

Answers to questions asked in the *Kia Ora, Toa!*  
Facebook Live interview with Helmut Modlik  
Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2020



**Q. Any chance to keep this channel going TOA Media add in the histories?**

*A. We've been thinking along the same lines. Online engagement enables us to connect with our people, not just here in Aotearoa, but across the world. Watch this space.*

**Q. Helmut – what excites you most about the current position and future prospects for the Iwi?**

*A. Transcript of Helmut's answer during the Facebook Live interview:*

*There are literally no limits in front of us. We can be and achieve whatever the heck we want, quite literally. I am so excited by the potential that I'm discovering in our people, the younger generation, we have a lot of educated, talented, energetic people, even in my generation there's plenty of juice left in some of my cousins and then of course we don't have too many of my aunties and uncles left, but God-willing across the generations we have talent, we have resources and there is opportunity just all over the place.*

*The last thing I want to mention, to be genuine about this, is we're mana whenua. That just means so much, that just says so much, and literally everybody in the public sector they have to come and talk to us. They HAVE to come and talk to us. So the opportunity to use this to maximum advantage to our people and the community is one channel of enormous opportunity to us, and that just flows into education and health, all of those public sector domains all have to engage with the iwi, and none more than the mana whenua and that is us. And that is so awesome for opportunity.*

*On the commercial side, there is literally so much opportunity, I don't even want to start, there is just so much opportunity. So there's no limit, and that's what makes me so excited. Whatever we want, we can make it happen.*

**Q. Will we look at a Puna Pakihi to support more entrepreneurship?**

*A. We've already organised access for our entrepreneurs to some work-class training and mentoring support as part of an online wānanga running in May. Moving forward, depending on demand, we could explore the establishment of a Puna.*

**Q. What are some of the new opportunities that have come out of COVID19?**

*A. Transcript of Helmut's answer during the Facebook Live interview:*

*Probably 2 or 3 things off the top of my head at this early stage. What's clear is that there will be a lot of pressure on some of our whānau with respect to their employment. There is going to be a need for people to be assisted through retraining and finding new career directions and so on. There's going to be a lot of opportunity, there already is, for those who have an eye or inclination for entrepreneurial start-up businesses and things like that. So, in each of those aspects, we've already taken some early measures.*

*Chas recently started up an [entrepreneurial Facebook page](#) and that's been pumping, and what we've done from this is set up a 3 day intensive training wananga where we've actually got an international-class entrepreneur and trainer who's going to be taking 25 of our iwi members who are keen to join up and go through this 3 day intensive training programme for building their capability to successfully take a business from an idea to a launchable, pitchable concept. At the end of it there will actually be some investors there that they'll be able to pitch their concepts to. I'm really excited about that, which is going to happen in May, and that has a lot more energy due to the Covid lockdown.*

*On the retraining stuff, we're intending to initiate some partnerships around providing for work retraining and labour sourcing for those who are physically inclined to work with the Porirua Regeneration Initiative. I won't go into the detail, but we've got some really cool things in the pipeline for helping those who are tradespeople. There's going to be a lot of opportunity.*

*I guess the one last thing I should say, which is a little bit negative but it might turn into a positive, is there's going to be a lot of businesses fail over the next wee while, and there's actually nothing wrong with these businesses: they're fundamentally sound, they've got good management it's just that from a cashflow point of view, from pre slow down and through lockdown, they're going to go belly up. And that's a waste, right, a waste, and some of our whānau will be in that space, so we will keep our eyes peeled in regards to that.*

*It's not our business to save a whole bunch of people's businesses, but it's definitely to our advantage to keep an eye open to where opportunities arise, if it fits with our strategy, if it fits with our iwi's needs and what would actually add value to us, frankly we might end up having some opportunities to get our hands on some fundamentally good businesses at some good prices, who knows.*

**Q. What can we do as iwi members to empower that talent and is it the Rūnanga that looks into resourcing those aspirations.**

*A. The Rūnanga definitely has a role to play in the development of our people's talents. That will occur in various ways – from better resourced interventions to improve educational achievement, to explicit policies requiring staff to mentor / support other Iwi members, to establishing Puna (as suggested by Deena). Individual Iwi members can support that by their encouragement and positive feedback, but also by getting appropriately involved.*

**Q. What's happening with the launch of Te Ahuru Mowai - what level will this be up & running?**

*A. Transcript of Helmut's answer during the Facebook Live interview:*

*Te Ahuru Mowai, that's a vehicle for social housing, and it's got a lot of opportunity, but that's only part of our Ngati Toa Iwi Housing Strategy whānau, that's its own story and it's been delayed by the Covid crisis, and we're now looking at a launch that's a little bit later than was planned in June/July, it's probably going to be pushed out a few months, but it's still looking good. We've got a good new man on board there, James Te Puni. So that's all looking alright.*

*But coming back to the real issue I'm fully expecting our Strategic Plan to say that an objective of ours is that all Ngati Toa have housing options where everyone is housed, and as many people as can be that want to be in their own home that we're committed to making that a reality, and I'm really committed to that.*

**Q. Helmut - what are your thoughts on a Ngāti Toa housing strategy?**

*A. Transcript of Helmut's answer during the Facebook Live interview:*

*That's the key, so whānau from my point of view, as long as the Runanga agrees with me, we buy land and we never sell it. And in fact all the land around our kainga that we can get*

*our hands on we buy it and we never sell it. And I am dead keen and serious about enabling our people to build their own homes on our land, and we've actually worked out how we can do that, where our people can get into their own houses on our land affordably. And I'm not talking cheap houses, I'm talking good houses on our land that we own, affordably. And you'll own your own houses, I won't go into the detail, but that's going to happen.*

**Q. Do we have a Business register so we can support all Iwi member's businesses?**

*A. We are looking at setting up a process for iwi business owners to register their businesses with the Rūnanga and/or developing an online marketplace for Ngāti Toa 'buyers and sellers'. This is so we have a good idea of what exists, and then to formulate a plan around how we can support iwi-owned businesses. Please keep an eye out on our Facebook page and website for upcoming communications around this.*

**Q. Helmut - what's your vision around education for our Iwi? Scholastically and culturally?**

*A. Transcript of Helmut's answer during the Facebook Live interview:*

*The Runanga is responsible for wellbeing and prosperity of our Iwi, right? And my job is to deliver on that. Now, there's no silver bullet on delivering on wellbeing and prosperity, but the closest thing there is to a silver bullet is education. That's the closest thing there is to actually enabling individuals and whānau to have what they want in their life. To be honest whānau, I've said this a million times in my life, I'm just a Maori boy from Takapuwahia with a flash name, who went to Ngati Toa School and Mana College and it was only by some good fortune and blessings that I was able to go get educated, and that's made the whole difference in my life. Literally, that's it.*

*So coming back to the question, we've had conversations with our education specialist people. Bianca, by the way whānau, is an absolute treasure – I just can't believe how lucky we are having Bianca working with and for us. So the TREAT Team that Janette and Rick's are on, we had a korero with them, as they are among our subject matter experts and they have been asked to refresh their thinking and formulate up some aspirational goals, ideas and if we threw the lid off and they could have whatever to deliver on our education aspirations, what would that look like? So I'm really excited to see what they come up with.*

*So that will be the main input, so my last thing I would just say whānau, is that there isn't anything I could do in my time that would make more difference for our people than enabling or trying to enable our people to be educated – across the board, I'm not just talking about mātauranga Pakeha, I'm talking about the full scope of, you know that*

*mātauranga that Ammon Katene's been posting? Man, I love that stuff! So the full range right, the whole thing so that our people are primo educated. As you can tell, this one really juices me up, I'm really committed to this direction whānau.*

**Q. Are there any plans to form better relationships with MPI and the local fisheries authorities to have more of a say in our region?**

*A. Honestly, this one is beyond me (Helmut) at present. We do have fisheries interests and involvement, but I'm not across the issues enough at this early stage to offer anything useful at this time.*