

Exploring how community participation can be better enabled by technology

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New Zealand Council Of
Christian Social Services

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Organisation Name:	New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS)
Organisation Description:	The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Long-Term Insights Briefing exploring how community participation can better enable by technology. NZCCSS has six foundation members: the Anglican Care Network, Baptist Churches of New Zealand, Catholic Social Services, Presbyterian Support and the Methodist and Salvation Army Churches. Through this membership, NZCCSS represents over 250 organisations providing a range of social support services across Aotearoa. We believe in working to achieve a just and compassionate society for all, through our commitment to our faith and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Further details on NZCCSS can be found on our website https://nzccss.org.nz/

Tirohanga Whānui | Overview

NZCCSS broadly supports the kaupapa of the DIA Long Term Insights Briefing, and its recognition of the upcoming challenges for Aotearoa in the digitalisation space, however we highlight some areas in which it could be furthered and deepened.

1 - The issue of inequality is not discussed in depth as it needs to be.

Growing inequality must be addressed through all areas of government. Access to technology can help lift people out of poverty, and help others to learn about factors which keep them there.

Digital integration is essential to the lessening of inequality across the intersections of ethnicity, gender and age. People who are more educated are much less likely to stay economically immobile and are more likely to vote on issues which affect their situation.

Further, issues of inequality of access must be addressed – challenges relating to age and ability must be adequately considered with firm plans in place to support benefits for all New Zealanders.

2 - The focus on the impacts of digital inclusion on Māori represents a significant and positive shift in the way this issue is viewed.

This inclusion is well presented, and its importance is well explained. As related above, the intersectionality of inclusion requires further explanation.

3 - Access to and engagement with democracy.

Technology has the prospect of facilitating access to democracy through online voting and political education.

RealMe verification is currently used to access a significant range of government funded services including IRD and StudyLink, and as such it can be expected to facilitate voting in the growingly digitalised world. However, this tool could do with a review as its regularly reported by users as hard to use

This briefing acknowledges decreasing political engagement on the local level and a possible link between this and trust factors, however it does not dig deep enough into this issue.

4 - Future Scenarios: The infographic representing Three Scenarios for 2032 is important and based in realistic outcomes, especially for those within marginalised communities. There is significant and important insight into this issue and what will occur if government strategy for digital integration does not effectively include these groups. NZCCSS hopes that this will be taken into account across government departments.