



NZR PASIFIKA STRATEGY

ASSESSMENT REPORT | OCTOBER 2022



MOANA
CONNECT



**TÖ
TUPU
LÄLANGA**

CONTENTS

List of Tables and Figures	4
Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations	5
Introduction	6
Background	7
Approach	8
A review of the NZR Pacific Strategy.....	10
Goal 1: PLANTING - (Tō) – Creating Opportunities	12
Why this Goal?	13
What other Strategies does this goal's objectives align with?	13
What does good progress/success look like based on information available?	16
Goal 2: GROWING - (Tupu) – Nurturing Pacific Talent.....	17
Why this Goal?	18
What other Strategies does this goal's objectives align with.....	18
What does good progress/ success look like based on information available?.....	20
Goal 3: WEAVING - (Lālanga) – Weaving Pacific Worldviews Across NZR.....	21
Why this Goal?	22
What other Strategies does this goal's objectives align with?	24
What does good progress/success look like based on information available?	26
For consideration	27
Summary.....	27
Next Steps.....	27
REFERENCES	28
APPENDIX	29

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: List of documents reviewed for the development of an Evaluation Framework for the NZR Pacific Strategy	8
Table 2: Summary of review of strategies and documents sent by NZR to Moana Connect in October 2022	31
Table 3: Alignment of Pacific Strategy goals and objectives to existing strategies and documents provided by NZR to Moana Connect in October 2022	32
Figure 1: All Blacks visit to South Seas Healthcare Otara	6
Figure 2: Saveatama Eroni Clark participating in Fa'afeiloaiga ile 'ava	10
Figure 3: Junior Rugby	12
Figure 4: NZ Rugby Pacific Advisory Group Inaugural Meeting.....	12
Figure 5: Ruby Tui and Renee Wickliffe - Opening game of the Rugby World Cup 2021.....	16
Figure 6: Pasifika Rugby Ecosystem - A village model of purpose.....	20
Figure 7: Dalton Papali'i speaks at a community gathering for the All Blacks visit to Otara	21

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term or Abbreviation	Definition
EDI	Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
Lālaga	To weave in Samoan
Lālanga	To weave in Tongan
NZR	New Zealand Rugby
PAG	Pacific Advisory Group
Tō	To plant in Tongan
Totō	To plant in Samoan
Tupu	To grow in Tongan and Samoan

INTRODUCTION

New Zealand Rugby (NZR), through its Pacific Advisory Group (PAG) and Strategy Subcommittee, have developed a draft Pacific Strategy to support the aspirations of the Pacific rugby community in Aotearoa. To help realise the Strategy's goals and objectives, NZR commissioned Moana Connect to develop an evaluation framework to ensure progress could be monitored and measured.

This report outlines the findings of Stage 1 of the evaluation framework development which was a review of the draft Pacific Strategy and other strategies and documentation relevant to the aspirations of the Pacific rugby community. This review will inform an outcomes framework that will evolve together with the Pacific Strategy during the wider consultation stage in 2023.

The first stage focused on a desktop review of existing documentation and consultation findings across NZR. This approach will bring existing data together in one document, thus helping maximise the accessibility and utility of the available data (particularly data collected from "Pacific rugby stakeholders), and to reduce the risk of duplication and/or over-consultation.

Our assessment describes the rationale for Goals 1, 2 and 3 and the line of sight between the Pacific Strategy objectives and other NZR strategies including Strategy 2025 and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan. Initial considerations for the components of an evaluation framework are also described for each goal, and suggestions for NZR and the Pacific Advisory Group (PAG) to consider are provided in the summary.



Figure 1: All Blacks visit the Southseas Healthcare in Otago

BACKGROUND

New Zealand Rugby (NZR) is committed to improving its responsiveness to Pacific communities, in particular Pacific players, coaches, development staff and their families. The NZR Pacific Advisory Group (PAG) and a Strategy sub-committee have contributed to high level outcomes for a Pacific Strategy which aligns to other NZR Strategies such as the NZR Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and Women's Rugby Strategy. The Pacific Strategy will inform the development and delivery of activities to achieve its goals and aspirations for Pacific peoples involved in rugby across Aotearoa. To ensure the effectiveness of the Strategy, an Evaluation Framework would provide a process for monitoring progress and identifying strengths, challenges and opportunities throughout the Strategy's implementation.

NZR commissioned Moana Connect to work with NZR's Pacific Engagement Manager, the PAG Strategy Sub-Committee to develop an Evaluation Framework for the NZR Pacific Strategy. The Evaluation Framework will be informed by existing data sources such as the 'Navigating Two Worlds' research, a Literature Review, the Black Ferns Review and numerous survey findings including the 'Women & Girls' Survey.

APPROACH

Understanding some of the constraints regarding a broad consultation process with Pacific communities (e.g., survey fatigue among the rugby community having been inundated with surveys for numerous other NZR strategies), NZR approved Moana Connect's recommendation to undertake a staged approach to the development of an Evaluation Framework. Due to the time limitations borne of NZR requiring a draft evaluation framework by December 2022, Moana Connect will undertake this work in two stages that will precede a consultation process in 2023 for both the Strategy and Evaluation framework. The two stages will be comprised of 1) a review of existing NZR strategies and relevant documents to identify alignment with the draft Pacific Strategy; and 2) a proposition of evaluation approach(es), measures, information sources and considerations for the ongoing evolution of the framework.

STAGE 1

This report outlines the findings of a review from Stage 1. The first stage focused on a desktop review of existing documentation and consultation findings across NZR to assess the currently available information which could inform the development of an Evaluation Framework. This approach helps to maximise existing data, particularly data collected from Pacific rugby stakeholders and helps to reduce duplication of consultation.

The desktop review required reading and analysis of a range of documents (see Table 1) to identify alignment, context and/or relevant contributions to the NZR Pacific Strategy values, goals and objectives.

Table 1: List of documents reviewed for the development of an Evaluation Framework for the NZR Pacific Strategy

Title	Type	Date of release
NZR Strategy 2025	Strategy	2022
Pacific Strategy	Strategy	(still in draft)
Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy & Plan 2021 – 2024	Strategy	2021
Black Ferns Review 2022	Review	2022
Respect and Responsibility Review	Review	2017
Super Rugby Aupiki – ‘He Hīnatoro – What could be	Review	2022
NZ Retention Project (by EY)	Report	2020
Navigating Two Worlds	Report	2022
NZR Cultural Competency Literature Review	Report	
Rugby Victoria – Pasifika Strategy 2021	Strategy (Victoria)	2021

NEXT STEPS

STAGE 2

This is the development of an Evaluation Framework, created using existing data. The evaluation framework will include a draft logic model, key evaluation questions, indicators and measures and a table of data sources. It may also include an evaluative rubric that describes what success looks like for key goals.

An initial evaluation framework can be expanded and evolve over time following further recommendations for addressing gaps in indicators and measures of success that cannot be identified within existing information. The framework may require further consultation with Pacific communities. This approach assumes an identification of resources within NZR that will be available to Moana Connect for consultation such as any availability of Saveatama Eroni Clarke and/or members of the PAG and Sub-Committee.

REVIEW OF PASIFIKA STRATEGY

The NZR Pacific Strategy focused on three high-level goals with specific objectives aligned to each. The Strategy is symbolically represented by the stages of *niu* (coconut) development and use, namely Planting, Growing and Weaving. The goals are mapped across to high-level goals within the NZR Rugby Strategy and the NZR Māori Strategy. To support the development of an evaluation framework, it is imperative that we have well-defined narratives and evidence to justify each goal and objective. Such a review is especially important in light of the wealth of information available, but with limitations in Pacific-specific data. The strategy is also still due for wider consultation. This assessment report gives greater depth to the draft strategy in order to begin the work in Stage 2 of exploring ways to identify and measure progress against the goals and objectives. It gives greater depth to the draft strategy in order to begin the work in Stage 2 of exploring ways to identify and measure progress against the goals and objectives.

The following sections describe our review of each part of the Strategy:

INTRODUCTION SECTION

Strategy context and relationship between Pacific and Tāngata Whenua

GOAL 1

Planting – Sowing Opportunities: To sow pathways and opportunities for Pacific people to be involved in rugby, on and off the field, and at all levels

GOAL 2

Growing- Nurturing Pacific talent: To create physically, mentally, and culturally safe environments for Pacific players and their families

GOAL 3

Weaving - Pacific worldviews across NZR: To incorporate Pacific values, approaches and worldviews into the fabric of New Zealand rugby at all levels

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND



Figure 2: Saveatama Eroni Clark participating in Fa'afeiloaiga ile 'ava

INTRODUCTION

It is understood that the introduction for the Pacific strategy will cover whom the Pacific strategy represents, the history of Pacific participation in rugby, and reflections on how Pacific peoples have contributed to rugby both in Aotearoa and globally. This section could be strengthened by reflecting on the challenges that Pacific people have faced in rugby historically and the factors that have contributed to these challenges as this helps to make explicit the importance of the strategy and the need for a concerted effort to address these.

PASIFIKA & TĀNGATA WHENUA

It is commendable that the PAG intends to acknowledge tāngata whenua and to reflect on the history and the tuakana-teina relationship that is shared amongst tāngata whenua and Pacific peoples as a part of this strategy. This section will require careful consideration - including but not limited to appropriate consultation with the NZR Māori team and meaningful engagement with Te Tiriti o Waitangi – as well as nuanced expression.

There may be value in addressing this through a section titled “Pacific and Te Tiriti o Waitangi”, with two subsections; “Pacific and Tāngata Whenua” and “Pacific and the Crown”. This would allow for the special relationship between Pacific and tāngata whenua to be acknowledged and explored, whilst also allowing for reference to the historical relationship between Pacific peoples, New Zealand and the crown, along with the various international and realm agreements. This history and these agreements have a profound impact on how the rights of Pacific players and the responsibilities of NZR are understood and framed.

GOAL 1: PLANTING - (TŌ) - CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

To create pathways and opportunities for Pacific people to be involved in rugby, on and off the field, and at all levels.



Figure 3: Junior Rugby



Figure 4: NZ Rugby Pacific Advisory Group Inaugural Meeting

The metaphor of planting niu is chosen for its alignment with the idea of 'creating' opportunities for Pacific players and the wider Pacific community to be involved in rugby at all levels, from the field to the board room. The act of planting requires preparation of the soil to ensure the plant can grow. Attracting Pacific peoples to the game of rugby requires a purposeful shift in the way it engages with people from across the moana and across all facets of NZR to ensure they feel welcome, appreciated, and supported to get involved.

WHY THIS GOAL?

Participation in rugby is on the decline as it competes with other sports and demands on people's time. Exacerbating this issue is the fact that the pathway to professional rugby is beleaguered with barriers and concerns that make it challenging for some Pacific players and their families to navigate.

It is also no secret that - despite the high representation of Pacific players at all playing levels - there is disproportionately low Pacific representation across non-playing rugby roles, including roles in coaching, management and governance. A quote from the 'Respect and Responsibility Review' report (2017) reflects the need for a goal which focuses on nurturing opportunities for Pacific to participate in rugby through these non-playing roles.

"I have been a partner of a rugby player, who plays a local club level, and also have lots of family who play and are involved in community club rugby...As a Pacific islander, I also hold concerns about how race and power looks at many levels of rugby – it is a shame to see a large majority of Pacific Islanders playing this sport – yet very little representation on boards or in positions of real power." (Online Mailbox Respondent)

Challenges relating to colonialism and cultural politics have been widely noted, and it is recognised that the cultural background of Rugby, the existing management structures, and the cultural norms and expectations embedded in Rugby club and community culture often create challenges for Pacific players (Grainger, 2009 & 2012, Respect and Responsibility Review, Navigating Two Worlds).

WHAT OTHER STRATEGIES DOES THIS GOAL'S OBJECTIVES ALIGN WITH?

A review of a range of documents provided by NZR was undertaken (see Tables 3 & 4) in order to gather evidence that would inform the development of objectives that align with the idea of planting/sowing opportunities. Four objectives relevant to this goal were established, and a summary of the literature relevant to each is provided below.

OBJECTIVE 1: TO SUPPORT MORE PACIFIC PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN NZR THROUGH NON-PLAYING ROLES

The need to improve processes for recognising, recruiting, developing, and retaining talented Pacific non-playing staff throughout NZR is well recognised in the literature. A number of strategies have been identified to support this including diversity targets, implementing a 'shoulder tap' system for underrepresented groups, diversifying recruitment panels, weighting applicants for ethnicity and other aspects of diversity (e.g. gender, sexuality, disability etc.), use of exit interviews, creating cultural roles such as matua and mentor roles, cultural liaison, and cultural navigator, mentoring, recruiting diverse people in 3s, (so that they are not isolated in their professional environment/have allies and community), emphasising the tautua and reciprocity aspects of non-playing roles, and increasing efforts to ensure that NZR provides a genuinely friendly and welcoming environment for staff who are not white, cis-male, heterosexual, and able-bodied. The need to determine suitable benchmarks, collect HR data (including ethnicity, broader demographic, and general engagement and development data), and undertake analysis thereof in order to determine performance against this objective is also well recognised.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR PACIFIC PEOPLES AND THEIR FAMILIES TO ENGAGE WITH RUGBY AS A SPORT, BOTH AS PLAYERS AND AS NON-PLAYERS

Although the literature did not place a particularly strong emphasis on creating new opportunities for Pacific peoples and their families to engage with rugby, a range of suggestions for how this might be achieved were readily identified.

It was recognised that engagement with and participation in rugby would naturally increase when rugby environments were more welcoming of women, gender/sexually diverse, and disabled communities. This highlights the importance of creating opportunities for Pacific women, MVPFAFF/Pacific Rainbow, and Pacific disabled communities to play and be an avenue for welcoming more Pacific peoples into the rugby community. Being more family-friendly, e.g., less emphasis on drinking, more availability of childcare etc., was also suggested. Creating cultural leadership roles, using Pacific venues (such as Pacific churches), and including more Pacific-Specific events, such as the Pacific Cup were also noted. Pacific Rugby holiday programmes were identified as a way to engage more Pacific youth in rugby. More broadly, creating volunteer opportunities and sharing more stories of community participation and roles were also noted.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO COMMUNICATE EXISTING PLAYER PATHWAYS TO PACIFIC PLAYERS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN A WAY THAT IS CLEAR AND REFLECTS THEIR VALUES AND ASPIRATIONS

To communicate existing player pathways to Pacific players and their families in a way that is clear and reflects their values and aspirations It was evident in the documents provided that both Pacific players and their families needed more support to understand the pathways available to them and the expectations and demands associated with this. The literature acknowledges that Pacific players are often driven by loyalty to and a desire to serve their family and community and that this brings unique pressures in terms of their professional progress. The need to recognise these values, to involve families in player development planning, and to manage the expectations of players and their families was noted, as was the need for family support and clear, structured education regarding player contracts, what a high-performance pathway looks like, what commitment is required, and what behaviours are expected. It was also made clear that such education and all related communications and processes would need to be culturally responsive, and flexible enough to meet the needs of players and their families. 'Office hours' where the coach could be reached for communication, family liaison roles, cultural navigators, and the creation of opportunities for informal conversation and feedback-seeking were also suggested as mechanisms which might support improvement in this area.

OBJECTIVE 4: TO CREATE NEW PLAYER PATHWAYS (PARTICULARLY POST-RETIREMENT) THAT REFLECT THE VALUES AND ASPIRATIONS OF PACIFIC PLAYERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

It is well recognised in the literature that more professional pathways are needed for players, particularly as they approach the end of their playing career or return to NZR post-injury or maternity. There is a significant overlap between the information pertinent to this objective, and the information pertinent to Pacific people in non-playing roles, as such roles may prove to be viable pathways for some. However, the literature also clearly indicates a need for NZR to take provide resourcing and proactively facilitate players' development of non-rugby skills and knowledge (e.g., cv development, study, interview skills etc.) in order to support them to pursue other career aspirations. It is acknowledged that player development plans are likely to be a key mechanism for identifying such aspirations and the pathways toward them, particularly if these plans better aligned with principles of personal and career development. As mentioned, family involvement in this planning and clear communication about the rationale for and importance of it is key. Introducing family liaison and cultural navigator roles would likely support with this.

WHAT DOES GOOD PROGRESS/SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE?

In order to define evaluation questions, indicators and measures for this goal and these outcomes, more information will likely be needed regarding the barriers to participation in Rugby that Pacific players, families, and communities face in a range of specific settings (e.g. schools, clubs, wider communities, operational spaces etc.) and the support that would be needed to overcome these. That being said, there are a number of barriers identified in the literature, that, if addressed, would support progress against this goal and the relevant objectives. For example, progress in this area might look like:

1. DEVELOPING EQUITABLE HR PROCESSES AND PRACTICES

- HR processes and practices reflect a genuine appreciation of diversity and, where relevant, align with the beliefs, values, and practices of Pacific communities.

2. CREATING ROLES AND DEVELOPING ROLE DESCRIPTIONS THAT ALIGN WITH CULTURAL VALUES

- NZR recognise the importance of and supports Pacific employees to fulfil and flourish in their community roles.
- Opportunities for participation are created by developing roles which are focused on giving (back) to and supporting Pacific communities (e.g. cultural leadership roles, roles supporting development in Pacific nations, community and club liaison roles in areas with high Pacific populations etc.).
- Reciprocity and service – e.g. How roles within NZR will give (back) to both the rugby community and/or Pacific communities – is an integral part of every role and its description.

3. COMMUNICATING IN A CLEAR, CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE, AND FAMILY-INCLUSIVE MANNER

- Multiple accessible and well-promoted opportunities are available for Pacific players and their families to receive information, ask questions, explore options, and make plans together as part of a transparent, clear, and collective process.

4. PROVIDING FAMILY-FRIENDLY SPACES

- Practice and game-day spaces are less driven by alcohol and have more facilities available to support the comfort and enjoyment of families as a whole.

5. EMPHASISING HOLISTIC PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Players are well supported to pursue a rewarding and meaningful career post-retirement through holistic development which takes their personal, professional rugby, and wider professional aspirations into consideration.

6. ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC RACISM AND ENTRENCHED DISCRIMINATORY ATTITUDES

- The potential player and employee base is enhanced as Pacific players of all genders, sexualities, and ability levels feel safe and welcome as a valued part of the rugby community.

GOAL 2: GROWING - (TUPU) - NURTURING PACIFIC TALENT

To grow pathways and opportunities for Pacific people to be involved in rugby, on and off the field, and at all levels.



Figure 5: Ruby Tui and Renee Wickliffe - Opening game of the Rugby World Cup 2021

GOAL 2

Goal 2 promotes the value of a nurturing environment that acknowledges the context in which Pacific players not only excel and contribute to team excellence but also thrive and contribute to their families, communities and cultures. The metaphor of Growing is a continuation of Goal 1 in that it recognises the care required for niu trees to grow and thrive. For our Pacific player and non-player talent, harnessing the factors that promote well-being and positive relationships would be beneficial for all.

WHY THIS GOAL?

Sport often plays a role in the building of social and cultural capital for many young Pacific athletes (McDonald, Rodriguez and George, 2018). In 'Navigating two Worlds', a report documenting Pacific people's experiences and contribution to non-playing participation in rugby (Ferkins, L, Dee, K., Naylor, M. and Bryham, 2022), participants spoke of their consideration of the wider circle of family and community:

"For example, when it comes to making a decision such as whether or not to coach a team, family are included in the decision-making process. It is more than the individual deciding they would like to take on this role, they need to consider how this will affect the wider family, other commitments and responsibilities, etc."

For Pacific players and non-players who participate in professional rugby, their sense of identity and well-being is tied up in their sense of belonging and service to their families and wider communities. A state of disharmony can cause significant stress for players, coaches and their families. Many reports have referred to the importance of acknowledging this wider sense of motivation and purpose:

*"Family, religion and education as the three most significant cultural factors that affect Pacific Island sport participation motivation (Schaaf, 2003)
Athletes defined mental well-being as the culmination of several interconnected factors, including: Family support, reciprocating family support, living a 'well-balanced' life, athletic performance and personal development away from sports. The maintenance of a well-balanced athletic identity and positive social relations were deemed central to sustaining mental well-being for these young men (Marsters, 2018)"*

This does not remove the emphasis on supporting individual well-being - physical, mental, and emotional health. However, it is important to acknowledge the cultural and spiritual elements that are influenced by positive relationships and contribute to an overall sense of well-being.

WHAT OTHER STRATEGIES DOES THIS GOAL'S OBJECTIVES ALIGN WITH?

A review of a range of documents provided by NZR was undertaken (see Tables 3 & 4) in order to gather evidence that would inform the development of objectives that align with the idea of growing Pacific talent. Three objectives relevant to this goal were established, and a summary of the literature relevant to each is provided below.

OBJECTIVE 1: TO ENSURE THE AVAILABILITY OF AND ACCESS TO CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE WELLBEING SUPPORT (INCL. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH) FOR PACIFIC PLAYERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

The need to improve the availability of and support access to culturally responsive well-being support is well covered in the NZR literature. Recommendations for improvement include increased emphasis on player rights and wellbeing amongst management and coaches, developing coaches' pastoral care skills, employing qualified medical and psychological staff who can provide services in mana enhancing and culturally appropriate ways, increased options for and pathways to support, and recognising/addressing players' fears around the impact of help seeking on selection. The literature also reflected on the need for players to be equipped with the skills and attitudes needed to promote resilience in a high-performance, high-pressure environment. It was also noted that Pacific players often experience additional pressure because of the desire/expectation to meet the material needs of their immediate and extended family through rugby (regardless of whether said family are located locally or internationally) and because of the stresses of being away from home and family. The establishment of cultural leadership roles (particularly family liaison and cultural navigator roles) in accordance with recommendations may support with this. There may also be a need to explore other options for supporting Pacific players with distress related to migration and separation, and for ensuring Pacific players' families – both here and abroad - are being adequately supported.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO SUPPORT POSITIVE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PLAYERS AND THEIR LOVED ONES AND PLAYERS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

The literature identified that reducing harm related to alcohol, violence, homophobia, and sexually inappropriate behaviour was a priority in order to ensure healthier relationships between players, players and their loved ones, and players and their communities. This included the provision of education/training (including upstander training), widespread changes to organisational culture, and the availability of non-punitive, transparent, and accountability-oriented pathways for disclosing harm. The need for more pro-social events, where responsible drinking is emphasised was also noted. While none of these issues were identified as being any more problematic amongst Pacific players than others, it was indicated that education and support regarding different international norms, expectations, and laws relating to some of the areas identified above may be needed. It was noted that a cultural navigator role could support with this. The impact of fame was also identified as a potential pressure point for young players and is another domain where support may be needed.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO PRIORITISE AND SUPPORT STRONG CULTURAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AMONGST PACIFIC PLAYERS AND NON-PLAYERS WITHIN NZR

This is an area that was not covered well by the available literature. While it was noted that it is important to create environments that support the physical, mental, and cultural well-being of players and that Pacific cultures should be celebrated, few recommendations for action had been made. As previously mentioned, it was recommended NZR create space for and run cultural events for Pacific players. The recommendation to establish Cultural leadership roles would also support with this objective.

WHAT DOES GOOD PROGRESS/ SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE?

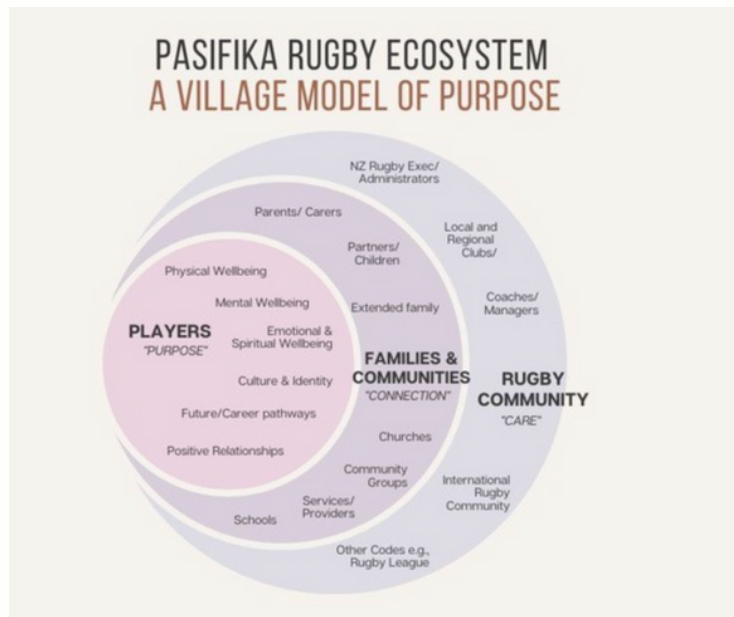


Figure 6: Pasifika Rugby Ecosystem - A village model of purpose

WELLBEING ECOSYSTEM

Goal 2 ensures the well-being of Pacific players, non-players and their families across the rugby community. The care of the individual player requires an understanding of the player's experiences on and off the field. The evidence points to a well-being approach that is premised on their sense of 'purpose' and the strength of their belonging to a wider family, community, and culture. Thus the cultural well-being of players and non-players and the well-being of their families and communities forms part of the player's well-being ecosystem. The player's journey in terms of their identity – culture, language, gender and sense of belonging - needs to be reflected in a well-being monitoring and evaluation framework. Figure 5 provides a draft schematic of this ecosystem to help us determine what actions, outputs and outcomes can form part of the evaluation framework. Findings and recommendations from existing reports such as the Ernst & Young report on Retention, can inform the actions, and therefore outcomes and measures, for this goal.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Players' well-being is inextricably linked to the nature of their relationships with others. Providing support where possible to ensure and maintain positive relationships with other people who matter to players in their lives is an important consideration for NZR.

GOAL 3: WEAVING - (LĀLANGA) - WEAVING PACIFIC WORLDVIEWS ACROSS NZR

To weave Pacific values, approaches and worldviews into the fabric of New Zealand rugby at all levels



Figure 7: Dalton Papali'i speaks at a community gathering for the All Blacks visit to Otago

WEAVING

Weaving is a skill passed down from generation to generation and is an integral part of Pacific-specific identities. Traditionally, weaving was a tool used for everyday living, utilised for shelter, roofing, carpentry, blankets, mattresses, screens, and clothing. In navigation and fishing, weaving was used to create ligatures, sails, and pirogues. It enabled Pacific people to voyage from one destination to another.

In Tongan culture, when woven, mats are always double-stranded for durability, to help withstand tough times. Metaphorically, this encapsulates the importance of equity and ensuring that interwoven strands (i.e., ethnicity, gender, worldviews, etc.) are respected and equal in standing. This document recognises the importance of understanding Pacific worldviews, of integrating Pacific approaches and frameworks into all strategies where Pacific peoples are involved.

This metaphor is used in Goal 3 to weave Pacific knowledge systems, ways, and worldviews into the fabric of New Zealand Rugby.

WHY THIS GOAL?

A literature review undertaken by NZR on cultural competency in sport raised salient points about the need for cultural frameworks within NZR due to the high proportion of Pacific players throughout rugby in Aotearoa (Ravula, 2014). Cultural competency can provide a 'competitive advantage' for NZR in light of the increasing profile of other sports drawing the attention of potential Pacific players.

With the high proportion of Rugby Union players identifying as Pacific, a greater awareness of Pacific context, worldviews, and experiences will help lay the foundation for Goal 3.

ENVIRONMENT NOT CONDUCTIVE TO PACIFIC GROWTH AND SUCCESS

The history of migration into New Zealand varies amongst the Pacific nations, with entry easier for some than others. Since the beginning of the 20th century, New Zealand has administered the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau, all retaining citizenship within New Zealand. Those from Samoa, Tonga, and Fiji usually migrated through temporary permits, quota schemes, and family reunification provisions. (Bedford and Hugo 2012)

A pull factor in New Zealand was the opportunity for Pacific migrants to provide for their families in their Island nations and to pave a path of greater opportunities for children born in New Zealand. As a result, many Pacific peoples on temporary permits obtained semi-skilled work. After the Second World War and up to the 1960's "overstaying" was accepted while demand for semi-skilled workers was high. However, due to the economic downturn of the early to mid-1970s, policing of permits became strict, resulting in the dawn raids and random street checks for Pacific people throughout New Zealand. Pacific people made up only one-third of the overstayers in New Zealand at that time. The rest were from Europe and North America, yet of those prosecuted around, two-thirds were Pacific (Cook, Didham et al. 1999).

The impact of the Dawn Raids is seen and felt at all levels, flowing into subsequent decades. Karlo Mila (2013) notes:

"Within a decade, the unemployment rate of Pacific peoples rose from 6 percent to 29 percent...In the late 1980s, Pacific peoples were more likely to be participating in the labour market than the rest of the population...By the mid-1990s their participation was well below the average and has remained so ever since....In 1986, Pacific peoples earned a real median income that was 89 per cent of the national real median income...By 1991 – only five years later – this had dropped to a ratio of 69 per cent of the national real median income."

In 2021, the socioeconomic inequities facing Pacific people is still evident. The Pacific unemployment rate is currently at 8.1 percent, twice that of Pakeha at 4.3 percent. Pacific peoples also have higher rates of children living in households that experience material hardship than the national average (28.6 percent compared to 13.4 percent). The median wealth of Pacific households is \$15,000, compared to \$138,000 for Pakeha (Asofa, 2021). Recently, a report launched by the Human Rights Commission's Pacific Pay Gap Inquiry found that on average, for every \$1 a Pākehā man earns, a Pacific man earns 76 cents while a Pacific woman earns 73 cents. Only 27% of the pay gap for Pacific men could be explained, and 39% for Pacific women.

Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner Saunoamaali'i Karanina noted that "the gap is really really significant and it becomes transferred to the next generation if we don't halt." She went on to explain "This research provides further evidence about what we've long suspected – the bulk of the Pacific Pay Gap can't be explained and is at least partly due to invisible barriers like racism, unconscious bias and workplace discriminatory practices.

When describing the flow-on effects of racial profiling and the Dawn Raids, Dr Melani Anae (2015) notes, "The legacy of this stereotyping since the 1970s is that Pacific peoples are still subject to racist abuse by governments, media, and the New Zealand public in general." These examples are provided to highlight the inequities that persist and the environmental landscape that Pacific peoples are often born into, which are not conducive to growth and success.

BIASES TOWARDS PACIFIC PEOPLES IN RUGBY

A number of analyses on sports commentary and race outline how sport, including rugby, is often racialised. Within sports commentary, players who are racially identified as 'white' are more frequently viewed as thinkers and framed as leaders (Byrd and Ulster, 2007; Billings and Eastman, 2002). When white athletes are critiqued, it tends to be for lacking athleticism and physical talents. Nonetheless, their abilities are produced through hard work and dedication. In contrast, athletes of colour, including Pacific, are more likely to be described as predominantly physical, to the detriment of intellectual attributes. They are also more likely to be criticised for mental errors and lack of concentration (Kahi, 2017).

In a thesis titled "Heart of Darkness: Negotiating race and racism in New Zealand rugby: Club rugby players talk rugby," Kahi (2017) explores examples of racism towards Pacific rugby players through public discourse by others of influence in rugby circles.

During a promotional tour to promote his book 'Somebody stole my game,' Former All-Black Chris Laidlaw explored the changing state of rugby due to professionalism. In one of the chapters, 'Is brown the new black?' Laidlaw focused on the phenomenon of the 'browning of the game,' seeking to debate the 'pros' and 'cons' on behalf of the rugby-viewing public. He notes:

"It must be said that, simply because of that explosive energy, Pacific players sometimes make themselves more vulnerable to missed tackles, and because of all that instinctive brilliance, they sometimes just go their own way on attack, compromising a team's tactical plan... Māori and Pacific Islanders tend to be more instinctive than measured in their approach, and every team at the top level needs someone who can plot and plan, adjust and adapt. There will always be a place for a Grant Fox or a Conrad Smith, and it is this ...variety that gives rugby its character." (2010: 213).

In May 2010, Andy Haden, another former All Black, was part of an expert panel on Murray Deaker's television programme, Deaker on Sport where they discussed multiple things including race and rugby. Speaking about the Auckland Blues franchise that struggled that year, Haden noted that the Blues should follow the Canterbury Crusaders recruitment policies. He stated:

"Once they've recruited three, that's it. That's their ceiling. Three darkies... no more."

While Haden revised his quote over the next few days by stating the comment was in reference to Pacific recruits and not Māori, he never recanted the 'darkies' comment. The broader issues of institutional and cultural racism that is informed by the same race logic as abuse were not addressed.

Pat Lam, a former All Black and Manu Samoa representative, was appointed coach of the Blues in 2009. During his four-year tenure as coach, the franchise only made the playoffs in 2011. The poor performance of the team attracted a lot of public criticism. Part of the criticism targeted the Samoan ethnicity of the coach and the number of Pacific Island and Māori players in the team who accounted for 22 of the 29 first-choice players (Kahi 2017).

In a press conference in 2012, Lam spoke out against the racial taunting he and the team had been subjected to. He noted:

It's sad really, it really is. We totally accept the criticism that we get when we don't perform. But it's the racist people, the social media, and talkback, where people say things that are pretty offensive. The question about the racial stuff is what I'm upset about. It's just sad that we live in a country that has that, but it's just a minority and I know that... It's different when it's a racial thing. The emotion is about my parents... For me it's a job. I'm enjoying the job and I enjoy the fact that as a team we come together and are working hard to get out of this adversity. When I think about my parents and the tough times they went through to be the people they are that's what I am, that's what I'm working to do with this team.

Before incorporating Pacific values, approaches, and worldviews into the fabric of New Zealand rugby, it is pivotal to understand the Historical Pacific context in New Zealand and the implicit (unconscious) and explicit (conscious) biases commonly experienced by Pacific peoples navigating in and through NZR. This will allow for a greater appreciation of Pacific peoples, their resilience, and a greater respect for Pacific worldviews and values.

WHAT OTHER STRATEGIES DOES THIS GOAL'S OBJECTIVES ALIGN WITH?

A review of a range of documents provided by NZR was undertaken (see Tables 3 & 4) in order to gather evidence that would inform the development of objectives that align with the idea of weaving Pacific worldviews across NZR. Four objectives relevant to this goal were established, and a summary of the literature relevant to each is provided below.

OBJECTIVE 1: TO PRIORITISE AND SUPPORT CULTURAL SAFETY AND COMPETENCY AT ALL LEVELS OF NZR THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

There was a clear recognition of the need for Pākehā-oriented systems to be dismantled and for cultural competency development to be widely undertaken at NZR. This included a target for 80% of staff and 100% of executive and board members to have undertaken unconscious bias training, and diversity and inclusion training, though the nature of this and its depth of attention to Pacific peoples is unclear. There is recognition that an organisation-wide rather than top-down approach is needed, that training must be frequently updated and there is also a recommendation that coaching and management KPIs be updated to reflect performance in priority areas such as well-being and culture is made by one report, and another recommends that mental skills and coaching frameworks engage a range of Māori and Pacific practice and mental models.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO INTEGRATE PACIFIC PRACTICES AND CUSTOMS INTO NZR WORKPLACES AND OPERATIONS

This area too was not well covered in the documents reviewed. There was recognition of the need to better harness cultural knowledge within NZR and a suggestion that cultural leadership roles be formally established. There was also an awareness that Pacific approaches to leadership are different and require flatter, more collectively oriented structures and processes, and as mentioned recommendations for leadership structures to be reconsidered in light of this. The use of talanoa as a way of seeking/gathering feedback from players was also suggested in one report, and it was also acknowledged that the spiritual values and practices of Pacific peoples should be supported, though no suggestions were made regarding how.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO SUPPORT CONNECTEDNESS AND GROWTH AMONGST PASIFIKA LEADERS WITHIN NZR

Unfortunately, this is not an area that was well addressed by the available literature. There was some general recognition of the need for dedicated cultural leadership roles and for more Pacific people in leadership roles (aligning with the need for more Pacific people in non-playing roles). It was also noted that those in leadership roles should be supported with their development of relevant leadership and governance skills, though what this support might look like for Pacific leaders, in particular, was not explored. There was also a recommendation for leadership structures to be reconsidered in order to better reflect an appreciation for Pacific approaches to leadership, and players' values and expectations regarding leadership. There was discussion of a leadership initiative for 20-25 diverse Pacific rugby community leaders as a part of the ED&I strategy, however, no other clear evidence of action or recommendations were found.

OBJECTIVE 4: TO BUILD AND ACTIVELY MAINTAIN MEANINGFUL AND RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN NZR AND PACIFIC COMMUNITIES BOTH LOCALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY

Evidence related to this outcome was also scarce, though Strategy 2025 did identify the importance of working with Māori and Pacific communities. Increased emphasis on/building up a Pacific brand emerged as a suggestion for building better relationships with Pacific communities, as did engaging in partnership with Pacific groups and organisations. As previously mentioned, using Pacific venues (e.g., Pacific churches) was identified as a strategy for connecting with the community, as was working with church leaders. One report also recommended that NZR create space for and run cultural events for Pacific players. Further to this Pacific-specific competitions, "bringing rugby to Pacific communities," and making events more family-friendly were also suggested. Despite the lack of evidence available at present, it is recognized that this is key; if meaningful and reciprocal relationships are not built everything else falls over and efforts risk being tokenistic and merely superficial.

WHAT DOES GOOD PROGRESS/SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE?

In order to define evaluation questions, indicators and measures for this goal and these outcomes, it is likely that more information will be needed regarding the inequities that Pacific people face prior to engaging with NZR and the biases that lead to those inequities. By understanding the biases, intentional goals and processes can be set to ensure that barriers are eliminated and Pacific worldviews are a). better understood, b) integrated into NZR. There are a number of barriers identified in the literature that, if addressed, would support progress against this goal and the relevant objectives. For example, progress in this area might look like:

1. REPRESENTATION OF PACIFIC PEOPLES IN MEDIA AND NZR COMMUNICATIONS

- Having Pacific representation in media to counter both mispronunciations of Pacific names and adverse narratives tied to ethnicity that are often shared through media and talk-back radio. This means calling out both implicit and explicit bias.
- Media coverage promotes Pacific success and includes a focus on the leadership roles of Pacific peoples in rugby.

2. CREATING ENVIRONMENTS WHERE PACIFIC PLAYERS' AND FAMILIES' LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND IDENTITY ARE ACKNOWLEDGED AND VALIDATED

- NZR recognizes that Pacific peoples are not a homogenous group – our communities are made up of specific ethnicities and unique cultures.
- NZR creates platforms and programmes that promote the use of the Pacific language, cultures, and identities.

3. A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT BIAS TOWARDS PACIFIC PEOPLES AND AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PAST HURTS IN RUGBY AS A RESULT OF ETHNICITY

- Training for NZR (both Pacific and non-Pacific) on Pacific worldviews and implicit and explicit biases.
- Opportunities are provided for workshopping and mentoring that allow a safe space for Pacific players and their families to discuss experiences (both positive and negative, including biases) navigating through NZR to inform future work and improve future vā.

4. EQUAL PAY

- A stocktake of Pacific income (Pacific players, NZR staff) to determine if pay inequities exist.
- To ensure Pacific players and staff have equitable pay and opportunities within NZR.

FOR CONSIDERATION

KEY VALUES/ PRINCIPLES

The Pacific Strategy could be strengthened by including a list of key values/guiding principles, as per the Māori Pou and Values in the current NZR strategy. This will help to ensure ongoing alignment with Pacific worldviews and will support decision-making around goals and objectives.

METAPHOR ALIGNMENT

While reviewing the goals and objectives of the Pacific Strategy next to the aligned metaphors of 'planting', 'growing' and 'weaving', there was some discussion about the ordering of the process of planting and nurturing niu in relation to the strategic aspirations. In order for the plant to thrive, there is a need to prepare the soil. This strongly relates to what is currently Goal 3: weaving Pacific worldviews across NZR; the environment should be conducive to 'planting' and 'growing'. It is suggested that Goal 3 be renamed to reflect preparation and that it be moved to the position of Goal 1 so that the process of planting and nurturing niu is represented as 'preparing the ground' (ensuring that the NZR environment is welcoming of and responsive to Pacific peoples in order to facilitate all other aspects), 'planting' (creating pathways and opportunities for Pacific people to be involved in rugby) and 'growing' (to grow pathways and opportunities for Pacific people both on and off the field). Therein, the end of the process would be represented by a mature niu tree, capable of bearing fruit and nurturing both the people and the environment around it. However, if we continue with the current order, then we can strengthen the 'planting' metaphor to include the importance of laying a rich foundation and refer to aspects of Goal 3.

We also recommend a stronger alignment between the metaphors and the rugby context. Consider Pacific terms for 'planting', 'growing' and 'weaving' as English lacks context and precision for what needs to be conveyed from a Pacific worldview. This would align with the use of Te Reo in the Māori rugby strategy and supports Goal 3 of weaving Pacific worldviews across NZR.

PASIFIKA AND TĀNGATA WHENUA

This section requires appropriate consultation with the NZR Māori team and advisors and will need to reference Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We agree with the reference to 'history and shared past' as an acknowledgement of our tuakana-teina relationship and what this means, including but not limited to the recognition that – by virtue of this familial relationship - Pacific win when Māori win. There is also an opportunity to make this section treaty-led, expanding it to reflect on the relationship with both treaty partners; Tāngata Whenua and the crown. This would support the inclusion of references to the various international and realm agreements between New Zealand and Pacific nations and their impact on the position of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY VOICES

Without access to the surveys, our assessment does not have sufficient input from family and community voice. Family and community voices are vital to the success of the Pacific rugby community.

NEXT STEPS

Stage 2 will require further talanoa with NZR, PAG and/or the Strategy Sub-committee to discuss the assessment report and the summary of evidence provided. From here, collaboration on the development of an outcomes framework will help inform the development of an evaluative rubric and relevant measures.

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APPENDIX A

Table 1: Summary of review of strategies and documents sent by NZR to Moana Connect in October 2022

OUTCOME	REALISING OPPORTUNITIES				NZR CULTURE & SYSTEMS				WELLBEING		
GOAL	To grow pathways and opportunities for Pasifika people to be involved in rugby, on and off the field, and at all levels				To incorporate Pasifika values, approaches, and worldviews into the fabric of New Zealand Rugby at all levels				To create physically, mentally, and culturally safe environments for Pasifika players and their families across all levels of New Zealand Rugby		
OBJECTIVE	To support more Pacific people to participate in NZR through non-playing roles	To create new opportunities for Pacific peoples and their families to engage with rugby as a sport, both as players and as non-players	To communicate existing player pathways to Pacific players and their families in a way that is clear and reflects their values and aspirations	To create new player pathways (particularly post-retirement) that reflect the values and aspirations of Pacific players and their families	To support connectedness and growth amongst Pasifika leaders within NZR	To build and actively maintain strong relationships between NZR and Pasifika communities	To integrate Pacific practices and customs into NZR workplaces and operations	To prioritise and support cultural safety and competency at all levels of NZR throughout the country	To ensure the availability of and access to culturally responsive wellbeing support (incl. Physical and Mental health) for Pacific players and their families	To support positive personal relationships between players and their loved ones and players and their communities	To prioritise and support strong cultural identity development amongst Pacific players and non-players within NZR
SUMMARY OF EXISTING EVIDENCE (Gathered from: Strategy 2025; 2021 Pasifika Strategy – Rugby Vic; Black Ferns review 2021; Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity Strategy and Plan 2021-2024; Super Rugby Aupiki – ‘He Hinatore -What Could Be’; Navigating Two Worlds; NZR Cultural Competency Lit Review; Respect and Responsibility Review; NZR Retention Project)	The need to improve processes for recognising, recruiting, developing, and retaining talented Pacific non-playing staff throughout NZR is well recognised in the literature. A number of strategies have been identified to support this including diversity targets, implementing a ‘shoulder tap’ system for underrepresented groups, diversifying recruitment panels, weighting applicants for ethnicity and other aspects of diversity (e.g. gender, sexuality, disability etc.), use of exit interviews, creating cultural roles such as matua and mentor roles, cultural liaison, and cultural navigator, mentoring, recruiting diverse people in 3s, emphasising the tautua and reciprocity aspects of non-playing roles, and increasing efforts to ensure that NZR provides a genuinely friendly and welcoming environment for staff who are not white, cis-male, heterosexual, and able-bodied. The need to determine suitable benchmarks, collect HR data (including ethnicity, broader demographic, and general engagement and development data), and undertake analysis thereof in order to determine performance against this objective is also well recognised.	Although the literature did not place a particularly strong emphasis on creating new opportunities for Pacific peoples and their families to engage with rugby, a range of suggestions for how this might be achieved were readily identified. It was recognised that engagement with and participation in rugby would naturally increase when rugby environments were more welcoming of women, gender/sexually diverse, and disabled communities. This highlights the importance of creating opportunities for Pacific women, MVPFAFF/Pacific Rainbow, and Pacific disabled communities to play and be as an avenue for welcoming more Pacific peoples into the rugby community. Being more family friendly, e.g., less emphasis on drinking, more availability of childcare etc., was also suggested. Creating cultural leadership roles, using Pacific venues (such as Pacific churches), and including more Pacific-Specific events, such as the Pasifika Cup were also noted. Pasifika Rugby holiday programmes were identified as a way to engage more Pacific youth in rugby. More broadly, creating volunteer opportunities and sharing more stories of community participation and roles were also noted.	It was evident in the documents provided that both Pacific players and their families needed more support to understand the pathways available to them and the expectations and demands associated with this. The literature acknowledged that Pacific players are often driven by a desire to serve their family and community, and that this brings unique pressures in terms of their professional progress. The need to involve families in player development planning, to manage the expectations of players and their families was noted, as was the need for family support and clear, structured education regarding player contracts, what a high-performance pathway looks like, what commitment is required, and what behaviours are expected. It was also made clear that such education and all related communications and processes would need to be culturally responsive, and flexible enough to meet the needs of players and their families. ‘Office hours’ where the coach could be reached for communication, family liaison roles, cultural navigators, and the creation of opportunities for informal conversation and feedback-seeking were also suggested as mechanisms which might support improvement in this area.	It is well recognised in the literature that more professional pathways are needed for players, particularly as they approach the end of their playing career or return to NZR post injury or maternity. There is significant overlap between the information pertinent to this objective, and the information pertinent to Pacific people in non-playing roles, as such roles may prove to be viable pathways for some. However, the literature also clearly indicates a need for NZR to take provide resourcing and proactively facilitate players development of non-rugby skills and knowledge (e.g., cv development, study, interview skills etc.) in order to support them to pursue other career aspirations. It is acknowledged that player development plans are likely to be a key mechanism for identifying such aspirations and the pathways toward them, particularly if these plans better aligned with principles of personal and career development. As mentioned, family involvement in this planning and clear communication about the rational for and importance of it is key. Introducing family liaison and cultural navigator roles would likely support with this.	Unfortunately, this is not an area that was well addressed by the available literature. There was some general recognition of the need for dedicated cultural leadership roles and for more Pacific people in leadership roles (aligning with the need for more Pacific people in non-playing roles). It was also noted that those in leadership roles should be supported with their development of relevant leadership and governance skills, though what this support might look like for Pacific leaders in particular was not explored. There was also a recommendation for leadership structures to be reconsidered in order to better reflect an appreciation for Pacific approaches to leadership, and players values and expectations regarding leadership. There was discussion of a leadership initiative for 20-25 diverse Pacific rugby community leaders as a part of the ED&I strategy, however no other clear evidence of action or recommendations were found.	Evidence related to this outcome was also scarce, though the Strategy 2025 did identify the importance of working with Māori and Pasifika communities. Increased emphasis on/building up a Pasifika brand emerged as a suggesting for building better relationships with Pacific communities, as did engaging in partnership with Pacific groups and organisations. As previously mentioned, using Pacific venues (e.g., Pacific churches) was identified as a strategy for connecting with the community, as was working with church leaders. One report also recommended that NZR create space for and run cultural events for Pacific players. Further to this Pacific-specific competitions, “brining rugby to Pacific communities,” and making events more family friendly were also suggested.	This area too was not well covered in the documents reviewed. There was recognition of the need to better harness cultural knowledge withing NZR and suggestion that cultural leadership roles be formally established. There was also an awareness that Pacific approaches to leadership are different and require flatter, more collectively oriented structures and processes, and as mentioned recommendations for leadership structures to be reconsidered in light of this. The use of talanoa as a way of seeking/gathering feedback from players was also suggested in one report, and it was also acknowledged that the spiritual values and practices of Pacific peoples should be supported, though no suggestions were made regarding how.	There was clear recognition of the need for Pākehā-oriented systems to be dismantled and for cultural competency development to be widely undertaken at NZR. This included target for 80% of staff and 100% of executive and board members to have undertaken unconscious bias training, and diversity and inclusion training, though the nature of this and its depth of attention to Pacific peoples is unclear. There is recognition that an organisation wide rather than top-down approach is needed, that training must be frequently updated and there is also a recommendation that coaching and management KPIs be updated to reflect performance in priority areas such as wellbeing and culture is made by one report, and another recommends that mental skills and coaching frameworks engage a range of Māori and pacific practice and mental models.	The need to improve the availability of and support access to culturally responsive wellbeing support is well covered in the NZR literature. Recommendations for improvement include increased emphasis on player rights and wellbeing amongst management and coaches, developing coaches’ pastoral care skills, employing qualified medical and psychological staff who can provide services in mana enhancing and culturally appropriate ways, increased options for and pathways to support, and recognising/addressing players’ fears around the impact of help seeking on selection. The literature also reflected on the need for players to be equipped with the skills and attitudes needed to promote resilience in a high-performance, high-pressure environment. It was also noted that Pacific players often experience additional pressure because of the desire/expectation to meet the material needs of their family through rugby and because of the stresses of being away from home and family. The establishment of cultural leadership roles (particularly family liaison and cultural navigator roles) in accordance with recommendations may support with this. However, there may also be a need to explore other options for supporting Pacific players with distress related to migration and separation, and for ensuring Pacific players’ families are being adequately supported.	The literature identified that reducing harm related to alcohol, violence, homophobia, and sexually inappropriate behaviour was a priority in order to ensure healthier relationships between players, players and their loved ones, and players and their communities. This included the provision of education/training (including upstander training), widespread changes to organisational culture, and the availability of non-punitive, transparent, and accountability-oriented pathways for disclosing harm. The need for more pro-social events, where responsible drinking is emphasised was also noted. While none of these issues were identified as being any more problematic amongst Pacific players than others, it was indicated that education and support regarding different international norms, expectations, and laws relating to some of the areas identified above may be needed. It was noted that a cultural navigator role could support with this. The impact of fame was also identified as a potential pressure point for young players and is another domain where support may be needed.	This is an area that was not covered well by the available literature. While it was noted that it is important to create environments that support the physical, mental, and cultural wellbeing of players and that Pasifika cultures should be celebrated, few recommendations for action had been made. As previously mentioned, it was recommended NZR create space for and run cultural events for Pacific players. The recommendation to establish Cultural leadership roles would also support with this objective.