

Office of the Minister for Social Development and Employment
Chair, Cabinet

Support for communities and community providers significantly impacted by flooding

Proposal

- 1 I seek Cabinet agreement to the following supports, using existing underspends, for non-government organisations (NGOs) and communities significantly impacted by recent flooding in Auckland and other regions, including:
 - 1.1 Community support fund (\$2 million)
 - 1.2 Community providers fund (\$4 million)
 - 1.3 Food fund (\$1 million)
 - 1.4 Expanding the scope of Community Connectors and discretionary support (\$4 million).
 - 1.5 Addressing the needs of disabled people (\$0.5 million)

Relation to Government priorities

- 2 This proposal aligns with a 2020 Labour party Manifesto commitment to ensure Aotearoa New Zealand's emergency management systems are geared towards an inclusive, community-led response to natural disasters.

Executive Summary

- 3 The January and February floods caused significant disruption to communities in the Upper North Island and are expected to be the biggest non-earthquake insurance event in New Zealand's history. While unprecedented, we do not yet know the full extent of the impact on communities. The flooding will also compound the impact of COVID-19 on the regions.
- 4 Community organisations mobilised rapidly to provide flood relief support to whānau and continue to do so. While community organisations are working tirelessly to respond to these welfare impacts, many of the volunteers and workers have been personally impacted themselves by the flooding. The risk of burnout following three years of responding to COVID-19 in the region is high. Regional public service officials are reporting that community groups and providers have exhausted funding available to respond quickly to community need.
- 5 While there are a number of existing mechanisms available to provide support to groups or households in emergencies, key gaps in support for community

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groups have been identified. To address these, I recommend Cabinet agreement to the following support package:

- 5.1 **Community support fund:** Up to \$2 million for community groups affected by recent floods.
 - 5.2 **Community providers response and wellbeing:** Up to \$4 million for community providers continuing to provide support to communities and whānau impacted by recent floods.
 - 5.3 **Food fund:** Up to \$1 million to reset food stock levels among community food providers, including food banks.
 - 5.4 **Expanding the scope of Community Connectors and discretionary support for flood impacted households:** I propose Cabinet agree to expand Connectors' remit to support people in Auckland and other regions who have been impacted by recent flooding, in addition to those impacted by COVID-19. I also seek agreement to additional \$4 million in discretionary funding available for Connectors to deliver this support.
 - 5.5 **Addressing the needs of disabled people:** \$0.5 million will be ringfenced to address the welfare needs of the disabled community. The focus of this fund will require direct engagement with disabled communities, and may include funding to meet the needs of disabled people or providers who have been affected by recent floods.
- 6 I propose this community support package leverage existing interagency infrastructure set up for the Care in the Community welfare response to COVID-19.
 - 7 The Ministry of Social Development and Employment (MSD) will work in coordination with other agencies to allocate this funding, including with Te Puni Kōkiri, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Whaikaha, the Department of Internal Affairs and the Ministry for Ethnic Communities. Allocation decisions will be guided by the groups most affected. This will include ensuring that funds are delivered to Māori and Pacific communities and providers (including Whānau Ora), the disabled community, and ethnic community groups.
 - 8 I seek Cabinet agreement to use up to \$11.5 million for this package of a forecasted underspend from the Care in Community welfare response. This support package is time limited until 30 June 2023.

Background

Situation in the Upper North Island

- 9 The January and February floods caused significant disruption to communities in the Upper North Island and are expected to be the biggest non-earthquake insurance event in New Zealand's history. While unprecedented, we do not

yet know the full extent of the impact on communities. The flooding will compound the impact of COVID-19 on the regions.

- 10 Community providers and public service officials based in the Upper North Island have highlighted the following welfare impacts:
 - 10.1 Access to essential goods and shelter: households who have been unable to return to their homes needing food, clothing, shelter, bedding, and medication. As at 8 February 2023, \$12.9 million of Civil Defence payments have been paid out by the Ministry of Social Development for Auckland, North Waikato and Waitomo District, supporting a total of 24,930 people. The top three reasons for seeking these payments were for food, clothing and bedding, in this order.
 - 10.2 Financial hardship: people unable to meet household costs due to absences from work, increased transport costs getting to work (due to relocating away from work or losing their vehicle). Residents of areas exposed to one-in-100-year floods of this are more likely to be low-income. These same residents may also be unable to access insurance due to rising premiums, or insurance availability.
 - 10.3 School attendance: Families are facing additional challenges getting their children back to school (e.g. because they have had to relocate far away from school, mental distress, school costs).
 - 10.4 Psychosocial wellbeing: Increase in anxiety and other mental health disorders due to the significant disruption to life and uncertainty about the future. There are also reports of increased loneliness and isolation with people either too worried to leave their homes or having to live away from their normal support networks.
 - 10.5 Difficulty navigating supports and services available: households fatigued from the clean-up and emergency response are struggling to navigate the different assessments required to access different supports as well as work with insurance companies to get what they are entitled to.
 - 10.6 Housing: The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) is supporting emergency response efforts through its Temporary Accommodation Service (TAS), Building Emergency Management (BEM) team, Residential Advisory Service (RAS), and MBIE Emergency Management, Business Continuity team (EMBC).
- 11 Māori represent a significant proportion of the residents in the Auckland suburbs most impacted by the flooding, and therefore Māori wellbeing has been disproportionately impacted. In addition to the welfare impacts highlighted above, Whānau Ora Commissioning agencies and Māori community providers have reported challenges finding temporary accommodation for large whānau displaced by the floods and difficulties for kuia and kaumātua to access communication.

Current responses

- 12 Community organisations mobilised rapidly to provide flood relief support to whānau and continue to do so. For example, as at 9 February 2023, providers with contracts with Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency Te Pou Matakana have supported over 5000 whānau, and Pasifika Futures providers have provided 3489 support packages.
- 13 While community organisations are working tirelessly to respond to these welfare impacts, many of the volunteers and workers have been personally impacted themselves by the flooding. The risk of burnout following three years of responding to COVID-19 in the region is high. Regional public service officials are reporting that community groups and providers have exhausted funding available to respond quickly to community need. As inflation was already impacting operating costs (rent, insurance, food, transport, petrol), many providers may now be in more precarious financial positions.
- 14 In terms of government support to individuals and families, there are a number of existing mechanisms available to provide support to groups or households in emergencies (full list provided in Appendix A). These include Civil Defence Emergency Management payments, MSD Hardship Assistance payments, Rural Assistance payments and through the Enhanced Taskforce Green programme. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) also covers reimbursement of welfare costs incurred by local authorities in caring for directly affected people in an emergency, essential infrastructure and recovery repairs and contributions to Local Authority Disaster Relief Funds (usually Mayoral Relief Funds).
- 15 From analysing these forms of assistance, four key gaps in support for community groups have been identified:
 - 15.1 **Community group funding:** community organisations reach individuals, families and whānau that often would not otherwise come to government for support and have been critical to the flooding response. They can also provide immediate relief for families, for example through food parcels, donated goods etc. However, the immediate responses initiated by community providers have severely compromised organisations operational baselines. Additionally, some providers are reporting damage to the physical spaces that they operate out of. While this is likely to be covered by insurance, they may need interim support in order to continue operating. There is, however, limited funding options to support community groups' response to events such as the recent flooding.
 - 15.2 **Community Connector scope:** 500 Care in Community Connectors across New Zealand were set up in response to COVID. These have discretion to give out cash payments. At the moment any payments are bound by Cabinet policy, which currently restricts these to COVID-related. This is a workforce and funding mechanism that can be activated if their scope is broadened beyond COVID-19. The

Connectors are currently supporting the flood response in the short-term out of MSD baseline funding.

- 15.3 **Support for disabled people:** Engagement undertaken with disabled people, their representative organisations, Disability Support Service (DSS) providers and other NGOs identified a need to support disabled people whose essential regular transport is disrupted by the flooding event. To support disabled people, Whaikaha has made available financial support to provide taxi/uber/other public transport travel assistance though its baseline. This funding is being distributed through Whaikaha's existing provider network to 16 February 2023 inclusive. Whaikaha does not have the capacity or funding to manage applications directly from the community, and as such the assistance is not being advertised publicly.
- 15.4 **Support for the volunteer sector:** The volunteer sector is very concerned about volunteer wellbeing issues, seeing instances of volunteer burnout, with COVID-19 exacerbating pressures. Māori and Pacific peoples in community facing employment will often continue to do unpaid community work alongside their job, leading to burnout and poor wellbeing outcomes. Two key funds for the volunteers are regularly over-subscribed,¹ and engagement with the sector has identified a need to provide better support to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the sector.

I consider further supports are required for community groups and providers

- 16 The Government has previously provided bespoke support packages to community groups in response to events such as the Christchurch earthquake and the Whakaari/White Island eruption.
- 17 Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle is also predicted to cause adverse weather events in the Upper and Eastern North Island in the coming days, potentially compounding on damage already caused by flooding, and increasing demand for community groups and providers.
- 18 Without adequate support, community groups will struggle to continue the crucial work they play in supporting communities and reducing hardship, negatively impacting their wellbeing in the long term.
- 19 Therefore, I recommend an \$11.5 million package for community support. All funds allocated under this proposal are time limited until 30 June 2023 and are limited to supporting communities and providers impacted by recent flooding in Auckland and other impacted regions.
- 20 This package has been developed in discussion with national and regional officials leveraging insights from community providers and reflects needs they have identified. I note a package of emergency supports for businesses

¹ As outlined in Appendix A these funds are the Community and Volunteering Capability Fund and Community Organisation Grants Scheme, which have both been oversubscribed for the past three years.

significantly impacted by flooding in the Auckland region has also recently been announced. These proposals are in line with that package, and from insights and structures developed during the Care in the Community COVID welfare response.

- 21 The Ministry of Social Development and Employment (MSD) will work in coordination with other agencies to allocate this funding, including with Te Puni Kōkiri, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Whaikaha, the Department of Internal Affairs and the Ministry for Ethnic Communities. Allocation decisions will be guided by the groups most affected. This will include ensuring that funds are delivered to Māori and Pacific communities and providers (including Whānau Ora), the disabled community, and ethnic community groups.
- 22 The package is comprised of five components:

Community support fund

- 23 We know that some of the most vulnerable people in Aotearoa are unlikely to access services but rather rely on their community for support. This component will support community groups (such as marae, churches or youth groups) to continue providing holistic support to their most vulnerable whānau.
- 24 We saw the success of this type of fund during the COVID response, where MSD funded community led solutions through the COVID-19 Community Awareness and Preparedness Grant Fund.
- 25 This fund will focus on supporting the capability of local community groups, who are not current MSD providers, to continue supporting communities and whānau in Auckland and other regions impacted by recent flooding. Funding will allow community groups to support the wellbeing of their whānau, support them to replace infrastructure needed to maintain operations and flood recovery.
- 26 MSD regions will engage with community groups impacted by floods seeking support for community led initiatives that met identified needs.
- 27 Up to \$2 million will be available for community groups. The amount that community groups can receive under the fund will be capped at \$3,500.

Community providers response and wellbeing fund

- 28 This funding will provide additional resources for providers supporting affected communities in need. Providers are considered those who already have government contracts in the social sector, including those funded by MSD as well as Whaikaha and Te Puni Kōkiri (Whānau Ora). Providers have mobilised quickly to provide flood relief support however this new emergency exacerbates existing pressure on the sector which (especially in Auckland) has not yet recovered from COVID-19 response.
- 29 Funding will allow providers to support the wellbeing of their staff and volunteers, support them to address immediate infrastructure needed to

maintain operations and flood recovery and help meet the increase in demand due to the flood response. This is not intended to replace or cover insurance related matters, but enable them to continue to keep operating in the flood response.

- 30 Funding will be targeted to providers in the most affected communities including Māori, Pacific, ethnic communities and disability communities and will consider cross-agency investment to minimise duplication. This will also include specific targeting toward providers that are working with children and youth, including phone lines/ text services to ensure there is capacity amongst providers. Funding will also be able to be used to increase staff resourcing for providers in the short term to increase capability in the flood response.
- 31 The amount that providers can receive under the fund will be capped at \$7,000 and will be a total fund of up to \$4 million.

Food fund

- 32 The floods have affected some community food providers stock, increased food demand and reduced the amount of donated food available to foodbanks. This component will allow community food providers to refill their stock to meet current demand. This will be up to \$1 million and will be distributed using existing mechanisms, for example the New Zealand Food Network, in order to facilitate bulk purchasing of essential items.

Expanding the scope of Community Connectors and discretionary support

- 33 Community Connectors were established in June 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and are a key part of the welfare component of the Care in the Community welfare response to COVID-19. Employed by non-government organisations, Connectors act as a trusted interface for individuals, families and whānau to access community and government supports and are well placed to respond to local need. They have access to discretionary funding that allows them to meet immediate wellbeing priorities where all other options have been exhausted, or the immediacy of the need prevents other options from being fully explored. They have the potential to reach those who face societal and structural barriers to access support from the government.
- 34 As discussed, where Community Connectors have capacity, they have already begun to support the response to the Auckland floods. Further support will be needed however, to enable Connectors to continue this support and use their discretionary funding.
- 35 A Cabinet decision is required to enable Connectors to further provide short term support to individuals, families and whānau in Auckland and other regions impacted by recent flooding. This is as their current remit is limited to, as caseloads of self-isolating households allow, providing short-term social support to those impacted by COVID-19 and connecting households to longer-term resilience support, as part of their mandate under the Care in the Community welfare response [SWC-22-MIN-0064 refers].

- 36 I propose to formally widen the Community Connector scope to be able to support people in Auckland and other regions impacted by recent flooding, in addition to their current remit of supporting people impacted by COVID-19. This will not increase any FTE cost as this is funded until 30 June 2023. The change of scope will also be time limited until 30 June 2023.
- 37 I also seek agreement to additional discretionary funding available for Connectors to deliver this support. This funding is capped at up to \$4 million and will ensure they have sufficient funding to support flood affected households.
- 38 MSD will provide updated service guidelines, which I will regularly review, to Community Connector providers, enabling Connectors to use up to \$1000 per household impacted by flooding in Auckland and impacted regions. For households impacted by COVID-19, the guidelines will remain at \$300 per household.

Addressing the needs of disabled people

- 39 Disabled people experience additional barriers and disruptions to their wellbeing and accessibility in an emergency response. MSD and Whaikaha will work directly with disabled people to understand their needs and how to support the disabled community as part of the flood response. This fund will provide up to \$0.5 million to assist with identified costs. This could include helping with additional challenges disabled people are experiencing as part of the flood recovery. It could also include meeting additional costs disability providers are facing due to the flooding (e.g. from having to pay staff who are unable to attend work, and employing additional staff to cover them, and providing additional care to disabled people impacted).

Implementation

- 40 I propose this community support package be delivered leveraging existing infrastructure set up for the Care in the Community welfare response to COVID-19 and in coordination with other agencies flood relief investment. Officials will work alongside officials from Te Puni Kōkiri, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Whaikaha, the Department of Internal Affairs, Health and the Ministry for Ethnic Communities through an existing interagency group, used for the Social Cohesion Communities Fund, to distribute community funding to communities and providers, reduce duplication and ensure there is no-wrong doors for communities to access funding. This will include utilising a range of mechanisms to allocate funding (e.g. Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies).
- 41 This approach builds on the previous delivery approach of the Care in the Community welfare response and targets community organisations from Māori, Pacific, disabled, youth, seniors, ethnic communities and volunteers. It will enable coordination across the community sector and ensure the right support is targeted to communities that are most in need. Monitoring and accountability will rely on existing reporting and oversight mechanisms updated to account for this flood relief package.

- 42 If this package is agreed, MSD will work with regional teams, Regional Public Service Commissioners and other welfare agencies to ensure implementation and delivery as soon as possible. As we are leveraging off existing infrastructure which has delivered similar programmes for COVID-19 responses, this is the most efficient approach. In delivering this package, MSD will emphasise the time-limited nature of the support.
- 43 MSD will report to me regularly on the rollout of this funding, including general distribution of funds to key population groups and regions, and any ongoing unmet needs that develop.

Financial Implications

- 44 The Care in Community Welfare Response has been allocated \$407.9 million over two years of which \$189.60 million sits in the Communities Multi Category Appropriation (MCA) in 2022/23.

s.9(2)(f)(iv)



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- 47 In order to fund \$11.5 million in flood supports as outlined in para 12 it is recommended that \$5.813 million be transferred from forecast CIC underspend in Community Support and Advice to Community Response to Adverse Events.

Legislative Implications

- 48 There are no legislative implications from the proposals in this paper.

Impact Analysis

Regulatory Impact Statement

49 Regulatory impact statement requirements do not apply to the proposals in the paper.

Climate Implications of Policy Assessment

50 There are no climate impacts arising from the proposals in the paper.

Population Implications

Population group	Impact
Māori communities	<p>Māori communities may be more likely to have older people, kaumātua and kuia, who may not have easy access to communication, which is a particular concern in times of emergency. NGOs which focus on supporting Māori whānau are particularly stretched - for example, more than half of s 9(2)(a) staff were themselves affected with flood damaged homes and vehicles - reducing the ability for these NGOs to support their communities. These NGOs have been crucial in supporting whānau through the flooding emergency. Māori communities may also be more likely to live in housing that is crowded, so may have particular difficulty finding appropriate housing to meet their needs following floods, such as in finding new accomodation. Whānau Ora providers have played a particular key role so far in supporting Māori communities to respond to flooding, and will continue to do aso as the emergency unfolds.</p>
Pacific communities	<p>Pacific communities are known to be more likely to live in housing that is crowded, and are likely to have lower income available to respond to emergencies. As such, Pacific communities may be less able to meet their immediate needs as a result of the flood, and may have particular difficulty finding appropriate housing to meet their family’s needs. For Pacific communities, negative impacts and stressors are not limited to those in geographically affected flood areas because of the collectivisation and redistribution of material resources and supports through Pacific family relationships. This means more far-reaching spill over effects across Pacific communities in Aotearoa, which we may last longer given the already inequitable social and economic outcomes for Pacific peoples. NGOs and community groups which focus on supporting</p>

Population group	Impact
	Pacific communities, including Whānau Ora providers, play an important role in mitigating the impacts on Pacific peoples.
Disabled people	<p>Disabled people may be at heightened risk during emergencies such as floods, including because of challenges regarding mobility. Furthermore, communications about an emergency response from across government should be in accessible formats and through appropriate communications lines for disabled people. Disabled people may be less able to access supports, such as specialised health care, on which they rely on a daily basis.</p> <p>All of the impacts of the floods will have been felt keenly by the disability community. Key priorities for disabled people are keeping safe, having access to food and other essential supports, access to services and programmes if relocated, and having somewhere to stay which meets their accessibility needs.</p> <p>Disabled people experience additional barriers and disruptions to their wellbeing and accessibility in an emergency response. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information is not always available in accessible formats in a timely manner • communication channels can be complex to navigate • accessible housing shortages make finding suitable alternative accommodation more difficult, and if relocated creates barriers to involvement in community programmes and services. <p>Disabled people can have additional costs that non-disabled people can avoid (for example, a person with a physical impairment may need to pay someone to clean their home).</p> <p>Parents of disabled children have also reported additional stress from delays in getting children back to school – expected routines have been disrupted, causing particular stress for some whānau.</p> <p>Engagement undertaken with disabled people, their representative organisations, Disability Support Service providers and other NGOs identified a need to support disabled people whose essential regular transport is disrupted by the flooding event.</p> <p>NGOs and Community Connectors which have a particular focus on disabled people will be engaged to form a key part of the flood response.</p>

Population group	Impact
Seniors	<p>Seniors may be at hightened risk of injury or isolation during floods, and be less able to access supports on which they rely on a daily basis, such as regular medical assistance in dressing or support in getting dressed. Accessible and easy to understand communication with seniors and older people during times of emergency is especially important.</p> <p>NGOs and Community Connectors which have a particular focus on seniors will be engaged to form a key part of the flood response.</p>
Children and young people	<p>Due to Auckland schools closing as a result of the floods may contribute to recent school disengagement. Parents of children and young people have also reported additional stress from delays in getting children back to school – expected routines have been disrupted, causing particular stress for some whānau. This may have significant long-term impacts if young people remain disengaged from education for a long period of time.</p> <p>Community Connectors have recently had an additional focus on supporting young people to re-engage in learning following disruption caused by COVID-19.</p>
Ethnic Communities	<p>A significant proportion of New Zealand’s ethnic communities are based in Auckland and were significantly affected by the recent floods. These communities significantly relied on community provider assistance during floods for help. Our ethnic communities have diverse and varying needs, and any assistance provided needs to be tailored accordingly. Specific support is needed for vulnerable groups such as ethnic woman and older people.</p>

Human Rights

51 The proposals in this paper are consistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993.

Consultation

52 The package was informed by discussions with the Department of Internal Affairs, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Te Puni Kōkiri, Whaikaha, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, Office for Disability Issues, Office for Seniors, and the Treasury. The Ministry for Ethnic Communities and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet were informed.

Communications

53 I intend to announce this package once Cabinet has made these decisions.

Proactive Release

54 I intend this Cabinet Paper be proactively released within standard timeframes.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1 **note** that individuals, families and whānau in the Auckland and other regions have been severely negatively impacted by flooding events
- 2 **note** the Minister for Social Development and Employment recommends further supports to be provided to NGOs and for community recovery in response to the floods
- 3 **agree** to a fiscally neutral package, using Care in the Community welfare programme underspends, with the following funds to support communities and providers in Auckland and other regions impacted by recent flooding, until 30 June 2023:
 - 3.1 **Community support fund:** Up to \$2 million for community groups supporting affected communities and whānau with the highest needs (capped at \$3,500 per community group)
 - 3.2 **Community providers response and wellbeing fund:** Up to \$4 million for community providers providing immediate relief to affected communities and whānau (capped at \$7,000 per community provider)
 - 3.3 **Food fund:** Up to \$1 million to reset food stock levels among community food providers, including bulk purchasing essential items.
 - 3.4 **Addressing the needs of disabled people:** \$0.5 million will be ringfenced to address the welfare needs of the disabled community. This will require direct engagement with disabled communities and may include funding for additional support for disabled people or providers who have been affected by recent floods.
- 4 **note** funding will be targeted to providers in the most affected communities including Māori, Pacific, children and youth, ethnic communities and disability communities and will consider cross-agency investment to minimise duplication
- 5 **agree** to expand the scope of Community Connectors to support people impacted by recent flooding in Auckland and other impacted regions, in addition to those impacted by COVID-19

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- 6 **agree** to make an additional \$4 million in discretionary funding available from Care in Community underspends, to enable Community Connectors to deliver this support, this will be capped at \$1,000 per household impacted by the flooding events covered for these proposals
- 7 **note** that a s 9(2)(f)(iv) underspend is forecast for 2022/23 for the Care in Community programme within the Community Support Services MCA, and this is available to support people impacted by recent flooding in Auckland and other impacted regions
- 8 **agree** to use up to \$11.5 million from the Care in the Community welfare programme underspend to support people impacted by recent flooding in Auckland and other impacted regions
- 9 **agree** to transfer \$5.813 million from within the Community Support Services MCA from Community Support and Advice category to Community Response to Adverse or Emergency Events category, in order to rebalance between output classes for the purpose of the decisions in recommendations 3, 6 and 8
- 10 **approve** the following change to the indicative spending profile between categories of a MCA to give effect to the policy decisions in recommendations 8 and 9 above, with no impact on the overall appropriation:

Vote Social Development Minister for Social Development and Employment	\$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27 & Outyears
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure					
Community Support Services					
Non-Departmental Output Expense: Community Support and Advice	(5.813)	-	-	-	-
Non-Departmental Other Expense: Community Response to Adverse or Emergency Events	5.813	-	-	-	-
Total Operating	-	-	-	-	-

- 11 **note** that the Minister for Social Development and Employment and the Minister of Finance are due to receive further advice on the Care in the Community welfare funding in March 2023, which will take into account decisions made in this paper
- 12 **note** that the Ministry of Social Development will provide regular updates to the Minister for Social Development and Employment
- 13 **invite** the Ministry of Social Development provide a report back to the Minister for Social Development and Employment and the Minister of Finance on the use and distribution of this support package by the end of July 2023.

Authorised for lodgement
Hon Carmel Sepuloni
Minister for Social Development and Employment

Appendix A: Summary of existing mechanisms for households and groups to receive support

Whānau Ora

Whānau Ora, while providing immediate support are also looking to potential short and long-term needs of whānau. Whānau already struggling with the cost of living have had to divert resources allocated to certain kaupapa (such as school resources) to clean up their homes (rent and own). Commissioning Agencies may have resources available within their baselines due to financial variances at this time of year, which they are at liberty to reprioritise to support flood response activities.

Pasifika Futures

Pasifika Futures have been providing regular dashboard reports outlining expenditure, engagement, support provided and intel of immediate whānau and provider needs.

To date Pasifika Futures has spent \$1.8 million in support, engaged with 5520 individuals, relocated 34 families and have 15 providers who have so far provided 3489 support packages.

Immediate support included access to food, accommodation, healthcare, mental health, translation services, pastoral care support, insurance and social service support. Their call centre is also actively triaging families and providing support.

MBIE fund for Auckland businesses

A \$5 million package of emergency support for businesses significantly impacted by flooding in the Auckland region was recently approved. It includes three components:

- 54.1 up to \$1.0 million for advice for small businesses, focusing on business continuity and resilience at community level
- 54.2 up to \$1.0 million for mental wellbeing support through a boost to the existing First Steps programme, and
- 54.3 up to \$3.0 million for discretionary flood recovery disbursements to support significantly impacted businesses.

MBIE Temporary Accommodation Service

- 55 MBIE is supporting emergency response efforts through its Temporary Accommodation Service (TAS), Building Emergency Management (BEM) team, Residential Advisory Service (RAS), and MBIE Emergency Management, Business Continuity team (EMBC).
- 56 TAS activated on 8 February 2023 for the Auckland floods that took place on 27 January 2023. People can register their details via the website www.tas.mbie.govt.nz or call 0508 754 163 to discuss their needs. The TAS team will contact those registered to assess needs and work with them to help find suitable temporary housing.

- 57 TAS is working closely with Auckland Emergency Management (AEM) to ensure a seamless transition for people in emergency accommodation into the Temporary Accommodation Service.
- 58 TAS is also assisting and supporting AEM with current emergency accommodation placements and logistics.
- 59 TAS is working closely with the National Emergency Management Agency, Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups and other Government Agencies including Ministry of Social Development and Kāinga Ora.

Department of Internal Affairs

Community and Volunteering Capability Fund

The Community and Volunteering Capability Fund provides grants to not-for-profit organisations for services and projects that improve leadership and strengthen the capability and capacity of New Zealand's diverse community and voluntary sector. Sector leadership and Volunteering are both priorities within this existing fund and can be quickly mobilised to respond to this event. This is an existing fund that can easily be mobilised for dealing with volunteer wellbeing. \$1 million is available for distribution each year and it has been oversubscribed at a ratio of 2:1 for the past three years.

COGS – Community Organisation Grants Scheme

This scheme provides government-funded grants to support voluntary and not-for-profit organisations working in local communities and neighbourhoods.

COGS committees prioritise community-based organisations delivering services to one or more of these priority sectors:

- Māori
- women
- Pacific communities
- other ethnic communities
- older people
- rurally isolated people
- people with disabilities
- families
- youth and children
- unemployed people
- community-based organisations with limited access to other government funding.

For the four Auckland based COGS Local Distribution Committees there has been from \$2 million to \$3.5 million available for distribution from 2019 to 2022. This fund has been oversubscribed at a ratio of 5:1, 4:1 and 3:1 for the past three years respectively.

Lottery Minister's Discretionary Fund Emergency Natural Disaster Relief Fund

The Lottery Grants Board (the Board) holds an Emergency Natural Disaster Reserve (ENDR) for the purpose of providing quick-access support to communities affected by an emergency natural disaster event. In this instance, an 'emergency natural disaster' is defined as a natural event that has been declared a Civil Defence Emergency by the relevant authority. The Fund has been activated to support the flood response in the Auckland, Northland, and Waikato regions.

The distribution of this is managed through an annual allocation of the reserve to a sub-programme of the Lottery Minister's Discretionary Fund (MDF); the Emergency Natural Disaster Relief Fund (ENDRF). The Department has the delegated decision-making authority for the ENDRF, up to the value of \$499,999 per emergency event. Should this amount be fully allocated and there remains significant community need for the same event, approval from the Minister of Internal Affairs must be sought for additional funds to be allocated.

ENDRF funding is distributed through a relational approach and the Department's regional Community Advisory teams are currently working alongside local authorities and community leaders in Auckland, Northland, and Waikato, to determine the level of support required to respond to the flooding events.

Funding can be utilised to support initiatives and activities that:

- assist community organisations that provide support services and have seen an increased demand for their services due to a natural disaster event
- repair, restore or revitalise community facilities that have been damaged by a natural disaster event
- provide partnership funding for work with other government agencies or non-profit groups with a shared purpose of supporting communities affected by a natural disaster event

Ministry of Social Development

Civil Defence payments

These include support for food, bedding, clothing, accommodation (non-recoverable) and furniture and whiteware (non-recoverable). There is no income or asset test. However, these are only available during a declared state of emergency (the current one in Auckland has been extended to 10 February).

Hardship assistance

This includes support for food (non-recoverable) and clothes, beds, furniture, appliances, school stationery and uniforms (generally recoverable, but may be non-recoverable in exceptional circumstances decided on a case-by-case basis). This is targeted at very low-income households (whether or not MSD clients), so subject to income and assets tests.

Enhanced Taskforce Green

This is a temporary employment programme in which people (usually beneficiaries) receive assistance to help clean up regions following an emergency. Uninsured households may benefit from clean-up of their properties.

Rural Assistance Payments

These are payments to farmers during flooding and other adverse events. They are aimed at assisting households whose main income is farming (includes horticulture, etc.) and who are facing difficulties in meeting their living costs as a result of the adverse event. While not aimed at replacing uninsured contents, uninsured farming households will benefit from these assistance payments.

National Emergency Management Agency

- 60 Under Section 33 of the Guide to the National Civil Defence and Emergency Management Plan, The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Financial support to Local Authorities after an emergency event covers:
- 60.1 Contributions to Local Authority Disaster Relief Funds (usually Mayoral Relief Funds) – more detail below.
 - 60.2 Reimbursement of welfare costs incurred by local authorities in caring for directly affected people in an emergency – more detail below.
 - 60.3 Precautions or preventative actions to reduce the immediate danger to human life during response period and reduce the potential consequences of an emergency in the period immediately before the emergency
 - 60.4 Essential infrastructure and recovery repairs

Contributions to Local Authority Disaster Relief Funds (usually Mayoral Relief Funds)

These are grants to local authorities for disbursement to support the needs of households, community organisations, small businesses, and marae. Among other things they can be used to support households facing hardship. As they are not intended to replace other funding sources such as welfare payments and insurance, and there is no income test, they potentially fill the gap for uninsured households who are ineligible for MSD Hardship assistance – depending on how the local authority sets its discretionary criteria for fund disbursement.

Reimbursement of local authority response (welfare) costs

These payments reimburse 100% of eligible costs incurred by local authorities in caring for directly affected people (accommodation, transporting, feeding, and clothing) in an emergency. There are formal rules under legislation for any such payments, which are made under permanent legislative authority. There is scope for households to make requests to local authorities for financial assistance, for which local authorities subsequently claim reimbursement.