Moana Eruera is a Maori woman (New Zealand indigenous) who has more than 20 years experience in the social and community work sector as a social work consultant, lecturer/educator, practitioner and supervisor. She has worked in a variety of practice contexts, including Government statutory positions as well as community and tribal (iwi) social service organisations. She is currently in private practice working with social service organisations in the northern rural region of New Zealand with some projects taking her nationally throughout the country.

She completed a Masters Degree research study which contributed to a developing evidence base of research for indigenous people by writing a framework for indigenous social work supervision.

She is currently leading the Amokura Family Violence Prevention Consortium ‘provider development and training strategies’ for Northland, New Zealand. This tribally (iwi) led initiative implements indigenous solutions to violence prevention. She is a strength based practice and resiliency national trainer and recently co-led an indigenous provider project which worked towards constructing a cultural family wellbeing assessment framework.

Her working career has been spent in the social services sector committed to issues of social justice, human rights and the development of Maori and indigenous people.
ABSTRACT

NEW ZEALAND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND RESILIENCE

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Indigenous peoples throughout the world have used strengths and resiliency to preserve the ongoing effects of colonization and as tools for sovereignty.

The ‘Tangata whenua’¹ of New Zealand, along side other indigenous and minority groups throughout the world, continue to progress the development of their own cultural frameworks and models of practice. More recently in New Zealand, particularly within the health and social services sectors, ‘tangata whenua’ have begun to examine resiliency research and practices which contribute to the body of knowledge in the area of ‘whanau ora’², and the cultural capacities and capabilities which assist families to build resiliency and protective factors and processes.

This presentation examines what has been learned from the theory and practice experiences of a ‘tangata whenua’ social work practitioner and trainer.

¹ A generic term for the indigenous peoples of New Zealand although different tribal terms are also used to differentiate between groups (Smith, 2003, Decolonizing Methodologies)
² A term used to describe “family wellbeing”