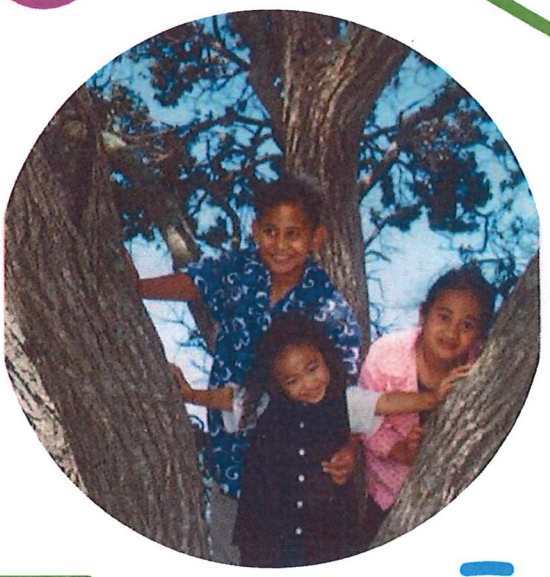

Generative Co-Design Policies and Practices involving Pacific Families & Communities

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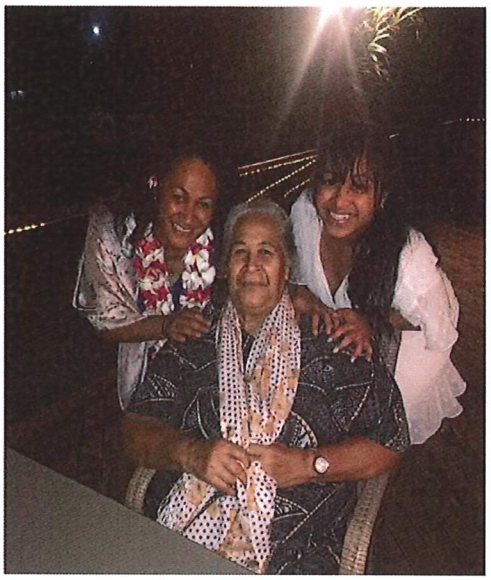
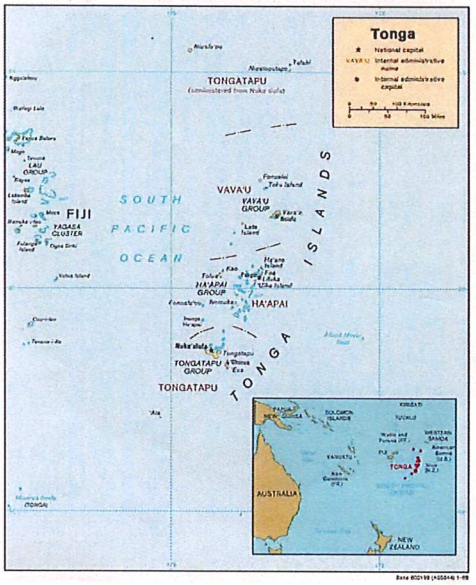
Talofa. Greetings. I thank the organisers for the kind invitation to participate in this important discussion on the 'intertwined impact of technological transformation and climate change on families in Oceania: navigating the policy response'. I acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of this land, those past, present and to come. I am of Samoan descent. I was born in Samoa but migrated to Aotearoa New Zealand when I was 3 years old with my family. I move between Samoa and Aotearoa NZ for family and work. The Samoa and Aotearoa NZ environments inform my analysis of these intertwined impacts, particularly on the extended family unit. Today I wish to speak to the notion of generative co-design policies and practices involving Pacific families and communities in the Pacific (which includes Aotearoa NZ), drawing on some key cultural framework models and research on Pacific family, housing and wellbeing. These adopt and promote a generative co-design and co-creation approach to policy and service delivery practice.

Who am I? Positionalities, Identities, Place, Relationships





It is important for any discussion of Oceania or the Pacific that as broad pan-ethnic umbrella categories or labels policy and service delivery models that use them provide every opportunity to highlight the fact that there are a diverse range of contemporary familial and national governance arrangements and geographies in the Pacific or Oceania, and that these differences have real impact on local, national or regional family policy application and effectiveness if not properly understood and accounted for. This is a call for more detailed policy language statements and briefs that capture cultural nuance and political, demographic and other context-specific local and comparative information, not only for Pacific or Oceanic populations, but for all pan-ethnic population groupings. The inability to do this well accounts for, in my view, a significant amount of failed or not-fit-for-purpose policies.

Research evidence of Pacific families in Aotearoa NZ suggest that in the 1990s (over 25 years ago) there was a steady trend away from marrying (59% of 25-34 year olds were in a marriage relationship in 1991 and by 1996 this had decreased to 47%). Some of this decrease was as a result of increasing numbers of Pacific couples deciding to live in a de facto relationship or choosing to remain single longer. An increase in the numbers of Pacific solo parents were at this time also recorded (in 1981 7.2% of Pacific families or households were

one-parent families/households, by 2006 they were 13.5% of Pacific families/households in Aotearoa NZ)[4]. These marriage and solo parenting trends impacted Pacific family and household composition and mirrored trends for the wider Aotearoa NZ population as a whole for the same period. The number of people in a marriage relationship in Aotearoa NZ peaked in 1971. In 1971 the marriage rate was 45.5. In 2023 it is 9.0.

In 1996, Statistics NZ began recording extended family households. In 1996 34% of Pacific peoples were recorded as living in an extended family, intergenerational, household arrangement.[1,2] In 2021 Pacific peoples in Aotearoa NZ comprised approximately 400,000 people. Of these over half (275000) lived in a family arrangement, with a third (85000) living in an extended family arrangement. Pacific peoples are therefore likely to live in large intergenerational family households with five or more people in the same house. Pacific peoples rated the wellbeing of their family highly compared to their own wellbeing (rating was 8.1/10 compared to 7.7/10 rating for the total NZ population).[3]

The point is that Pacific families lives in households that range from single parent households to multi-family households. Over time in diasporic places like Aotearoa NZ there has been evidence of a downward trend in the typical one family household and upward trends in Pacific households without children, single parent households, and multi-family (usually intergenerational) households. There is a paucity of detailed comparative data on the composition of households for Pacific Island countries across the region. In Samoa, a culturally homogenous Polynesian country, the multi-family intergenerational household is the standard type.[5] Decision-making within families and households continue to privilege the faamatai or chiefly and elder respect systems. These systems operate on collective responsibility models for decision-making – from household economics to childrearing and individual careers – which impact individual and collective wellbeing at both family, community, and national levels.

1 Cook, L. et al. 1999. On the demography of Pacific people in New Zealand. Statistics NZ. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Robert-Didham/publication/237511392_On_the_Demography_of_Pacific_People_in_New_Zealand/links/54e634a30cf277664ff471fb/On-the-Demography-of-Pacific-People-in-New-Zealand.pdf

2 De Raad, J-P., and Walton, M. 2008. Pacific people in the New Zealand economy: understanding linkages and trends. In *Pacific Interactions: Pasifika in New Zealand, New Zealand in Pasifika.* Bisley, A. (Ed.). Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington. pp.41-84.

3 Statistics NZ. 2023. Pacific housing: People, place, and wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand. Retrieved from www.stats.govt.nz. ISBN 978-1-99-104922-3 (online).

4 Cotterell, G., et al. 2009. Pacific families now and in the future:

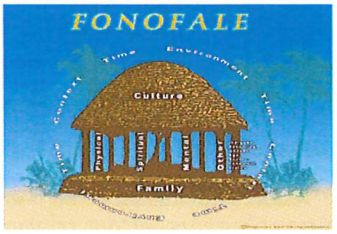
changing Pacific household composition and wellbeing 1981-2006. NZ Families Commission.

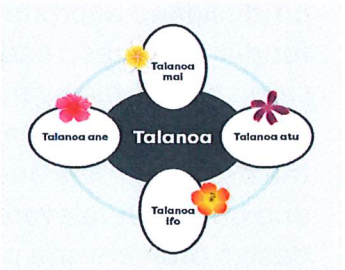
[5] Samoa Bureau of Statistics. 2020 (July). Fact Sheet – Samoa DHS – MICS (Demographic Household Survey – Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey) – preliminary results. UNFPA, Pacific Community & UNICEF

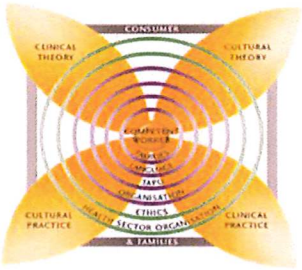
Generative Co-Design, Policy and Practice through an Indigenous Pacific / Oceanic lens

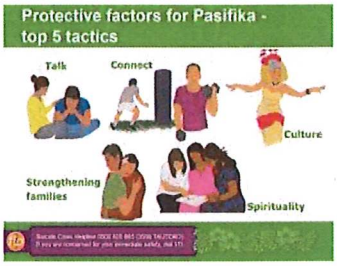
- Processes of and tools for **creative cooperation**
- Focus on **user involvement**
- Employing **Indigenous Pacific / Oceanic epistemic values** frameworks

- Bird et al (2021), Steen (2013)
- Le Va (2015), Vaioleti (2006), Fonofale (1995), Seitapu (2009), Tatai Aho Rau / CORE Education (https://core-ed.org/en_NZ/free-resources/blog/talanoa-is-for-everyone-a-guide-for-educators/)









To better understand the complexities of Pacific families and households – in the Pacific Islands or in the diaspora – generative co-design models for policy and service delivery practices that centre Pacific values have been developed. In Aotearoa NZ and in Pacific countries such as Fiji, Tonga and Samoa these models include the Fonofale, Talanoa and Seitapu models.[6] The generative aspect of the co-design elements of these models speaks to a recognition of the need to allow 1. the co-design process to not only be done in a genuinely collaborative manner (i.e., in consideration of equity, diversity and fair participation), but also 2. to be done in a manner that is 'generative'. That is, to understand that there is no one fixed way of doing co-design but rather that what works best for the project and the team will evolve as the team gets to know each other and a shared understanding of the collaborative enterprise forms and trust relationships deepen. The understanding here – using an Indigenous Pacific or Oceanic lens – is that the relationships to be formed are long-term; they are (ideally) for life and/or for communal or collective wellbeing. Within this understanding are Indigenous Pacific values frameworks and ethics of care that generally contain four overarching principles: 1. custodianship (that view or belief that all humans are custodians of life), 2. relationality (that all life is interconnected and interdependent), 3. tapu (that all life has a sacred/spiritual essence to be revered with humility), 4. kin-oriented community (that all life

exists in kinship and is a constant search for communal balance or harmony – what Samoans call 'tofa sa'ili).

The processes or tools for 'creative cooperation' in generative co-design here may include adopting the 'talanoa methodology', which may involve engaging all 'stakeholders' in a project (from researchers to funders to end-users and/or community participants) in conversations about each of the different parts of a co-designed coproduced project (from the aims to the methodology, outcomes, funding sources, recommendations, dissemination strategies, policy translation work, public-facing media communications, resource development, etc.). The 'creative' part of 'creative cooperation' is to emphasise the need to again allow the project's rules and/or guidelines to be flexible enough to allow for adaptive and novel but relevant and productive ways to work together. [7] For current co-design projects and project teams I am working with this often means having some concrete but open and generous discussions from the outset about expectations, approach, values, constraints, and the desire to work in a co-creative and co-operative way.[8] Aotearoa NZ's recently established Māori and Pacific Housing Research Centre (University of Auckland) engages in the co-creation of research with Māori and Pacific whanau (Māori language term for families), as well as communities, NGOs, local and central government, and other research groups. Co-creation is the preferred term to describe the kind of collaborative work they do in that it includes a wider range of collaborative activities with stakeholders for maximum research value and impact. Co-design is seen as focusing on product or service development and can be seen as a subset of co-creation. Co-production is distinguished from co-creation in that it focuses on products.[9]

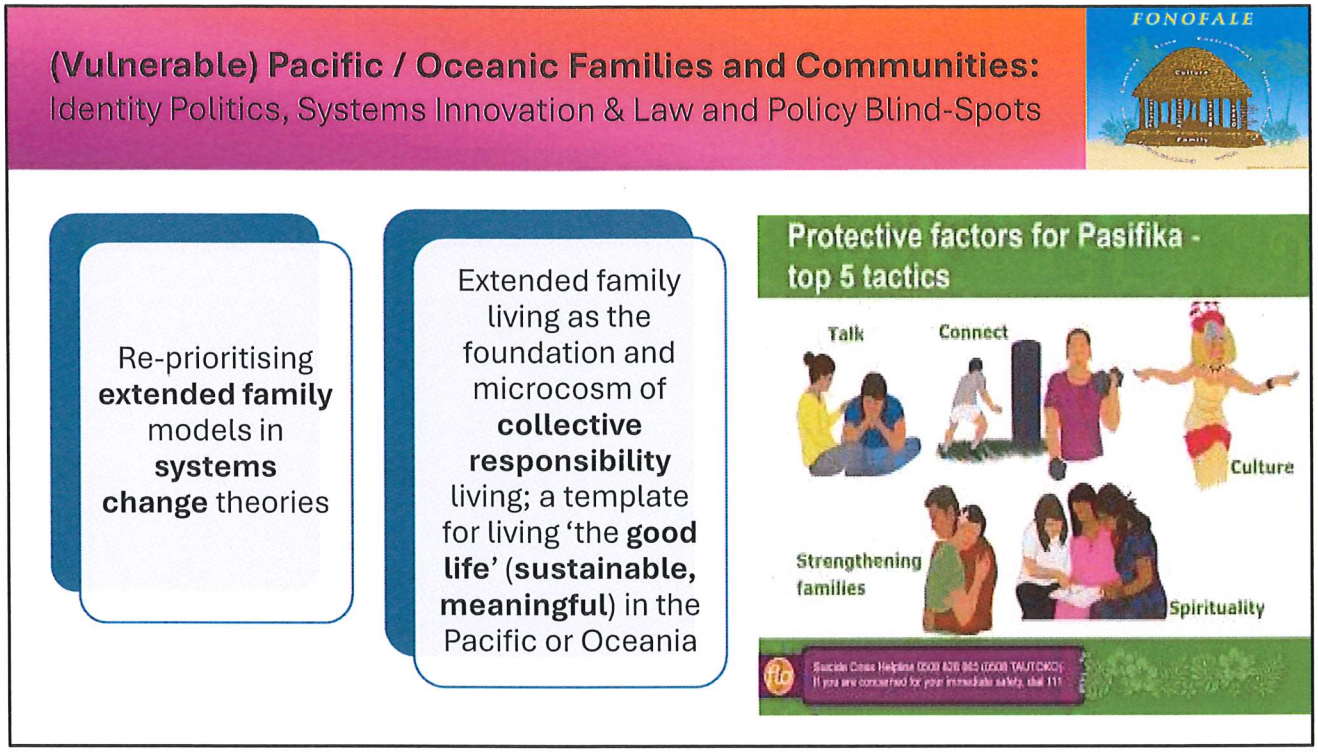
[6] For the Fonofale model see New Zealand Ministry of Health. 1995. Pacific Islands Peoples' understanding of mental health - Strategic Directions for the Mental Health Services for Pacific Islands People. Wellington: Ministry of Health. For the Talanoa model see Vaioleti, T., 2006. Talanoa research methodology: a developing position on Pacific research. *Waikato Journal of Education*. 12, pp.21-34. For the Seitapu model see Le Va. 2009. Let's get real – real skills plus Seitapu – working with Pacific people. NZ National Centre of Mental Health Research.

[7] See Bird, M., et al. 2021. A generative co-design framework for healthcare innovation: development and application of an end-user engagement framework. *Research Involvement and Engagement*. 7:2, https://doi.org/10.1186/s40900-021-00252-7. See also, Steen, M. 2013. Co-design as a process of joint inquiry and imagination. Design*Issues,* 29: 2, pp.16-28.

[8] See for example the work described in the publication: Mannell, J., et al. 2023. Love shouldn't hurt – E le saua le alofa: co-designing a theory of change for preventing violence against women in Samoa. *Global Public Health*,

18: 1. https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2023.2201632

[9] Personal communications with Co-Director Dr Karamia Muller. See also MAPIHI website: https://mapihi.auckland.ac.nz/



Working with Pacific families in Aotearoa NZ and the Pacific Islands most at risk of experiencing negative impacts from climate change and technological transformations more often than not means working with socio-economically deprived families. These are families that have low household incomes and are unable to access reliable transportation to take them to medical services if needed, or to pay for these medical services, and they cannot afford to live in a safe and hygienic house or to have access to hi-tech devices. They are also often those most vulnerable to online scams because of low levels of understanding about online systems, low personal self-esteem, and high levels of financial need. Technological transformations that impact the delivery of basic welfare services disproportionately affects high deprivation populations. Protective factors that Pacific peoples in Aotearoa NZ spoke of in terms of Pacific suicide prevention and mental health, those that have lent themselves to building resilience, include (a) being able to "talk/share" about their problems and gain constructive support, (b) having a sense of community that provides "connection" and belonging, (c) having strong sense of cultural identity, (d) having strong spiritual beliefs, and (e) having strong family bonds.[10] In terms of prevention against family violence a recent Pacific Aotearoa NZ study found that (a) education, (b) skills development, and (c) family and cultural support are key to overall resilience and prevention of family violence in Pacific environments.[11]

These high-level factors are essentially the same factors raised by Pacific communities for dealing with the impact of climate change disasters.[12] A recent study on the nexus between family violence (especially gender-based violence) and climate change in the Pacific re-emphasised the importance of family and community cultural support systems and resources to preventive and intervention success and systems change theorising.[13] In each of these references to family, the extended family unit persists and is assumed to be part of the modelling of family resilience and prevention strategies in the Pacific against the impacts of family violence, climate change and technological risks.

[10] For the work on protective factors for Pasifika, top 5 tactics see Le Va website: https://www.leva.co.nz/resources/preventing-suicide-for-pasifika-top-5-tactics/.

[11] For the recent work on preventive factors against family violence for Pacific peoples, communities, families in Aotearoa NZ, see: Crichton-Hill, Y. and Ioane, J. 2023. Pasifika protective factors for family violence in Aotearoa New Zealand. Pasefika Proud, NZ Ministry of Social Development. https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/research/pasifika-protective-factors-for-family-violence/msd-pasifika-protective- factors-for-family-violence-jun-2023.pdf

[12] Tiatia-Seath, J., et al. 2020. Climate change, mental health and well-being for Pacific peoples: a literature review. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 32: 2, pp.399-430.

[13] Ayeb-Karlsson, S. et al. 2023. Stories of loss and healing: connecting non-economic loss and damage, gender-based violence and wellbeing erosion in the Asia-Pacific region. Climate Change, 176: 157. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-023-03624-y

Some relevant statistics re Pacific families and housing in Aotearoa NZ

https://www.stats.govt.nz/reports/pacific-housing-people-place-and-wellbeing-in-aotearoa-new-zealand/#:~:text=275%2C000%20Pacific%20peoples%20lived%20in,fifth%20of%20the%20total%20population

Pacific peoples' demography, diversity & culture (2018 census)	Pacific home ownership, affordability & living conditions (2018 census)	Relevant wellbeing vis a vis housing outcomes	Summary points
Almost 400k people living in Aotearoa NZ identify with a Pacific ethnicity (2/3 NZ born)	In 1986 half of Pacific population owned their own homes; in 2018 just over 1/3 owned their homes	Living in own home associated with higher rates of life satisfaction	Pacific peoples make up a significant and diverse part of Aotearoa NZ but suffer high socio-economic disparities
4 out of 10 people identify with more than one ethnicity	Pacific peoples rated home affordability lower than total popu	Living in own home and staying in same neighbourhood longer associated with higher rates of life satisfaction	Home ownership offers economic security and social stability
68.75% (of 400k or 275000) live in a family, 22.3% (or 89000) in an extended family	Pacific peoples likely to live in urban areas	Lower housing affordability ratings linked to lower mental health ratings	Pacific peoples' housing (as a whole) is of poor quality and often too small
Over 50% live in household with more than 5 people	Over 50% of Pacific peoples live in homes that are damp, mouldy, cold, etc. compared to 32% of total population	Living in larger households is associated with lower rates of loneliness compared to one person households	Housing inequities impact Pacific peoples' health and social wellbeing
Family wellbeing rated highly by Pacific peoples compared with total NZ population	Homelessness prevalence rates for Pacific peoples is more than double that for total NZ popu (578 ppl compared to 217 per 10,000)	Living in unsuitable homes is associated with lower life satisfaction	Pacific intergenerational living contributes positively to lower levels of loneliness and higher levels of resilience reported

Published Aotearoa NZ census statistics on Pacific demography, housing and wellbeing forecast that a significant proportion of Pacific families continue to live in extended family households and uphold extended family wellbeing as a core cultural value. Given current neoliberal political and socio-economic conditions and infrastructures globally and its impacts on Pacific politics and economies, a significant proportion of Pacific families' struggle to meet the challenges of technological transformations and climate change, whether in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia – considered 'developed' countries – or in the Pacific Islands (considered 'low income, least developed' countries).

In Summary...

Generative co-design policies and services or programmes can be sustainable and meaningful for vulnerable Pacific families and communities, in the Pacific diaspora and Pacific Island nations, where good tools and opportunities are in place to realise good family leadership (extended and nuclear), family belonging, individual agency and systems change ...

In summary, the stage of pulling together ideas and forming trust relationships for research that involves Pacific families and communities, the co-design approach is ideal. This, however, would naturally lead to co-creation or coproduction. When working with Pacific families and communities, whether in terms of climate change or technological change challenges, there is compelling evidence that the extended family unit or model remains a relevant and preferred but underresearched model for Pacific families, now and into the future. As such global, national and local family policy frameworks that seek to be effective in their support of Pacific family wellbeing ought to be working more deliberately with it in their theories of change for Pacific families.

Recommendations:

- That research on the role of the Pacific extended family unit in mitigating the negative effects of climate change and technological transformation in the Pacific be supported.
- That nuanced generative co-designed and co-created research methodologies are developed to capture the similarities and diversities of Pacific family experiences of technological transformation and climate change locally, nationally and regionally.
- That more opportunities be created for wider Pacific representation (from the Pacific or Oceania region and from Aotearoa NZ and Australia) and voice at regional and international expert hui or fono (meetings).