

Tokelau

"Language strengthens our link to our ancestral lands and traditional ways. Enriches our cultural experience as well as our connection to our elders and ancestors passed"

80%

support the vision

80%

agree with timeframe

80%

agreed with Tiered approach

90%

agree with action items

- There is a strong support for the strategy, but members of the Tokelau community would like to see consideration for the creation of a community space for the language to thrive and legislation to raise the status of the language.
- There is a desire to frame the Strategy around how beneficial languages can be for us, rather than what we are losing and why we need to respond to it.
- They see an opportunity for all Pasifika groups to work more collaboratively together, learn from each other and share resources.
- They note that language classes are hard to find and there needs to be investment in attracting teachers to teach the language and offering the language at all levels of the education system and in the community.



Niue

"Our vagahau is of the utmost paramount importance to our identity, cultural values, history and future survival as a 'living' culture"

86%

support the vision

50%

agree with timeframe

78%

agreed with Tiered approach

79%

agree with action items

- There is wide support the strategy although some would prefer to see explicit action points because they feel the key actions are too high level and it is difficult to see the community's role in achieving the vision.
- They would like to see more explicit focus on resources as that is a huge barrier to language maintenance and revitalisation.
- Unhealed language trauma is a barrier to engaging with the language. There needs to be support for this – "It's important to fix the roots rather than just the branches."
- There is a need for more engaging, youth-focused and beginner level resources and language learning opportunities to help people feel excited about the language. This should also involve our elders.
- There should be more innovative and creative ways to teach the language and to offer bilingual and immersion options from early learning right through to tertiary – this could include mentoring and partnerships with elders, young people, NZ teachers.
- There is also a need to develop more translators as there is a significant shortage in this area.



Cook Islands

"Our language is our identity - Our turanga vaevae"

90%

support the vision

33%

agree with timeframe

91%

agreed with Tiered approach

88%

agree with action items

- Most Cook Islands people engaged support the key actions, however noted the need to ensure responses were reflected of their lived experiences. It was also noted that the actions didn't go far enough to effectively respond to all the different dialects.
- Most agreed with the categorisation of languages. The groupings were sensible without creating hard boundaries. There was large support for the urgency needed to support Cook Islands languages.
- Communities expressed the need for language learning to start within the family home, however everyone has a role to play to support language thriving.
- A concern shared by many was the intergenerational trauma. For elders who migrated to Aotearoa, who had to assimilate to the new environment and the impacts this had later for youth who no longer have their language.
- There was wide support of needing resources that are relatable, relevant, and reflective of the current environment, i.e., digital content, youth by youth resources, game, language hubs
- The community want to see more sustainable investment for language providers and community, especially when solutions to reverse the decline rests within the community.
- It was important for many, that all environments and settings are considered in supporting the revitalisation of language i.e., not just the church
- The lack of quality language teachers was a key concern with suggestions that the system (especially formal education) needs to adapt and recognise the language skills of elders and community leaders so they can teach the language



Samoa

"Language is the cornerstone of our culture's survival. It is embedded in our songs, prayers, food, myths, beliefs, customs, and medicinal knowledge"

100%

support the vision

76%

agree with timeframe

88%

agreed with Tiered approach

96%

agree with action items

- There is strong support for the Strategy and in particular the role the Government can play in shifting mindsets that all languages are valuable.
- Some see an opportunity to connect with organisations and institutions in Samoa to find accessible models and content for supporting gagana Samoa in Aotearoa.
- This was the only ethnic group to suggest an ethnic specific organisation or commission to support gagana Samoa in Aotearoa, as opposed to a pan-Pacific one.
- An issue that persists is that any language support seems to be demand driven and responding to demand in the community. They want to see more proactive policy and planning to promote and support gagana Samoa throughout New Zealand.
- The community wants more language resources, more engaging language learning opportunities for young people throughout the year (using platforms like TikTok), free language classes, more support from local Councils and more awareness of the rate of language loss.
- There should be specific pathways and incentives for building the Samoan teacher workforce.



Tonga

"Our Pacific language is the expression of culture and more importantly, it empowers Pacific peoples to challenge the dominant discourses that continue to disadvantage our children and their families"

88%

support the vision

88%

agree with timeframe

88%

agreed with Tiered approach

88%

agree with action items

- There is strong support for the strategy although there are mixed views on the 10-year timeline and the key actions. There is a feeling that they do not capture the urgency of the situation (note: there is a common misunderstanding that having a longer timeframe means that urgent action will not happen).
- There needs to be a much stronger focus on the connection between language and identity in the Strategy – show how strong language abilities build strong identity and lead to reduction in crime, educational inequity etc.
- For lea faka Tonga to thrive, there must be investment in supporting the language in homes as this is where language is being lost. This must be supported by resources and opportunities to learn in the community and in schools.
- There is also a need for accessible translators in the legal, educational, health, government sectors.
- Programs such as 'Talanoa Ako' are helpful within our community, and it would be beneficial to see more programs like this that target specific groups to understand the value of our language.



Tuvalu

"Tou iloga ko tau gana. Kafai se fakaaoga tau gana, koe pela me se lakau tapea - Your language is your identity. Without your language, you are metaphorically like a floating piece of wood in the middle of the ocean"

100%

support the vision

67%

agree with timeframe

84%

agreed with Tiered approach

67%

agree with action items

- There is support for the Strategy, but the community would like to see more initiatives focused on the Tuvalu community.
- They see a need to focus on the valuing of the language in particular – this is a barrier to the continued use and transmission of gana Tuvalu.
- Other areas for better supporting gana Tuvalu include legislation, language learning and bilingual pathways in education, clear policies that support the language and the development of community spaces where they language is used, and local initiatives can be supported.
- There was mention of work underway at Porirua College which is a promising initiative that could also happen elsewhere.
- There also needs to be consideration for the different dialects within gana Tuvalu.



"If this process does not happen then our next generation has lost this crucial aspect of who they are, their ethnicity may be all they have to show their identity but without the language, you lose the knowledge, the history, about who you are and about what your ancestors left behind."

100%

support the vision

100%

agree with timeframe

80%

agreed with Tiered approach

100%

agree with action items

- The Fijian community is supportive of key actions in the Strategy but disagrees with how their language has been categorized. They see “promotion and awareness raising” as a step backwards.
- Fijian language classes in Whanganui and Wellington are examples of what is working well, however, the teachers volunteer their time. Fiji language week is also valued.
- Desire to see vosa Vakaviti valued in education – more language nests, classes, curriculum focus and resources, support for Fijian teachers.
- Want more inclusive language programmes and more public broadcasting in vosa Vakaviti
- There is ongoing debate about whether to include Fiji-Hindi as a Pacific language.



Kiribati

"Our language make us who we are. If we suddenly danced our traditional dances sang in English, we lose the essence of who we are. As one of the first countries to be impacted by climate change, we may soon have no place to return to where our Kiribati language is nurtured and is an official language."

100%

support the vision

100%

agree with timeframe

100%

agreed with Tiered approach

100%

agree with action items

- Kiribati community is supportive of the strategic and the key actions.
- There is interest in capturing the language knowledge of older generations and producing stories, songs, poems and audio to use and help stay connected to Kiribati culture.
- The community is positive about the Kiribati bilingual unit and kids club and would like to see in-home programmes to support parents as first teachers and funded play groups.
- They would like to see more support for bilingual provision, language resources, homebased learning and helping people qualify as early learning teachers.
- They would also like to see opportunities for elders, missionaries, pastors etc. to teach the language in schools.
- Interest in seeing a regional panel established for the Strategy to create transparency.



Rotuman

"Our language is a gift and should always be taught at home, so it's never lost"

100%

*support the
vision*

66%

*agree with
timeframe*

66%

*agreed with
Tiered approach*

50%

*agree with
action items*

- There is support for the Strategy but a feeling that 10 years is too short-term and too much focus on use of the language does not account for improving language transmission, which is important.
- There is a need in the Rotuman community to focus on language transmission and use in the home. This should be supported by books, songs, language learning resources and websites with resources.
- There wasn't a strong push for language learning in schools, but rather a focus on raising awareness and celebrating the language through language weeks and resources.
- Regular community meetings with traditional music, dance, dress and creating safe spaces to listen to knowledge holders is important, as well as representation through PMN Rotuma.



Youth

"Elders and community leaders would like to pass on the baton. However, there is still a breakdown in how to pass on the baton to young people."

"Most Pacific parents and the education system force their children to prioritise English instead of Pacific languages. As a result, young people tend to prioritise English over their native language because they believe English will help them in their professional careers."

Challenges

- There is significant language trauma resulting from assimilating into New Zealand and speaking English and/or trying to speak their Pacific language and being ridiculed when they make mistakes.
- Youth don't often feel seen or heard in decision-making processes when they are the ones who need to carry the languages forward.
- Even if Pacific languages are valued in the home, the education system generally doesn't value them and this reinforces the idea that English is the key to success
- Realm nations feel like they don't necessarily get the support they need as smaller groups (Tokelau, Niue in particular) so it is good the Strategy prioritises these groups.

Opportunities

- We must find ways to create safe spaces for elders and young people to connect and build relationships that enable the passing on of language and cultural knowledge – this is particularly important for realm languages.
- There are examples of great things happening on a small, local scale. We need to learn about this stuff, capture it and share it so others can apply it in their community.
- We need to harness things young people are passionate about and use this to inspire language learning – music, dance, technology etc.
- To lift the value of the languages for young people we need to show how languages are valuable for professional careers. We need to support young parents to gain critical awareness about our languages and to value learning and transmitting the languages to children and young people.
- We need to ensure there is youth representation in key decision-making areas so their voices are heard

