

**Philanthropy New Zealand Conference
Te Papa Tongarewa; Wellington
'Healthy Whanau, Healthy Communities'**



**Hon Tariana Turia, Minister of the Community and Voluntary Sector
Wednesday 6 April 2011; 12.00**

The clergyman and social reformer of his time, Henry Ward Beecher once said about philanthropy,

*'In this world it is not what we take up,
but what we give up, that makes us rich'.*

It is one of those concepts that I absolutely believe in.

When I think about the experiences I have been blessed with in my life I believe that the more I give away, the more that positive energy comes back tenfold.

Within te Ao Maori, specifically within te hunga wairua – the spiritual realm – our whanau will 'offer up' various ideas and visions to the greater collective, knowing that the strength of the group will be enhanced by the contributions of the individual.

It is a time-honoured practice demonstrating the capacity to care; the practice of sharing.

People often say that if you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else. It works both ways – the power and momentum of knowing that what you are doing is of value to another person can be hugely fulfilling. Mahi aroha – the giving of one's time through love, caring or sense of duty – is an essential way to contribute to the wellbeing of whānau, hapu and iwi.

And so it was with these thoughts in front of me, that I have been genuinely looking forward to joining with you today.

There is probably few better who exemplify the power of philanthropy than the founder of your own organisation, the late Sir Roy McKenzie.

Sir Roy founded a number of organisations, including of course the Roy McKenzie Foundation and the Centre for the Study of Families at Victoria University.

He was patron of the Outward Bound Trust, a councillor at the Council for Educational Research and provided a significant level of support to many other charities, including Women's Refuge, the Deaf Decade Trust, Birthright, the hospice movement, and the Nga Manu Native Reserve Trust.

I want to commend the Board of Philanthropy New Zealand, and in particular your Chairperson, John Prendergast, for your determination to live up to such an awe-inspiring legacy.

The art of manaakitanga – literally the expression of generosity in acknowledging the mana of others around us has helped to shape the New Zealand character.

As I shared earlier, generosity has always existed as a fundamental element within my own whanau, hapu and iwi.

When Europeans arrived in Aotearoa, they brought English concepts of charity and volunteering, and so from early colonial days there were patriotic and charitable societies, lodges, clubs and sporting groups. Generosity and manaakitanga now bind us together as the essence of humanity.

This history has influenced us to become, according to the United Kingdom's Charities Aid Foundation, **the most generous country in the world** which is quite an amazing affirmation by anyone's standards.

And so with that in mind it gives me great pleasure to release the **Quarterly Generosity Indicators**. These indicators are published regularly by the Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector in association with the Generosity Hub.

These latest results cover five quarters, summarising data collected on the giving behaviours of New Zealanders from October 2009 through to December 2010.

The overall picture is that levels of generosity were consistently steady despite the challenging times we live in.

It seems that the number of people volunteering surges in summer, driven by the huge number of community-based sports events that occur over the summer months. On the flip side, the number of people donating goods increases in winter, primarily driven by donations to social services and in particular hospices.

The number of people donating money does not seem to be affected by season, but by need. Major surges in donations appear to be linked with two major recent natural disasters – the tsunami that hit Samoa and Tonga; and the first Christchurch earthquake.

The average donation to international aid organisations was around six times higher in December 2009 than in the subsequent four quarters, indicating the huge outpouring of support for our Pacific neighbours in their time of need.

Given these trends, it will be interesting to see if the next two quarterly updates show similar surges in response to the events of 22 February in Christchurch and the Japanese tsunami.

The events of the past couple of months have caused us all to reflect on how much we can give of ourselves to help another – whether it be by donations, by baking, offering a place to stay, a holiday away for families traumatised by the thousands of aftershocks and the perpetual sense of uncertainty.

Kind souls from right across the world have shown real generosity and some very innovative ways to fundraise and help those living through these terrible events. They have taken action to help the injured, and provide food, shelter and support.

Marae have hosted people whose homes were damaged. Tainui iwi sent a team of 40 builders and nurses to Christchurch; thousands of hot meals were ferried into the Eastern suburbs by the Rangiora Express, sporting and musical events, fairs, charity auctions, home baking, and respite care have been provided by volunteers and ordinary families.

This giving has been largely spontaneous and from the heart.

Outside of Christchurch, Volunteering Auckland co-ordinated a network of community organisations providing support for Christchurch based migrant and refugee families displaced by the earthquake; and many large Maori incorporations grouped together, inspiring each other to donate livestock, cash and other resources to help out whanaunga in Canterbury.

Every where you look people and organisations are doing their very best to help Christchurch start to rebuild – both nationally and internationally.

The Prime Minister has launched an international appeal to bring support to the earthquake rebuilding and recovery.

And Philanthropy New Zealand itself is leading work on a coordinated and strategic approach within its sector to supporting Christchurch. And I want to particularly acknowledge Ana Rolleston of the Ngai Tahu fund for the vital role that Ngai Tahu has played and will continue to play in the recovery effort, the restoration and rebuilding of Christchurch.

We are all in no doubt that there is a long road ahead – recovery will take weeks, months and even years.

While the pathway forward for Otautahi must, by right, engage us all in the journey, we must not forget that there are other communities and families who continue to struggle in challenging circumstances to live up to their potential. How do we move towards sustainable solutions, and how do we support whānau and communities to develop their own solutions; to nurture and build resilience?

The insights you bring as innovative givers will be critical in informing the pathway forward.

I have to say that the more I learn about the way in which our communities are responding to what I call a Whānau Ora approach, the more convinced I am of the significance of this model.

Whānau ora is about working with the strength and potential of whānau; essentially it is about encouraging whānau to do things for themselves. We know that there is a proliferation of organisations and Government agencies, going in and doing 'to' or 'for' families. That is not what Whānau ora is about. It is about restoring the family to be able to do things for themselves.

Whānau ora is not a new concept or philosophy. But it is a model which is homegrown – it has proven success in maintaining our cultural, physical, social and intellectual strength over successive generations. If we were to believe the media we would believe that Maori families are all in crisis. 90% of Maori families are actually doing very well – and we have a model that works well for us.

Through Whānau Ora we currently have 25 provider collectives engaged in a process of service and organisational transformation. They are made up of 158 providers across a range of health and social service types who provide existing services under a range of government contracts.

These provider collectives are committing to deep organisational change and developing programmes of action that will enable them to design and deliver whānau-centred services.

In turn, we as government are engaged in a change process in the way we join together to identify the outcomes alongside those families and those providers – that we want to invest in, and use integrated contracts based on high trust principles to do this.

Whānau Ora is marked by an approach - not a programme - that actively encourages whānau to move from being passive recipients of services to being contributors and designers of their own destiny.

We expect that as whānau engage in this planning process they will first identify the things they can do for themselves – how they can activate the generosity and manaakitanga we spoke about earlier, especially in the interests of more vulnerable whānau members. It is about reinvigorating our collective sense of responsibility for the wellbeing of our own.

Over the last two months I have had many occasions to be proud of our response to the crisis of the day. Time and time again, the generosity of New Zealanders shines through. We have shown our ability to work together to strengthen our communities and to pull through in times of adversity.

This conference is an opportunity to reflect on our achievements – but importantly also to consider our challenges, and to learn of new approaches, innovative strategies.

In this sense, can I conclude by welcoming Henrietta Marie to our shores.

Henrietta comes from the Gimuy Walubarra Yidinji people in the land in which the city of Cairns now stands.

She has spent her lifetime protecting and preserving the taonga of her people – including indigenous cultural heritage, intellectual property, bushfood, and other indigenous initiatives.

It is really exciting to see the influence that she has had as Program Manager of the Christensen Fund, and in particular in the work leading to establish the United Nations University Institute for Traditional Knowledge in northern Australia.

She comes to us fresh from her experience in chair Philanthropy Australia's Indigenous Affinity Group – and in doing so, I think she will have many new ideas for us all to consider about the ways in which we build on the strengths and experiences of our communities to create the futures we seek for ourselves.

I wish you all a wonderful two days together – the programme looks incredibly stimulating and if there is one key theme it would be 'maximising impact' – let's hope your conference itself also enables you all to maximise the time you have together to achieve the greatest impact for good.