

Bay of Plenty
Ethnic Women's Hui
Report

Held on Saturday 4th May 2024 1.30pm

Arataki Community Centre



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Introduction

The purpose of the hui was to bring ethnic women in Tauranga together to connect and build a better understanding of their needs and aspirations in order to develop programmes and services that could create stronger, healthier communities.

Thanks to the organisations collaborating in this initiative: Shama, Multicultural Tauranga and Tauranga City Council.



Number of women who attended:

35

Session One: Opportunities and Gaps

The first session of the day aimed to identify the strengths and enablers in Tauranga for ethnic women and also identify challenges, barriers and potential solutions.

What are the strengths and enablers in the BOP that enable ethnic women to achieve their aspirations?

A number of support of existing organisations and services, as well as cultural support groups were identified by the groups including:

- Volunteering (NZ Red Cross, Waipuna Hospice)
- Shakti provided support – helped for women to know their rights.
- English Language Partners classes
- Multicultural Tauranga
- Universal Diversity Charitable Trust – social work support, focusing on ethnic clients
- Women's WING – Women's international networking group has been going for 10 years, meeting every last Friday of month has 235 members on Facebook.
- Pacific Island Community Trust BOP
- Tauranga City Council
- Friends but not community (Brazil)
- Cultural communities are safe networks for those needing support – can encourage and invite vulnerable members to attend programmes.
- Rest Home options
- Family connections

What are the needs/challenges experienced by you/your community in BOP?

A number of themes arose in discussions, particularly the themes of:

- Lack of Connection:
 - There is a need for outreach the most vulnerable in our community
 - I.e.: people experiencing social isolation, mental health, elderly
 - There is a need for hand-on support to navigate and connect with the right support as a newcomer to the community
- Language Barriers:
 - Language barriers came up a number of times, particularly for grandparents supporting grandchildren in NZ
 - Need to increase the accessibility of interpreting services
- Transport:
 - Need transport for elders (grandparents) and women
 - Need for public transport to be more accessible (reliability, better transport public in general)
 - Lack of knowledge about how to navigate and what to do (step by step).
 - Weather and difficulties with geographic conditions, bus gets harder
- Need for information/ workshops:



Figure 1: Hui attendees brainstorm strength and challenges for ethnic women in BOP.

- Including these topics:
 - How to apply for benefits
 - How to start a small business
 - Women knowing their rights and entitlements
 - Services for non-residents/citizens.
 - Educational options for children and adults and information about school zoning
 - Healthy Relationships
- An authentic platform where communities know they are accessing the right information.
 - Lots of community organisations are on Facebook and we don't know if they are authentic.
 - Information about community events and services they can access.
- Relationships challenges, how to have healthy relationships/Social support needed:
 - Lack of support tailored to ethnic communities
 - Relationship abuse – power in relationships, Pressure on women to support families, too many responsibilities, and not knowing their rights. Feel pressure to be everything.
 - Students – young women from migrant backgrounds having challenges with parents not seeing the benefits of study/careers.
- Housing:
 - High cost and difficulty finding housing - for Pasifika there is homelessness support available. No support for ethnic people.

What are the services/solutions that can support ethnic women in BOP?

- Having a place of support:
 - A place to go that people can trust and receive support.
 - Having regular gatherings such as this hui
 - A Supportive network, psychological support, friendship, positive attitudes
 - Independent women's group to support migrant women in Tauranga – run classes, a place where women can go, give professional social support and assistance for needs.
 - Workshops on practical skills like cooking classes, sewing classes and driving, Workshops on how to sell at Market places, parenting/ schooling
 - Dancing club, Movies – Cine clubs
 - Celebrate Languages/Sharing culture
 - Have a better understanding of Maori organisations
 - Positive relationships with children - Parenting support
- An authentic platform where communities know they are accessing the right information.
 - Information about community events and services they can access.
 - A guide on what to do, how the systems work and where to go to ask for help. Identifying what organisations can best provide this information to the community.



Figure 2: Diverse group of women at the discussion table.



Session Two: Areas of Interest

The second session of the hui focused on key areas of interest and discussions on what can be done locally to support.

The topics were Health and Wellbeing, Financial Independence, Arts and Crafts, Parents and Families, Socializing/ Making Friends.



Figure 3: Attendees in group discussion about interest areas.

Health and Wellbeing

- Need for support for those who are not eligible for public health care (temporary visa holders).
- Education through GPs around the use of interpreters – best practice
- Have list of Multicultural GPs
- Migrants are struggling with health and being pre-judged by the system.
- Awareness about language support available at GPs/ Hospital
- Awareness that Midwives and GP appointment interpreting is covered by GPs - using the Decypher Interpreting Service.

- Need more emotional support/ counselling and awareness about mental health and wellbeing (what's normal and what's not) - Isolation/ Depression needs to be addressed.

Socialising/Making Friends

- Events and programme that enable: Connections, Communications, sharing a lot of your experiences. Share – learning off each other, basic skills sometimes (Parenting/ Socialising)
- Specific meetings/ groups to support/train migrant women (i.e social support, NZ work environment, interviews, Legal advice - Baywide Community Law).
- Organise more programmes such as:
 - Swimming classes
 - Cooking classes
 - Internet- how to do Posters/website
 - Pottery
 - Marketing
 - Yoga/Zumba
 - Dancing Club
 - Driving
- *Considering: Workshops Weekend, Evening Child Care, transport
 - Have more regular women's groups, and organise activities to be together
 - Cross-cultural events to connect with wider community (with pakeha, Maori, Pasifika)
 - Celebrate International Women's Day
 - Providing mentors or guides for migrant women.
 - Volunteer work
 - Newsletter – Direct Information
 - Increase communication between groups
 - Council representation



Figure 4: Note taker listening intently on discussion at the table.

Financial Independence

- Support for women to get into markets and start small businesses
 - Have resources and support to develop ideas for small scale businesses
 - Where to find help
 - How to register
 - Where to seek help if things go wrong
 - Best success stories - learn from established business
 - Platforms where like-minded women can socialise and seek support from each other / network.
- Resources and training for job applications and CV preparation
 - Better understanding of volunteering programmes
 - support how to handle rejections

Barriers:

- Reference needed for jobs.
- Lots of rejections,
- Lots of skills but lack of information.
- Family barriers and lack of support for working mothers.

- There are visa restrictions of who can apply for funds that are available so opportunities to get funding for everyone.
 - Funds for artists to encourage them.
 - Information and resources for student visa holders
 - Talent Pool. Recognizing different talents where people perform and showcase their talents
- Support for budgeting
- Information on gardening and community gardens
 - How to grow own vegetables
 - Skills to utilise small backyards for gardening
 - Gardens communities where to share vegetable
 - Accessing funds and financial support/who can apply
 - How to apply for different benefits

Arts and Creative Expressions

- Need of support for Ethnic minority students at Uni, - solution: meeting to address needs of students (with Council and other organisations).
- Support and activities for kids (storytelling time)
- Community Events - International music festival

Barriers:

- Lack of awareness - Tauranga library does offer amazing services but they have very low attendance.
- Lack of suitable community events particularly in winter
- No friends, people are shy to go is they don't know anyone
- Sometimes event timings are not family friendly.
- Some good events are not child friendly.

Solutions:

- Events should have ice-breakers

- Combination of indoor and outdoor events.
- Have more information about different groups as Tauranga writer group, Tauranga Arts Society

If you want to know more about the practical solutions we are organising, please email Haidee.Kalirai@tauranga.govt.nz, and we will keep you up to date.

Conclusions

The first BOP Ethnic Women's hui highlighted both the strengths and the challenges faced by ethnic women in Tauranga. By leveraging existing support structures and addressing identified needs through targeted programmes and services, we can work together to create a more supportive environment for ethnic women in our communities.



Figure 5: All attendees of the hui.