

1 TAHI

KO WAI TĀTOU WHO ARE WE



This section of the guide will take you through a journey of who we are as Rīpeka Whero Aotearoa, the importance of our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and how our Fundamental Principles can be understood and expressed through Te Ao Māori values in practice.

Rīpeka Whero Aotearoa New Zealand Red Cross

The International Red Cross Movement is a global humanitarian network made up of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and 191 National Societies worldwide.

Around the world, each National Society is guided by the Fundamental Principles, working to prevent and alleviate human suffering within their own communities, while contributing to collective global responses in times of crisis. While we are united by these shared principles, each National Society reflects the unique context, culture, and people of the country it serves.

So, what does this mean for Rīpeka Whero Aotearoa, and what makes us unique?

New Zealand Red Cross was established in 1915 as a branch of the British Red Cross, supporting troops during the First World War, and became an independent National Society in 1931. In 2014, the name Rīpeka Whero (a literal translation of Red Cross) was adopted, reflecting the organisation's commitment to honouring Indigenous language and identity, and acknowledging Aotearoa New Zealand's bicultural foundation.

At the heart of what makes Rīpeka Whero Aotearoa unique, compared with other National Societies, is our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and our relationship with Māori as tangata whenua. This commitment is foundational and is reflected in our constitution. It shapes how we understand our role, how we build relationships, and how we deliver our **mahi** in ways that uphold equity, **mana**, and partnership.

mahi	work	mana	prestige, authority, power
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Tā tātou tauāki paiherenga ki te Tiriti o Waitangi

Our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Rīpeka Whero Aotearoa | New Zealand Red Cross is committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, to strengthen our engagement with Māori as tangata whenua. We work as an auxiliary to government in the humanitarian field, supporting people and communities in times of need while remaining independent and guided by our Fundamental Principles.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a founding document, and a source of rights for all New Zealanders. Although we are not a Crown entity and have no statutory obligation to Te Tiriti, our global mission is to uphold humanity wherever it is found, promote human dignity, and serve vulnerable people. New Zealand Red Cross embraces the principles of partnership, participation and protection in pursuing and fulfilling the objectives set out in our mission and what has been written in our constitution.

Our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi

We're committed to strengthening our understanding and building capability in:

- te reo Māori
- tikanga Māori
- **mātauranga** Māori

By doing this, New Zealand Red Cross will:

- support Māori with their humanitarian aspirations
- build meaningful relationships and networks with Māori
- deliver culturally responsive and relevant services that are accessible to all

By working alongside Māori as tangata whenua in our humanitarian efforts, we will improve outcomes for the people and communities we serve.

Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te tangata
With your food basket, and my food basket, the people will thrive

mātauranga

knowledge, wisdom

Ngā uara Māori kua tuituia ki ā tātou Mātāpono Taketake

Māori values
interwoven with
our Fundamental
Principles



The seven Fundamental Principles are the foundation for all the work the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and National Societies around the world do – in peacetime, in public health emergencies, after disasters, and in response to armed conflict.

Te ao Māori is a holistic and interconnected framework deeply rooted in **whakapapa**, which binds people to the environment, ancestors, and the spiritual realm. It embodies core values that emphasise collectivism, sustainability, and relational ethics.

When we explore the deeper meaning of Māori values we see they often overlap or are connected to our Fundamental Principles.

Our Fundamental Principles are centred around humanity, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield and, in both international and national contexts, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Māori values are also deeply centred on humanity, emphasising interconnectedness, collective wellbeing, and relationships over individual pursuits. The core of this worldview is often summed up by the following **whakataukī**:

*He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.
What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people.*

whakapapa

genealogy

whakataukī

proverb

When we start to flesh out what these values are, we can see how they are interwoven with our Fundamental Principles.

Whanaungatanga – fostering strong, respectful connections with others, creating a sense of belonging and ensuring that everyone is included and valued.

Manaakitanga – raising the mana of others and showing care through actions.

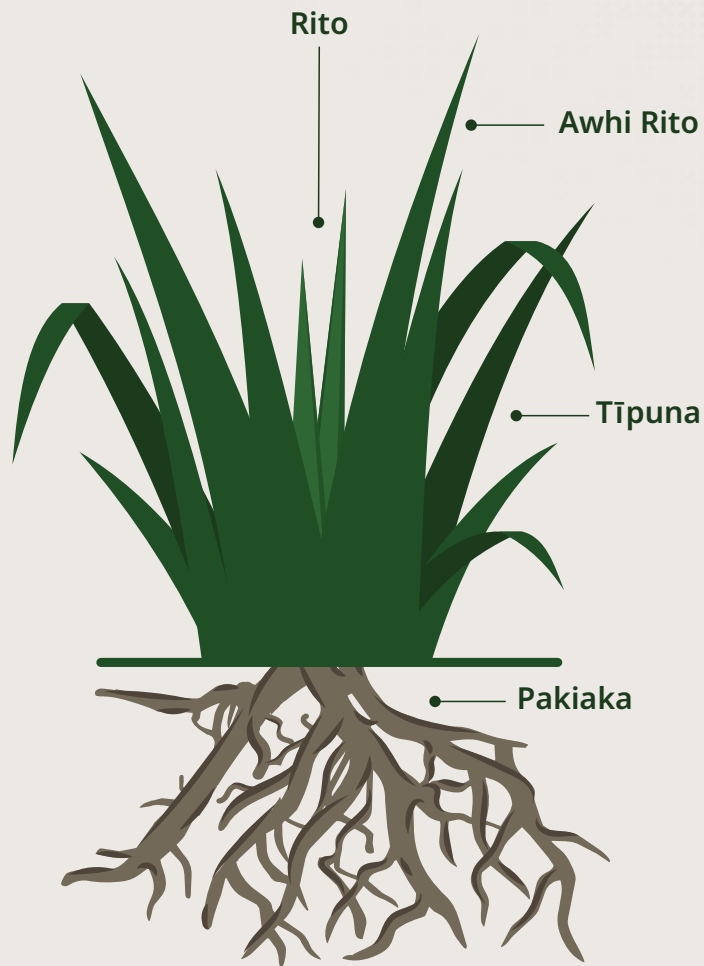
Mana – The inherent authority, power, prestige, and dignity that every person possesses.

Aroha – Demonstrated through action rather than just emotion, such as sharing resources, and supporting **whānau** and community.

Kotahitanga – Bringing together diverse people for a common purpose, encouraging collaboration and solidarity.

Kaitiakitanga – Managing resources to maintain the life force (**mauri**) of both the environment and the people.

whanaungatanga	relationship	kotahitanga	unity
aroha	compassion, love	mauri	life force
kaitiakitanga	guardianship	whānau	family
manaakitanga	hospitality, kindness		



In te ao Māori, **harakeke** is often used as a metaphor for whānau, values and interconnected systems. When we look at the different parts of harakeke we see a structure like that of our Fundamental Principles.

The centre leaf in harakeke is called the **Rito**. It is referred to as the child of the plant and is protected by the **Awhi Rito**, the outer leaves that support, nurture, and protect the rito, ensuring its survival and growth. They do not favour one side or another; their purpose is steady, balanced care. The **tīpuna** represent the ancestors, providing strength, protection, and wisdom to the whole plant. They stand on the outside, forming a boundary between the inner whānau and the wider world. **Pakiaka** is the root system that does its work quietly. They do not seek recognition, yet they sustain the entire plant. Pakiaka often grow together, intertwining and strengthening one another.

This concept provides a practical and meaningful way to apply our Fundamental Principles in the work we do. The values closely align with the approaches that guide our mahi, offering another lens through which we can understand and strengthen our practice.

harakeke	flax	tīpuna	ancestors
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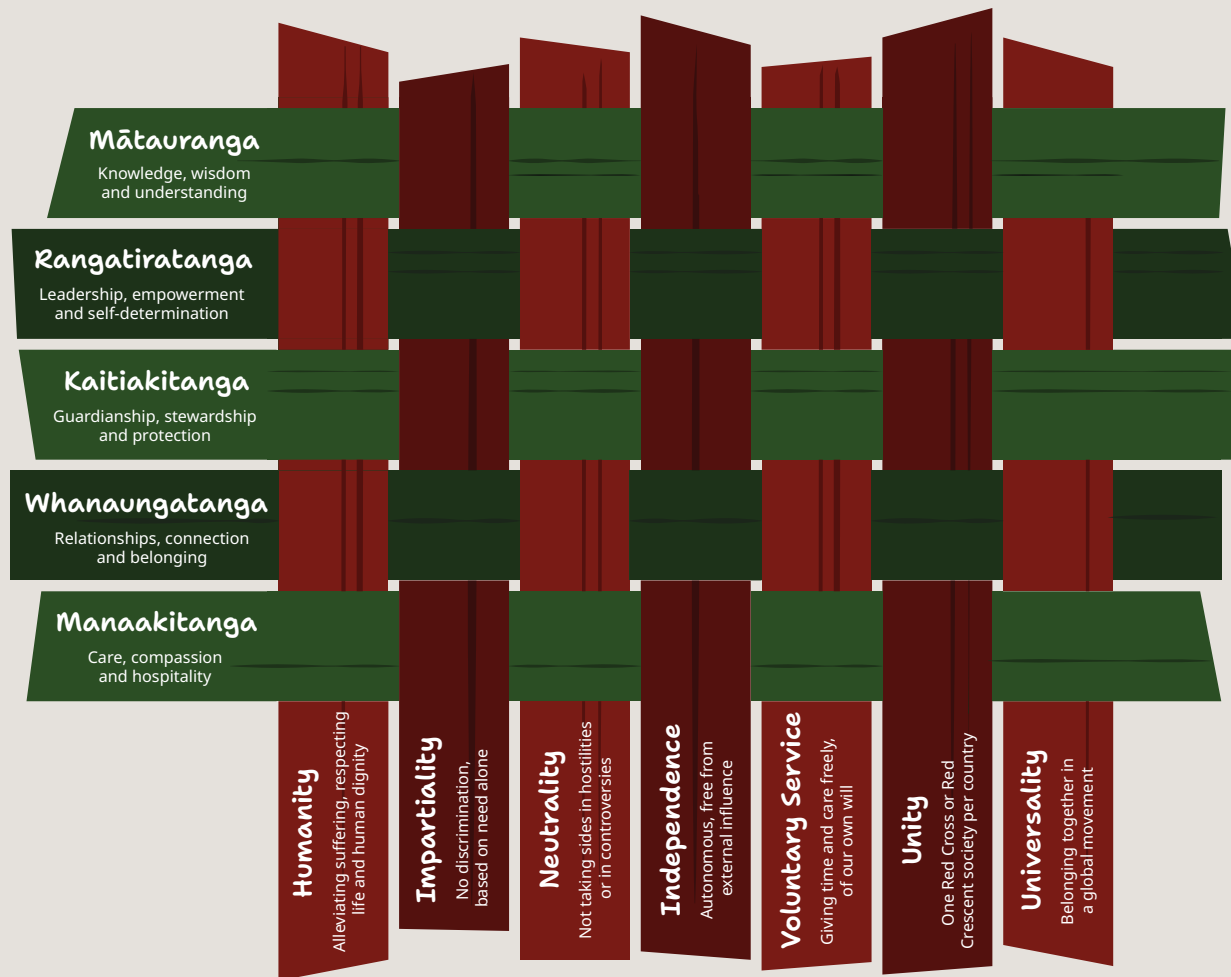


Humanity is what we aim to protect, represented by the rito at the centre of the harakeke. Around the centre, the awhi rito create a safe, trusted space. In the same way, **impartiality** and **neutrality** guide us in how we treat people – fairly, without bias or favouritism. Through the strength and protection of the tīpuna leaves, the harakeke stands securely within its own structure. This reflects our **independence** – we maintain the autonomy to act according to our humanitarian principles rather than external influence. Beneath the surface, the pakiaka connect, nourish and sustain the whole plant. They represent **voluntary service**, **unity**, and **universality** – three interconnected principles that ground and strengthen our Movement.

Together, these parts form one living whole – the pakiaka provide the foundation, the wider plant creates protection and stability, and the rito remains at the centre, just as the seven Fundamental Principles work together to sustain our shared commitment to humanity.

When harakeke is harvested and then woven, the weaving of each strand represents the coming together of different values and principles. Neutrality cannot exist without impartiality, just as kotahitanga is strengthened through whanaungatanga.

Each strand in a woven piece relies on the others for strength, purpose, and balance, no single strand can stand alone. In the same way, Māori values and our Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are not isolated ideas but are interdependent and strengthened through their relationships with one another.



Māori Values (Mātauranga)

Fundamental Principles of The Red Cross

HERE FOR HUMANITY

He aha te mea nui o te ao?
He tangata, he tangata, he tangata

Weaving as a Metaphor

Each strand is unique, but when woven together with intention, respect and care, they form something strong, beautiful and enduring.

Tikanga in Action

The way we weave matters. With respect, intention and aroha, the principles and values are upheld in how we think, decide and act.

**Woven from our past,
strengthening our present,
protecting our future.**

Māori Values and
Red Cross Principles
– Woven together for humanity.

Te kōrero o te koutangata i te ao Māori

The story of Humanity in te ao Māori

In Māori culture, humans are deeply connected to the land and to the natural world. Kaitiakitanga grows out of this connection and expresses it in a modern context. Many of you would have heard reference to **Ranginui** and **Papatūānuku** and some of you may already know their story. In this section, you will learn about **te ao mārama** – the beginning of life – and how this story has influenced our identity.

This **pūrākau** grounds our global brand with Aotearoa New Zealand's cultural landscape, reminding us that our work is deeply human – rooted in life, care, and connection.

There are many different accounts of this story told by iwi across Aotearoa and throughout Polynesia. This version is an adaption of some of these accounts.

Ranginui

Sky Father

Papatuanuku

Earth Mother

te ao mārama

the natural world

pūrākau

story

The world began in nothingness and darkness, from that darkness came Ranginui and Papatūānuku, they had many sons who were powerful **Atua** representing aspects of nature living in a world of darkness.

Longing for space and light, the sons deliberated on how to change their world. All but **Tāwhirimātea** agreed that their parents must be separated.

Many of the sons tried and failed to separate their parents embrace, until **Tāne Mahuta** lay on his back and pushed upward with his legs, slowly forcing Ranginui and Papatūānuku apart. In doing so, he created Te Ao Mārama – the world of light.

The many sons of Ranginui and Papatūānuku were now free from the darkness and confines of their parents' long embrace. They moved across the earth, seas and skies, settling within their new domains and creating life.

Tāne embarked on a mission to create life and diversity in trees, plants, birds, animals, and insects, but still, something was missing.

Tāne began searching for a human female companion. His mother Papatūānuku revealed **Kurawaka**, the place where she kept her sacred earth.

Tāne travelled to Kurawaka and there with the red clay of his mothers body, Tāne began forming the body of the first human, a **wahine**, moulded in his own likeness. Once the body was formed, Tāne leaned over and pressed his nose against hers, breathing life though his nostrils. As she drew her first breath, she sneezed "**Tihei, mauri ora!**" – Behold, there is life!

The wahine was given the name **Hineahuone** (the woman formed from the earth). This is the birth of Humanity and life as we know it.

atua	God, deity
Tāne Mahuta	Deity of the forests and all forest creatures
Hineahuone	The woman formed from the earth
Tāwhirimātea	Deity of wind and storms
wahine	woman
Tihei, mauri ora!	sneeze of life, call to claim the right to speak

ARAMOANA

Aramoana means “pathway across the ocean”, a pattern of zigzags that speak to the great journeys of migration, guided by stars and deep ancestral knowledge.

Aramoana represents the **kaupapa** of navigating complex humanitarian challenges with purpose and clarity.

It speaks to being guided by core values, responding to need wherever it arises, and moving in unity across boundaries

NIHO TANIWHA

Niho Taniwha is a pattern made up of bold, jagged triangles representing the teeth of a taniwha, a powerful **kaitiaki** in many iwi traditions.

This form speaks to strength, guardianship, pursuit and perseverance. Niho Taniwha reflects the unwavering commitment to protect life and health, even in the harshest conditions.

It speaks to the strength required to stand beside people in times of crisis, and the enduring pursuit of relief, safety and dignity for all.

RAU KŪMARA

Rau Kūmara refers to the leaves of the kūmara plant, a vital crop in traditional Māori life and a symbol of both sustenance and care.

Its connection to **Rongo** (the atua of cultivated food and peace) brings with it themes of nourishment, strategic planning, and the importance of seasonal cycles.

Rau Kūmara represents the careful preparation and foresight needed in humanitarian response, as well as the deep care required to nurture communities long-term.

PĀTIKI

Pātiki is inspired by the flounder, a fish known for its adaptability and ability to thrive in diverse environments

This pattern symbolises abundance, resilience, and the ongoing provision for the community’s wellbeing.

Pātiki reflects our organisation’s flexible response to ever-changing humanitarian needs, ensuring help reaches those who require it most.



Please use the QR code to access the brand guidelines.

Tō tātou Tuakiri Ataata

Our Visual Identity

Rīpeka Whero Aotearoa is on a journey to better reflect the unique identity of Aotearoa, guided by Strategy 2030.

As part of this, the organisation has recognised the importance of incorporating **toi Māori** into its brand in a way that feels thoughtful and integrated with our Movement identity and culture.

The creative direction is anchored in the story of Hineahuone, whose story connects to the colour red and to the deep values of humanity and whakapapa. From this foundation, we explore the arts connected to women, such as weaving and the teachings of **Te Whare Pora**, to help shape a brand identity that is grounded, connected, and future-facing.

One blade of harakeke woven over another forms patterns that are traditionally diagonal and speak to whakapapa, place, and values. This helps create a link between the existing brand and Māori design traditions, supporting a look and feel that is authentic, intentional, and well integrated.

These patterns carry deep meaning and as such there are restrictions on their use. The Communications, Marketing and Philanthropy Directorate have put together brand guidelines that present the patterns in more detail, including how and when they should be used.

***Did you know – We have two Microsoft teams backgrounds.
The Pātiki and the Rau Kūmara.***

kaupapa	purpose
Rongo	the atua of cultivated food and peace
niho taniwha	taniwha teeth
pātiki	flounder
kaitiaki	guardian, caregiver, keeper
aramoana	pathway across the ocean
rau kūmara	kūmara plant leaves
toi Māori	Māori arts
te whare pora	house of weaving