

## **Hihiko o Mangarautawhiri - Power sovereignty for a prosperous whānau and hapū**

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As a result of the New Zealand electricity reforms of 1980 and 90s, people who reside in the Te Rohe Potae (King Country) across to the western lands of Tuwharetoa down to Ohakune, have no option but to pay two separate power bills; one to an electricity provider, and another to The Line Company, for the use of their powerlines. Ngāti Hinemihi ki Tuwharetoa is one of many hapū that must live under these electrical power regulated conditions. Residents have reported a 77% increase in their line charges, and often, the cost of the 'line rental', is 4x times the cost of the actual power they consume. For many low-income whānau, kuia and kaumātua, this has often resulted in going without electricity. The use of 'Power Sovereignty' as a double entendre is in reference to asserting rangatira whilst addressing the power bills. The Te Mangarautawhiri a Pukehou Trust (TMaPT), members of Ngāti Hinemihi, has partnered with Unitec's Ngā Wai ā te Tui Māori and Indigenous research centre to develop this research project on behalf of their hapū. The research will focus on the aspirations of Ngāti Hinemihi whānau, the social and health impacts of living with these high electricity payment demands. The research will develop a framework of alternative and innovative power energy that increases whānau technical skill capability to maintain their systems. This 18-month project is funded by Placement Fund, Vision Matauranga, MBIE.