

Kahika Programme

Pilot Evaluation Report

Annalise Myers and Nadine Metzger
Point & Associates

July 2021



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KAHIKA PROGRAMME EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROGRAMME AND REACH

Kahika programme aims to address the needs of marginalised migrant women who need viable pathways to progress their education, employment, and enterprise opportunities. A programme coordinator and five mentors supported fifteen women to complete a 12-week programme.

KAHIKA REACHED 15 MIGRANT WOMEN

Aged between 37 – 54 years of age living in Auckland. At the beginning of the programme, their visa status was:

- 35% New Zealand citizens,
- 47% resident visa holders,
- 18% work visa holders.

ETHNICITIES AND LANGUAGES

Amongst the group there were 12 ethnicities, and the majority were bilingual who spoke English as a second language and twenty percent (20%) were trilingual (three languages).

REACH INSIGHT

Most of the participants (65%) were new contacts for Belong Aotearoa and at the beginning of the programme 14 participants were looking for employment opportunities.

KAHIKA HAS.....

Four (4) women have successfully secured new employment and five (5) have started their own businesses. A further seven (7) women are actively applying for jobs.

Developing their leadership knowledge and skills was one of the main drivers in helping women achieve their goals and gain confidence.

All participants felt the programme had enabled them to see how they might contribute to their community.

Participants highly valued gaining knowledge of the Treaty of Waitangi and the ongoing impact of colonisation on Māori rights, customs, and aspirations.

Acknowledgements

Belong Aotearoa want to thank the following organisations and people for their support:

CEU Innovation Fund at Auckland Council for funding the initiative

Wesley Community Centre, Puketāpapa Local Board for providing the venue

Te Tahawai Marae for hosting a group cultural experience

Workshop facilitators:

Dawn Te Kani and Kirsty Fong, Treaty People

Sandy Thompson, LEAD Centre for Not-for-Profit Leadership

Ella Kumar, Puketāpapa Local Board

Dr Sangeeta Karmokar, Women Entrepreneurship Centre

James Ashwell, English Language Partners

Ciao Chen, Life Potential NZ

Fa'aulu Tomuli-Afoa, Red Book Agency

Rochana Sheward, Belong Aotearoa

Mentors:

Dr Fasiha Subhan, Amrit Kaur, Rochana Sheward, Malu Malo, Najira Khanam

Participants:

We wish to thank the women who participated in the Kahika pilot for their enthusiasm and contribution

The word kahika denotes the flower of the rātā and is an alternative name for another iconic tree, the Pohutukawa.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the pilot of the Kahika programme.

The Kahika programme was developed in response to Belong Aotearoa research findings on the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable migrant families and communities. The following research insights informed the programme design:

- The pandemic had increased anxiety among vulnerable communities, negatively impacting their sense of financial security and social connectedness. Participants were anxious about the potential impact if the income-earner in their family lost their job.
- A particular gap identified was marginalised migrants and forced migrant women who need viable pathways to progress their education, employment, and enterprise opportunities.
- Women want to find new ways to develop and broaden their competencies and connections within a structured and integrated approach.
- Current ready-for-work type programmes are more suited to people who have a greater grasp of English and are more socially connected.

Kahika was open to migrant women living in Auckland and was held at the Wesley Community Centre from the 25th of March to 10th June 2021.

The Kahika pilot included te ao Māori, leadership, employment preparedness and self-development. A programme coordinator and five mentors supported fifteen women to complete a 12-week programme. The programme ran for two days per week with participants attending workshops, group mentoring sessions, and undertaking self-directed learning toward achieving their individual goals.

Programme Objectives

The specific benefits of the programme aimed to ensure:

1. Participants are empowered to identify and intentionally progress towards their self-identified personal and occupational aspirations/goals.
2. Participants gain valuable hands-on experience through volunteering, work placements, and incubator-type activities.
3. Participants enhance their English language skills and build their self-confidence through

connecting and communicating with others.

4. Participants reach a higher level of readiness for work or training and can actively explore employment and income generation opportunities.
5. Participants gain knowledge, understanding, and confidence to navigate the systems that can support their aspirations and those of their families.
6. Participants take up opportunities to engage in civic life and identify ways to contribute to prosperity for Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Evaluation method

A developmental evaluation approach has been used throughout the project. Programme participants were supported to participate in evaluation activities and surveys with opportunities to give narrative feedback through:

- Participate in reflective sessions with an external researcher.
- Each participant kept a journal to reflect on and self-assess their progress, review their goals, adjust their development plans.
- Observations gathered from the programme team, tutors, external facilitators, and mentors.

An outcome evaluation was undertaken using pre- and post-programme surveys. This report is a summary of findings of the outcome evaluation and key insights from the reflective sessions and journaling.

Limitations

Fifteen out of seventeen participants completed the post-programme survey. Two women who withdrew from the programme did not complete the post-programme survey.

Findings

Pre-programme responses

Status in New Zealand

Seventeen women enrolled in the Kahika Programme. Participants had lived in New Zealand from 3-21 years, with an average time of residency of 10 years and 5 months. When arriving ten women were migrants, and seven forced migrants¹. At the beginning of the programme, their visa status was:

- 35% New Zealand citizens,
- 47% resident visa holders,
- 18% work visa holders.

Women's Ages and Living Situations

The age range of participants was 35-54 years of age with an average age of 45 years old. Eighty-five percent (85%) were living with children, and three women were living with children on their own.

Ethnicities and Languages

There were 12 ethnicities amongst the group, including Sri Lankan, Iranian, Indian, Vietnamese, Palestinian, Iraqi, Malay, Turkish, Pakistani, Lebanese, Latin American, and Vietnamese Chinese.

The majority were bilingual who spoke English as a second language and twenty percent (20%) were trilingual (three languages). Participants collectively spoke twelve different languages. When rating their English skills, three women (12%) indicated they were beginners, seventy percent intermediate, and eighteen percent advanced English. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the participants indicated they wanted opportunities to improve their English.

¹ We follow the convention of the Aotearoa Resettled Communities Coalition (ARCC) by referring to migrants from the refugee quota programme, asylum seekers and family reunification as 'forced migrants'. In their words: "The problem is not actually the word 'refugee', but the negative connotations that come with it... former refugees are now new Kiwis... like a good number of New Zealanders who have come as immigrants at some point in their ancestry." (Abann Kamyay Ajak Yor (2021) Beyond Refuge, Aotearoa Resettled Community Coalition: Auckland)

Education and Training

Fourteen of 17 participants indicated they had a tertiary level qualification (half of these qualifications were achieved overseas) for example, Bachelor's degrees in Arts, Engineering Management, Psychology and Marketing Management. Thirteen percent (13%) completed their high school education overseas, and one participant had no high school education. Eighty-two percent (14 participants) had completed entrance-level training once moving to New Zealand. These courses included Small Business, Healthcare, Early Childhood Education, Catering, Retail, Health & Safety, Computer Skills, and English Language Courses.

Employment Status

At the beginning of the programme 14 of 17 participants were looking for employment opportunities. Their employment status was unemployed (18%), studying (12%), homemakers (35%), self-employed (12%) and employed (part-time, casual, contractor) (20%). Those with work experience in New Zealand were in paid work or volunteering part-time. Some of the roles were childcare, caregivers, cleaners, administrators, catering, teachers, call centre staff, and volunteer coordination.

Sense of Connectedness in New Zealand

Before starting the programme, most participants (47% strongly agreed and 35% agreed) considered New Zealand home. Three (12%) were unsure, and one woman strongly disagreed they considered New Zealand home. When exploring their sense of connection here in New Zealand, half (50%) of the participants knew who they could ask for support to pursue their goals. However, forty-seven percent (47%) could not identify anyone or were unsure who they could ask for help. There were similar numbers for participants who also found it difficult to seek support for themselves and their families.

Despite this, three-quarters thought they were treated fairly by other people, and seventy percent felt confident to contribute to their community. The majority reported feeling well-connected with other people outside their families and friends. Seventy percent thought they could communicate well with others outside their family and close friends.

Most of the participants (65%) were new contacts for Belong Aotearoa after receiving family and friends' recommendations and encouragement to apply. Others had previously completed the Wise Catering Business Course, and the coordinator recommended the Kahika programme to help them achieve their new goals.

Reason For Applying

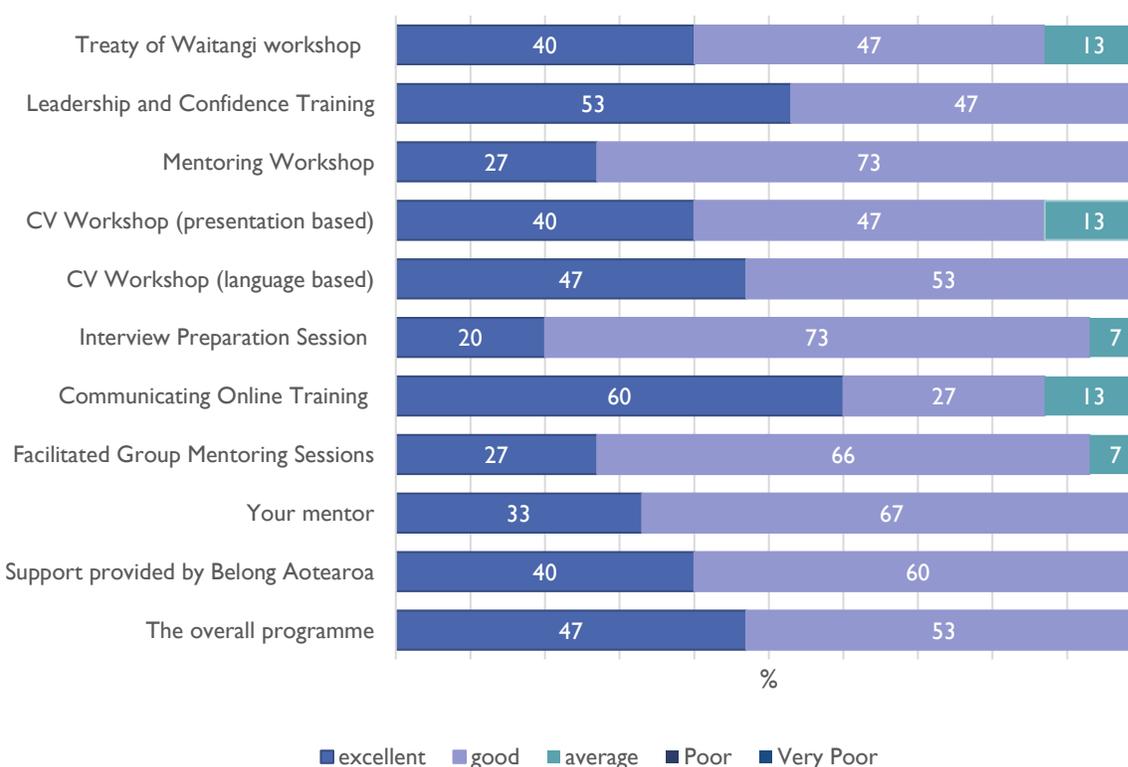
Most participants applied for the programme to help them secure a job (48%) or gain support to set up their own business (18%). The majority also expected to gain more self-confidence, practice speaking English in groups, learn about different cultures and aspects of New Zealand society. Before the programme sixty-five percent felt they had opportunities to develop skills to achieve their personal goals; however, only half felt they had a specific plan.

Post Programme findings

Overall satisfaction

Fifteen women of 17 graduated from the Kahika programme and completed the post-programme survey. The majority rated their overall experience of the workshops and support as overwhelmingly positive. Those who rated 'average' overall satisfaction were participants with 'beginners' level English skills. Also, participants rated 'average' when they thought the workshop was not tailored specifically for a migrant audience. Others rated 'average' when they needed more time to practice these sessions, for example, practicing interview skills.

Figure 1: Overall satisfaction by session name (n=15)



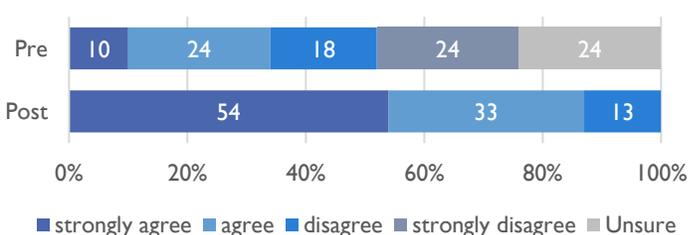
Capturing change

The pre and post questionnaire captured significant changes for participants across all programme objectives (see charts). In five pre-programme questions, participants answered 'unsure' which we discovered was a result of their lack of confidence with written English. As a result, in the post-programme survey we reconsidered the approach, offering the survey online, enabling participants to use google translate and the researcher was available to answer queries about questions.

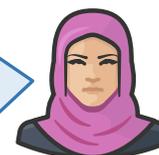
Support, connection and belonging

Programme participants said that having the opportunity to meet and converse with other women with similar life experiences helped them build social networks and friendships. As a result, most (87%) agreed after participating in Kahika that they could access all the support they needed.

Figure 2: I can access all the support I need (% , pre n=17, post n=15)

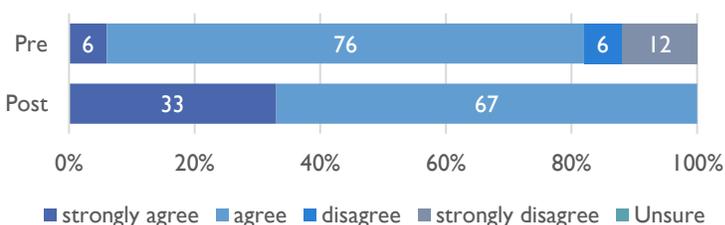


I feel I have friends here and they accept me for who I am. No judging.



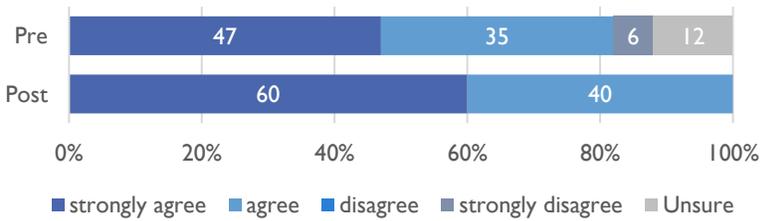
Kahika helped enabled participants to broaden their social supports and connect with others outside of their family, and all participants (100%) agreed they felt well connected with people outside of their family.

Figure 3: I feel well-connected with other people outside my family (% , pre n=17, post n=15)



Some women told us they learned more about 'living in New Zealand' throughout the course. This, combined with building their social support networks meant that all participants (100%) agreed that Aotearoa New Zealand is now their home.

Figure 4: I consider Aotearoa New Zealand as my home (% , pre n=17, post n=15)



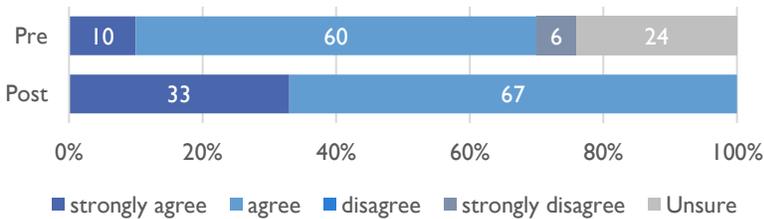
Now I feel more connected to Aotearoa, I'm building my network and getting that feeling that this can be my home.



Opportunities and contribution

Prior to the programme, nearly one third of participants were unsure (24%) or disagreed (6%) that they were confident contributing to their community. After Kahika, all participants (100%) agreed that the programme had enabled them to see how they might contribute to their community.

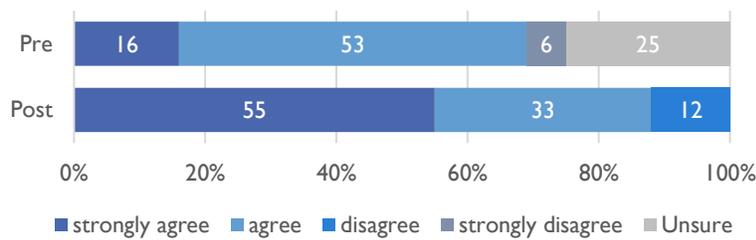
Figure 5: I feel confident to contribute to my community (% , pre n=17, post n=15)



Feeling connected, feeling supported, knowing that I contribute to the community.

Most women (88%) agreed they had opportunities to help themselves and their families grow after participating in Kahika. They said they were more prepared to apply for a job (88%) and were confident they could fulfil their aspirations. They attributed this confidence to understanding how to make and customise their CV, how to confidently participate in a job interview and how to start their own business.

Figure 6: I have opportunities to help myself and my family grow (% , pre n=17, post n=15)



Many found the CV and interview workshops and mentoring sessions helpful for exploring ways in which they could make the most of their strengths and opportunities. They said:

The coaching and mentoring sessions were very important and helpful to explore new ways to project my career and skills. This has become a long-term goal for me :)

Being able to re-word and rewrite key aspects of my strengths onto my CV. And customise CV accordingly to different roles.

All the information opened my mind and allowed me to see myself doing meaningful things and sharing with others.

Communication and Leadership

Most participants say they have learned new skills and are more confident communicating with others. Programme participants have indicated that communication was one of the things they struggle with the most and felt that the focus on conversational English throughout the programme was a key part of their increased confidence in communication.

Conversations with Kahika participants suggest that the leadership component of the programme was one of the main drivers in helping them achieve their goals, gain confidence, gain sense of self, helped them understand their strengths and potential to support their own and other’s goals. Many said leadership is about being a good listener and that following your own dreams means being healthy and helping yourself and others. One woman said the leadership part of the programme helped her feel confident enough to apply for a job, for which she was successful.

Creating a self-leadership journey means building independence to be able to follow my life goals and put it in action.

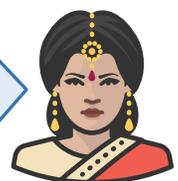
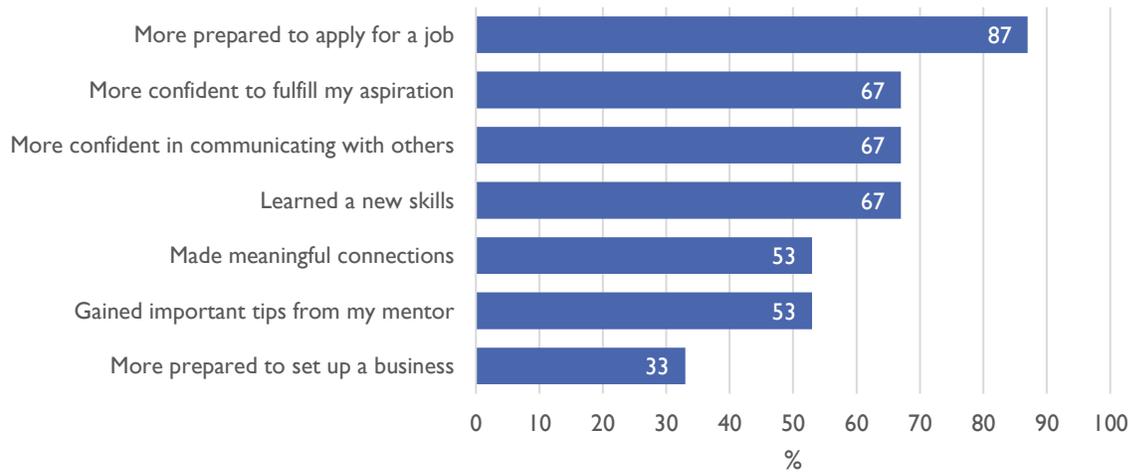


Figure 7: What participants gained from Kahika (% post n=15)



The programme has contributed to greater levels of confidence around job seeking and community leadership. For example, four participants have secured new employment and five have started their own businesses. Seven participants (47%) indicated they are actively applying for jobs and nine participants (60%) indicate they will enrol in training.

Figure 8: Outcomes of participation (% post n=15)



Te Ao Māori

A core part of the Kahika programme were a Treaty workshop and a visit to Te Tahawai Marae, which enable the women to understand the context of the te Tiriti o Waitangi and its role as the document that has enabled migration to New Zealand, and to contribute to the women’s sense of belonging in Aotearoa.

Many of the women spoke of how, prior to the workshop, their knowledge about Māori was largely formed through the mainstream media. Because of this, their views were primarily negative. The Treaty workshops and marae visit were a chance for them to reflect on these views and learn about the impact of colonisation and the role of tangata whenua. Feedback from participants shows they highly valued gaining knowledge of the Treaty of Waitangi and the ongoing impact of colonisation on Māori rights, customs, and aspirations.

They appreciated the personal experience of learning how Māori culture, values and customs are practiced and protected within Māori structures of whānau, hapu, and iwi. Many of the migrant women had first-hand experiences of colonisation before coming to New Zealand and were deeply moved by their experiences at the treaty workshops and marae visits. The visit to Te Tahawai Marae was a highlight for participants learning about Māori women’s role in their culture, the importance of spirituality and retaining their cultural values and traditions. Many came away with a sense of shared values and an increased sense of belonging.

Felt more connected after talking together and sharing our cultural views. It’s so necessary when you migrant to NZ.

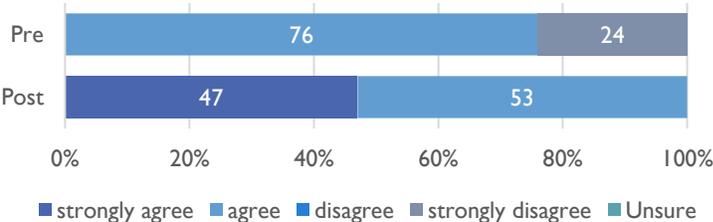
Values and culture are more like ours - caring for everyone, holistic wellbeing.

I learned Maori people care for their extended families like us.

I valued they welcomed us into their community and country

This part of the programme has sparked an interest for the women to continue their journeys to learn Te Reo and more about Māori society. Following the programme, 100% of women said they understood the Treaty of Waitangi.

Figure 9: I understand the Treaty of Waitangi (% , pre n=17, post n=15)



Future programme recommendations

All participants (100%) recommend the Kahika programme to other migrant women, specifically to increase awareness of Māori culture and history, build social connections, and self-confidence to pursue career goals.

This programme is highly recommended to migrant women to build self-confidence and settle in New Zealand. Thank you so much for giving us an opportunity.

I think everyone needs to learn more about Māori culture to be part of New Zealand.

In the post-programme survey, women suggested the following improvements:

Many participants wanted to learn more about te ao Māori. However, there is a delay due to needing to learn English to access this knowledge. They would like more opportunities to continue their learning.

Those without children felt the range of topics chosen for the conversational English sessions needed to be varied to be more inclusive for those without children.

Most of the participants were educated and worked overseas before caring for children at home once arriving in New Zealand. Many participants wanted the programme to be more tailored to migrant experienced women. They thought there needed to be more sensitivity from facilitators of the barrier's migrant women experience, for example, past trauma, setting and pursuing personal goals, CV writing, practicing interview skills and securing a job.

Several women found it difficult to pursue their employment goals and meet family commitments while attending the 2-days per week. Some women found the range of topics too broad from life skills to personal aspirations. This made it difficult at times for them to relate the learning to their personal goals. Most of the participants wanted specific support to gain work experience in New Zealand. They want more opportunities to meet potential employers and for the programme to offer work experience or internships.