



08 JUN 2021

Dear

On 10 May 2021, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

1. *Community Food Transition Grants*
 - a. *How was the \$2million fund identified and then delivered?*
 - b. *To whom and how much, for what services?*
2. *The Community Food Response Grants – of \$19.6million*
 - a. *How was that Fund identified as being sufficient or in fact, worthy?*
 - b. *Where has that fund been delivered, to who and how much?*
3. *The Food Secure Communities Grant of \$10.1million*
 - a. *Who determined that \$10.1 million was sufficient?*
 - b. *How is that grant being deployed amongst communities?*
4. *I note your Minister advises that you have hosted two Social Sector Commissioning Symposium recently. Your Minister states that these Symposium achieved 'great' success.*
 - a. *Can you please advise what success looks like to you out of these two symposiums on matters of commissioning?*
 - b. *To do that you are going to have to, very quickly, define what MSD means by commissioning. Can you inform us please?*

In late 2019, the Ministry had begun dialogue with Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective (representing a collective of social service organisations on behalf of the wider community food sector) who had expressed concerns around growing food insecurity. The Ministry of Health survey of Household Food Insecurity Amongst Children in 2019 noted that 19% of children were living in households experiencing moderate or severe food insecurity. This included 37% of Pacific children, and 29% of tamariki Māori.

During the Alert Level 3 & 4 COVID-19 lockdown, food insecurity spiked, and it was estimated by Kore Hiakai and Auckland City Mission that an additional half million people would continue to be food insecure post the lockdown, due to the economic downturn and unemployment expected from COVID-19. This was expected to have ongoing impacts on foodbanks, food rescue and other community food services. In consultation with the sector, it was estimated that demand on services would be around 50% higher over the following two years (which has worked out to be roughly correct). A strategy was developed by the Ministry together with the sector, philanthropic organisations and other government agencies. This was funded through Budget 2020 and provided \$32m over three years (F2020 – F2022) to:

- support the increased demand on foodbanks, food rescue and other community food services
- provide national-level support to strengthen the capability of the sector, and to increase the supply of high-quality surplus food
- support communities to develop and implement plans for longer-term sustainable food security.

The \$32m expenditure on the Food Secure Communities programme is broken down as follows:

- \$2m in F2020 for the Community Food Transition Grant Fund
- \$19.6m over two years (F2021 and F2022) for the Community Food Transition Grant Fund
- \$1.01m over two years (F2021 and F2022) for the Food Secure Communities Grant Fund
- \$6.86m over two years (F2021 and F2022) to fund three national NGO agencies to support the sector: the New Zealand Food Network; Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective; and Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance
- \$1.2m over two years (F2021 and F2022) for the Ministry's Food Secure Communities team
- remaining expenditure of \$1.33m has been used on COVID-19 resurgences and towards a further fund for Food Secure Communities Implementation.

Please see below information in response to your questions.

1. Community Food Transition Grants

a. How was the \$2million fund identified and then delivered?

The Ministry in conjunction with the sector, identified the need to support community food services to cope with increased demand on their services. Funding support transitioned from Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) funding during the COVID-19 Alert Level 3 & 4 lockdown to longer-term Ministry funding (the Community Food Response Grant Fund). The Community Food Transition Grant Fund (Transition Fund) covered the period from June 2020 – August 2020. Funding was prioritised for groups who had received CDEM funding, although other community food organisations were also able to access funding.

Further detail including funding criteria is detailed in the link below: www.msd.govt.nz/what-we-can-do/community/food-secure-communities/community-food-transition-grants.html.

b. To whom and how much, for what services?

There were 135 organisations who were successful in receiving a share of \$2m of funding. A list of services who received funding and how much can be found here: www.msd.govt.nz/documents/what-we-can-do/community/food-secure-communities/successful-applicants-cftgf.pdf.

A report on what has been delivered through this fund can be found here: www.msd.govt.nz/documents/what-we-can-do/community/food-secure-communities/20210126-outcomes-of-the-community-food-transition-grant-fund-final.pdf.

2. *The Community Food Response Grants – of \$19.6million*

a. *How was that Fund identified as being sufficient or in fact, worthy?*

The need for the Community Food Response Grant Fund (Response Fund) was identified to meet the estimated 50% increase in demand expected to be experienced by foodbanks, food rescue and community food services due to COVID-19. This figure was arrived at in consultation with Kore Hiakai. It provided time-limited, flexible grant funding that contributed toward the costs of this increased demand over two years from August 2020 to June 2022. It also provided an opportunity for organisations to work towards new approaches or practices that would contribute towards great food security in their communities.

Further detail including funding criteria can be found at the following link: www.msd.govt.nz/what-we-can-do/community/food-secure-communities/community-food-response-funding.html.

b. *Where has that fund been delivered, to who and how much?*

There were 131 organisations that were successful in applying for a share of \$19.6m in funding. A list of the 131 services that received funding, their location, and funding amount can be found here: www.msd.govt.nz/documents/what-we-can-do/community/food-secure-communities/successful-applicants-cfrqf.pdf.

3. *The Food Secure Communities Grant of \$1.01million*

a. *Who determined that \$1.01 million was sufficient?*

The Food Secure Communities Grant Fund (Communities Fund) was for \$1.01m over two years. The priority for the Ministry after the COVID-19 lockdown was supporting community food services to manage their increased demand. In discussions between the Ministry and the sector, the need to support communities with their longer-term food security was identified. Addressing this need would help prevent food security shocks in the future. As a result, 95% of funding was targeted towards increased demand but 5% was reserved to support communities to become food secure.

Since then, there has been strong interest from communities, and the \$1.01m was identified by the Ministry as not being sufficient to meet demand, given a wider desire to increase availability of healthy, affordable food, and to reduce dependency on foodbanks and food hardship grants in low income communities. As such, a new Food Secure Communities Implementation Fund for the 2021/22 year was announced this month: www.msd.govt.nz/what-we-can-do/community/food-secure-communities/implementation-fund.html.

The Communities Fund allows communities to work together to develop and implement a plan to create long-term, sustainable food security in their community. Where plans are already underway, funding is being used to enhance existing efforts. Further detail about how the fund is available at the following link: www.msd.govt.nz/what-we-can-do/community/food-secure-communities/food-secure-communities-grant-funding.html.

b. How is that grant being deployed amongst communities?

A list of the 49 organisations that received funding, their location, and funding amount can be found here: www.msd.govt.nz/documents/what-we-can-do/community/food-secure-communities/successful-applicants-food-secure-communities-grants.pdf. This part of your request is, therefore, refused under section 18(d) of the Act.

4. I note your Minister advises that you have hosted two Social Sector Commissioning Symposium recently. Your Minister states that these Symposium achieved 'great' success.

a. Can you please advise what success looks like to you out of these two symposiums on matters of commissioning?

The two symposia were supported by a separate wānanga with Māori social sector leaders and a fono with Pacific social sector leaders. The second symposium built on these earlier engagements, bringing together over 30 organisations from the social sector, iwi, hapū and Māori to test the work done by the project team since the first symposium, to improve how government commissions social services. By the end of this targeted engagement round we achieved:

- the development of an overarching foundation focused on relational ways of working and giving practical effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- further insights to inform the ongoing practical development of the system enablers needed to support foundational shifts (e.g. funding statements for the funding and costing of services, and an approach to monitoring and contracting)
- a tangible pathway for Ministers to consider for commissioning improvements that will help improve the wellbeing of people, whānau and communities
- engagement that was honest, energised, and informative
- a commitment by participants to remain engaged on this work.

b. To do that you are going to have to, very quickly, define what MSD means by commissioning. Can you inform us please?

Through a sector update in August 2020 on this work (available on page 5 here: www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/planning-strategy/social-sector-commissioning/msd-social-sector-commissioning.pdf), commissioning was defined as referring to the interrelated activities, including but not limited to planning, engagement, funding, procurement, monitoring and evaluation that need to be taken through third-party providers to ensure people, whānau and communities who need support get the support they need. It is an activity carried out by both government and other organisations.

Agencies recognise there are many different parts to commissioning social services and many actors, including the Crown, government agencies, iwi/hapū/Māori, commissioning agencies, non-government organisations, Māori organisations and community organisations, that have a role and voice in its success.

The principles and purposes of the Act under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry of Social Development's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Marama Edwards
Deputy Chief Executive
Māori, Communities and Partnerships