

# Water Tanks for Whānau

## The Social Accord in Action

Feb 2020 (ongoing droughts)

May 2021

June 2024



550+

Total potable water installations to be completed\*



### Impacts

#### Poor water quality and droughts:

Poor water quality for Te Hiku whānau has been a long-term problem impacting on health and wider well-being.

Te Hiku Iwi Development Trust (THIDT) gathered evidence from local health data and number of tank refills supported by MSD or Te Rarawa.

Our networks told us that in 2020 we were going through the 9th drought in 10 years.

Gather data and evidence.  
Define the system issue.

Drivers  
Building resilience in remote communities  
Addressing vulnerability in infrastructure.  
Improving health outcomes.



### Mobilising the Public Sector

#### The urgency was highlighted from drought:

The drought raised the urgency of this systemic issue and it became a focus for the Iwi/Crown **Joint Work Programme** where Iwi Chairs, the Chair of the Te Hiku Iwi Development Trust and Government Ministers work together to advance the Social Accord.

During early 2021 THIDT worked on behalf of the Iwi Chairs with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to find a **pathway to investment in water resilience**.

Iwi Chairs agreed that Te Aupōuri would roll out the project on behalf of Iwi accord partners.

Ministerial support was critical. We also needed to gain wide ranging support from government agencies (locally and nationally).

Partnerships to make it happen. Te Hiku Iwi Development Trust (THIDT) as the fund holder.

### A partnership outcome

The outcome was a signed partnership agreement with accountabilities for joint Iwi and the Crown. Reciprocity in the relationship.

Funded through NEMA to improve the resilience of Te Hiku whānau during drought

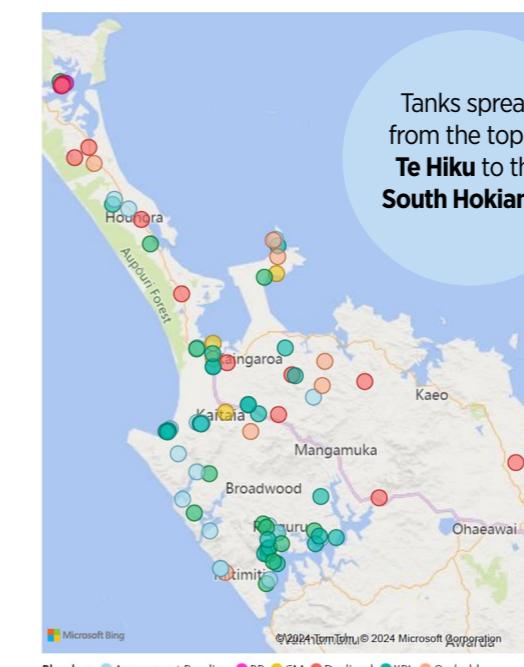
Efficiencies and Economies of Scale

#### Organisational alignments

- Te Aupōuri – Project lead and Host Employer
  - Puna Wai Ora – Te Hiku Drought Relief Programme
  - Tupu Plumbing
- Te Rarawa
- Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Takoto
- Te Hiku Iwi Development Trust (THIDT)
- Apprenticeship Training Trust
- Education Unlimited
- Mauri Social Services
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
- Ministry of Social Development
- Navigator – Strategic Advice
- NorthTec (Te Pūkenga)
- RCP – Project Management
- Te Puni Kōkiri
- Tertiary Education Commission

### Potable water installations across Te Hiku

A collective Iwi approach and high demand required robust assessment processes to ensure water tanks went to whānau within the Te Hiku rohe according to need regardless of Iwi affiliation.



Tanks spread from the top of Te Hiku to the South Hokianga

### Resilient water system

- Enhances water security and climate resilience for Te Hiku.
- Addresses critical water needs and contributes to broader community resilience for whānau at the deepest end of the public infrastructure deficit.
- Fosters a culture of mutual support - strong cultural and social bonds within iwi to facilitate a cooperative approach, creating an informal network of water storage and a collective capacity of over 10 million litres.
- More resilient than centralised water storage which can be vulnerable to single points of failure.
- Alignment with UN Sustainable development goals SDG6 clean water and sanitation, SDG11 sustainable cities and communities SDG13 climate action.

#### Puna Wai Ora

Winners of the Infrastructure NZ Building Nations Social Impact Award 2023



“Thank you so much for pushing this kaupapa! We had our tank installed last month and had literally run out of water the week before... 3 tamariki at home and no rain on the horizon had us stressing! Now we have 2x tanks and plenty of water. Thank you again to all involved

– Holly Windelborn and whānau

<https://www.punawairoa.org/whanau-feedback>

\*369 installed at 30 June 2024

# Water Tanks for Whānau

## Implementation



Sept 2021 - March 2022

March 2023

Sept 2023

March 2024

April 2024

Sept 2025

Puna Wai Ora  
500+  
Installations

### Pilot begins 25-30 tanks

Te Kao, Awanui, Ahipara

We took the advice of experts from outside our region to run a pilot and work out what was involved in implementing an infrastructure project of this kind.

Grow local capability through partnerships in set-up and delivery



Puna Wai Ora - Wai Ako  
(<https://www.punawalora.org/>)

### Main Works Programme kicked off

Te Hiku Drought Relief programme initiated by a new collective structure "Puna Wai Ora" – with support and on behalf of Iwi who are part of the Te Hiku Social Accord.



### 50 tank installations

**Challenge 1:** Increasingly limited local plumbing business capacity to carry out the work.

**Challenge 2:** Achieving broader outcomes including education and training of rangatahi.

**Solution:** Tupu Plumbing design commenced.

Strength in the collective approach to make it happen

Tupu Plumbing is a tank installation partner, administered by Te Aupōuri Iwi Development Trust (on behalf of joint Iwi).

Collective agreement for Te Aupōuri to administer on behalf of joint Iwi: Ngai Takoto, Te Rarawa and Te Aupōuri Iwi. Enabled with THIDT and Crown support.

### Training programme

Tupu Plumbing established as a Māori-led and mātauranga informed workforce development solution.

A 2-year programme to provide employment and training for locals.

*"This is Rangatahi working towards formal qualifications which will lead to meaningful careers."*

*"Since Tupu Plumbing started last October the programme's pace had doubled, with the number of tanks installed jumping from 200 to more than 300 in less than five months."*

– Mihi Harris, PWO Programme Lead



### Tupu Plumbing first cohort

We've utilised Puna Wai Ora as a platform for developing skills and qualifications for rangatahi.

Tupu Plumbing not only contributes to solving the water deficit but also employment deficit.

### First 50 Tupu Plumbing tank installations

979  
Applications Received

431  
Applications Approved

### Current Cross Agency Collective Agreement for Tupu Plumbing finishes

369  
Installed as at June 24

### Next steps

- Before September 2025: agree a cross-agency enduring approach
- Extend to repairs and maintenance – supporting roof repairs
- The need remains: many whānau homes are still vulnerable to water shortages
- Leverage the delivery model across other collective Iwi priorities

# Water Tanks for Whānau

## Project feedback



Here's what whānau say about the impact...

### Tupu Plumbing

#### Pastoral support - the “secret sauce”

- More than just training and employment - Building aspirations and confidence of tauira
- Significant shifts in personal circumstances of tauira, e.g. ability to move out of emergency accommodation through support with financial literacy and budgeting
- Health support, e.g. access to counselling support as needed
- Full cohort largely remains active on the programme with average attendance at 90% (x1 left due to health related reasons)



*“Thank you so much for the installation of the water tank at our property. The team from Tupu plumbing was very efficient and every step of the process was explained precisely, from the beginning to the end.*

*We have great appreciation for the mahi they do for our whānau, hapu, and Iwi throughout the rohe, as we all know Wai is such a precious Taonga.*

*So from me and my whānau, we give our heartfelt thanks to Rob, Justine and the Team from Tupu Plumbing. We hope this mahi/ initiative may continue as it is so important for everyone to be able to have access to one of life’s basic necessities, he wai. Kai Ora.”*

**- Janine Tatana, and whānau**



*“Aww thanks to the team for the installation of my water tank, so much appreciated. Left the area clean and tidy, will recommend this crew to all my whānau and friens. JOB WELL DONE!”*

**- Facebook post, whānau feedback**



*“I would like to give a huge mihi to Tupu Plumbing – Rob, Justine, Hone (digger operator) and the Tupu crew for all their hard and excellent mahi. Very professional and straight into the mahi, I honestly thought it would take longer and was so impressed with how they got the tank up the side of our house and around the back.*

*It means so may to my whānau and I to now have 2 water tanks, new spouting, new down pipe and a filtration system.*

*It’s a beautiful sound to hear water going into our tanks rather than on the ground. With a household of 12, WATER IS GOLD, So to have all of the honestly means so much to us. Praying for the rain now.”*

**- Na, The Williams and Yakas whānau**