Title: The Impact of Scrapping Census on Māori Data Sovereignty and Governance (MDS/G).

Scrapping the Census raises risk for Māori Data Sovereignty in the form of loss of accuracy in measuring the Māori population. The Census has been more than just a count, it’s a chance for Māori to stand up and be fully seen. Full census is where Māori’s could tell the government, “who I am, my iwi, and this is how I identify”. Governmental datasets within the integrated data infrastructure were not created to reflect Māori identity, iwi affiliation, or **whakapapa,** they were for service use, not for social identity. From a MDS perspective, this is a clash with the principle of **Whakapapa.**

The principle of **Rangatiratanga** is also at risk, as scrapping the Census takes away Māori’s ability to define themselves and puts that power into government’s hand. The principle of **Manaakitangi** is broken**,** as Māori shares their data, but the government isn’t giving accurate and culturally adapted data back.

“How do we fix this? Strongly by making a better system together**.”** To get this right, Statistics NZ must fix Māori governance by co-designing census processes, by working in genuine partnership with Māori. Together we can create a Census future where Māori data is not just counted, but valued too.