map of community services, programmes and organisations so that policymakers can see the scale and reach of services they can access to support their policy design (e.g. co-design, gaps identification) and implementation (e.g. promotion, sharing).

Next Steps

The discussion has brought to light an important question for us to address collectively across sectors, and requires further exploration:

How do we increase the representation of ethnic diversity at a central and local government level over the next 12 months?

Post discussion the following updates, emerging and existing opportunities have also been identified, which align with the solutions and recommendations generated at our hui. While positive change to promote belonging and inclusion is underway, there are more opportunities to build on this momentum as detailed below.

Welcoming Communities New Zealand

This programme is supported by Immigration New Zealand, The Department of Internal Affairs (including the Office of Ethnic Communities) and the New Zealand Human Rights Commission.

Ten councils across five regions are working with their communities to implement Welcoming Communities, a programme that puts the welcome mat out to newcomers: recent migrants, former refugees and international students. The two-year pilot programme was implemented with a parallel evaluation process. The ten councils involved in the pilot programme have chosen to continue participating in the programme and implementing their Welcoming Plans. Based on its success, the programme may be rolled out to other regions in New Zealand.

There is an existing Welcoming Communities Advisory Board who provide subject matter expertise to support the implementation of the programme. Professor Rawiri Taonui sits on the board. Dr Taonui is an independent writer, researcher and advisor on Māori, indigenous and inter-cultural human rights, equity, diversity and anti-racism.



New Zealand History will be compulsory in all schools by 2022

On 12 September 2019, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and Education Minister Chris Hipkins announced changes would be made to the national curriculum so New Zealand history will be taught in primary and secondary schools.

The changes would cover the entire breadth of the curriculum, including NCEA. History lessons are expected to include the arrival of Māori, early colonisation, the Treaty of Waitangi, immigration to New Zealand, and the evolving identity of the country. Aotearoa's involvement in the Pacific will also be covered.



Cultural Competency Training

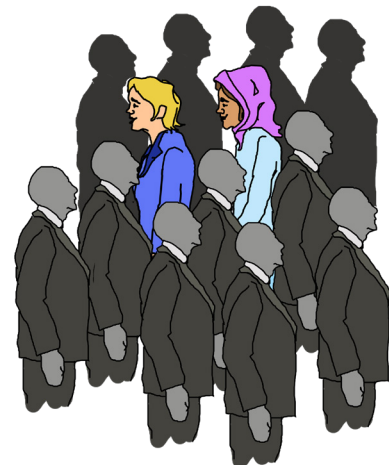
Belong Aotearoa and Community Waitakere are exploring piloting a cultural competency training programme/prototype to be delivered by the community.

Collective Asking

Te Ohu Whakawhanaunga, an emerging broad-based community alliance in Auckland, is focusing on identifying common issues and concerns for the community. It is hoped this may feed into a public election forum including next year's national elections, and in the lead up to develop the collective ask with community organisations. There is opportunity for interested organisations to feed into this piece of work, with Belong Aotearoa building on this momentum.

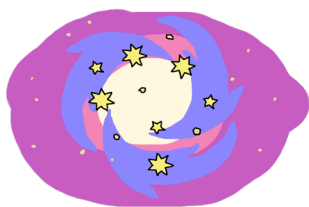
Disrupting community engagement processes

Auckland Council and MBIE are interested in supporting this piece of work through sharing of insights, analysis and a possible testing ground for new ways of reaching diverse communities.



The Constellation Model

The Inclusive Aotearoa Collective is proposing the use of the constellation model to empower communities. Anjum Rahman is leading this work and has connected with Belong Aotearoa and other key organisations across New Zealand to collaborate as widely as she can. If you are interested in finding out more about the Collective and the constellation model, please contact Anjum on anjum@inclusiveaotearoa.nz



Any organisations or individuals that are interested in further discussing or contributing to these opportunities can email Belong Aotearoa for more information, at: communications@belong.org.nz

Belong Aotearoa proudly supporting youth.

All illustrations in this report were provided by Clarence Lomiwes, with the funds received going towards supporting youth to compete in the upcoming King of the South Grappling Tournament held in Queenstown.

Note from Clarence:

"On November 22nd three of our studio members (Creative Youth Studio) are going to Queenstown to compete at the King of the South Grappling Tournament.

They have been training in Mixed Martial Arts for several years through a free community program I run at Hub West. Despite only recently competing this year all three have shown a skill in the sport with all medalling at the North Island Regional Tournament and the National Grappling tournament held in April.

All three teenagers have been attending the Studio consistently for over seven years and have developed into coordinators for many of the programs and events that we run throughout the year. They are all now an integral part of our holiday program leadership team that cater to 50 young people during term breaks.

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to fundraise for this trip which will provide a new challenge for these youth to work towards as well as a new city to explore for everyone involved. For one of the youth, this trip is especially important as he will be the first in his family to fly on a plane."

For design work and to also support this trip contact Clarence Lomiwes
clarence.lomiwes@gmail.com

This sector hui was convened
by Belong Aotearoa.

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