



SUPPORT FUNDING AREA REVIEW

April 2022 | Prepared for Rātā Foundation

EMPOWERED TO THRIVE

By Research First

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Executive Summary

This review of Rātā Foundation's (Rātā) Support Funding Area looks at the Funding Area's theory of change and priorities and aims to provide Rātā with a report that:

- reviews the key national drivers and influences in the areas of relevance to the Support Funding Area, and identifies the key issues, needs, and trends facing the communities in Rātā's regions;
- identifies the populations that are at risk of negative life outcomes relevant to the Funding Area, and what works or may work to improve these outcomes;
- looks at Rātā's current relationships and future focus; and
- makes recommendations as to the direction of the Support Funding Area.

Through this review we find the current priorities and target populations still relevant, including issues of mental health and addiction, the unmet needs of those experiencing domestic and sexual violence, and supporting young and older people.

However, emerging issues related to the rising cost of living and the coronavirus pandemic (Covid), and longer-terms issues related to housing and the Digital Divide, are continuing to burden the most vulnerable. Continued inequality and rapid societal changes are putting pressure on New Zealand's social cohesion.

While the Support Funding Area priorities focus on funding organisations that meet immediate needs and build people's self-reliance and resilience, they do not address structural issues such as racism, poverty, and housing.

Although not covered by this report, Rātā Foundation addresses these issues in part through other Funding Areas. In particular, the Connect Funding area focusses on building communities and social inclusion, and the Learn Funding area is focused on giving people a strong foundation through education.



Recommendations

Current priorities

We recommend Rātā strengthens its work on its current priorities, targeting support to those most vulnerable and affected by widening and structural inequalities.

Kaupapa Māori

Rātā should increase its investment in Kaupapa Māori services to ensure equitable, accessible, and culturally appropriate access for Māori.

Culturally responsive services

Rātā should increase support to the delivery of culturally responsive services, including funding capacity building in the sector to increase accessibility for hard-to-reach communities.

Engagement

Rātā should continue to maintain and develop relationships with the sector to gain insights and an understanding of community issues and service needs.

Collaboration and strategic partnerships

Rātā Foundation should use its strategic position in the sector to broker connections and relationships between funders and non-profits.

Rātā should continue its approach to targeting more funding to partnerships to support system change to strategic initiatives to ensure these have the largest possible impact, for example working with those working with whānau at an early stage to secure generational change.

Digital inclusion

Rātā should proactively partner with organisations that are addressing digital inclusion.

Rātā should investigate funding the technological capacity of non-profits to assist their effectiveness and understand the impact of their services and to enable them to reach more people.

Sustainability

Rātā should invest in programmes that are sustainable over time and can survive changes in government or changes in government spending priorities.



Introduction

Rātā Foundation (Rātā) is the South Island's largest philanthropic funder. Its purpose is to invest in communities in Canterbury, Nelson, Marlborough, and the Chatham Islands to support positive intergenerational change.

This change is created by supporting people to be more involved in their local communities, supporting individuals and whānau/family during their life course and in their lifelong education journeys, supporting collaboration between not-for-profits, and supporting communities and organisations to be environmentally and socially sustainable.

Rātā does this through five key Funding Areas:

1. Learn,
2. Support,
3. Connect,
4. Participate, and
5. Sustain.

Rātā reviews these funding areas every three years to ensure that they are fit for purpose. In 2022 the Support Funding Area is to be reviewed. Rātā Foundation contracted Research First Ltd to conduct an evidence-informed review of the Support Funding Area.

This review provides an assessment of the issues, drivers, and trends facing the communities of the Rātā funding regions to determine the priority issues and the issues faced by those delivering in the sector.

The Support Funding Area has a vital role in the region. In this report we will examine significant issues within the purview of the Support Funding Area, assessing changes in existing areas of need and the emergence of new ones, and making recommendations for Rātā Foundation to implement¹.

¹ An outline of how this review was completed is provided in Appendix A of this report.



Support Funding Area

Rātā's theory of change

This report is focussed on the Support Funding Area. Rātā's theory of change for this funding area is described as follows:

We want individuals, families and whānau to thrive so they can participate positively in the community. At times, people need support to overcome challenges and build resilience, and for some people long term support is needed.

We do this through our four key priorities for funding:

- ensuring people get the right support for their needs when they need it;
- supporting positive youth development for young people/rangatahi;
- supporting older people/kaumatua to live full and active lives; and
- supporting the provision of services to people with mental health or addiction challenges.

The changing context

During the time that research for this report was being undertaken, world events have continued to impact on priority populations.

While the priority areas were all critically important prior to the coronavirus pandemic, the asymmetric impacts of the pandemic have magnified their importance. With younger and older groups among those most affected by the pandemic (due to the closure of schools and heightened vulnerability to the adverse effects of the virus respectively), a significant mental health fallout in the wake of lockdowns, and the acceleration of the housing crisis and the cost of living, the need for these services has never been greater. Indeed, the pandemic period has likely seen an exacerbation of inequality, pushing more people to the brink of poverty and reducing social cohesion in the community.

Added to this, the Russian war in the Ukraine, and its effect on energy prices and the flow-on effect of inflation, suggests that there will be no reprieve for those vulnerable to such economic shocks.



Alignment of Rātā’s Support Funding Area with key government agencies

The aims of Rātā Foundation’s Support Funding Area focus on three populations of need:

- younger people;
- older people; and
- those struggling with mental health or addiction challenges.

In addition to the three distinct areas, there is a wider population goal aiming to ensure individuals can get the right support for their needs when they need it.

The summaries below state the key direction government agencies are taking in relation to the populations above.

Supporting positive development² for young people/rangatahi

New Zealand’s government has a number of initiatives to support positive development for young people, with the two most prominent being the Ministry of Youth Development’s 2020-2022 Youth Plan, and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet’s Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy.

New Zealand’s Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy³

- The 2019 strategy set out by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Strategic priorities are to reduce child poverty and mitigate its impacts; to better support children and young people of interest to Oranga Tamariki and address family and sexual violence; and to better support children and young people with greater needs, with an initial focus on learning support and wellbeing.

Ministry of Youth Development, Youth Plan: 2020-2022⁴

- This strategy document was released by the Ministry of Youth Development in response to the pandemic, outlining the impact of the pandemic on young people and establishing Māori, Pacific, LGBT or rainbow, and disabled 17-24 year olds as priority groups.
- The document outlines a series of “actions” to help young people, ranging from closing the employment gap for disabled young adults, to amplifying the voices of young adults emerging from the care system.

² Youth development approach - MYD

³ Child and Youth Wellbeing (childyouthwellbeing.govt.nz)

⁴ [youth-plan-2020-2022-turning-voice-into-action-rebuilding-and-recovering.pdf](#) (myd.govt.nz)



Supporting older people/kaumatua to live full and active lives

Ageing represents a significant policy issue across advanced economies and New Zealand is no different.

Older individuals are the group in society most vulnerable to issues of social isolation and loneliness, while also being the most likely to be digitally excluded. While younger groups are able to pivot their social engagements, and their day-to-day activities from banking to interacting with government services, online, digitally excluded older people are likely to find themselves increasingly isolated.

As the issue of ageing becomes more widespread, the government is largely targeting measures designed to maintain health deeper into old age in order to lessen the collective burden felt as the population aged 65 and above swells.

Healthy Ageing Strategy

- Ministry of Health strategy published in 2016.
- Aims centred around the prevention of need through the establishment of healthy behaviours today, allowing individuals to live well with long-term health conditions, improving rehabilitation and recovery following acute episodes, providing better support for individuals with complex needs, and providing respectful end-of-life care.

Better Later Life: He Oranga Kaumatua 2019 to 2034

- Office for Seniors strategy published in 2019 with an updated action plan released in 2021.
- Builds on Healthy Ageing Strategy, but has a more holistic approach to the experience of ageing, focussing on valuing people as they age, keeping them safe, recognising diversity, taking a whole of life and whanau-centred approach to ageing, and by creating a sense of collective responsibility to plan and act for later life.

Supporting the provision of services to people with mental health challenges including people with addictions

He Ara Oranga: Report of the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction

- Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction report published in 2018. Forty recommendations were made by the inquiry with 38 either accepted, accepted in principle, or further consideration agreed to.
- Report prompted by growth of concerns about the experiences of individuals with mental health and addiction challenges; concludes that government and the health system alone cannot solve mental health and addiction issues, but rather a holistic approach at national,



regional, and local scales is required to combat mental health and addiction, and to improve the experiences of those struggling.

Repeal and Replace the Mental Health Act 1992

- Following He Ara Oranga, it was recognised that the Mental Health Act has not kept pace with the shift toward a recovery and wellbeing approach to care, and has never been comprehensively reviewed.
- Since 2019, the government has set about reforming the legislation, with specific focuses on embedding Te Tiriti principles and addressing Māori needs, ensuring the most appropriate tools are available for individuals to make decisions about their care and treatment, and defining why, when, and how compulsory mental health treatment might be appropriate.

Alignment with Rātā’s goal of ensuring individuals can get the right support for their needs when they need it

- Getting the right support at the right time to meet an individual’s needs or the needs of families/whānau is about ensuring that referrals are made to the correct provider in a timely manner when a need is identified. For this to be achieved, these providers need to receive sufficient funding and need to collaborate and cooperate fully to put the child, person, or family at the centre of the response.
- The Government has asked the Productivity Commission to investigate the dynamics and drivers of persistent disadvantage and to make recommendations to help break or mitigate the cycle of disadvantage within people’s lifetimes and across generations⁵. Feeding into this A Fair Chance for All inquiry is the debate around joined up social service initiatives and looking at practical measures for collaboration. In her paper on joined-up social services, Fry (2022) acknowledges the many barriers and hurdles that will need to be overcome for this to work in practice, but sees “identifying better ways to develop, support, assess and learn from collaborative approaches” as a key priority for the Productivity Commission’s A Fair Chance for All inquiry.

⁵ <https://www.productivity.govt.nz/inquiries/a-fair-chance-for-all/>



What are the theories of change in this area?

Not all stakeholders interviewed for this research were aware of the theory of change⁶ at the heart of Rātā's Support Funding Area.

They noted the transition within government agencies from a traditional approach of goal setting and impact measurement to a more aspirational model that rethinks “what good looks like” or “what success looks like.” One interviewee pointed out that government processes are already designed to focus on measurables and impact assessments; therefore, their view is that the aspirational model fits well in public policy. Some interviewees within funder organisations believe the adoption of theory of change approaches will help to instill greater business acumen within, and a more consistent approach across, the non-profit sector.

Some stakeholders talked about the importance of showing how ethnic and cultural models of change can be as valid as Eurocentric theories of change. Here some stakeholders were looking to Rātā to help develop these models, and to promote their more widespread use.

When applicant interviewees were asked about how their organisation's activities lead to the impact they are aiming to make, they focused on the tactics required to survive in the short term (a perspective that some noted has been exacerbated by the pandemic); ensuring members of the communities they serve have roofs over their heads, and on providing advocacy and support, health and well-being programmes, and education programmes aimed at lifting their communities out of poverty and deprivation through teaching and developing growth mindsets and independence. However, their work using culturally responsive and sustaining strengths-based theories, philosophies, and approaches to underpin all the programmes and services delivered by these organisations reveals much about the theory of change models they are working with.

⁶ The Center for Theory of Change (2021) describes the methodology as a process that uses an Outcomes Framework to fill the gap between programme or change initiative goals and the path to achieving these desired objectives.



Social sector issues, drivers, and trends

Inequalities in society

Since the early 1990s, New Zealand has had levels of inequality at rates above the OECD average⁷, with these inequalities leading to entrenched negative outcomes for the young, the elderly, women, and ethnic minorities⁸. Interviewees across the board believed that these groups in particular need protection from the lasting, knock-on impacts of inequality as the status quo has left them inherently less able to challenge existing structures of power.

"There are growing inequities within the community that spread things even further apart for the haves and have nots. So that's something I don't think funding will just solve. But the longer-term relationships that organisations and funders have within a community, that's where I think there's some real potential for growth. So it's not that a one-off one-year 10K investment is the way to go. That's a 20-year commitment to a particular community with quite a bit of funding behind it and some really lofty goals of more systemic change, as opposed to tweaks."

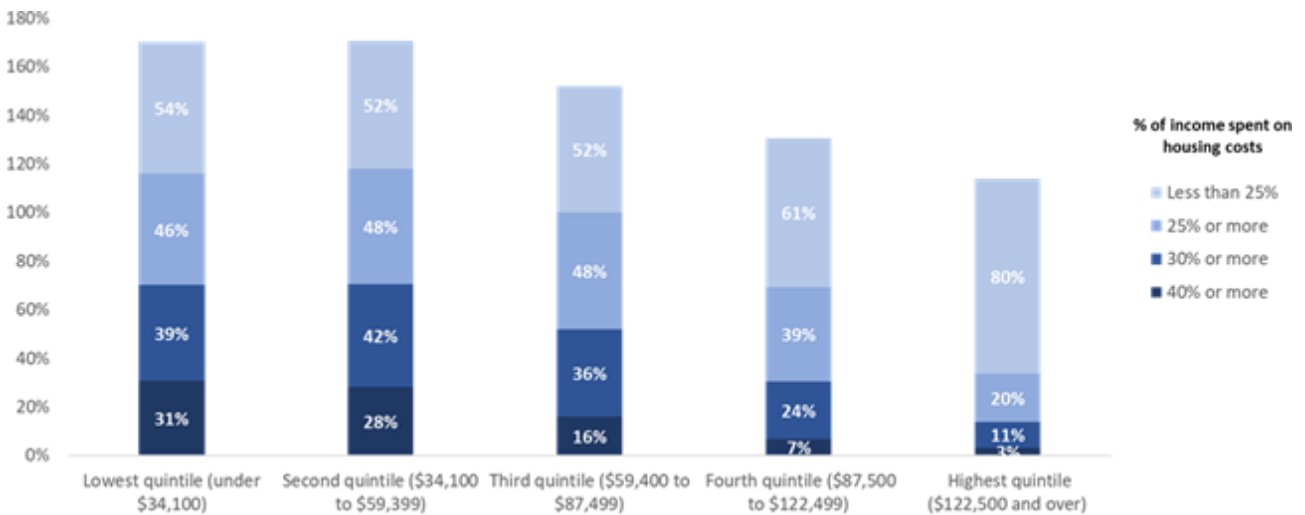
This problem is not limited to New Zealand, with the financialisation of the housing sector in particular leading to an economically extractive context in which an ever-greater proportion of less wealthy households' incomes is spent on housing costs. For the year ending June 2020, 17 percent of households spent 40 percent or more of their total household income on housing costs. However, in the lowest and second lowest income quintile, 31 percent and 28 percent of households respectively spend over 40 percent of their income on housing.

⁷ <https://socialreport.msd.govt.nz/economic-standard-of-living/income-inequality.html> From the late 1980s through to the mid-1990s, income inequality in New Zealand increased significantly. Since then the Gini coefficient – a measure of income inequality based on household incomes – has remained relatively stable (albeit at levels above the OECD average).

⁸ Research on New Zealand shows that a failure to address equity and equality issues will have negative long term health, social, financial, educational, and well-being outcomes that will prevent certain groups from fully participating in society (Casswell, Huakau, Howden-Chapman, & Perry, 2011; Hobbs et al., 2019; Rashbrooke, 2013; Robertson, 2020).



Figure 1: Housing costs to disposable income ratios by household income quintiles



Source: Stats NZ, 2021

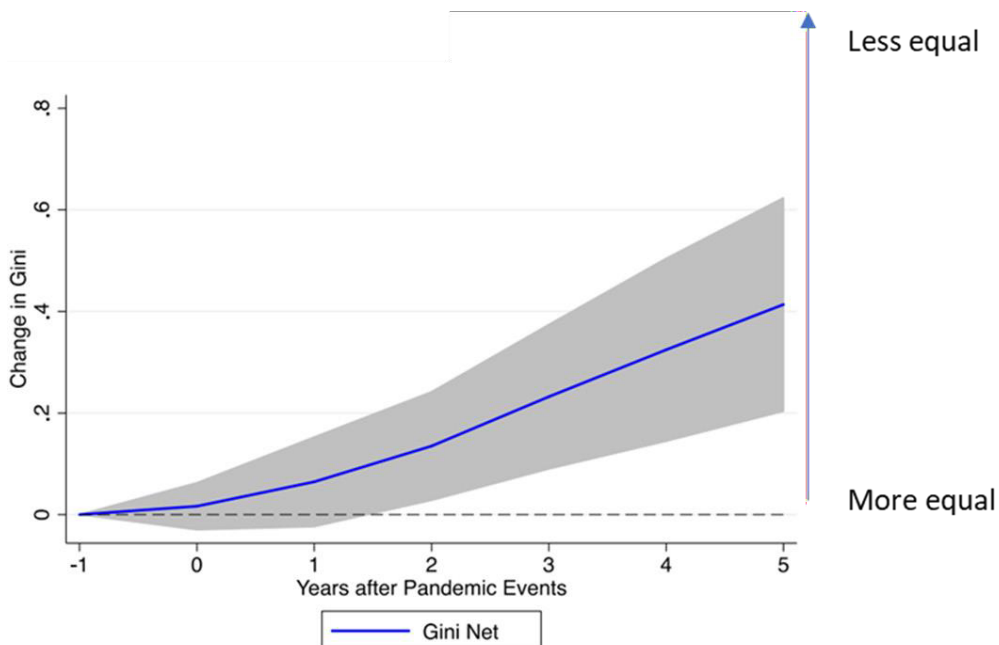
This context is not restricted to housing, with low-income households representing greater risk to businesses in search of stable, predictable profit margins; consumers with low or unpredictable cash flow in their day-to-day lives pay premiums – on short-term contracts, for example – to offset this risk. In New Zealand the situation is further exacerbated by the fact that a lot of the wealth in land and housing was gained through the appropriation of land from Māori, contributing to persistent and unprecedented levels of economic inequality for Māori.

As noted above, the coronavirus pandemic has significant potential to exacerbate these inequalities, with historical precedents explored by the International Monetary Fund showing elevated inequality⁹ for years following pandemic events.

⁹ <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WP/Issues/2021/05/01/Will-COVID-19-Affect-Inequality-Evidence-from-Past-Pandemics-50286>



Figure 2: Impact of pandemics on net GINI



Source: *Will COVID-19 Have Long-Lasting Effects on Inequality? IMF, 2021*

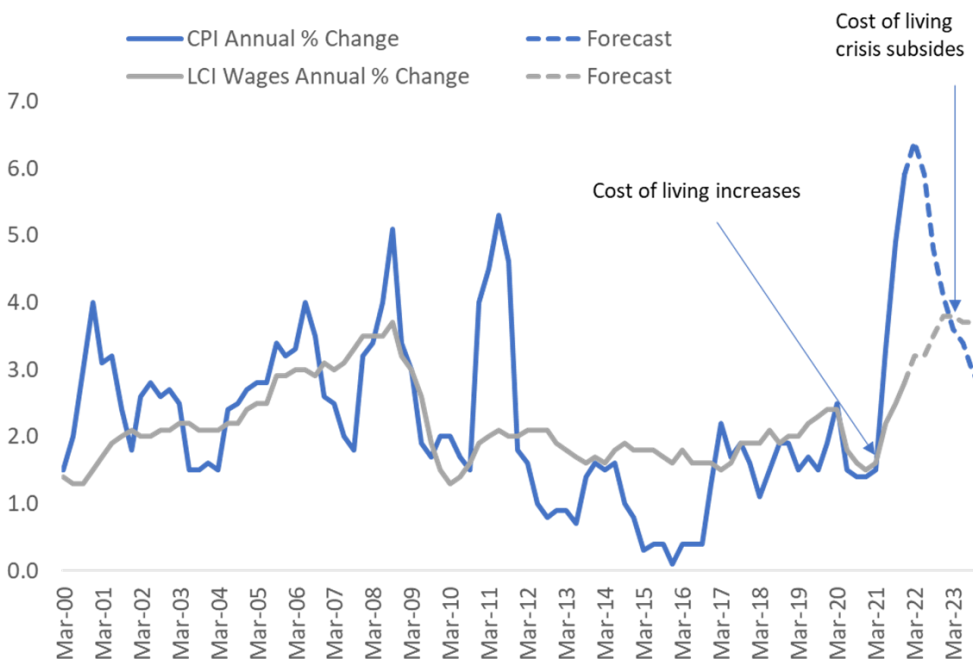
While the IMF's research is based on regionalised pandemics such as SARS or Ebola, the experience of the pandemic in New Zealand as well as other advanced economies hit harder by the pandemic have differed significantly on economic boundaries; wealthy, office-based workers have been able to quickly and relatively harmlessly shift to remote working as case numbers have risen, while individuals in manual and consumer-facing jobs, such as retail, have been disproportionately reliant on wage subsidisation.

Young et al. (2020) and Deitrick et al. (2020) posit that non-profit organisations are often on the frontline of any crisis, working with the government to sustain the community and improve the quality of life. The Covid-19 pandemic is no different, leading to increased demand for community services and unprecedented pressure on non-profits' human and financial resources. At the same time, however, social distancing, vaccine requirements, and other measures have hindered the operations of several non-profits. Non-profits have had to do more with either fewer, or badly compromised, resources. To respond to these challenges, non-profits have had to shift their operations online and find new ways to collaborate with communities, allowing them to work with both the vaccinated and unvaccinated, solutions which can leave older individuals digitally excluded from services. While vaccine passes have been relaxed and mandatory vaccination orders in place only for selected industries, the vaccination and/or vulnerability to Covid status of individuals continues to create service delivery issues for community organisations, such as how to access unvaccinated service users and whether to mix vaccinated and unvaccinated service users that visit their facilities.

The rising cost of living

Factors that did not emerge strongly in interviews, but are too important to ignore in the context of supporting communities, are the growing inflation on the cost of living and the energy crisis.

Figure 3: Annual changes in wages and CPI, with forecasts



Source: ANZ 2022

Over the last decade, the relationship between change in wages and changes in prices (measured by the CPI or Consumer Price Index) has been a positive one; in most years, growth in wages has been higher than the growth in prices. In these years, consumers' cash goes further.

However, as house prices¹⁰ and energy costs have soared¹¹ the cost of living has grown drastically year-on-year without a commensurate rise in incomes. This is not unprecedented, with similar spikes in the cost of living throughout the 2000s, but economic forecasts suggest that this will be a significant problem for the next 12 months at least.

¹⁰ <https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/money/2022/02/increased-cost-of-living-inching-towards-crisis-as-kiwis-pay-hundreds-more-for-basic-items-this-year.html>

¹¹ <https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/money/2022/01/will-skyrocketing-fuel-prices-ever-return-to-normal.html>



This is a vast economic shift, and one that will affect all consumers relatively equally; from December 2020 to December 2021, inflation experienced by all households increased by 5.2 percent ranging from 4.9 percent in the lowest-expenditure group to 5.4 percent in the highest-expenditure group. While renters have experienced a significant rise in prices, the cost of servicing debts like mortgages has significantly affected wealthier, home-owning households.

“We’re seeing house prices skyrocketing and inflation will start to go up. As interest rates rise, for those on the lower end of the income scale or with jobs in the gig economy that don’t have any security, they will become more vulnerable.”

While high-expenditure households have perhaps felt a greater increase in cost of living in absolute terms, compared to low-expenditure households, their increased savings and reduced housing, food, and petrol costs as a proportion of disposable income leaves them better insulated against short-term price shocks than low-income households. For vulnerable households living paycheck to paycheck, cost of living increases such as those forecast for the next 12 months are likely to have significant implications.

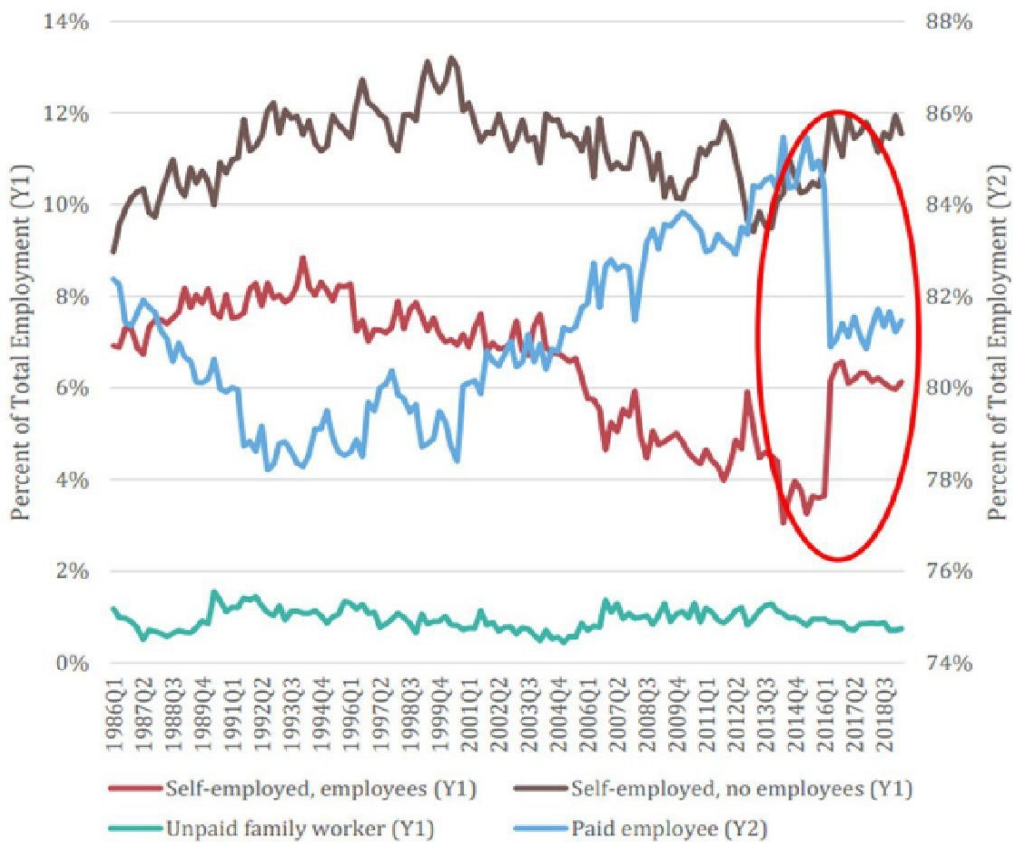
Precarious employment

The quotation from the interview at the end of the prior section references being at the lower end of the income scale or holding a job in the gig economy as factors that leave people vulnerable to short-term shocks in the cost of living (Lepanjuuri, K. et. al., 2018).

The advent of the “gig economy” – a term often associated with the glamorised idea of picking up jobs as and when you need them, fitting around your social schedule – has served to make employment increasingly precarious, shifting business risks such as sick pay, or the cost of downtime, onto a vast network of “contractors” hired on a task-by-task basis. The best example of this is the shift in employment status of taxi drivers in advanced economies, who have gone from being paid by a firm for the obligation to their time, to being paid only for the kilometres they drive with passengers in their car with passengers and drivers matched by a tech platform like Lyft or Uber.



Figure 4: New Zealand employment types using HLFS



Source: *Measuring the 'gig' economy: challenges and option*, Motu, 2019

This is a rapidly emerging, but hard to measure segment of society, which makes understanding the needs associated with them difficult to gauge. Motu, a Wellington-based think tank, uses the number of people who identify as being self-employed without employees as a proxy for gig work, with data from New Zealand's Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) illustrating a sharp increase in the proportion of self-employed people with no employees and a corresponding decline in the number of people who identify as paid employees. This shift took place largely between 2014 and 2016, in each case reversing 20-year trends in employment, with both factors settling at "new normal" levels in the years since.



Housing

In the current environment of rising prices, the interviews show housing equity as a dominant issue impeding the delivery of social and support services. On balance, the belief is that New Zealand has a long way to go in terms of housing equity outcomes, particularly for Iwi and Māori.

The increase in house prices relative to earnings cannot be underestimated here; from 1993 to 2021, the ratio of median house price to average income has increased from 3 to 1 to 7 to 1. As both investors and owner-occupiers have scrambled for housing assets, marginalised groups and those earning low salaries are left to rent, paying increased housing costs that adversely affect disposable incomes.

Figure 5: Median house price to average income and years saving for a 20% deposit



Source: RBNZ, REINZ, Stats NZ, ANZ Research, 2021



Interviewees spoke of the fact that a lack of permanent housing among some whānau has meant that these families or individuals are constantly relocating, which presents a significant challenge in terms of ensuring continuity of the relationship and access to the service on the part of the community organisations. This lack of stability has the potential knock-on effect of worsening existing problems within that family, creating additional challenges that affect the ability of that person or family to get the help they need. The interviewees highlighted that in their work they find that poor housing quality is a notable problem, particularly among the populations at risk within their communities.

A complicating factor here from the perspective of non-profit organisations is that issues of housing equity often require community-led responses to be effective and importantly, equitable. Often this means relinquishing control over the response, and instead providing communities with the resources and the platform from which to create change themselves. More specifically, a Eurocentric, one-size-fits-all approach to solving housing equity will not work in the New Zealand context.

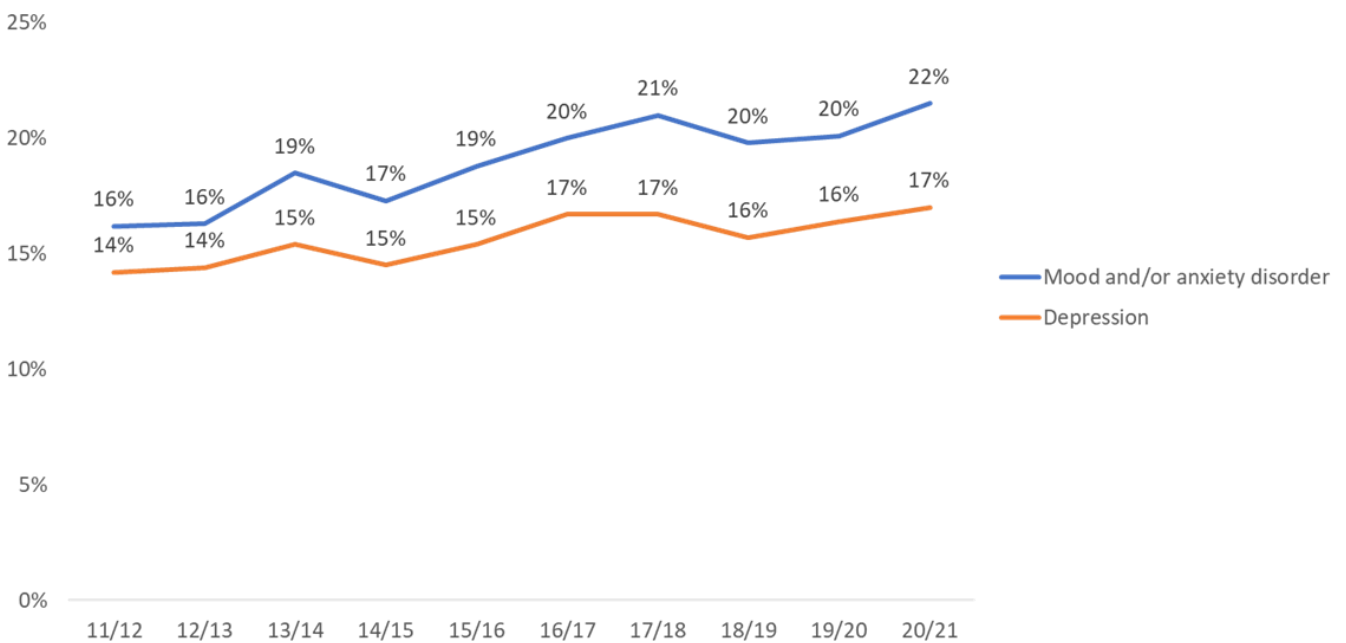
Supporting the notion of non-profit as facilitator, collaborator, or enabler in the housing space, another interviewee felt that the current situation is reflective of a broader problem across New Zealand, where addressing issues to do with the provision of housing and affordability is something that can be addressed only at the national policy level. From this perspective, non-profit organisations' resources are best used in a supportive role, for example providing financial support or skills to exploratory efforts by housing trusts or other programmes aimed at understanding how to access better and more affordable housing in the areas in which they operate. Regarding housing equity for Māori, the Rātā Foundation could contribute to programmes that support innovative and culturally appropriate solutions.



Mental health and addiction

Poor mental health and addiction have grown significantly as issues within communities in New Zealand over the last decade, with the percentage of adults experiencing mood or anxiety disorders increasing from 16 percent to 22 percent from 2011/12 to 2020/21 and the proportion experiencing depression increasing from 14 percent to 17 percent over the same period.

Figure 6: Percent of adults with ‘mood and/or anxiety disorder’ or ‘depression’, New Zealand, 2011/12 to 2020/21



Source: Ministry for Health 2021

Society’s attitudes toward mental health have developed markedly over this period, and it is possible that rather than an absolute increase in the proportion of individuals suffering with mental illness, there has been an increase in individuals coming forward and seeking help from health services and not-for-profits.

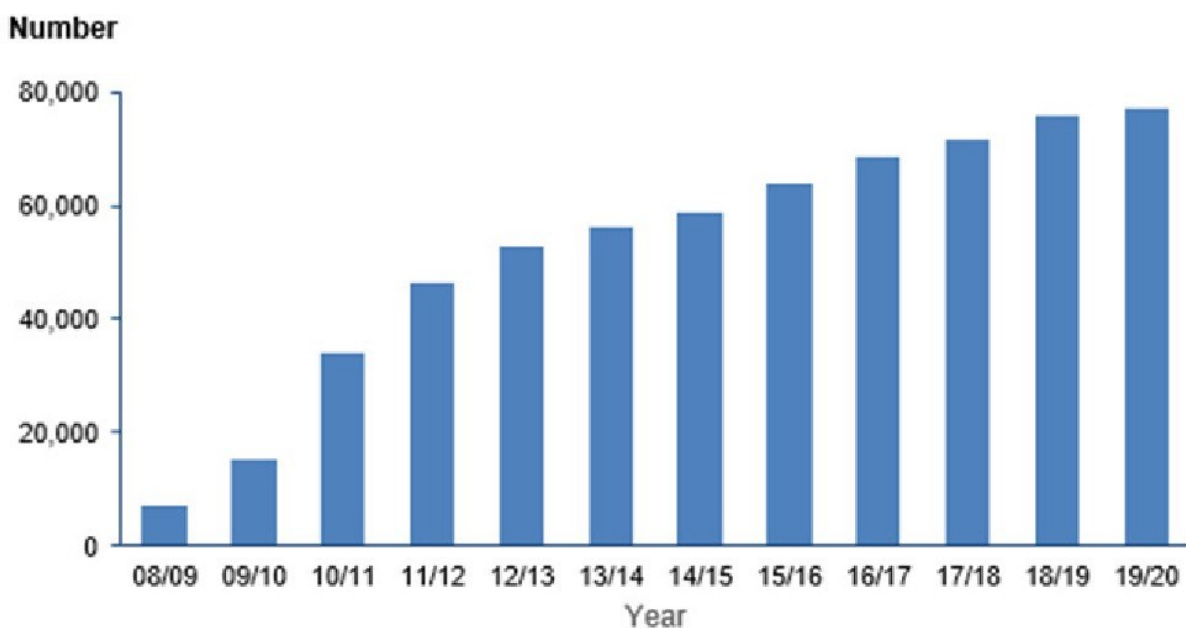
“We try to destigmatise talking about emotional problems or mental health problems so that people reach out when they need help and don’t feel like they’re weak for doing it, but I don’t think we’re going to alleviate the need for responsive mental health services as well.”



This development is often seen as positive, destigmatising emotional problems or problems with mental health. However, one interview reflected that while society might be becoming more receptive to individuals speaking about their mental health, it would be too simplistic to assume that better dialogue surrounding mental health will eradicate its acute presentation to mental health services.

Whether incidence is growing, or whether more people are coming forward for help, the result is a vast increase in demand experienced by NGOs providing services to those with mental health or addiction problems. Between 09/10 and 19/20, the number of clients seen by NGOs regarding mental health or addiction has increased from below 20,000 to almost 80,000 per year.

Figure 7: Number of clients seen by NGOs for mental health and addiction, 2008/09 to 2019/20



Source: Ministry of Health, Service Use 2019/20 tables

Complicating the landscape of growing demand for mental health services is the labyrinthine infrastructure of mental health and addiction services, a context that sees individuals struggling with multiple issues bounced from organisation to organisation; a process that can stop people accessing the help that they need. One interviewee describes the process in relation to an individual with both mental health and addiction problems, with organisations wanting one issue – often the one that they are not involved with – resolved before they will offer their services.



Q: Are there any groups in particular that you worry about in terms of ability to access the support they need?

A: “One would be people who perhaps are quite affected by their mental health or addiction situation... There are also a number of people who have coexisting problems, mental health and addiction. If you are looking for help with addiction, what may happen to you – and it’s quite frequent – is that you will be told ‘deal with your mental health issues before we can admit you to an addiction service’, then you go to the mental health service and they say, ‘deal with your addiction issues before we can admit you to a mental health service’.”

In addition to these entrenched issues within mental health and addiction, the pandemic has also contributed to a significant increase in the presentation of particular mental health conditions, most notably eating disorders. The number of New Zealanders seeking help for eating disorders doubled in 2020¹², with academic studies finding a direct correlation between the experience of the pandemic and increased incidence¹³. This is a global phenomenon, rather than one related to gaps in service provision in New Zealand, with elevated incidence of eating disorders likely to continue while the conditions of the pandemic remain.

Family and sexual violence

While none of the expert interviews revolved specifically around issues of gender and sexuality, gender – and in particular violence toward women and family violence – represents a significant area of spending within the Support Funding Area.

It is possible that the problem – particularly regarding sexual violence – may be far larger than realised. One interviewee estimates that only 6-10 percent of sexual violence is reported to the police, leaving a significant number of victims who are unknown to law enforcement, and potentially to NGOs.

“So, in the area of violence, and sexual violence in particular, we’ve got something like 6-10 percent of sexual violence reported to the police. This leaves a hell of a lot of people that no one knows about, and so there will be a whole lot of vulnerability here. But it’s not necessarily the people’s inability to access services. It’s because we culturally have to shift society’s rhetoric about sexual violence and change the norm about people disbelieving people and making it difficult for them to report.”

Interviewees were aware of measures that could help to solve the problem of both sexual violence and its underreporting, but they are big problems that will need coordinated and targeted

¹² <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/300169261/covid19-number-of-eating-disorder-patients-soaring-since-lockdown-experts-say>

¹³ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34454600/>



responses, for example the Family Violence Collaborative¹⁴ and Integrated Safety Response¹⁵ in Christchurch. Widespread cultural change is required to put the conversation around sexual violence “on the table” in a similar way to the way in which family violence has become part of the national conversation. This requires campaigning and the stimulation of societal debates that increase awareness and literacy around the topic.

“For key drivers for sexual violence to change – and this is a conversation that goes on quite regularly – it’s kind of a team of five million approach. We absolutely have to change the story. We have to see this as a solvable problem and do so much better with people understanding the issue and thereby responding more appropriately. A game changer would be cultural change, like we got with the Its Not Okay campaign, which led to a lot more open dialogue on that topic; they certainly got that topic on the table a lot more than sexual violence is on the table.”

There are, however, identifiable and practical changes that can be made to increase the likelihood of individuals coming forward to report violence, and that do not need to take quite as long as widespread cultural change. At present, it is felt that the way in which the legal system deals with sexual violence – “the lumps” to quote one interviewee – make it very difficult for women to come forward.

“A large reason why people don’t come forward and don’t want to report it because of lumps in the legal system just really make it very difficult.”

There is significant funding within the Support Funding Area for family violence and violence against women, but when it comes to sexual violence in particular, it is possible that there is vast unmet demand for support, and as a result, a lack of resources to both create cultural and practical change within society and the legislative infrastructure respectively.

The Justice Ministry’s annual New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey (NZCVS) shows that LGB+ adults are more than twice as likely to experience intimate partner violence (IPV) and/or sexual violence compared to the NZ average (29 percent) based on the NZCVS (Ministry of Justice, 2021).

¹⁴ An innovative response to family violence after the Canterbury earthquake events: Canterbury Family Violence Collaboration’s achievements, successes, and challenges (massey.ac.nz)

¹⁵ Integrated Safety Response: Evaluation of years 2 & 3 released | New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse (nzfvc.org.nz)



Technology and digital divides

Both the literature review and interviews show that the non-profit sector is currently lagging on adoption of innovative digital technologies compared to other sectors, despite the significant gains in capacity available through their implementation. This includes technology for organisational purposes to streamline business processes, provide internal systems for monitoring impact, and encourage collaborative working, such as cloud-based data storage applications that allows individuals in an organisation to collaborate and share data in real time off-site as well as at an organisation's premises, digital accounting services to help non-profits track regulatory and legal compliance, and data security and disaster recovery applications. It also includes technology to promote or raise awareness of organisations, such as digital marketing tools, or technology that be used as teaching or knowledge sharing tools, such as mobile apps¹⁶.

This is not a problem specific to Rātā's stakeholders, or to the context of New Zealand. Laporte, Kelly, and Agbabiaka (2018) identify that non-profits are missing out on significant operational efficiency, mission impact, and competitiveness by not adopting or making greater user of newer technologies. Budgetary factors, a lack of openness to innovation and change, and a lack of skills to implement these technologies are listed as common barriers within the non-profit sector, but overcoming these barriers could lead to significant efficiencies and capacity-expanding outcomes.

An important issue highlighted by one interviewee, however, is the difference across organisations in the way that they have implemented funding application services.

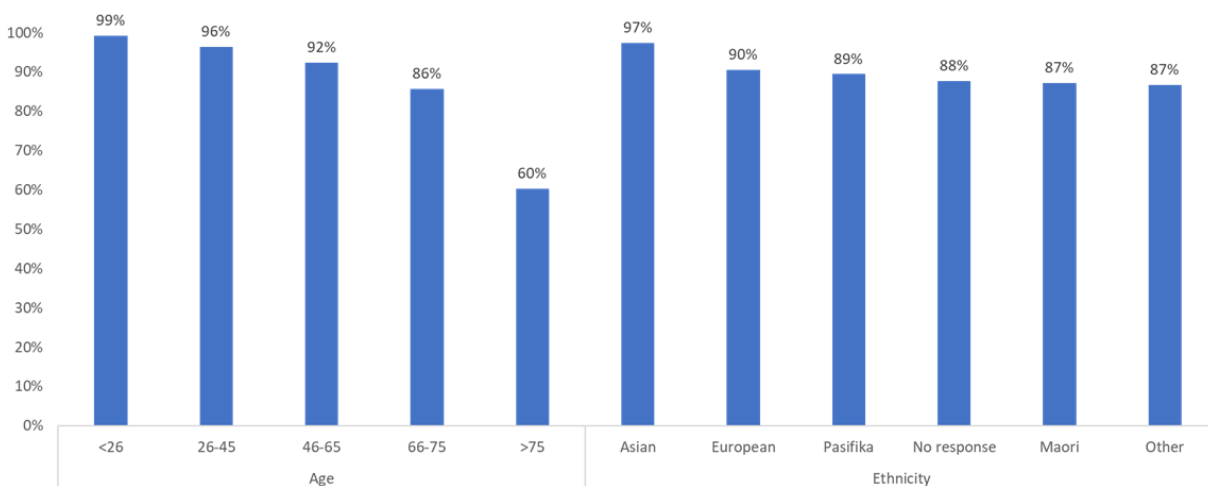
“In the current state, we have multiple applications for multiple organisations potentially wanting different things, or the same things, in different formats or on different platforms. Some charities have a particular system, Rātā has one system, city council has one. It's horrendous. There's a lot of admin time spent duplicating information across multiple platforms because of a lack of connection between funders in this space. If they could be realigned locally or nationally, to be a central point of application, that would be incredible in terms of bringing efficiency”

The interviewee felt that in submitting funding applications, they often need to provide the same information and supporting documentation. Having a centralised, interoperable digital platform for stakeholders where they can store information applicable to all funding applications and then reuse this information to apply for funding from a number of different organisations via the platform would result in a much more efficient system.

¹⁶ <https://www.infoxchange.org/au/digital-technology-not-for-profit-sector>

Issues of technological access or sophistication are not limited to non-profits with significant digital divides present within the general public, whether due to a lack of digital skills, lack of connectivity through fixed or mobile internet, or the cost of digital devices. These divides are particularly pronounced across age, and while internet access is almost ubiquitous among under 65s, over 65s and over 75s in particular face exclusion on the basis of both digital access and digital sophistication.

Figure 8: Internet access (%), by age and ethnicity



Source: Digital.gov.nz, 2017

These divides – both in individuals’ access to technology and their capacity to use it confidently – are at the heart of conversations around digital equity.

The Digital Equity Coalition Aotearoa (DECA)¹⁷, a community group focused on improving access to the digital world for New Zealanders, defines digital equity as “when everyone can access and effectively use digital technologies so as to participate in our society, democracy and economy.” This equity is achieved through digital inclusion, which the Department of Internal Affairs (2019, p. 7) defines as “all of us have what we need to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from the digital world.” According to Health Informatics New Zealand (2021), data from government surveys show that one in five New Zealanders faces digital inclusion issues, and census data shows that 11 percent of households, which includes those living in low-income areas and social housing, rural areas, the elderly, those with disabilities, and Māori and Pacific communities, do not have any internet access. The effects of this lack of inclusion are evident from the stakeholder interviews.

¹⁷ <https://www.digitalequity.nz/>



“Digital technology is a real challenge and the upskilling of people to use digital technology is a challenge... it’s another equity issue for people who may not want to use digital or can’t. For older people or people who do live in remote areas, it becomes really challenging to access basic services.”

Most interviewees highlighted how digital equity or inclusion issues deter optimal delivery of community services, leaving the digitally excluded even more vulnerable. Specific problems include digital inequity in education, where the children of whānau without devices or internet access have been left out or left behind at school during a lockdown scenario because they are unable to attend the virtual classes. In addition, in households without a reliable internet connection or that have limited devices, some family members end up spending less time with support services staff so that internet time is able to be preserved for their kids to go to school online. Another problem is that deprived households will often have a single device to share across the whole family, making it challenging for service providers to find the right time to contact or discuss the person needing help without other family members being present.

“There might be only one device of one type in a family. So they’re sharing it. So we have to be mindful that we need to think about this and some of the needs of our whānau and that we check in when that might be best for them. The good thing about that, although it’s challenging, is that we might engage with other members of their family that we never would have had the opportunity to involve.”

Inequities in the quality of internet access are viewed as hampering the quality of social/community service delivery and widening the digital divide. For example, internet connections in some areas are not entirely dependable and continually drop out and reconnect during virtual conversations, impacting the quality of conversations.

Finally, within the context of the Covid-19 lockdowns, the interviewees found from experience that a lack of digital connectivity to the world during such periods has implications for mental health. Specifically, people who live alone and are digitally excluded are more prone to mental health issues due to the isolation and lack of human contact.

Compounding these issues – and driven, in part, by the pandemic – is the larger problem of the digital shift of services by both organisations and government, with essential commercial and public services shifting to online platforms. As such, the digitally excluded cohort of society is set to grow, and to be increasingly left behind as the world increasingly shifts online.



Social cohesion

New Zealand has seen considerable social change in recent decades, with increasing diversity and rapid emerging technologies. It is important to better understand the dynamics underpinning social cohesion. The importance of social cohesion is well recognised as being critical to our collective and individual well-being (Gluckman, P., et. al., 2021). In the recent report from Koi Tū, the Centre for Informed Futures, Gluckman et. al., state:

“ This is because humans evolved as social animals living in increasingly complex collectives, which came to depend on institutions to sustain their social well-being and cohesion. Social cohesion provides the basic construct of highly functioning and complex societies that work for the benefit of their citizens.”(p.2)

They also note:

“ For New Zealand, we must recognise the unique challenges of the country’s bicultural foundations, the manifest inequalities that have deepened over recent decades, and the realities of an increasingly diverse and multicultural society. This includes serious inequalities in education and consequent employment opportunities, as well as unequal access to healthcare. These challenges already threaten to undermine our social cohesion and collective well-being and must be addressed openly and conscientiously.”(p.3)

New Zealand’s largely unnoticed social cohesion has been made overt by key events over the last three years – the Terrorist Attack of 15 March 2019 and the Covid-19 pandemic. The Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Terrorist Attack on Christchurch Mosques on 15 March 2019 (2020) note social cohesion has direct benefits for people’s lives and increased productivity. While having a society that is cohesive, inclusive, and embraces diversity is a good in itself, efforts to build social cohesion, inclusion, and diversity can contribute to preventing or countering extremism.

Among the many recommendations of the report pertinent to government agencies involved in counterterrorism, the report identifies the work needed to be done on social inclusion and cohesion in Aotearoa New Zealand. The Ministry of Social Development is taking the lead engaging with communities, civil society, local government, and the private sector on the development of a social cohesion strategic framework and a monitoring and evaluation regime.

In addition, the report notes the impacts of the response and recovery to Covid-19 and see the opportunity to build and enhance our social infrastructure and community resilience. The writers believe there is a strong case for further cross-government actions to improve social cohesion and how we embrace diversity.



However, for one interviewee this represents a significant concern as with limited connections there is the potential for issues to increase. How we emerge from the pandemic, and the extent to which these connections are re-formed, will be crucial for cohesion.

“Where we see limited connection, we see worse outcomes for people; so I really worry about that in the Covid age. I’m quite worried about that as we move forward, especially as we come out in the new traffic light system – just how you can continue to engage socially to keep up good levels of cohesion which obviously then helps mental health and all of the follow-on effects from there.”

Gluckman, et. al., also point out that the response to Covid-19 and the pathways laid out to recovery have highlighted and exacerbated existing inequalities, leaving many individuals, communities, and nations struggling to cope.

Reduction in volunteerism

The availability of data on rates of volunteerism is quite poor, but there is a sense – both in the available literature and within our interview sample – that volunteering rates are in decline.

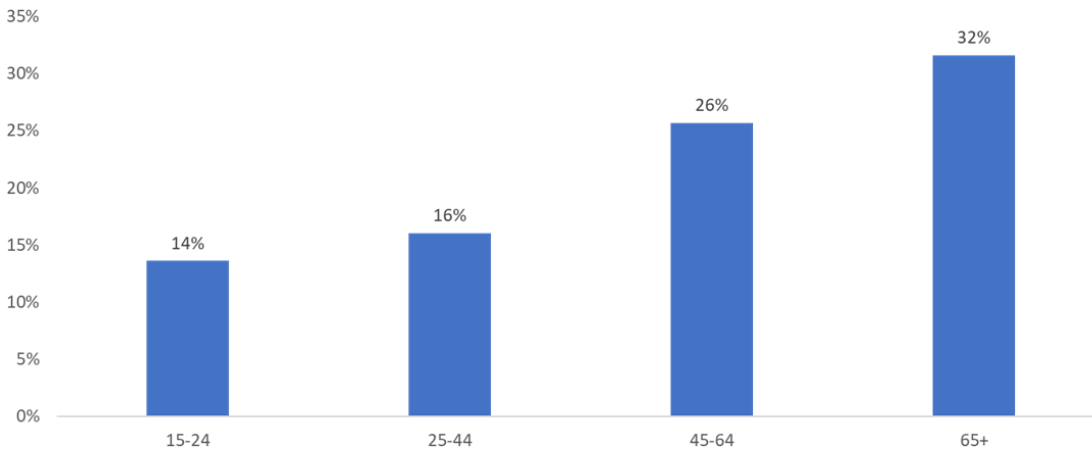
Research collated by the Red Cross¹⁸ points to a decline in the number of volunteer hours in New Zealand due to increased demands on people’s time. This is driven by an increase in the prevalence of households in which both parents work, while also performing childcare duties. Increasing responsibility for looking after elderly relatives is a problem inherent to the ageing population and one which will only place greater demands on the time of the working-age population in future.

One driver of a reduction in volunteering rates is the ageing of the volunteer workforce, an issue described both in the literature and by interviewees. Over 65s are more than twice as likely to volunteer in New Zealand as under 44s, and while there is clearly a role played by work here – over 65s are overwhelmingly likely to be retired, with more free time – there is also a shift in attitudes across generations. It is believed that younger people are less likely to volunteer than their predecessors when they were the same age.

¹⁸ NZRC_ReimaginingVolunteering_ResearchSummary.pdf (redcross.org.nz)



Figure 9: Volunteer rates in New Zealand by age



Source: Stats NZ, 2018

The ageing of the workforce is an incredibly widely felt concern within non-profits; 35.8 percent of respondents in Volunteering New Zealand’s 2020 State of Volunteering Report (Go, 2020) identify the ageing of the volunteer workforce as the primary concern facing their organisation. While this reality has fed into the idea that today’s young people don’t care about their communities and don’t want to do good, one interviewee feels that it is instead a matter of harnessing the willingness to give that exists within young people.

“I see younger people wanting to volunteer for a cause, or a one-off thing to which they’re willing to contribute, but they don’t want to be involved in something for three years. I think the nature of volunteerism is that it’s still there, how do we engage with that resource in a meaningful way for them, but it also gives the ability for those organisations to access that resource and use it wisely?”

This is an attitude shared by the authors of Volunteering New Zealand’s 2020 report, which describes a trend in which there is a “move from long-term, regular volunteering towards episodic and project-based volunteering”. Non-profit organisations are unlikely to be able to change the attitudes of hundreds of thousands of young people across New Zealand and have them conform to existing volunteering models; instead, non-profit organisations must establish how best to harness the energy present within this audience.



A stretched sector

The issues explored thus far contribute to a growing sense that the non-profit sector is becoming increasingly stretched. There are emerging areas of need regarding housing and the cost of living, society is becoming increasingly divided, damaging social cohesion and the informal support networks that come with strong communities, and volunteering is declining, all of which are likely to change the way in which non-profits are able to offer services.

Interviewees stated retaining talented and impactful staff working in the non-profit sector is a challenge for organisations, and staff often move to the government sector for opportunities to earn higher incomes.

At the same time as being stretched, the sector is also experiencing a significant squeeze on funding. Most of the interviewed applicants view the current funding environment as challenging due to Covid-related impacts, the changing priorities of funders, and competing or overlapping interests among operators in their respective sectors. In New Zealand, the government is considered a primary source of funding for community groups and initiatives. However, with the ongoing Covid pandemic, applicants feel less funding is available for community initiatives as the government directs more attention and funding towards controlling the pandemic and its effects. Applicants on multi-year funding arrangements or working on a project-specific basis feel these effects to a lesser extent.

From a stakeholder viewpoint, although government agencies have support to fund core needs, they also face challenges securing enough funding, leaving the government agencies with less money to accommodate non-profits and community groups. To overcome this challenge, government agencies have adopted new funding models; for example, government agencies are now exploring and submitting collective or partnered budget bids for additional funding for initiatives with a shared interest. Stakeholders are keen to see community groups move away from a singular view of government as the primary source of funding and embrace new funding models, which not only reduces the burden on government resources, but also encourages the non-profits to have diverse funding streams.

Greater emphasis on collaboration

A common response to the increasingly stretched nature of the non-profit sector is greater emphasis on collaboration. Collaboration allows for the sector to use its strengths and skills more efficiently as a collective. When information and expertise is shared, organisations can work within their strengths, benefit from the knowledge and skills present within other organisations, and avoid duplication of services.



A good example of a model that works in the South Island is the funding group within Marlborough District Council meeting every quarter with community organisations to discuss priorities, making sure everyone is aligned and thereby avoiding any unintentional duplication of effort. This ensures that public funds go as far as possible in helping community organisations deliver on their missions. Moreover, the philanthropic effects in the District have the buy-in and support of local politicians.

“I would use the example of Marlborough [District Council] engaging with other philanthropic and council funding organisations to understand where we all fit together and leverage our funds further. I would look at working with those in the community to identify them, to see what they see as the key agencies and resources, and make sure that they’re adequately funded to provide their ongoing level of service.”



Populations at risk

The literature and the interviews reveal a variety of groups that are considered to be at risk of being underserved within their communities and need the support of philanthropic organisations. These vulnerable groups are discussed elsewhere in this report, and may intersect:

- Māori and Pasifika communities;
- young people;
- isolated older people;
- victims of family or sexual violence including those in the LGBTIQ+ community;
- people who are underserved because of limited access to, and trust in, service providers, or a lack of culturally appropriate services;
- those excluded by technologies or underserved because of distance; and
- those subject to the exacerbating effect of the Covid response and recovery on inequalities.

Not discussed in other areas of the report, but raised through the interviews are

- **refugees and migrants:** This group often finds it difficult to access basic services like healthcare, decent housing, and connecting with their new society, which negatively impacts the resettlement process. For example, Marlborough has been identified as one of six new refugee centres in New Zealand, and that means they have been investing resources to support these communities and give them a start.
- **first-time parents from immigrant and low-income communities:** This group often has limited access to birthing education and support after giving birth. This has been exacerbated in immigrant communities by the closure of borders due to the Covid pandemic, which has meant that spouses or partners cannot enter the country, leaving a new mother to care for the new-born child alone in a culturally different society (The Helen Clark Foundation, 2022).



Rātā relationships

Relationship with Rātā

The interviews yielded some insights into their opinions of their current relationship with the Rātā Foundation and their perceptions of the Foundation and what it does. Overall, the sentiment among interviewees of the Rātā Foundation is positive, with most interviewees volunteering their opinions of how interactions with Rātā have been over time. In summary, participants value the:

- Foundation's efforts towards the establishment and maintenance of mutually beneficial relationships. Specifically, stakeholders were impressed with how Rātā's relationship managers take the time to get to know their clients and their needs. They also appreciated the advice they received from their relationship manager, and they enjoyed the face-to-face interactions with them.
- provision of multi-year funding by Rātā. Among the interviewees who are applicants and receive funding from Rātā Foundation, there is an immense appreciation of the commitment that Rātā Foundation makes to providing multi-year funding. The multi-year funding provides community organisations with the certainty and security needed for robust future planning for providing services and programmes to the community. More importantly, in a dynamic operating environment, having a secure source of funding gives these community organisations the ability and flexibility to become more innovative in their approach to achieving their aspirations.
- communication done by the organisation. In addition to having relationship managers that are good ambassadors, the interviewees showed an appreciation for the level and quality of interactions and communications with and from Rātā Foundation. This is an important aspect, as clear and effective communication significantly aids the development delivery of programmes and initiatives that meet the goals of both the Rātā Foundation and community organisations.
- ability to draw from and learn from the experience and knowledge available within the Rātā Foundation and its staff. Interviewees feel Rātā Foundation has a good understanding of the non-profit sector and has strategic intelligence that helps community organisations extend their reach and effectiveness. The sharing of knowledge also helps community organisations think and see things differently, allowing them to focus on innovation.



Direction of the Support Funding Area

The literature review together with the interviews examine how Rātā can improve how it undertakes its funding to meet the aim of the Funding Area's Theory of Change:

“At times, people need support to overcome challenges, build self-reliance and resilience, and for some people long term support is needed. We recognise that when people are well supported, they have a better opportunity to participate positively in the community”.

Through this review we find the current priorities and target populations still relevant, including issues of mental health and addiction, the unmet needs of those experiencing domestic and sexual violence, and supporting young and older people.

However, emerging issues related to the rising cost of living and Covid, and longer terms issues related to housing and the Digital Divide, are continuing to burden the most vulnerable. Continued inequality and rapid societal changes are putting pressure on New Zealand's social cohesion.

While the Support Funding Area priorities focus on funding organisations that meet immediate needs and build people's self-reliance and resilience, they do not address structural issues such as racism, poverty, and housing.

With this in mind, the literature scan and interviews provide insights as to how Rātā can work in ways to maximise its funding in the Support Funding Area, while taking a broader holistic approach to the determinants of need.

Recommendations

Support Funding Area priorities

Current priorities continue to be relevant. These are:

- ensuring people in need get the right support for their needs when they need it;
- supporting positive youth development for young people/rangatahi;
- supporting older people/kaumatua to live full and active lives; and
- supporting the provision of services to people with mental health challenges or addictions.

We recommend Rātā strengthens its work on its current priorities, targeting support to those most vulnerable and affected by widening and structural inequalities.



While not a priority under the Support Funding Area, we note Rātā's priorities under their Connect Funding Area are focussed on social cohesion and inclusion, which is a growing issue for New Zealand.

Kaupapa Māori

Rātā should strengthen and increase its investment in Kaupapa Māori services to ensure equitable, accessible, and culturally appropriate access for Māori.

Culturally responsive services

Rātā should increase to support the delivery of culturally responsive services, including funding capacity building in the sector to increase accessibility for hard-to-reach communities.

Engagement

Rātā should continue to maintain and develop relationships with the sector to gain insights and an understanding of community issues and service needs.

This information is crucial to Rātā's funding decisions in this complex sector. It will also help Rātā identify non-profits that are complementing each other to maximise reach.

Collaboration and strategic partnerships

Rātā Foundation should use its strategic position in the sector to broker connections and relationships between funders and non-profits.

Rātā should continue its approach of targeting more funding to partnerships to support system change to strategic initiatives to ensure these have the largest possible impact.

Rātā should proactively partner with organisations that are addressing digital inclusion, and those working with whānau at an early stage to secure generational change.

Rātā should investigate funding the technological capacity of non-profits to assist their effectiveness and understand the impact of their services and to enable them to reach more people.

Sustainability

Invest in programmes that are sustainable over time and can survive changes in government or changes in government spending priorities.



Value addition

Beyond looking at investment decisions, interviewees were also asked to share their views on other ways in which Rātā Foundation can add value to its relationship with community organisations and how it can support promising practices and emerging models in the sector.

Recommendations

- If possible, try to make the application form more consistent with other funders to reduce the time spent on administrative tasks.
- Become more of a facilitator and influencer among non-profits looking for guidance from sector leaders.
- Invest in maintaining the relationship strategy that Rātā Foundation has already established with their clients.



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Appendix A: Review method

This evidence-based review of the Rātā Foundation’s Support Funding stream was compiled using a combination of a literature review and a series of key stakeholder interviews.

In-depth stakeholder interviews were chosen because they are a mature and proven way of engaging with busy professionals. These interviews were 30-60 minutes long, semi-structured in design, and recorded and transcribed using the AI platform Otter.

The analysis reported here was underpinned by a technique known as ‘triangulation’. This is a common technique for establishing the veracity of data gathered in qualitative research projects, and involves the use of multiple sources of information, perspectives, and kinds of data. This mix enables the researcher to ‘see’ the research question from a number of different perspectives and, therefore, to have much more confidence that the findings are accurate.

That said, it is important to note that small qualitative research projects like this one use a selection and not a sampling design. That is, they are based on the deliberate selection of participants who typify (rather than represent) the population of interest.

Research First are experts at qualitative research design and have a thorough QA process to ensure the interview guide works as predicted. This involves both cognitive testing and piloting. Cognitive testing is a process by which research instruments are pretested with members of the survey population to understand how they interpret the questions and instructions and understand the meaning of questions.

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