

# MANA IN MAHI MĀORI EVALUATION

## FINAL REPORT

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**Disclaimer:**

The views and interpretations in this report are those of the evaluators.

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**Whāia te iti kahurangi, ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei!**

Seek what you cherish most deeply, and if you must fall short of that,  
let it be to a lofty mountain!

*Tēnā koutou katoa*

*Ki tā te kōrero o ngā tipuna, me titiro whakamuri kia anga whakamua. Me mihi ka tika ki te hunga i para te huarahi mō tātau.*

*Ko koe tērā e Whetu, nāhau rā ka tuku te pou tarāwaho arā Whānau Rangatiratanga. Ānei mātau i mahue mai nei i tō wehenga, heoi e kore e ngaro ōu pukenga kōrero, ōu tohutohu mai. Moe mai rā, moe mai rā kōrua ko tō Tūmanako.*

*Nā reira, moe mai rā koutou katoa, te maha o naiane, te mano o nānahi, te tini o neherā. E ai anō ki ngā mātua, rārangī maunga, tū tonu, tū tonu, rārangī tangata, ngaro noa, ngaro noa. Ko rātau ki a rātau; ko tātau ki a tātau. Tēnā anō tātau katoa!*

*Tēnā koutou katoa o Whakatū, o Waikato, o Te Tairāwhiti rānei. Koutou katoa i kōrero ki a mātau, koutou anō i whakakīki tō mātau kete kōrero. E kore e mimiti te puna aroha mō koutou katoa. Tēnā rawa koutou.*

*Tēnā hoki koutou ngā kaimahi katoa o te Manatū Whakahiato, tae noa ki te uepū Rangahau, Aromātai rānei. Nā reira, tēnā anō koutou katoa!*

According to our ancestors, we must look back to move forward. It is proper to acknowledge those who have laid the path for us. That is you Whetu, you who gave the Whānau Rangatiratanga framework to us all. We are left bereft by your departure but will not lose your wisdom and direction. Rest, rest with your Tūmanako.

Therefore, rest all of you, the many of today, the thousands of yesterday, the multitudes of the past. As our elders said, mountains last but people pass on. Those passed on to themselves, as we are joined now to ourselves. Greetings to us all!

Greetings to those of you in Nelson, in Waikato, and in the East Coast. All of you who spoke with us, who filled our kete with kōrero. The wellspring of aroha for you all will not dry out. Thank you very much.

Greetings also to all the staff of the Ministry of Social Development, including the Research and Evaluation team. Therefore, thanks again to everyone.

*Tēnā koutou katoa*

To the Māori Mana in Mahi participants who met with us, we say humbly – ngā mihi maioha. The experiences, insights, and learnings that you shared, will help to fine-tune the way Mana in Mahi is delivered in the future and ensure a positive experience for future participants.

To the employers and Ministry of Social Development staff, thank you for willingly making time to share your insights with us. Lastly, we are especially grateful to Kahukore Baker, Principal Analyst (Ministry of Social Development) for your support, guidance, and feedback.

Nā mātau iti nei ko Lisa, ko Rachelle, ko Chelsea, ko Toiroa, ko Ruiha.

## Contents

<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>6</b>
Overview	6
Key findings	7
Recommendations	11
<b>Background</b>	<b>15</b>
Overview of the evaluation	15
History of Mana in Mahi	16
Key design features	16
Profile of participants	20
Methodology	20
<b>Māori employees' experience of Mana in Mahi</b>	<b>23</b>
Overview	23
The first six months – overcoming challenges that affect employment	23
After six months – gaining work experience, skills and qualifications	27
Overall quality of experience of active and completed employees	32
<b>Outcomes for Māori Mana in Mahi participants</b>	<b>35</b>
Overview	35
Outcomes for active and completed participants	36
Outcomes for wāhine	37
Outcomes for participants who have been on the benefit for 2+ years	37
Outcomes for whānau	38
Outcomes for participants who exited early	41
<b>The role of employers in supporting positive employee outcomes</b>	<b>46</b>
Overview	46
Employer views of the value of Mana in Mahi	46
Employer insights into pastoral care provision	50
<b>Programme Design - Consideration of Māori needs and aspirations</b>	<b>53</b>
Overview	53
Early design – consideration of Māori needs and aspirations	53
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>56</b>
Overview	56
Strategic design improvements	56

Operational delivery improvements	57
References	62
Appendix A: Background – Māori employment context	65
Appendix B: Detailed evaluation methodology	68
Appendix C: E-mail from Work and Income to new Mana in Mahi employees	73
Appendix D: Mana in Mahi Intervention Logic 2022 (Draft)	75

# Executive summary

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## Overview

### *Background to Mana in Mahi*

Launched in August 2018, Mana in Mahi (the programme) was introduced as a pilot programme designed to support young beneficiaries into employment. It was a one-year programme where young people were connected to employers who would train them on-the-job and support them to complete job-related qualifications. A range of design features, such as incentive payments for remaining in employment, were built into the programme to support the success of the new employees. Changes were made to the settings and features of the programme as it evolved, including broadening eligibility in the context of COVID-19 to include people who are not on the benefit but were considered at risk of long-term benefit receipt, and to remove the age cap of 25 years.

As at the end of January 2023, the programme has had 5,703 participants of which 36 percent have identified as Māori<sup>1</sup>. To date, the programme has been strongly aligned with the construction and trades industries and this has impacted the type of person put forward, and recruited for, placement. Young men have made up the majority of participants.

### *Purpose of the evaluation*

Formative and impact evaluations of the programme were carried out within its first two years. The kaupapa Māori evaluation was commissioned to understand the experience of Māori participants, within the broader context of Te Pae Tata (MSD's Māori Strategy).

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine if the programme is creating positive and sustainable outcomes for Māori. The evaluation seeks to: build an understanding of how the programme and its features work for Māori; provide insights into the outcomes that Māori achieve through the programme and any wider impact of their whānau; provide insights into employer experience of the programme and provide recommendations for improvements. This evaluation is being undertaken concurrently with two other evaluation streams commissioned by MSD; the analysis of IDI data and a mixed methods evaluation of Mana in Mahi Phase Two and expansion.

The evaluation drew on the experience and insights from 54 stakeholders in the Tairāwhiti, Waikato and Nelson regions. This included Māori employees and whānau, Māori and non-Māori employers, MSD work brokers and other MSD kaimahi and pastoral care providers.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Social Development (2023). *Mana in Mahi Strength in Work – Progress Report End January 2023*. [Internal performance report REP/23/2/036].

## Key findings

*After a settling in period, many Māori have a positive experience of the programme*

For many employees, the early months of placement can be challenging. For those transitioning from the benefit into employment, continuity of income was a concern. Most were not aware of MSD entitlements that could support their transition.

*At first when I went in – I was a little gobsmacked... What I was doing was telling them [Work and Income] that I got the job...just needing help with clothing and things like that that.... it was a little intimidating because it was like "Right you got your job. We can give you this but we're gonna cut you off the benefit." ... It wasn't like "Hey, this is what your support is gonna be".*

– Wahine Māori, beauty industry, East Coast

After starting their new role employees faced a number of challenges (such as transport related issues, childcare issues when tamariki were unwell or schools were in lockdown, relationship/custody issues, resolving court issues) while also trying to develop a routine work ethic and settle into a new workplace culture.

*A young fella couldn't get to work. There was a flat tyre. Car didn't have a warrant. Just helping that young person navigate it, cause it's all new to them... It's okay to get a flat tyre. Teaching them that as soon as you know about issue, let the boss know.*

– Work broker, Waikato

Mana in Mahi has a number of built-in pastoral care supports which are mostly virtual services. However, only one evaluation participant had accessed these. Some regions had contracted intensive pastoral care services over and above the virtual services built into the programme design. The key features of the intensive services are that they were generally provided face to face by an experienced pastoral care provider who checked in with participants throughout their placement. They often engaged with employers, and sometimes whānau, to foster conditions and settings that would maximise the likelihood of success of participants.

Employees who received this type of support highly valued it. They felt it gave them a positive and successful experience, in the context of their youth, lack of work experience and any challenges they were facing outside the workplace.

*I really enjoyed being on the Mana in Mahi programme, the mentor ... just gave me the push to get me back into the work and confidence building, so thank you.*

– Wahine Māori, social service industry, Nelson

At around three to six months, most employees are becoming more settled into work life. With the support of employers, they have strategies in place to deal with transport and other challenges that affect work attendance. They are beginning to develop good work routine and habits. Most feel well supported by employers and industry training providers as they begin their formal training and study towards qualifications.

*My boss he's quite good and always willing to help me out and help me learn as best I can so it's good.*

– Tane Māori, automotive industry, Nelson

Many found study requirements challenging, particularly finding the time outside of work while juggling competing commitments like caring for tamariki. Few were aware of Additional Education Support that could have assisted them with study-related costs (such as laptops). Employees valued the incentive payments which they spent mostly on work-related tools/equipment and/or transport related costs.

*Many Māori gain solid work experience and industry qualifications*

Since its launch 2,055 Māori have participated in the programme and just under 1,200 have completed or are still active. Participants enjoy being employed, and value the work experience, training, and opportunities. Employees who are still active in, or who have completed the programme, gained solid work experience and attained formal industry-based skills/qualifications.

Almost all active Māori participants (93 percent) have formal training pathways. Over half of these participants are studying Level 4 qualifications. Those who are active or recently completed the programme were optimistic about their future, both in terms of completing their qualifications and remaining in their occupation for the medium-long term.

*Yeah, nah - I'm loving it.*

– Tane Māori, electricity industry, Waikato

Every active, or completed, evaluation participant felt the work experience and skills they had attained through the programme positioned them well for future opportunities. They felt positive and optimistic that the pathway they were on would enable them to build a secure future for their whānau. Most were intending to continue employment with their current employer. Those who thought they may pursue other opportunities in the future, intended to remain in the same occupation/industry.

Employee feedback and programme data provides strong indications that Māori clients who complete the programme are on track to achieve the medium/long term outcomes set out in the programme's intervention logic – increasing earning and financial stability over time, staying engaged in employment and not returning to the benefit.

*Positive outcomes for participants have flow-on effects for whānau*

Wanting to provide an economically secure future for their whānau was a key motivation for participants joining the programme. Employees who were parents were inspired by their tamariki and aspired to be a positive role model for them. Wider whānau (such as parents and partners) were proud that their whānau member was participating in the programme and felt that their future was brighter as a result.

*I was telling them about it. My brother wanted to get onto it ... They were like "Yeah, that's wicked as"... I've got a mate that wants to get into it, and she lives in the Bay here.*

– Tane Māori, automotive industry, Nelson

Māori participants spoke about the positive impacts that being in skilled employment had on their tamariki and wider whānau. They were excited by the increased likelihood greater economic security that being in skilled employment created for their whānau. Participant outcomes programme aligned well with some of the key dimensions in MSD's Whānau Rangatiranga



Framework including the economic and human resource potential dimensions, and to a lesser extent, the social capability dimension.<sup>2</sup>

*Employers are committed to supporting Māori participants to success, but some find the high level of pastoral care needs challenging*

Employers rate the programme highly and see it as a positive initiative in a challenging labour market. The subsidy provided for taking on employees was welcomed by employers and helped offset the lower levels of productivity and other costs for employees in the early months of their placement.

Māori employers actively sought out Māori employees, and Māori employees in turn valued the culture of Māori workplaces.

*One of the boys just came back early this morning. They had a tangi that they needed to help out at. He called me Sunday night to say that they were having to stay as the tangi got delayed. I think our culture plays a big difference in that understanding. It's understanding the background of your employees and getting to know them a bit better, rather than just seeing them as a number.*

— Māori employer, Waikato

Most employers (Māori, and non-Māori) were committed to supporting Māori employees through their placements and into sustainable employment. However, employers were challenged by the volume and range of pastoral care needs of employees, particularly in the first few months. Larger employers were better resourced to meet those needs, for example through access to their own employee assistance programmes.

Smaller employers tried to actively support employees to overcome immediate challenges (for example by providing transport and other social support). However, due to their small scale and the immediacy of other pressures on the business, they were less equipped to provide the intensive pastoral care support that some employees needed. We heard from MSD staff that a small number of employers were dismissive about the concept of pastoral care support. They held the view that everyone should just be able to 'get on with it'.

*Wāhine and those that have been on the benefit more than two years achieve good results*

Wāhine Māori are less likely than tane to participate on the programme. This likely reflects the strong focus on the construction sector (where women have historically been under-represented). Similarly, long-term beneficiaries have had limited access to the programme. Feedback from staff suggests that this is because they are perceived to be less "work ready".

However, wāhine, and participants who had previously been on the benefit for more than two years, had positive experiences and achieved good outcomes. They identified that strong pastoral care and/or employer commitment had been key to their success. Some employers noted these

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<sup>2</sup> The Whānau Rangatiratanga Framework is intended to help MSD think about how a policy, programme or initiative is meeting the needs of whānau. It is based on Te Ao Māori principles and capability dimensions as identified in the Māori Statistics Framework and reflects the key aims of Whānau Ora. It informs the development of the Families and Whānau Wellbeing research programme.

cohorts can be a good investment because of their life experience, their motivation to provide for tamariki and desire to break the cycle of inter-generational poverty.

*Where I'm at now, this is it, this is me. I love it. I love the challenges. I love pushing myself. I love trying to adapt to mahi cause... I've never had a full-time job in my life... But this, this is nice to me, it doesn't feel like my job, coming in everyday doing something I love.*

– Wahine Māori, beauty industry, East Coast

*Not all Māori have a positive experience of the programme*

Since its launch, two out of five Māori (42%) have exited the programme early. Administrative data shows that one in three Māori who exit the programme early are currently receiving a benefit and they are more likely than non-Māori to be doing so. Further research is required to identify why participants are exiting early, and where they are going to, as this information is not systematically recorded.

When asked for their insights as to why some participants exit early, employers mostly offered that either the participants had unrealistic expectations of what the job involved (which was true of one early exit) or they didn't have the attitude and work ethic to hold down the job.

Eight evaluation participants had exited the programme early. They offered several reasons why they did not complete their placements, including that their employer had gone out of business. Others felt forced to leave because their employer hadn't followed through on commitments made, (such as enrolling them in an apprenticeship or reviewing their pay). Some attributed their early exit to unfair treatment by employers. These participants did not have the confidence or skills to resolve these issues with their employer. Instead, they felt their only option was to leave their job. This feedback highlights the risk that when a vulnerable or inexperienced Māori employee is placed with a less supportive employer, this could be a profoundly negative experience for that person. This in turn could act as a barrier to their future prospects.

*I signed a contract for being under them, but I only got paid \$200 to \$300. They said I was just volunteering to do it. So that was another reason I left, because they were putting me down as a volunteer, not an actual worker... For 4 months work, and I was working every single day, 8 o'clock 'til 4:30pm – sometimes till 6 o'clock.*

– Wahine Māori, beauty industry, Nelson

At the time of the evaluation, among those who had exited early, some were on the benefit, some were in low-skilled roles, and some had moved to new employers in the same role.

Putting in place strategies to reduce the number of early exits will increase the effectiveness of the programme for Māori. Feedback suggests this could be achieved by increasing participant access to intensive pastoral care support; ensuring processes are in place to vet employers and safeguard employees from unfair employment practices and introducing support for employees and employers to navigate employment relations issues.

*Mana in Mahi has been designed as a universal programme and Māori representation is declining*

Mana in Mahi was designed largely as a universal programme with no specific input from Māori stakeholders (such as iwi, Māori employers or Māori industry representatives). Māori needs were

not considered during the prototype and the experience of Māori participants did not inform subsequent design. Despite this, some generic design features have worked for Māori including support to achieve qualifications while working, paid course fees and incentive payments. Intensive pastoral care support has been impactful for those who received it.

With the onset of COVID-19, high Māori participation in the programme helped support the case for expansion and the increase in the duration of the placements (from 12 to 24 months). At the same time, the broadening of the entry criteria to include those aged over 25 years and those not on the benefit, has enabled mature Māori, and rangatahi potentially at risk of going on the benefit, to access the programme.

However, in the five years since its launch, Māori representation on the programme, has declined from over just over half to just over one-third of participants. This relates to the broadening of the programme entry criteria to include non-beneficiaries. Another factor may be that employers are less likely to refer Māori as potential programme participants.

## Recommendations

Table 1 sets out the recommendations to emerge from the evaluation findings. It identifies strategic design improvements that could improve the impact of the programme for Māori. These include addressing the decline in Māori representation on the programme, updating the programme logic and extending the duration of the programme for beneficiaries and employees with complex needs.

It then draws on Te Pae Tata, MSD's Māori Strategy and Action Plan, to frame the opportunities for operational improvements in the way that the programme is delivered.

### *Te Pae Tata – MSD's Māori Strategy and Action Plan*

Te Pae Tata (2019) was developed to underpin Te Pae Tawhiti (2018), MSD's organisational strategy. Both strategies identify the same three high-level 'key shifts' for the future direction of the organisation:-

- *Mana manaaki* – engaging with MSD and accessing our services is to be a positive experience
- *Kotahitanga* – having genuine and credible partnerships with Māori to support Māori leadership in service design and delivery
- *Kia takatū tātou* - supporting Māori aspirations and initiatives for long-term social and economic development inclusive of sustainable employment.

The strategy enables us to appreciate how some existing design features of Mana in Mahi benefitted Māori, and where potential operational improvements can strengthen MSD's response to the three key shifts, especially that of *mana manaaki* in a programme designed to better assist people into sustainable employment.

The recommendations include firstly, reviewing process for website enquiries, increasing awareness of and access to entitlements, increasing effectiveness of pastoral care support and reducing the number of early exits (Mana Manaaki).

Secondly, it is recommended MSD partner with Māori to review the design of the programme and better understand Māori aspirations for the Māori workforce (Kotahitanga).

Finally, it is recommended that participation by women and people who have been on the benefit more than two years is promoted, to extend the impact of the programme on vulnerable whānau. Increasing partnerships with Māori as employers and work brokers and pastoral care providers is also recommended (Kia takatū tātou).

**Table 1: Recommendations for improved design and delivery of Mana in Mahi**

Strategic design improvements	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Assess the reasons for the decline in Māori representation on the programme.</li> <li>b) Update the draft intervention logic, including to take account of entry pathways and ensure that Māori beneficiaries have equitable access to the programme.</li> <li>c) increase the duration of the programme back to 2-years for beneficiaries and participants with complex pastoral care needs.</li> </ul>
Operational delivery improvements	
Mana Manaaki – A positive experience every time	
Review the website entry pathway	d) Review the process for, and outcomes of, website enquiries.
Increase awareness of access and entitlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e) Review processes to ensure that employees (and their employers) are aware of the transitional support they are entitled to, and make this support easily accessible</li> <li>f) Review the effectiveness of communications to employees about the Additional Education Support funding and monitor and report on its uptake (by key demographics)</li> </ul>
Increase the effectiveness of pastoral care support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g) Review the effectiveness of the promotion of virtual pastoral care services to ensure that employees are aware they can access these services</li> <li>h) Monitor the uptake of the services (by key demographics) and seek client feedback on their satisfaction with the services</li> <li>i) Increase investment in intensive pastoral care support services and target them towards employees that were previously beneficiaries and employees with complex needs</li> <li>j) Require work brokers to ensure that:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– all employers are aware of their pastoral care obligations</li> <li>– all employers are assessed for their commitment to, and capacity to provide pastoral care</li> <li>– all employers are aware of, and actively promote, the remote pastoral care services available to employees; small businesses are able to connect their employees with complex needs to intensive pastoral care services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Table 1 (cont.): Recommendations for improved design and delivery of Mana in Mahi**

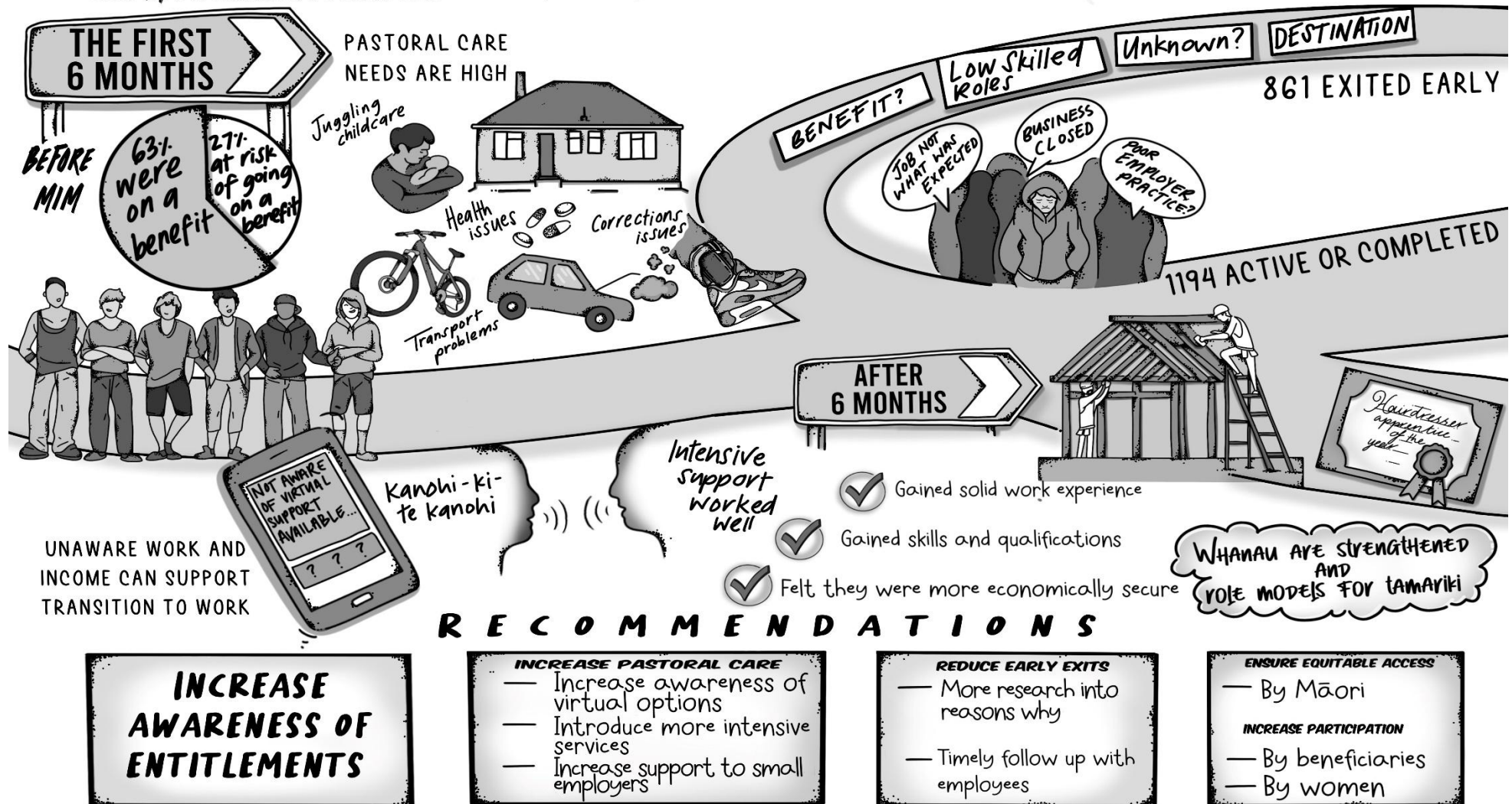
Operational delivery improvements (continued)	
Reduce the number of early exits	<p>k) Undertake research into the reasons why participants exit early and where they go</p> <p>l) Put in place processes to safeguard employees from unfair employment practices and support employees and employers to resolve workplace issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– case managers and work brokers informing participants of their basic employment rights prior to entering employment (such as minimum pay rates, working hours and health and safety regulations)</li> <li>– In-Work Support monitoring the volume of requests for employment relations advice and offering employees seeking employment relations advice mediation by a third party if appropriate</li> <li>– In-work Support contacting participants as soon as they are notified they have exited to understand why and connect them to Work and Income if appropriate</li> <li>– work brokers following up with employers with multiple early exits to ensure their workplace practices are of an acceptable standard.</li> </ul>
Kotahitanga - Partner with Māori	
	<p>m) Partner with Māori to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– review the design and delivery of the programme to inform how success for future Māori participants can be maximised</li> <li>– better understand Māori aspirations for the growth and development of the Māori workforce and how the programme might be aligned with these</li> </ul>
Kia Takatū Tātou – Support long-term social and economic development	
	<p>n) Increase access to the programme by women and people who have been on the benefit for more than two years.</p> <p>o) Grow the number of Māori employers offering placements in the programme</p> <p>p) Increase the number of partnerships with iwi/Māori organisations who provide work broker and pastoral care services.</p>



# MANA IN MAHI – EVALUATION OF THE EXPERIENCE OF MĀORI PARTICIPANTS

2055 MĀORI PARTICIPANTS SINCE 2018

59 participants across the rohe\*



\*Waikato, Te Tairāwhiti and Whakatu | 29 employees | 4 Whānau | 9 employers | 11 MSD staff | 2 pastoral care providers

# Background

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## Overview of the evaluation

Mana in Mahi is an initiative by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) to support individuals to gain training and skills towards sustainable employment and away from benefit dependency. It developed out of the 2017 Coalition Agreement commitment to introduce programmes for long-term unemployed to improve work readiness. There was a particular focus on doing more to support young people into work, and this occurred in the context of labour market shortages and high benefit usage.

The programme was introduced by MSD as a training to work programme in August 2018. It has a focus on paid employment coupled with enrolment in a training pathway. A formative evaluation was conducted during phase one to identify lessons to inform the expansion of the programme. MSD is now seeking to understand how the programme is working in practice.

This report presents the findings of the kaupapa Māori qualitative evaluation. Its purpose was to determine if the programme is creating positive and sustainable outcomes for Māori participants. The evaluation objectives include:

- building an understanding of how the programme and its features work for Māori
- providing insight to Māori outcomes as a result of the programme
- identifying any inequities within the programme and providing recommendations for change
- identifying any wider impacts that the programme may be having on the participants' whānau.

The evaluation was guided by six key questions:

1. How were the needs and aspirations of Māori considered in the design of Mana in Mahi (including phase one, phase two and expansion)?
2. How have Māori clients experienced the programme and how effective are its various design features, roles, and settings for them?
3. Does Mana in Mahi reduce existing barriers to employment or training experienced by Māori clients? If so, how?
4. Is Mana in Mahi supporting Māori towards positive outcomes and meeting clients' needs and expectations?
5. Has participation by Māori individuals had a wider impact on their friends and whānau?
6. What is the experience of Māori and non-Māori employers engaged with Mana in Mahi in terms of supporting Māori clients to achieve positive outcomes?

Readers should note that the key evaluation questions refer to 'clients' which relates to MSD beneficiary clients. Throughout the findings we refer to 'employees' or 'participants' of the programme as a large portion of those participating in the programme have not been former beneficiaries or clients. The detailed background for the programme is in Appendix A.

## History of Mana in Mahi

The programme was introduced in August 2018 as a prototype named 'Dole for Apprenticeships' for 150 participants. It was initially intended for young people aged 18-24 who had been on a benefit for at least three months and were at risk of long-term benefit dependency.

Employers were sought who could offer full-time roles, pay the adult minimum wage and support the young person into an industry training qualification. Employers received a wage subsidy for each client they took on as well as additional funding linked to pre-employment/on-the-job training and work readiness costs such as equipment for the job. The clients also received incentive payments to remain engaged in their role.

The initial release of the programme exceeded expectations with 247 young people engaged in the first phase. A formative evaluation during that phase led to some changes including a rebranding to the programme. Phase two of the programme began on 1 July 2019 with funding allocated to reach as many as 2,000 participants. The eligibility criteria were broadened to remove the requirement for someone to have been on a benefit for at least three months and to include part-time roles. Pastoral care services were also introduced.

In August 2020 and in the context of the COVID-19 epidemic, an Apprenticeship Support Programme (ASP) was released. This introduced increased funding to expand the programme and introduced other apprenticeship programmes. There was significant concern around business closures and redundancies and ASP was designed to incentivise companies to maintain, and take on more, apprentices who may otherwise turn to benefits. Under this expansion of the programme the youth focus was removed, the wage subsidy and coverage of training fees increased. Additional educational support was provided to clients and supports were extended to up to two years instead of one. However, this expanded support was only intended to be temporary and ended in 2022.

## Key design features

Mana in Mahi sits alongside other employment programmes (such as Flexi-wage and Skills for Industry) and is targeted to those who are on benefit or at risk of long-term benefit receipt. Its differential is paid employment coupled with enrolment in a training pathway as the strategy towards achieving sustainable employment.

Short-term outcomes of the programme are:

- clients enrol in an industry qualification, gaining knowledge
- clients gain experience and build resilience in the labour market
- clients understand how to use wraparound support effectively to help them achieve their goals
- gaps in the labour market are filled.

Longer term outcomes are:

- clients gain industry qualifications leading to further development in their industry
- clients earn more and their financial stability increases over time
- clients stay in employment and do not return to benefit.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Social Development (2022). *Intervention logic: Mana in Mahi* [Internal document].



Table 2 provides the current policy settings for the programme (currently funded and approved through to 4 August 2024) and shows any changes made since its introduction.<sup>4</sup> The programme is delivered through regional offices alongside other MSD products. Work brokers<sup>5</sup> or case managers<sup>6</sup> are central to connecting an MSD client to a product or programme. There is a Mana in Mahi service delivery lead within MSD national office who holds fortnightly online hui with regional staff about the programme.

**Table 2: Mana in Mahi policy settings and changes over time**

Design element	Setting description	Changes since introduction
<b>Duration</b>	One-year programme	Expanded to a 2-year programme only between 5 Aug 2020 and 5 Aug 2022. Then reverted back to a 1-year programme
<b>Wage subsidy</b>	Up to \$16,000 (plus GST) over one year (paid pro-rata if part-time)	Increased from \$9,580 from 5 Aug 2020. Ended in 2022.
<b>Target cohort</b>	Anyone at risk of long-term benefit receipt from the age of 17, including people not currently on benefit	Originally 18-24 year-olds (plus referrals outside this age group) in receipt of main income support benefits <sup>7</sup>
<b>Additional educational supports</b>	None originally.	Up to \$2,000 for literacy and numeracy support or equipment to work or study from home introduced from 5 Aug 2020 (paid direct to client on invoice)
<b>Participant incentive payments</b>	Three \$1,000 payments to clients over one year – at attendance and training milestones	Payments extended into second year just when it was a two-year programme
<b>Pre-employment/ on-the-job training support</b>	Up to \$2,000 per participant at the start of the contract (paid to employers)	No change
<b>Course fee support</b>	Up to \$8,000 (plus GST) over one year to cover the cost of courses not covered by other fees free initiatives	Extended into second year (\$16,000 max) just when it was a two-year programme.
<b>Programme cost</b>	Current	Phase one
<b>Maximum per participant cost</b>	\$31,000 (excl. GST)	Originally a potential maximum of \$14,580 (excl. GST)

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from: Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee (2022). *Extending increased supports under Mana in Mahi*. [Cabinet paper 22-2SUB-0097], p.3.

<sup>5</sup> The role of work brokers is to establish strong relationships with employers, industry and community groups, clients, and other key stakeholders within the region to market the sale of MSD products and services.

<sup>6</sup> Case managers work face-to-face with clients to find ways to support and help them achieve their goals, ensuring they are fully supported as they work towards financial independence.

<sup>7</sup> Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee. (2018). *Phased Implementation Plan for Mana in Mahi – Strength in Work (Dole for Apprenticeships)*. The paper references those on Jobseeker Support, Sole Parent Support, Supported living Payment and younger people on Youth Payment or Young Parent Payment.

### *Employer responsibilities*

Each employer signs an agreement with MSD which sets out what their responsibilities are and how they will be funded. Under the current delivery model, an employer:

- agrees to provide the client with paid employment, training and commits to sign them up to a formal industry training qualification and/or an apprenticeship
- provides a full-time, 30 hours minimum job that is permanent (no fixed end date) and is a pathway to formal industry qualification or apprenticeship
- agrees to ensure a training pathway is in place and the client is enrolled in study within 91 days and training has commenced within 182 days
- submits receipt from training organisation as proof before fees payment
- pays no less than the adult minimum wage with hours to be clearly stated in employment agreement with employer
- agrees and sets KPIs for the employee
- offers in-work support to the employee. This can be provided by the employer, or an alternative service can be provided by MSD (In Work Support service or other).

### *Provision for pastoral care*

When participants begin their employment, they are given the option of MSD phone support via their In-Work Support (IWS) team, including regular check-ins on their wellbeing. An introductory email is sent to all new participants.<sup>8</sup> It notes that unexpected things can come up while you're working and that someone from the IWS team can "call you regularly to check everything is going well at work and at home". (Appendix C)

During phase two, MSD began contracting national providers to deliver three programmes to provide virtual pastoral care services. The three online pastoral support services are Whītiki Tauā, Puāwaitanga and Te Heke Mai.

Whītiki Tauā and Puāwaitanga are "free, professional mentoring or counselling services for when you may have challenges with work, or life in general, or feel anxious or uncertain". Both services are provided by Whakarongorau Aotearoa/New Zealand Telehealth Services.

Whītiki Tauā is specifically for Mana in Mahi employees and 18-24 year olds either on a benefit or recently off benefit and starting work or training. It provides virtual mentorship with a focus on the individual's wellbeing, growing confidence, setting, and achieving goals. The service is available through self-referral.

Puāwaitanga is a virtual counselling service focused on support for anxiety, low mood, relationships, grief, stress, and general wellbeing. It was set up in partnership with health and government agencies initially to reach those who are unable to access counselling services otherwise, such as those in rural areas. It is available to all MSD clients including Mana in Mahi participants and is accessed through self-referral.

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<sup>8</sup> Including those who were on the benefit as well as those who were deemed to be at-risk of being on the benefit.

Te Heke Mai is a remote coaching programme for employers, employees and those getting into new work or training and is provided by MyCare in association with MSD. It is an app-based system that encourages individuals to set goals. They are then coached by real people to achieve them. People access this service by consenting to MSD staff sending their name and contact details to the service for follow-up.

In addition to these virtual options, some regional MSD offices have introduced additional intensive pastoral care services which are offered to some Mana in Mahi employees. This evaluation did not explore the funding source or levers used within regions to activate these additional services. However, in one of the regions a person was contracted to work directly with employees while in another region an organisation was providing whānau-centred work brokerage services for MSD. The attributes of these services included kanohi ki te kanohi support, navigation of MSD system and entitlements, and wraparound support for whatever may be challenging the ability to succeed in the new job.

There are three main pathways into the programme for potential employees:

- via Work and Income case managers (beneficiaries). A work broker will learn of a job vacancy, mostly through employers, and seek suitable clients. With a vacancy the work broker is likely to run a search through the beneficiary database looking for job seekers who have expressed interest in work that aligns with the role. When they have a shortlist of clients, the work broker will e-mail them with brief details about the opportunity and their willingness to be interviewed. Those who agree then are invited in to meet with the employer who discusses the role with them and then makes a selection. Clients can also initiate interest in an occupation and request to join the programme. (Some beneficiaries heard about job openings through whānau/friends)
- via employers (non-beneficiaries). Under this scenario an employer may identify a potential employee who they consider meet the criteria for the programme. The employer will then connect with an MSD work broker who assesses the employee's eligibility for the programme
- via the website (self-initiated). The programme is advertised as a programme on MSD's website and candidates can email their general interest in the programme via the website.

The most common pathway for Māori who have entered the programme has been via the benefit. Māori employees were more likely than non-Māori to have been previously registered on a benefit (63.5 percent compared to 46.1 percent respectively). Of those who had come via Work and Income, 68 percent had been on the benefit for less than 12 months and 32 percent had been in receipt of benefit for more than 12 months.

Enquiries to the website are forwarded to a central inbox and then referred on to the applicable region to respond. It is unclear how many of these enquiries are received, responded to, and ultimately actioned. One work broker reported that if they are referred enquiries via the website, that they advise the potential employee to find an employer first, and then come back to them to be considered for the programme.

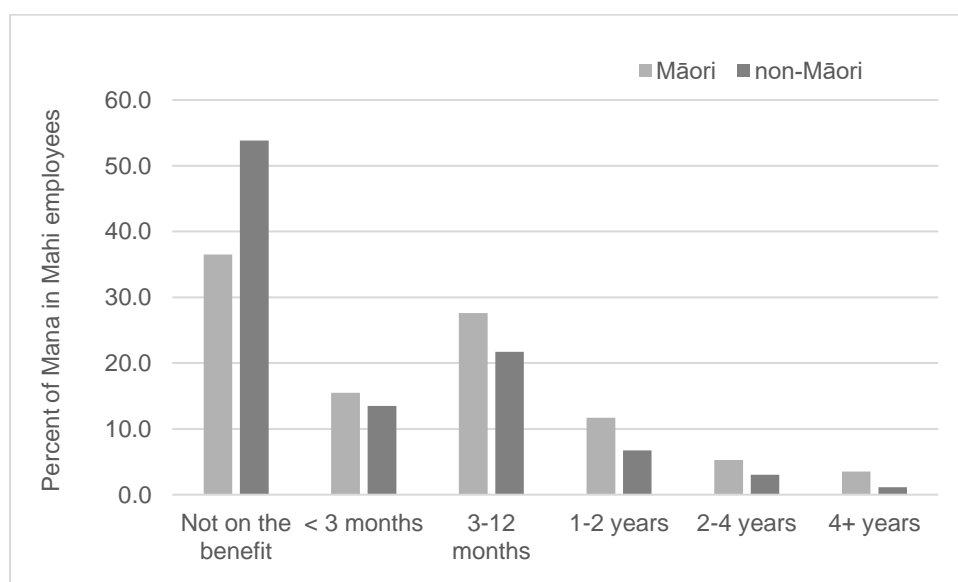
## Profile of participants

As of January 2023, there have been 5,703 placements since the programme's introduction. Of the total participants:

- 75 percent were male
- 64 percent were younger than 24
- 52 percent joined the programme from the benefit
- 36 percent (2,055) identified as Māori
- Māori employees were more likely than non-Māori to have been previously registered on a benefit (64 percent compared to 46 percent respectively).

Of those who had come via Work and Income, 68 percent had been on the benefit for less than 12 months and 32 percent had been receiving a benefit for more than 12 months. The comparable figures for non-Māori were 76 percent and 24 percent respectively.

**Figure 1: Placement referrals by duration on the benefit**



## Methodology

MSD commissioned mainstream formative and process evaluations of the programme, with reports published in May 2019 and January 2020. The findings from these reports helped inform changes in the programme's design and implementation. This kaupapa Māori evaluation was commissioned to focus specifically on the experience of Māori participants, within the broader context of Te Pae Tata (MSD's Māori Strategy).<sup>9</sup>

The evaluation took a staged, multi-method approach that was informed by documentation review and interviews with key informants from MSD's National Office, regional MSD kaimahi, employers, programme participants and in some cases, their whānau.

<sup>9</sup> It is being undertaken concurrently with two other evaluation streams – an analysis of IDI data and a mixed methods evaluation of Mana in Mahi phase two and expansion.

Interviews began in March 2022 with MSD National office and regional staff. As these interviews coincided with a COVID-19 community outbreak (Omicron variant) they were held remotely. Fieldwork was delayed until it was considered safer to visit the three regions between August and October 2022.

Three MSD regions were selected: East Coast, Waikato, and Nelson. Te Tairāwhiti, Waikato and Te Tau Ihu presented contrast in terms of Māori population, types of industry, youth, and unemployment statistics. These regions had also not been involved in previous Mana in Mahi evaluations. We conducted interviews in Hamilton City, Gisborne, Hastings, and Nelson.<sup>10</sup>

The intent was to interview around 40-50 individuals for this evaluation and in total we gathered the insights from 54 people. Table 2 below shows the number and type of interviewee by region.

**Table 3 – Interview participants by role and region**

Location	MSD staff	Pastoral care providers	Employers	Employees	Whānau	Total
National Office	2	-	-	-	-	2
East Coast	3	1	4	5	0	13
Waikato	3	0	3	14	3	23
Nelson	3	1	2	9	1	16
<b>Total participants</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>54</b>

We spoke to 28 employees across the three regions: 20 were active or completed and eight had exited the programme early. Eight identified as female and 20 as male. Just over 39 percent of these participants had been receiving a benefit on referral to the programme.

The 20 employees who were active, or had recently completed, were employed almost evenly across the following sectors: construction, scaffolding, and related industries, the beauty industry, regional councils, and health services. A small number were other sectors such as horticulture and automotive.

Four of the nine employers interviewed were Māori and we spoke to at least two employers in each region. Appendix B contains more detailed of the evaluation methodology and regional descriptions and statistics.

### *Caveats*

The qualitative findings presented in this report, are based on the experiences of a limited number of participants and the views and experiences they were willing to share. As with all qualitative research, the experiences of the evaluation participants (current, completed and exited early) may not reflect the experiences of the entire cohort of Māori participants.

<sup>10</sup> MSD regions and service centre locations: <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/corporate/annual-report/2018-2019/overview/our-locations.html>

Similarly, the three regions provided interest contrasts in terms of population demographics and employment sectors/industries. However, these dimensions are likely to vary across other regions so the patterns of participation and potentially experiences of employees may differ to those who participated in this evaluation.

Notwithstanding these caveats, the evaluators consider that the results provide a useful snapshot of the programme's successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement.

# Māori employees' experience of Mana in Mahi

## Overview

This section explores the Māori employee experience of the programme during their first few months on the job and then as they progress through the programme over the following 12-24 months. The findings are based on feedback from 20 employees who were either still active, or who had completed the programme. The experience of employees who exit early is discussed in the Outcomes section of the report.

### Key findings

During the first few months of employment:

- most ex-beneficiaries were not aware of the Work and Income supports that could help them to transition into work
- most employees faced challenges that affected their reliability at work such as transport issues, health issues and issues juggling whānau commitments
- employees tended to take time, and needed support, to adjust to a work routine and new workplace culture.

After a few months:

- most employees pastoral care needs were ongoing:
  - most employees were still experiencing a range of challenges outside the workplace
  - only one employee was aware that MSD offered virtual pastoral care support
  - employees who accessed intensive, face to face pastoral care support found it valuable
  - employees saw the value of investing in training and study
- all employees recognised the benefits of on-the-job training and formal industry qualifications
- many experienced challenges with study but most felt well-supported (by their employers and industry training organisations)
- most were not aware funding was available to assist them with study-related costs
- employees were motivated by incentive payments and most used them to buy work equipment or to help with costs of living.

## The first six months – overcoming challenges that affect employment

The first few months on the job are full of challenges for employees. Evaluation participants identified a range of issues that affected their ability to engage in the workplace.

*Some employees didn't feel affirmed moving off the benefit*

Once a beneficiary has been placed on the programme, they are transitioned off the benefit. We heard from employees that this can be a stressful time, and this was reiterated by pastoral care providers.

A few Māori employees spoke about feeling disappointed by Work and Income's reaction once they had secured a job. The employees were excited and feeling as though this was a significant event for them and their whānau, but their case manager treated it as another transaction.

*At first when I went in – I was a little gobsmacked... What I was doing was telling them [Work and Income] that I got the job...just needing help with clothing and things like that that.... it was a little intimidating because it was like "Right you got your job. We can give you this but we're gonna cut you off the benefit." ... It wasn't like "Hey, this is what your support is gonna be".*

– Wahine Māori, beauty industry, East Coast

The financial implications of moving off the benefit can be particularly daunting, especially for long-term beneficiaries and those with children.

*I didn't know I had to go get Inland Revenue... It's your first job, all of that can be overwhelming. That was my experience.*

– Wahine Māori, beauty industry, East Coast

*Employees were not aware of entitlements that could support their transition to work*

A number of employees who had transitioned off the benefit did not recall being offered post-benefit advice or support. They did not feel sufficiently informed about their entitlements and what to expect. A work broker described the challenges associated with transitioning off the benefit and how new employees were not aware of their entitlements which they should have obtained through the benefit exit process.

*I think housing is an issue...not confident in general budgeting, and our benefit exit process wasn't as complete as it could have been... There were some more things that she was entitled to, especially by way of accommodation assistance.*

– Work broker, East Coast

*Information about support did not reach most participants*

On having a placement confirmed, employees are sent an email from MSD which gives them links to a range of supports and entitlements (see Appendix 3). It provides a comprehensive and practical list and links for new employees about how to access financial and other support and regular check-ins with MSD. The email also outlines how to access free professional mentoring and counselling and support for extra training resources, as well as how to enrol in training and access incentive payments.

Most employees who were interviewed had no recollection of receiving an email or being advised of supports in the email. This could be for a number of reasons – client email addresses could be out of date, they may not have had access to email, or they may have received and overlooked the email. Regardless, it seems that communication of this critical information via email had not been effective for the evaluation participants.



One former case manager is now providing intensive kanohi ki te kanohi pastoral support services to MSD clients in one region. She recognised a need for employees to be supported around their entitlements and dealing with issues that might prevent them from being successful in their employment.

*The fact that I was a case manager has been a real advantage with Mana in Mahi in this role because I know the products even though things can change. Income limits go up and things like that. It has been a real advantage to know what they can get.... Hopefully put them in employment for the rest of their life. It's been a definite advantage knowing about the systems and how to get attention for them and their needs.*

– Pastoral care provider, East Coast

Employers were also unclear about the programme features and settings which then made it difficult for them to explain or support the employees around their entitlements. At the same time, some employers took on employees across a range of products (e.g., Flexi wage) and were not clear about the differences. It seemed that they all merged into one for employers. This could result in employees not receiving all their entitlements (e.g., pre-employment support), especially if they themselves lacked the information.

*Transport issues were a significant barrier to work attendance*

Māori employees were motivated to be in their new roles but often took some time to manage the transition. Both employees and employers identified transport-related issues as key barriers to attendance at work when employees joined the programme.

*Yeah transport ... was a big thing... My boss sorted out for my work mates who pick me up and drop me off after work.*

– Tane Māori, electricity industry, Waikato

*Transport is often an issue and relying on other people doesn't always work and driving on the wrong licences and getting fines, not having third party insurance. I try to tell them about paying off the small things helps if the big things turn up.*

– Pastoral care provider, East Coast

*Transport is huge. And even if they have transport and a licence... a lot of people, even 50-year-olds, only have a learners'...especially if I am doing civil construction. Their minimum is one restricted. We are trying to deal with that in many different ways through quite a few different providers. The other problem has been Covid, and a backlog of people trying to get through VTNZ as well. So, licensing is huge. Having transport is huge. Being able to get to work.*

– Work broker, East Coast

For these clients, especially young tāne, a sense of whakamā if things went wrong could lead them not to communicate with employers about these challenges in a timely way. Feeling shy or awkward about letting an employer down at an early stage could easily send some back to the 'safety' of the benefit.

*A young fella couldn't get to work ... there was a flat tyre. Car didn't have a warrant... just helping that young person navigate it, cause it's all new to them...It's ok to have a flat tyre. Teaching them that as soon as you know about issue, let the boss know and a lot of them are like "Oh no you know I've only been at work for like two months and already I'm asking the boss for a day off." And I was like "Well some of the stuff is out of your control." You can't control getting sick, you can't control a flat tyre on the car that you don't own. You can't control Auntie telling you that she's not gonna take you to work tomorrow.*

– Work broker, Waikato

### *Employees found juggling whānau commitments challenging*

Most employees had some difficulty juggling commitments outside of work, which impacted on attendance and sometimes performance at work. Many had tamariki and needed to ensure they could be cared for while they worked, with variations in childcare options (and cost) depending on where they lived. Relationship/custody issues were also identified as issues that could impact on work attendance and sometimes training and study.

*Whānau issues full stop. There are so many challenges for so many people. They get to work, and something happens in the family, and they just go off the radar, for sometimes a week.*

– Work broker, East Coast

*It was more personal things, stuff at home that was going on. So we had issues with my daughter because she suffers from a bad case of anxiety... It was just family stuff that I was trying to sort out, so I didn't really have time to study.*

– Tane Māori, social service industry, Waikato

One pastoral care provider gave examples of the types of challenges people can face in the early days of employment when they haven't yet accrued annual or sick leave.

*...I've just had two sole parents come onto the Mana in Mahi program and on the second week the fellow had to stay at home, medical certificates applied, because his child was ill. Then the woman ...she had terrible toothache, so long-term beneficiaries and they've got this chance and they're very on board with it but with the children and with the issues in winter that have come up, that the employer wasn't stumping up with these subsidies.*

– Pastoral care provider, East Coast

This provider knew about MSD entitlements and support options available through Work and Income, particularly for sole parents, and was able to help. But they were also conscious of the responsibility of employers – participating in the programme and being subsidised – in supporting their employees.

### *Employees took time to settle into a work routine and to adjust to a workplace culture*

Most participants (65 percent) were under the age of 25 and often had limited experience in a work setting. There were a range of issues and stresses for these, mostly young, employees and those first few months were 'make or break'. In addition to what might be going on in their personal lives, everything was different in the workplace, they were entering into a new environment, learning work habits and employer expectations.

Adjusting to workplace culture was identified as a challenge for some employees, mainly for tāne who form the vast majority of participants on this programme. One pastoral care provider spoke of the 'bloke-ish', 'harden up' culture in some workplaces which some rangatahi found difficult.

*It's that maleness, when they went on to sites they got a bit of a shock, very direct language.... I noticed that a lot of them didn't have dads, so I think that they hadn't had that male voice in the home, so it was quite a big adjustment.*

– Pastoral care provider, East Coast

For those employees who had been on the benefit, their relationship with their case manager (who will likely have worked them regarding their aspirations and needs) ends once they begin work. They may engage briefly with a work broker while being signed onto the programme, but after that their key relationship is with their employer.

*Once someone is off our books they are the employer's responsibility... Whereas with pastoral care they have an agreement with the employer, agreement with client, and that becomes a supportive and safe place for that person.*

– Work broker, East Coast

## After six months – gaining work experience, skills and qualifications

After six months employees better understood expectations around attendance and settled into mostly positive relationships with employers. Most employees had settled into their roles, established a regular work routine and were beginning their formal training. Most valued the opportunity to work towards qualifications and felt that this would lead to higher and more sustainable income and work options in the future. Most employees felt well supported by their employers.

They identified a number of examples of pastoral care support they received including employers:

- supporting with transport to and from work
- providing extra time off work to manage child custody processes
- providing EAP support for an employee who tested positive for drugs and holding their job open
- funding a rehabilitation programme and holding the job for an employee who had tested positive for drugs
- providing time off work and funds for external counselling for one employee to deal with anxiety and depression; another for anger management
- supporting with locating and subsidising childcare
- building tangihanga leave in to work contracts.

*They did help me look for childcare services and they did offer to help with transport... I couldn't find anyone to look after my son. They would look at childcare services out where we were, and they would come pick us up and drop him off...that was cool.*

– Wahine Māori, horticulture industry, Waikato

*My boss he's quite good. Always willing to help me out and help me learn as best I can so it's good.*

– Tane Māori, automotive industry, Nelson

*Māori employees were not accessing the remote pastoral care services available through the programmes*

The need for pastoral care support was high. Most Māori employees interviewed were experiencing issues that pastoral care could have helped them to manage. These included high living costs, family obligations and numerous other issues that put them under significant stress and pressure.

Mana in Mahi has design features to support clients once they have started work including In Work support (phone-based wellbeing and work satisfaction checks) from MSD and three opt-in remote services offering mentoring/counselling/coaching. No data was available at the time of the evaluation on how many employees had taken up these services.

Only one of the employees who were interviewed had heard of these services. He responded to a text from Whītiki Tauā and had had a positive experience. Another had a remote mentor she appreciated but could not recall the service name.

*It has been good for me... she said, 'Don't say no to help' if it is there*

– Tane Māori, construction industry, Waikato

Most employees had not heard of these virtual support services and feedback from MSD staff indicated that these services aren't actively promoted.

*There have been different times that we have promoted it [Te Heke Mai], but I suspect we're not doing so well .... We should be using it more. I know we've done it before, and then we get busy. It's like a lot of things, you hear about it, and if there's no uptake of it within a month or so, it gets buried under the next wave of information.*

– Work broker, East Coast

Another work broker who had plenty of experience with phone calls to young people going unanswered, endorsed the idea of texting to engage employees.

*A lot of our young people if you told them so and so is going to give you a phone call they'd be like "I ain't answering that phone call". You know there was an excuse for not doing it... but if it was a text message or there was an alert on the app on their phone, they were more likely to respond that way.*

– Work broker, Waikato

*Māori employees valued intensive pastoral care*

East Coast and Nelson MSD each have contracts with external pastoral care providers to offer more intensive support to clients where needed. In Hastings, a former MSD case manager is contracted to work with clients to provide wraparound support. The East Coast region also holds a contract with Tūranga Ararau which is a service provider for Te Rūnanga o Tūrangānui-a-Kiwa. Work and Income refers people to Tūranga Ararau to provide support before their placement starts. This is designed to help them be work-ready (including licences, personal presentation, health, and safety) and gives them ongoing pastoral care for a year if needed. East Coast work brokers were impressed with the intensive pastoral care approach and impact of these services on employees.

*They are fantastic. They will keep regular contact, that might be around car, license, they will take people to their first day of work, make sure they get there on the first day, and just be around to refer them to support services if they need that. They will be an advocate between MSD and the client and employer. A medium for communication, because I can't ring every single person that I have put in MIM to see how they are going.*

– Work broker, East Coast

*I refer them to [pastoral care provider] ...I am doing that with all of my [clients] from now on – providing the client is okay with it, and they seem to be. I just say; "Hey, this is a support thing. This is in case down the track anything happens, you have someone who can help you work through any issues or challenges you have on job. It is just there to make sure you are going to be successful". I haven't done it well in the past, so I have just put a process in place where I am referring it right in the beginning.*

– Work broker, East Coast

In Nelson, Te Kotahi o Te Tau Ihu Trust delivers marae-based work brokerage and pastoral support for MSD.<sup>11</sup> Two of the Nelson employees participating in this evaluation had been actively supported by the Trust.

*I really enjoyed being on the Mana in Mahi programme, the mentor ... just gave me the push to get me back into the work and confidence building, so thank you.*

– Wahine Māori, social service industry Nelson

*It was just very much like someone who you could talk to anything about and help work through any issues or how to set goals and just someone just to be there for you.*

– Wahine Māori, social service industry Nelson

*They were always trying to give you advice on how you can approach for bigger things or furthering yourself within the company and don't just kind of stay in place...they were great on the helping me get to where I wanted to be.*

– Wahine Māori, beauty industry, Nelson

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<sup>11</sup> Te Kotahi o Te Tau Ihu Trust was established by the eight iwi at the top of the South Island during COVID-19, who had previously engaged with the Regional Inter-Sectoral Forum.

*Many employees found study challenging – especially outside work hours*

Many evaluation participants said that the training/qualification component of the programme was important to them from the start. One client had begun the four-year hairdressing qualification around eight years earlier, but children and life had prevented completion. Mana in Mahi meant that they were able to complete the qualification, gain practical salon experience and other work skills. Those working in construction, hairdressing, and other trades (e.g., automotive) were particularly aware of the need for formal skills development to progress in their industries.

*You just gotta knuckle down and just do it eh? Like I flat with my mate and he's also a mechanic but he's doing heavy diesel and we just like smash out a bit of homework every couple of days after work.*

– Tane Māori, automotive industry, Nelson

Other employees had few expectations around their training but on reflection felt it was an asset for them. An employee in an office job had completed a computing qualification while on the programme, without training being a strong motivator for her. She had since chosen to keep studying and was enrolled in a business programme.

Balancing work and study can be challenging for anyone and the requirement to undertake formal qualifications makes the programme distinct amongst MSD's programmes. Assessments generally happen on-site during work time, as does a lot of practical learning, but further study is usually required outside of work time.

*It's been a bit of a struggle but mostly just finding a time and place. This other boy got me to stay back a bit late once a week...At the workshop...Yeah and so I'm not distracted ... like I stay about an hour or something and I have a couple people help me through.*

– Tane Māori, steel industry, East Coast

Those who did struggle with study identified key barriers such as being too tired in the evenings (especially if they had physical jobs), have to juggle study and parenting commitments and staying motivated through remote learning. This was a particular issue in some areas during COVID-19 when education shifted entirely online.

*Most employees felt well supported by employers and industry organisations to study*

Most employees felt supported by their employer and/or industry training organisation to undertake their study and assessments. Good employers appeared to facilitate this by providing study time during the work week. One hairdresser noted being grateful to be given a day off work per week for study, which made the training commitment more achievable, particularly when juggling tamariki commitments.

Another appreciated having colleagues who were also working towards qualifications and they would encourage each other to get the mahi done.

*There are other boys around (who also have to study), and we always yarn about it and stuff. Try help each other out, and also [Industry Training Organisation] they do that. They come in and help us, so she is pretty good. Always on our case and calling us up. That is good, I like that.... Face to face, but then random times she will call us.*

– Tane Māori, construction industry Waikato

*I've been very fortunate here with the manager who... allowed me to take home my work laptop so I could study. That was huge and I mean just having it all paid for and knowing that that was all. That it's not just for like the here and now but for the future too, so I can further myself.*

– Wahine Māori, social sector, Nelson

One work broker gave an example of an industry training organisation that provided tailored support for an employee with dyslexia.

*We've got one young man who has quite a high degree of dyslexia... but the BCITO gave him some really good support. So, that's been great because that young man struggled his way through school.....but he's out flatting, he's got a life, he's doing well in the apprenticeship, and he's getting support for his dyslexia... ..Some of our ITOs are doing good stuff.*

– Work broker, East Coast

MSD's pre-employment subsidy via employers and the additional education support direct to employees are there to support employees with education needs but there was a low level of awareness and low uptake. A few of those interviewed had received a laptop to aid their studies but this was usually because their pastoral care provider had advised them they were eligible. One client said he found out after he had completed the course that he could have received support to buy a laptop. Most employees were not aware they might have been eligible for the additional education support funding.

#### *Employees found incentive payments empowering and motivating*

A unique design feature of the programme is that it includes incentive payments of \$1,000 that are paid directly to employees who remain in employment at three months, six months, and 12 months. There are no other requirements attached to these payments with MSD referring to them as being "earned by clients for staying committed to their employment".

All employees we spoke to highly valued these incentive payments particularly in the context of mostly minimum wage roles and high living costs. Most reported that they used their incentive payments for work-related costs, in particular, purchasing tools and other work-related equipment.

*I got ...[incentive] payments when I was in my first year and like obviously you are getting paid pretty s\*\*t in the first and second year, so like it was so helpful for buying tools... because tools are so expensive ... What I did is buy like heaps of Milwaukee tools because when you buy them in bulk you can get like packs, and they are cheaper, so you aren't buying like separate things. I was able to get...quite a nice toolbox and tool collection now ... it's super handy man. It was a real help.*

– Tane Māori, automotive industry, Nelson

*Yeah, I just used it all on tools and it's so good ...like I used to have to borrow my boss's tools a lot and now I don't have to because I've got like everything...Nah like it was pretty awesome.*

– Tane Māori, automotive industry, Nelson

*A lot of the time, I always have to ask someone if I can use theirs [their workmates' tools]. That just helped me buy some stuff that I need... I bought me a little set, like a grinder and drill and those kind of things yeah ... I didn't really spend it... I kind of just let it build up a bit and I bought like a pretty decent piece.*

– Tane Māori, steel industry, East Coast



*It made a huge difference when, even just that transition where I was new to the job and just didn't have any equipment that I needed. And some jobs they'll pay for all the initial things but just those little extra things that you don't really think of at the time that are just really helpful.*

– Tane Māori, social sector, Nelson

Some also used incentive payments for vehicle-related expenses (which increased their reliability) and to help with day to day living expenses.

*When those payments came in, that motivated me to look into getting a car. So I did finance it, but those first couple of payments were actually pretty good for that. Helped me just with the motivation, I think.*

– Tane Māori, infrastructure industry, Waikato

Employees spoke about the payments empowering them, enhancing their sense of mana, especially as providers for their whānau.

*When I was having my rough patch, and I was seeing that counsellor. Then something came in and just having that ... put me on a real high, and I was grateful as.*

– Tane Māori, construction industry, Waikato

While the incentive payments were not a driver to join the programme, employees did see them as an acknowledgment and reward for staying in the programme. This suggests that, as a design feature, incentive payments were having their intended impact.

*He come back to us and said "Hey there's some money in my account and it came from you guys. But I don't know what to do with it. Do I have to pay it back?" ... We were like "That's yours, good on you for being at work." And this young fella's like "So what do I spend it on?". I said, "We don't care, like spend it on things that are meaningful to you and good on you for being an employee."*

– Work broker, Waikato

Two employees reported that they had not received incentive payments. In one region, work brokers advised there was a backlog of overdue incentive payments as a result of the post-expansion uptake of the programme. Programme numbers, as well as subsidy rates, were significantly increased in the context of COVID-19 and projected job losses. The increase in clients to the programme, in particular non-beneficiaries, had created a significant amount of administration including many bank account details still needing to be obtained or checked (as they were not already in the Work and Income system).

## Overall quality of experience of active and completed employees

*Most Māori employees who were active or completed had a positive experience*

Employees who were still active on the programme, or had recently completed, were positive about their employers and their experience on the programme.

*So now, where I'm at now, this is it, this is me. I love it. I love the challenges. I love pushing myself. I love trying to adapt to mahi cause... I've never had a full-time job in my life. Part-time yup. But this, this is nice to me, it doesn't feel like my job, coming in everyday doing something I love.*

– Wahine Māori, beauty industry, East Coast



*Yeah, nah - I'm loving it.*

– Tane Māori, electricity industry, Waikato

Many were still working with the same employer and enjoying their jobs while some had changed jobs but stayed in the same industry. One participant who finished the one-year programme but then went into a different industry was happy that the programme had given him some experience which helped him identify what he really wanted to be doing. A few participants changed to other employers in the same industry after completing the programme. They spoke about having gained work experience, training, and the confidence to seek better conditions for themselves.

*Just keep training me because still, to this day, that's my main focus – is just training to get more qualifications, more tickets.*

– Tane Māori, construction industry, Waikato

One of these employees had only just learned they were successful in securing a new role and was ecstatic. There had been staffing tensions in the previous work environment where she had her Mana in Mahi experience. She had been supported by an external mentor throughout her time on the programme. She credited that external, independent advice and support with equipping her to complete the programme and then make a more positive change for her and her family.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Wāhine Māori reported positive experiences*

We interviewed several active wāhine who were employed in the social/health service, beauty and horticulture industries. All had had positive experiences. Most had tamariki and reported challenges juggling childcare and whānau commitments, full-time work hours and study. However, all were highly motivated and were driven by the skills, training, and experience that they were gaining. They knew these would help them to achieve their aspirations and provide a good life for their whānau in the future. All reported that their employers were supportive, encouraging and created a work environment that enabled them to manage challenges.

One wahine was a sole parent who had gone on the sole parent benefit after separating from a partner and the programme enabled her to get back into the workforce. For her, the outcomes included gaining a qualification and work experience but also regaining confidence and feeling like a better role model for her children.

*I've become a more confident person. I suppose when I had kids, then raised them pretty much solely, you lose a lot of confidence in yourself and in your ability to get back out there and so that's just given that back. It's given me purpose and also to show the kids that, ... you're more capable than what you think.*

– Wahine Māori, social service sector, Nelson

Those with mentoring or pastoral care support strongly credited it as helping them manage challenges external to the workplace and navigate challenges within the workplace. The support meant they could remain on the programme.

Despite the potential for Mana in Māori to support wāhine Māori into employment and invest in their training and development, they represent only 1 in 4 Māori participants. This figure is

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<sup>12</sup> It was unclear to interviewers in this case if the employee was being mentored via a virtual service or in-person through either their employer or an intensive pastoral care provider.

comparable for non-Māori women. The factors contributing to low access by wāhine Māori to the programme and the potential for the programme to better serve wāhine Māori are discussed further in the Design section of the report.

*Māori who had been on the benefit for more than two years reported positive experiences*

We interviewed several people who had previously been on a benefit for a long time (more than two years). All of them had a positive experience and achieved very good outcomes. They each had challenges entering the workforce such as managing childcare, learning to manage their finances, and health issues. While other employees had similar challenges initially, these issues had greater potential to derail people who had been receiving a benefit for a long time.

However, despite complex social and economic factors, they were all highly motivated and reported that the programme had been an important enabler for them. All but one employee had access to an intensive pastoral care provider to support them and this was critical to their success. In one case, the employee had been on a benefit for over 15 years but in her first job, with intensive pastoral care support, had been fast-tracked into a leadership role.

There is considerable potential for the programme to support long-term beneficiaries into employment, leading to sustainable outcomes for them and their whānau through targeted investment into their training and development. Currently, long-term beneficiaries represent only nine percent of all Māori participants and four percent of all non-Māori participants. The reasons for this and the potential for the programme to better serve long-term beneficiaries is discussed further in the Design section.

### Implications

- Better communication about assistance that is available to support transition to work is required.
- Better promotion of existing pastoral care services is required.
- Increase provision of intensive pastoral care services would support the success of employees with complex circumstances.
- Better communication about Additional Education Support funding is required.

Detailed recommendations regarding these implications are provided in the concluding section of the report.

## Outcomes for Māori Mana in Mahi participants

### Overview

This section considers the extent to which the programme is supporting Māori towards positive outcomes and meeting their needs and expectations. It provides an overview of outcomes that the 20 active or active and completed Māori employees are achieving through their participation in the programme. It also describes the experience of eight participants who exited the programme early. It also explores how participation in the programme has impacted on their whānau.

### Key findings

#### *Outcomes for active and completed employees*

- Since its launch, 2,055 Māori have participated in the programme, accounting for 36 percent of all participants.
- Three out of five Māori participants were either active or had completed the programme.
- Employees who are active, or who have completed the programme, have enjoyed being in skilled employment and valued the training and development opportunities that it provides.
- Almost all active Māori participants (93%) had formal training pathways.
- Over half of active Māori participants were studying Level 4 qualifications.
- Most active and completed employees intended to complete their qualifications and remain in their occupation for the medium to long term.
- Women made up 27 percent of programme participants and achieved positive outcomes.
- People who had been on the benefit for more than two years, made up 9 percent of programme participants, and achieved positive outcomes.
- Participant outcomes had positive flow on effects for whānau in terms of improved financial security outlook and role modelling for tamariki.

#### *Outcomes for Mana in Mahi participants who exited early*

- Two out of five Māori participants exited early.
- Employers mostly attributed early exits to unrealistic expectations of employees.
- Employees who exited early identified a range of reasons why including: businesses closing down, employers not following through on commitments, unfair treatment by employers and the job not being what they expected.

## Outcomes for active and completed participants

*Employees enjoyed being in skilled employment and felt confident about their future prospects*

Overwhelmingly, active and completed employees were enjoying the roles they had attained and the opportunities that they were exposed to through the programme.

*I love it... I like to drive. Yeah, it's pretty cool. We do have a set job to do, but you come in and the day is like; you go here, go here, go here, go here. So, it is all different. All around the same type of work, but every day is pretty different. I enjoy that.*

– Tane Māori, water industry, Waikato

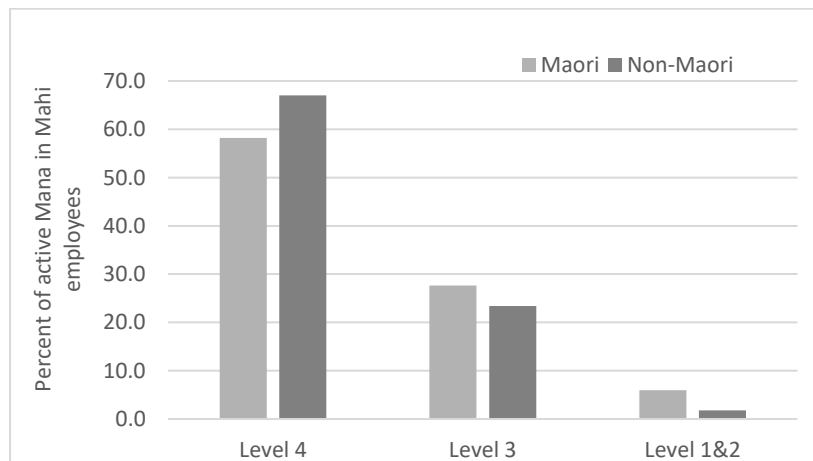
The majority of active participants were doing well in their jobs and achieving training goals. Most signalled that they intended to stay in their current occupations and that they saw themselves pursuing further training and growing their skills and experience. These positive outcomes will also have flow-on effects for their employers and industries.

A small number from the construction industry hoped to move either to another employer or overseas at some point in the future. They felt that the skills and experience they were accruing through the programme were positioning them well to work towards achieving their aspirations.

*Almost all active Māori participants had formal training pathways*

As at the end of January 2023, 93 percent of active Māori employees had training pathways – a figure that was comparable to non-Māori. Figure 2 shows the majority of Māori (58 percent) were studying at NZQA Level 4. However, Māori employees were more likely than non-Māori to be studying lower-level qualifications. One third of active Māori employees were studying at Level 3 or below compared to one quarter of non-Māori. Conversely, 58 percent of Māori were studying at Level 4 compared to 67 percent of non-Māori. All participants were committed to completing their qualifications.

**Figure 2: Active Mana in Mahi participants by NZQA level of study**



Active Māori employees who participated in the evaluation were enrolled and undertaking relevant industry training qualifications in their first year. Those who had completed the programme reported that they had attained, or were on track to attain, their industry qualification.

In terms of longer-term aspirations, active and completed participants felt confident about their skills and knowledge and positive about their employability in the future.

*Doing something and getting a certificate out of it. I was just doing Maccas and schoolwork ... If I lost that job, I wouldn't have anything to fall back on. If I get qualified, I can fall back on this.*

– Tane Māori, water industry, Waikato

## Outcomes for wāhine

Wāhine Māori have been under-represented in the programme, accounting for 27 percent of Māori participants. Most of these were employed in industries and occupations where women make up most of the workforce such as in the beauty industry, and health and social services.

The programme has not actively promoted access by wāhine Māori to construction and related trades, which is the largest industry employer for the programme.<sup>13</sup> In the workforce generally, the under-representation of women in these industries is well recognised.<sup>14</sup> In recent years, industry bodies and training organisations have been seeking to attract women into these industries. They have also been profiling the success of wāhine in these industries, particularly wāhine Māori and Pasifika. Some MSD evaluation participants recognised increasing access by wāhine as an opportunity to increase the success of the programme.

*I've always thought we could do better with our young women, especially when it comes to the trades. One of the greatest welders I know is female. She's awesome. I think we've missed the boat there. We could always do better.*

– Work broker

*I get a bit frustrated at the generalisations that young women don't want to go into building and aren't capable ... 'cause they are. .... I'm like, "Well one of my daughters could build the house if she wanted to".*

– MSD advisor

## Outcomes for participants who have been on the benefit for 2+ years

To date, participants who had been on the benefit for more than two years have accounted for only nine percent of Māori programme participants.<sup>15</sup> Some case managers indicated that they are reluctant to refer long term beneficiaries to the programme as they feel they tend not to be work ready and are less likely have the work ethic to succeed.

One case manager noted that they would not short-list any beneficiaries who have been on a benefit for more than two years. Other work brokers confirmed that this practice had been

<sup>13</sup> The programme was initially designed at a time of sector skill shortages in these industries and construction apprenticeships were prioritised in the roll-out. Mana in Mahi was a key initiative included in the Action Plan to deliver the Construction Skills Strategy which aimed to engage up to 4,000 more people pursuing construction-related careers. Refer: Cabinet Economic Development Committee (2018). *Action Plan to deliver the Construction Skills Strategy*, p.8.

<sup>14</sup> A range of research has identified the barriers women face to participation in these industries. For example, see reference list including *Trade Careers - Insights Research* (2021); *Victoria's Women in Construction Strategy*; and *Barriers affecting women in trades initiatives in Canada*.

<sup>15</sup> The equivalent figure for non-Māori is four percent of non-Māori participants.

incentivised through job placement targets, though recent policy had shifted towards the quality rather than the quantity of placements.

*Work brokers have had targets to achieve as far as how many people we place into employment. There are two sides to the argument, accountability, productivity, etc. On the other side, behaviours of just taking the easy wins and not doing the depth of work and follow-up with our priority, more vulnerable clients - that tends to suffer when we're chasing another three or four people into easier jobs to get people into.*

– Work broker, East Coast

Some indicated that pre-employment programmes that help people get “work ready” such as Building Futures,<sup>16</sup> may be a more appropriate pathway for long term beneficiaries.

## Outcomes for whānau

*Whānau were a key motivator for employees*

Most Māori employees said that whānau were their key motivation for entering into employment and advancing their skills, experience, and motivation. All active/completed clients interviewed for this evaluation were motivated to get into work. Most referred to whānau and were seeking stability – creating better circumstances for their tamariki or being encouraged by siblings and parents.

*I've just had a son too ...he's only about seven weeks old. So yeah, just I know having a stable job and for my son and my partner.*

– Tane Māori, electricity industry, Waikato

*But I've always wanted to become a builder because of my son. My son loves building...so it made me want to become a builder.*

– Tane Māori, construction industry, East Coast

*We don't have any electricians in our whānau so, I want to be the first one and hopefully pave the way for the younger ones... I think my brother wants to jump into trades now.*

– Tane Māori, electrical industry, East Coast

Several tane who had previously worked in low-skilled, low paid industries (such as meatworks and retail) were motivated by the prospect of moving into roles with better terms and conditions and future prospects.

*When I left school, I went to [meatworks]... I wanted a job that was more 9-5 not dark till dark.*

– Tane Māori, electricity industry, Waikato

*My family love the fact that I get to come home not at late hours like I was when I was working at [business]... I used to go home stressed a lot with the things they'd have me do. And that's what they've noticed lately, is that I come home and I'm a lot easier to get along with. So it has a big effect on my family.*

– Tane Māori, construction industry, Waikato

<sup>16</sup> Building Futures is a training programme, supported by industry and MSD, that helps people get mahi in the timber processing or building supplies industries. It gives people personal help to develop the skills needed to get mahi and manage their lives.

*Employees have inspired whānau and future generations*

In turn, the achievements of Māori employees were inspiring to friends and whānau members. Whānau who were interviewed were immensely proud of the achievements of their rangatahi and other relatives who had participated. A common theme was that they felt that participation in the programme had been an important step towards financial security in the future for their whānau member and their whānau.

*Proud of our boy, school wasn't really a fit for him, he was struggling, and he had a desire to get into something that he was interested in, and we supported him with that and to see him be qualified now and have a fulltime job is awesome... Yep, he's the third out of eight but he's the first to be qualified in anything.*

– Mother of MIM employee, Waikato

*It makes me feel like secure, like there's security for him because he's got his career sorted and he's qualified, and he's gone through knowing what it takes...so that gives me peace of mind, but it also gives him security he's got something to fall back on.*

– Mother of MIM employee, Waikato

*It's good to have someone that's like getting a trade and actually doing something. It is really handy because it doesn't matter where we are he'll be able to find work.*

– Partner of MIM employee, Waikato

*I know that some of his peers have become good friends. And that's a really good thing. So for him, I know for us as a family, it's been huge. It's been a huge benefit for us. He seems a lot happier, they can see that.*

– Mother of MIM employee, Waikato

*They are really proud of me, and they are really excited of what's coming next.*

– Tane Māori, steel industry, East Coast

Some noted the positive impact that engagement with the programme had had in terms of role modelling for tamariki, younger siblings and friends.

*Because seeing my daughter wanting to do that little girl's hair. She's like "Mummy I wanna be just like you". And it melted my heart. And I was just like "Oh my God". Because I didn't have that growing up. So, for my babies to be like "I'm gonna be a hairdresser just like you, aye Mum" ... it's lovely.*

– Wahine Māori, hairdressing and beauty industry, Nelson

*I was telling them about it. My brother wanted to get onto it ... They were like "Yeah, that's wicked as". ... My brother's doing an apprenticeship for building in Nelson. I've got a mate that wants to get into it, and she lives in the Bay here.*

– Tane Māori, automotive industry, Nelson

*Participation in Mana in Mahi contributed to whānau rangatiratanga*

While Māori we spoke with had different experiences depending on their employer and the type of support they needed and received, in general they felt that the programme had been of benefit to them personally. They said that this had positive flow-on effects for their whānau. They spoke

about the impacts of the programme on their tamariki and broader whānau and the greater potential they felt there was for achieving whānau economic security and overall resilience.

The Whānau Rangatiratanga Framework (the Framework) outlines the vision of whānau being strong, safe, and prosperous and ultimately, exercising control over their destiny.<sup>17</sup> It provides a useful tool to consider the extent to which the outcomes achieved through by individuals, align with the vision of whānau rangatiratanga.

Table 4 explores the extent to which the programme is contributing to whānau rangatiratanga. It is important to note that the outcomes of individual employees may not translate directly into whānau (collective) outcomes. Nonetheless, this mapping attempt is a useful first step in testing the extent to which MSD programmes have the potential to contribute to MSD's strategic vision for whānau Māori.<sup>18</sup>

The table uses a "heat mapping approach" to highlight the degree of alignment with the capability dimensions and principles. Light grey denotes a weak alignment to the outcomes, whereas dark grey indicates a stronger alignment.

Based on the feedback from active and completed participants and their whānau, it is evident that the outcomes achieved align reasonably well to the economic and human resource potential dimensions of the framework. There is also some alignment to the social capability dimensions.

In terms of the sustainability of te ao Māori dimension of the framework, outcomes for employees who worked for Māori organisations included, to some extent, the principles of wairuatanga and kotahitanga. For Māori employers, their business models were strongly driven by their aspiration to advance Māori and ultimately whānau wellbeing. Māori made up most, if not all, of their workforce and Māori values, principles and cultural provided the foundation for business operations. Within this context, there was alignment between the cultural identity of employees and their employer/workplace (wairuatanga). Employees were also able to contribute meaningfully to the culture of those businesses in an authentic way (kotahitanga).

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<sup>17</sup> The Whānau Rangatiratanga Framework informs the ongoing development of the Whānau Wellbeing Research streams of work, as part of the Families and Whānau Wellbeing research programme. The framework is intended to help MSD think about how a policy, programme or initiative is meeting the needs of whānau. It is based on Te Ao Māori principles and capability dimensions as identified in the Māori Statistics Framework and reflects the key aims of Whānau Ora.

<sup>18</sup> *Whānau are strong, safe, and prosperous – active within their community, living with a clear sense of identity and cultural integrity and with control over their destiny – Te mana kaha o te whānau!* (Te Pae Tata, Ministry of Social Development, 2019)



Table 4 – Contribution of Mana in Mahi outcomes for Māori employees to whānau rangatiratanga

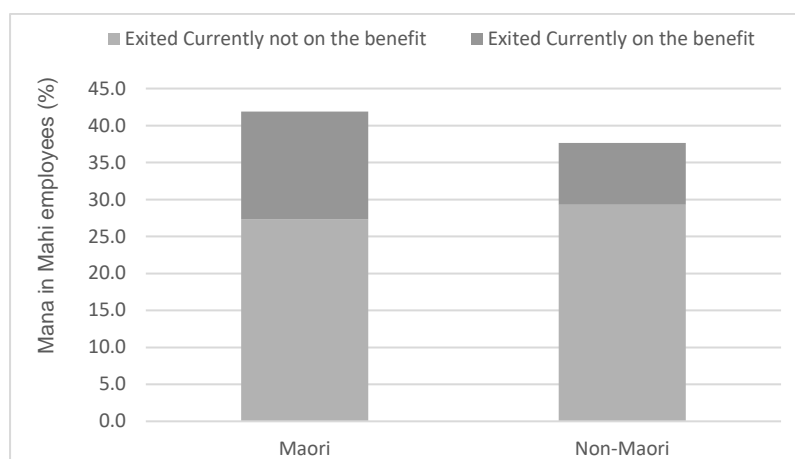
Capability dimensions	Principles				
	Whakapapa	Manaakitanga	Rangatiratanga	Kotahitanga	Wairuatanga
<b>Sustainability of te ao Māori</b>	Whānau have a positive relationship with Te Ao Māori	Whānau are able to foster and develop their connections to Te Ao Māori	Whānau exercise leadership in Te Ao Māori	Whānau are able to meaningfully engage with Māori culture and Māori institutions*	Whānau can access and express their culture and identity in ways that are meaningful to them*
<b>Social capability</b>	Whānau are connected and safe	Whānau care for themselves and for others	Whānau exercise leadership in Te Ao Whānui	Whānau are able to access and trust institutions	Whānau are able to express and embrace spirituality
<b>Human resource potential</b>	Whānau wellbeing is enhanced	Whānau support each other to succeed	Whānau are able to live well	Whānau are able to achieve their aspirational goals	Whānau are resilient and able to overcome adversity
<b>Economic</b>	Whānau can manage and leverage collective resources	Whānau are able to support each other financially and to accumulate financial reserves	Whānau enjoy economic security	Whānau can navigate barriers to success	Whānau can access their material and non-material resources.

## Outcomes for participants who exited early

### *Two out of five Māori participants exited early*

Māori participants were more likely than non-Māori participants to exit the programme early. Since its establishment, 861 Māori have exited early from the programme (42 percent). This compares with 38 percent of non-Māori.

Māori who exited early were more likely to currently be on the benefit (post exit). Of the early exits, 300 Māori participants are currently on the benefit (34.8 percent) compared to 22.3 percent of non-Māori (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Percent of Māori and non-Māori who exited early by benefit status**

Employers reported the reasons for employees exiting early to MSD. Table 5 shows that most exits were recorded by employers as withdrawals. Māori were slightly more likely than non-Māori to have been dismissed, or to have had the reason for their exit recorded as unknown.

**Table 5: Percent Māori and non-Māori who early exit by reason for exit**

Reason for early exits	Māori	non-Māori
Withdrew	94.4	95.9
Dismissed	4.2	3.1
Unknown	1.4	1.1
Total	100.0	100.0

Eight Māori who exited the programme early participated in the evaluation. All had exited within the first 12 months of the programme. Connecting with this cohort was challenging as mobile phone was their main access point and some numbers were no longer connected. People whose numbers were active sometimes required multiple calls in order for the person to pick up. Further, some people were reluctant or declined to be interviewed about their experience.

Of the eight who exited early, at the time of the evaluation:

- three were on the benefit
- three had gone on to low-skilled/non-apprenticeship roles (labouring, retail, administration)
- two had changed employers (scaffolder and plumber). Of these one had retained their apprenticeship and another had secured an apprenticeship as their previous employer had undertaken to take them on as an apprentice, but this didn't happen.

*Reasons why participants exited early*

Of the eight interviewed, one participant said he left his job because the nature of the job was not what he thought it would be. One lost his job, and consequently his place on the programme, as their employer went out of business. At the time of the interview, they were still seeking employment in low-skilled industries/occupations.

*The business was going down... They had to let me go. I'm just searching for full-time work in hospitality and factory work because I don't really mind factory work.*

– Wahine Māori, hospitality industry, Nelson

Another participant had experienced significant workplace injury. This person was receiving ongoing support from their case manager. They had been placed with another employer but due to the ongoing challenges related to the injury, they had not been able to sustain the employment. They aspired to return to another the programme in the future.

*Some participants felt they had been poorly treated by their employers*

Five other participants who exited early, did so because they felt they were not being treated fairly by their employer. Reasons for exiting early included that they had not received any training or that they had not been signed up for the apprenticeship they had been offered (two participants) and pay-related issues (one had not received regular pay, one had not been paid at all and one had been offered a pay rise that never eventuated).

*The last company I worked with was supposed to take me on as an apprentice but they just strung me along... The thing that really got me is because of that because they didn't sign me up [as an apprentice], I'm like a year behind all of the people I did my pre-trade with.*

– Tane Māori, construction industry, Waikato

*I signed a contract for being under them, but I only got paid like \$200 to \$300 and they said I was just volunteering to do it. So that was also another reason I left because they were putting me down as a volunteer, not an actual worker... For 4 months work, and I was working every single day, 8 o'clock 'til 4:30pm – sometimes till 6 o'clock.*

– Wahine Māori, beauty industry, Nelson

None of the employees felt confident to raise these employment relations issues with their employer – likely due to their youth and lack of experience/confidence in the workplace. Instead, they felt that leaving their job was the only option.

*When you look at the hours it was like "Oh heck you know my first job". I didn't want to step out of line and talk about that stuff.*

– Tane Māori, construction industry, Waikato

One mature employee, who had previously received Work and Income support as she had been caring for her father, was placed in a role that she was committed to and really enjoyed. However, she said she exited early as she had not been paid. She had unsuccessfully tried to contact Work and Income for support as she was loving the job and would have preferred to continue in the role.

*I left the job. It was a bit confrontational – I wasn't getting paid... You didn't get any correspondence from me? I was never able to get a hold of you guys, to let you know this was happening. I wish I did because I didn't want to leave. I would've stayed... I was enjoying the [business]... but I wasn't being paid. I couldn't stay there... I didn't want to kick up a stink. I just left.*

– Wahine Māori, agriculture sector, Nelson

*Employers often attributed early exits to unrealistic expectations and poor behaviour by employees*

Consistent with the experience of participants who exited early, work brokers and pastoral care providers reported that most early exits occurred within the first 12 months. However, the reasons for exiting offered by employers did not align with the reasons offered by employees. Employers, and some MSD staff, attributed early exits to an unrealistic employee expectations of the role or poor employee work ethic or behaviour (resulting in disciplinary issues).

Pastoral care providers and some work brokers offered a more balanced view indicating that both employers and employees can contribute to early exits. One pastoral care provider offered the view that rangatahi often do not cope well with the workplace culture and style of communication (especially in the construction industry where there are a high proportion of placements). She felt expectations by employers of these new, inexperienced young employees may be too high in some instances leading to a communication stalemate.

*When I talk to the employer about why the employee left, they say that this is not the work they wanted to do or they don't just turn up to work and the employer releases them. However, it's maybe that the employer has talked to their employee in a way - a bit harsh. There are employers of the old school but what happens to a lot of these young people, once they get being told those sorts of things, it sticks with them and then they forget to communicate with the employer.*

– Work broker, Waikato

Those with competing priorities at home, without employer support to study or who struggled with education could be particularly at risk of poor outcomes.

*The manager kept putting him on so many shifts that he could not get the study he needed to get done. He fell over in his job and left. That was one of the failure ones. Back on benefit .... I think that the pressure of doing work and doing the study was too much.*

– Work broker, East Coast

In one region, a pastoral care worker was able to help mediate when an employer was having an issue with an employee, in an effort to try and keep the employee's job. This was at a critical juncture for a young person which could see them turn to a benefit or be given a second chance.

*He was under suspicion of going home at lunch and smoking marijuana and drinking so there had to be a disciplinary meeting. And he didn't handle himself very well I thought. But I did have to point out [to the employer], "Do you agree that it was an unusual situation? This was out of character" - helping the client at that meeting and putting forward some really good points just so it wasn't one sided.*

– Pastoral care provider, East Coast

### **Implications**

- There is potential for the programme to benefit increased numbers of wāhine Māori and Māori who have been on the benefit for more than two years.
- Reducing the number of early exits would increase the overall effectiveness of the programme.
- Research into why participants exit early and where they go is required.
- Processes are required to protect participants from unfair employment practices.
- Employees and employers may need support to resolve employment relations issues.

Detailed recommendations regarding these implications are provided in the concluding section of the report.

# The role of employers in supporting positive employee outcomes

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## Overview

This section explores the experience of Māori and non-Māori employers in terms of supporting positive outcomes for their employees through the programme. The findings are informed by engagement with nine employers or their representatives (four Māori employers and five non-Māori employers). Their businesses spanned the construction, beauty, horticulture, health and social service sector and local government. Three of those interviewed were large organisations, one was a medium-sized operation and five were small businesses.

### Key findings

- Mana in Mahi has been positive for employers in a challenging labour market.
- In line with the kaupapa of their business, Māori employers consciously seek out Māori employees.
- Māori employees value the cultural context of Māori businesses.
- Non-Māori employers were driven by:
  - social imperatives to create opportunities for those who experienced labour market disadvantage.
  - the desire to build a workforce that reflected their community.
- Employers were challenged by the range and volume of pastoral care needs of employees.
- Large employers have the scale to provide intensive pastoral care support.
- Small employers find it difficult to provide intensive pastoral care support.
- Some employers do not see the need for, or the value in, pastoral care support.
- Employers' saw value in the incentive payments.

## Employer views of the value of Mana in Mahi

*Mana in Mahi has been positive for employers in a challenging labour market*

Employers are in a strong position with this programme both in terms of sourcing employees (in what has been a tight labour market) through MSD and through the wage subsidy. The trade-off is the time and care invested in individuals who may have little experience of work and need good support. Employers had a positive view of the programme. They felt that the wage subsidy for the programme was reasonable as it helped to offset the low levels of productivity of the employees, particularly in the first six months. It also supported them to invest in on-the-job and formal training for their employees.

*You know, it's enough time to get someone trained up and productive. It gives that little bit of cushion and support.*

– Non-Māori employer, East Coast

Employers had a range of motivations to engage in the programme, leading with the need for employees when there have been low rates of unemployment. For organisations that have traditionally relied on international RSE workers for seasonal work, the programme was an opportunity to try and develop local workers for the industry. Employers reported that it has been difficult to recruit and retain people from the local community for this type of work in the past. This programme was therefore a useful incentive for horticulturalists in particular and also for employers in the construction sector.

*I found it especially helpful after the COVID lockdown. Our industry got hit pretty hard. We had heaps of restrictions... that helps out a bit.*

– Non-Māori employer, East Coast

Other employers were conscious of the need to engage and build a younger workforce for succession so were keen to employ young people not already in the workforce. Employers referred to the “higher drama” that the “new generation” tended to bring to the workforce, but the employers were motivated to develop and retain new talent. This was seen as being good for business now, for its sustainability and as a good investment for MSD, supporting growth of the local economy and wellbeing of the local community.

*Māori employers consciously seek out and actively support Māori employees*

All Māori employers we interviewed had been deliberate about engaging Māori employees. This was consistent with their business values and aspirations. They were keen to invest in supporting and developing Māori individuals as well as a Māori workforce.

Overall, we found that these employers shared:

- an understanding of societal and structural barriers to wellbeing that many Māori face, especially rangatahi
- a desire to purposefully create opportunities for Māori to be self-determining
- understanding and empathy for the challenges rangatahi face.

*I think there's that stereotype that the people on the benefit don't want a job. But there are people looking for jobs, you just gotta wait and hope you get the right one.*

– Māori employer, East Coast

*Our people can do so much better. Just look at the young boys I've got now. They could have stuck at just a factory job or whatever it might be, but they wouldn't be living up to what they can do – their potential... Being able to give them an opportunity... it's up to them what they want to achieve with it. They've done so much good so far. Hopefully they carry on to the finish – maybe start their own company or employ others, having that flow-on effect. That's what I see we can do a bit better.*

– Māori employer, Waikato

*Just being able to support them through that. I was grateful for the opportunity. I got to do it, so it's my way of giving back I guess, just provide an opportunity and it's up to them how they use it.*

- Māori employer, Waikato

Some employees felt challenged when transitioning into the programme. Rangatahi in particular, struggled with confidence in general and especially in relation to entering a new work environment. A Māori work broker observed that over time, rangatahi may be better supported by Māori employers.

*I think if it's a young Māori person, and especially if it is their first job, there are going to be challenges. If they were working with a Māori employer, they would fully understand where they are coming from. Because a lot of these people are really shy, so they don't communicate that well and they might be homesick.*

- Work broker, Waikato

Māori employers gave examples of understanding the cultural obligations of Māori employees and sought to be flexible to allow them to meet those obligations.

*One of the boys just came back early this morning – they had a tangi that they needed to help out at. He called me Sunday night to say that they were having to stay as the tangi got delayed. I think our culture plays a big difference in that understanding. It's understanding the background of your employees and getting to know them a bit better, rather than just seeing them as a number.*

- Māori employer, Waikato

*Māori employees value the cultural context of Māori businesses*

Some Māori employees working for Māori employers felt better supported in a Māori workplace.

*Oh what I first noticed is the like a whānau vibe... and I really liked it as a Māori business. Māori you know. Boss is Māori. So, it was just pretty cool.*

- Tane Māori, steel industry, Waikato

*I'm not saying it's because we're all Māori but I'm saying ... it's more of an environment that makes me feel like I'm a part of this team. Like I'm ... of value....And then in other industries it can be really like, really blank.*

- Wahine Māori, hair and beauty, East Coast

One employee who exited a business (because an apprenticeship never eventuated) spoke of the challenges of being the only Māori in their new workplace.

*Oh I probably liked the old place more. Yes, the new company is weird. It's difficult being the only Māori in the place. At the minute I'm just sticking to it, just trying to get my licences for my trade.*

- Tane Māori, construction industry, Waikato

*Non-Māori employers were also invested in growing the wellbeing of their communities*

Some non-Māori employers were committed to investing in growing the wellbeing of their communities through offering employment opportunities for those who had previously experienced labour market disadvantage – Māori and non-Māori alike. One large business believes that its business sustainability is closely tied to its people development and its ability to support the community.



*That support structure [pastoral care] is probably the best thing... That's the way to get people out of that poverty trap and into where they can start thinking "Oh money's increasing in my account, I'm going somewhere" ... Then they can start to think about the education, future, and stuff like that. That's what we're trying to do, we're trying to move their mindset away from the day to day and then into this week, next week.*

– Non-Māori employer, East Coast

These employers appreciated the programme provided much-needed staff and reduced their risk during the apprenticeship phase. They had positive, proactive relationships with MSD as well, knowing who to contact and acting quickly if issues with an employee were developing.

One of the councils has an annual intake of new staff drawn from MSD specifically to give people from their community work opportunities. They have developed supports around the new employees including creating a network for them to support each other. These employees are exposed to different parts of the business to try and discover what they enjoy doing and given in-house support to develop their resumes.

#### *Employers' viewed incentive payments positively*

Employers reported mixed views on the value of incentive payments. On balance, they viewed them as a positive feature of the programme. Employers agreed with the concept of incentive payments and saw the advantage for their businesses in employees being able to put the payments towards work-related equipment or living costs.

*What I'm trying to do is make sure they stay in the programme obviously for our benefit but also for their own benefit. You know it [incentive payment] could be a motivator definitely especially as it's getting close to that period.*

– Non-Māori employer, East Coast

One employer said that incentive payments could create challenging dynamics in the workplace if there are employees on different MSD programmes that do not provide incentive payments (such as Flexi-wage).

*At one of the employers, they were all doing a national certificate ... One of the guys ... found out everyone else was doing their qualification and getting this incentive payment. He kicked up such a stink – messy as.*

– Work broker, East Coast

Another two employers had felt that MSD making an incentive payment at three months, if an employee's attendance/conduct had been poor, sent mixed messages to the employee. One employer suggested that MSD check in with the employer, and potentially defer the first payment until the employee is back on track.

*It's definitely good for them. I can see why it's there... That's peanuts in the scheme of things if we can get them off the benefit. It's a good incentive, but [they need to do] a little more than just come to work... It keeps them in the job but maybe there is some more checks and balances through the year.*

– Non-Māori employer, Waikato

Other ideas offered by employers included: making the first payment at six rather than three months; using the current funding to increase the hourly rate of employees after a set period, so

that the incentive was enduring; or to offset extra leave taken by employees during the early stage of employment.

## Employer insights into pastoral care provision

*Employers were challenged by the level of pastoral care needs*

Employers are obliged under the terms of their agreement with MSD to provide pastoral care support to their employees. The contract allows the employer to refer the employee to an MSD-contracted service but few of the employers we spoke to were aware of the online pastoral care services available to the programme clients.

Employers found catering to the pastoral care needs of employees challenging, particularly in their first few months. A few we spoke with had struggled with new employees presenting with what they perceived as a poor work ethic – calling in sick or failing to turn up to work without notice. For smaller businesses especially, this was extremely challenging both in terms of productivity but also the time and stress involved in trying to manage the employee and their personal needs.

*I feel like when they haven't been in the workforce for a long time, they still have that "just cruise to work, once a week". A lot of time they do need to realise it's not school – this is a place of work. So we were finding a lot of sick days in the short time they work...the cars broke down. Lost the keys. Something has happened. Like there was something every second day.*

– Māori employer, health and beauty industry, East Coast

*One of them is not at work today, wasn't at work the other day, there is all this family stuff arising which happens. When they give you the commitment of turning up to work and then don't start turning up to work that's also one of those things that can happen and it's not because of the work or the environment, it's because the stuff they have got in their own life.*

– Non-Māori employer, construction industry, East Coast

*Large employers are well equipped to provide pastoral care support*

We found that larger employers were well equipped to provide more comprehensive pastoral care for challenges outside the workplace. Larger employers (including councils, a health provider, and a building supply firm) tended to have strong internal pastoral care support systems in place and were able to offer employees tailored and intensive support.

In one region, an employee who was at risk of serious misconduct was offered an independent counsellor by his employer, including the option of a Māori counsellor which he enthusiastically accepted. He has gone on to be a reliable and highly valued employee.

*"Do you want a Māori person to talk to?" And I was like, "Yeah, hard. That would be mean." Someone who I could relate a bit more with, and that was cool as... she was giving me strategies I can do already, and I still practice them to this day.*

– Tane Māori, infrastructure industry, Waikato

Employees in these organisations spoke positively of the pastoral care support that they had received.

*Yeah, they were willing to help me, and I appreciated that. They didn't just [dismiss the employee]. They actually wanted me so that was a big wake up call for myself, as well. People*

*do care, people do appreciate you and value you. So, it woke me up, and I value myself, you know.*

– Tane Māori, infrastructure industry, Waikato

*Small employers find it difficult to provide intensive pastoral care support*

Medium to small employers were supportive when employees were facing challenges but generally did not have the scale to provide intensive pastoral care support. Pastoral care issues like reliability and attendance disproportionately affected their business productivity.

*It is hard to be a business owner and also mindful of your employees at the same time. If they're not here to do the work, you're not making any money to pay your employees, to look after their families. Especially when they are starting out on a career, it can have a big effect on not only your business but them personally.*

– Māori employer, Waikato

Small employers who were interviewed were not aware of the three remote/online pastoral care services built into the design of the programme. They were keen to receive more information so that they could refer their employees to the services.

Small employers who had the support of third-party pastoral care providers who worked with employees kanohi ki te kanohi found this invaluable. They recommended this be an area of further investment for MSD.

*It's a bit of a mission. It's being lower socio-economic group and having problems that are too big for you to solve quickly... I think maybe spend more money on [the pastoral care providers] of this world.*

– Non-Māori employer, East Coast

*Māori providers took a whānau-centric approach to pastoral care*

An iwi-based provider in Nelson delivered multiple services in relation to the programme. They identified and brokered employment opportunities, held relationships with the MSD work broker and the employer and provided pastoral care/mentoring to the employee. It was evident that they knew about the societal and structural barriers to wellbeing that many Māori face. They had high aspirations for Māori and were purposefully creating opportunities to be self-determining. They were strategically placing Māori in quality roles that they considered to be integral to Māori development.

The work broker worked with employees in a whānau-centred way to engage and motivate them to good effect. Central to their practice is whakawhanaungatanga, meeting over kai and building trust. He would address any needs and challenges before considering employment.

The broker also took a whānau-centred approach, often going into homes and extending support to the wider whānau. In one example, a young wahine was on the benefit but wanted to be a hairdresser and was supported into an apprenticeship which she now loves. On visits, the work broker noticed other family members were often home and discovered they were not working so proceeded to work with them and now they all have permanent jobs. Their approach to improving outcomes for Māori is to “find ways to get closer to whānau”. The work broker reported that going to whānau rather than expecting them to navigate the phone lines or websites when there may be

literacy barriers or past poor experience with government agencies, is a successful strategy. We were advised that iwi-based work brokerage and support is also happening in Waikato with two MSD work brokers directly supporting Tainui and Maniapoto.

*Some employers do not see the need for pastoral care support*

A few MSD staff and pastoral care workers reported that some employers do not provide pastoral care support because they do not believe in it. They reported that employers may provide in-work support in relation to learning skills on-the-job but nothing further if pastoral care is needed, despite their contractual obligations.

*Some employers, they don't even think kiwis should get any pastoral support. They shouldn't need it; they should just show up and work... they haven't moved to a different country to go and do a job, why do they need pastoral care?*

– Work broker, East Coast

*There is definitely an expectation with some employers that everyone should be able to just show up and work, and get the job done. And, if they can't do that then "I'm not really interested in even talking to them" which, if you're a busy employer, I get it but given the labour market currently and the options on who you can hire, you can't afford to be that picky. Some employers are starting to realise that, but some are still stuck in their ways.*

– Work broker, East Coast

Employers whose practice does not align with the objectives and design of the programme, including the provision of pastoral care, are not ideal for the profile of employees that the programme is targeting. (These are mostly young people who experience significant social disadvantage including benefit receipt.) These insights suggest the need potentially for more rigorous vetting of employers, particularly in relation to their attitude to pastoral care needs and their capacity to provide appropriate support.

### Implications

- There is an opportunity to grow the number of businesses who support the programme.
- Expectations of employers to provide pastoral care need reinforcing.
- Better communications to employers about virtual pastoral care services is required.
- Employers should be expected to promote, and refer, employees to virtual pastoral care services.
- Small business should be supported with access to intensive pastoral care support for employees with complex needs.

Detailed recommendations regarding these implications are provided in the concluding section of the report.

# Programme Design - Consideration of Māori needs and aspirations

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## Overview

This section considers the extent to which the needs and aspirations of Māori were considered during the design of the programme. It spans the prototype of the programme developed in 2018 (phase one), its initial expansion in 2019 (phase two) and its further modification during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020).

### Key findings

- Mana in Mahi was designed as a universal programme with Māori needs and aspirations deferred during the design phase.
- Despite high Māori participation during the prototype phase, Māori experience was not drawn on to inform subsequent design.
- As the programme's design and settings evolved through COVID-19, Māori participation helped support the case for increased funding and expansion.
- Since its launch, Māori representation on the programme has declined from nearly half of all participants to currently just over one third.

## Early design – consideration of Māori needs and aspirations

*Māori needs and aspirations were not specifically considered during the prototype*

Mana in Mahi was designed as a universal apprenticeship programme, initially for beneficiaries. During the prototype phase, no specific design consideration was given to the needs and aspirations of Māori. The phase one Cabinet paper advised that the 'final design' would:

- consider any implications for Māori and Pacific people
- include consideration of further work undertaken by MSD with the Ministry for Women to ensure any gender implications would be carefully managed.<sup>19</sup>

It was anticipated that the programme clients may need intensive case management, resilience and confidence training, in-work support, and funding to aid work readiness (such as driver licensing). However, MSD has acknowledged it initially referred young people who were 'relatively more work ready' to the programme. In phase two the intention was to focus more on those who faced barriers to employment.

*Māori experience from the prototype did not inform subsequent design*

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<sup>19</sup> Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee (2018): *Phased implementation plan for Mana in Mahi – Strength in work (Dole for Apprenticeships)*, p.12.

MSD took a phased approach to the design and implementation of the programme so that they could learn about what worked and make changes. Phase two was implemented from July 2019 and the number of funded places increased from 150 up to 2,000.

Māori made up 55 percent of clients on the programme in its first year. This aligned with MSD's youth income benefit client base. Despite their significant participation rates, Māori experience from the prototype did not inform subsequent design. At this point, the primary aim of the programme had shifted from *"supporting young people into sustainable employment"* to *"apprenticeships and an industry training pathway, leading to sustainable employment for young people who are at risk of long-term benefit receipt"*.

*Limited reference to Māori was made as the design evolved through COVID-19*

In June 2020, coinciding with the early phase of COVID-19, Cabinet approved the Apprenticeship Support Programme. This was a comprehensive package of support for employers in order to retain and bring on new apprentices as a response to the economic downturn. Mana in Mahi was identified as one of four key initiatives under this programme.<sup>20</sup>

Mana in Mahi was considered an important complement to the other initiatives in this package because of its "additional targeted support to those most vulnerable in the labour market, particularly those who are at risk of long-term benefit receipt." Cabinet was advised that the programme offering was *"relevant and viable in the current economic climate, and that employers should be incentivised to invest in this group, even with other apprenticeship supports being available."*

The design changes at this point including extending the duration of the programme from 12-24 months, increasing the base subsidy to employers, payment of course fees and the introduction of additional education support. At this point, Māori made up 45 percent of all clients and were being referenced in the evolving design of the programme. Cabinet was advised that:

- lengthening of the programme to 24 months would increase the period of pastoral care and that this would better support Māori
- increased subsidies would help the skills acquisition and employment of Māori.

Links were made to *He Kai Kei Aku Ringa* – the Crown Māori economic development strategy. This indicated these changes supported growing the Māori workforce into high-wage, higher-skilled jobs and noting their existing labour market vulnerability:

*...more targeted initiatives will support Māori apprentices... through Mana in Mahi (which includes support for Māori participants who are most at risk of adverse labour market outcomes).<sup>21</sup>*

By the end of October 2021, Māori represented 36.5 percent of all placements. MSD prepared a bid for further places from 2022 and argued that the programme supported equitable outcomes under Article Three of the Treaty of Waitangi. The basis of this was a universal cost-effectiveness

<sup>20</sup> The other Apprenticeship Support Programme Initiatives included: a new Apprenticeship Boost initiative, increased support for Group Training Schemes and the Regional Apprenticeships Initiative.

<sup>21</sup> Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee (2020). *Apprenticeship Support Programme – design and implementation of the Mana in Mahi expansion and the Apprenticeship Boost Initiative*, p.16.

evaluation showing it to have a positive impact in terms of increasing income and decreasing time on benefit.

In August 2022, the COVID-19 extension of the term to 24 months was reversed, back to 12 months. Papers supporting this proposal did not consider the potential impact of this reversal on Māori clients, despite the previous rationale that increasing the term of the programme would be beneficial for Māori.

*Māori representation on the programme is declining*

Since its launch in 2018, the proportion of Māori on the programme has declined from 55 percent to 36 percent in 2023. This decline may have been driven in part by the broadening of the programme eligibility criteria in 2020 to include non-beneficiaries at risk of long-term benefit receipt. Overall, this change in eligibility greatly expanded the reach of the programme and benefited many (including Māori), particularly in the context of COVID-19, who may have been at risk of going on the benefit.

At this point, employers were able to refer potential programme participants to work brokers. Programme data suggests that proportionately fewer Māori (37 percent) than non-Māori (54 percent) have been referred by employers. This may have driven the shift in balance between Māori and non-Māori participants on the programme.

### Implications

- There is an opportunity to partner with Māori to gather insights into how the design and delivery of the programme could be enhanced to maximise success for Māori participants.
- The decline in Māori representation in the programme requires consideration.

## Recommendations

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### Overview

This section begins with recommendations about how the design settings of the programme can be improved for greater impact on Māori. These include addressing the decline in Māori representation on the programme, reviewing the programme logic and extending the duration of the programme back to 24 months for clients with complex needs. It then draws on Te Pae Tata, MSD's Māori Strategy and Action Plan, to frame the opportunities for operational delivery improvements to further enhance the impact of the programme on Māori participants.

### Strategic design improvements

The decline in Māori representation on the programme, from more than half of participants when it was launched, to currently just over one third of participants requires consideration. A strategy is required to mitigate further declines.

The earlier analysis identifies that the decline may relate to the broadening of the programme entry criteria to include non-beneficiaries. Another factor maybe that that the employers are less likely to refer Māori as potential programme participants. The most recent intervention logic for the programme (2022) needs to be updated to incorporate and test the rationale for these changes in entry criteria and pathways into the programme.

There is merit in investing in at-risk rangatahi to avoid them entering the benefit system. However, given the disproportionate representation of Māori amongst beneficiaries, it is important to ensure that beneficiary access to the programme is promoted and prioritised by MSD. Ultimately Māori representation on the programme should align with Māori levels of benefit receipt, particularly for rangatahi Māori.

Finally, part of the rationale for the extension of the programme to 24 months was that Māori would benefit from a longer period for supported work placement. When the duration reverted back to 12 months, there was no analysis of the impact this would have on Māori. Given the range of external challenges identified faced by evaluation participants who had been beneficiaries and other participants with complex needs, returning to a 24 month programme duration for these cohorts is likely to increase their chances of success on the programme.

It is recommended that MSD:

- a) assess the reasons for the decline in Māori representation on the programme
- b) update the draft intervention logic to take account of entry pathways and ensure that Māori beneficiaries have equitable access to the programme
- c) increase the duration of the programme back to 2-years for beneficiaries and participants with complex pastoral care needs.



## Operational delivery improvements

In 2019 MSD published Te Pae Tata, which sets out its Māori Strategy and Action Plan, Te Rautaki Māori me te Mahere Mahi. MSD is seeking to embed a Māori world view that will honour their commitment as a Te Tiriti o Waitangi partner and prioritise the needs of whānau.<sup>22</sup> Building sustainable employment opportunities “to enable whānau, hapū, iwi and communities to develop and grow” is a primary action set out in the plan.

Te Pae Tata sets out three strategic shifts in the way that MSD contributes to the Māori-Crown Relationship – Mana Manaaki (a positive experience every time), Kotahitanga (partnering for greater impact) and Kia Takatū Tātou (supporting long term social and economic impact). Operational recommendations are aligned against these three strategies below.

### *Mana Manaaki – A positive experience every time*

*We will earn the respect and trust of Māori, listen without judgement, and be open and fair*

In the context of the programme, Mana Manaaki is about ensuring that all Māori have a positive experience of the programme. The evaluation findings suggest that four operational enhancements are required to ensure a positive experience for all Māori participants including:

- reviewing the process for website enquiries
- increasing participant knowledge of assistance available to support with transition to work and study
- increasing the effectiveness of pastoral care support
- putting in place mechanisms to reduce the likelihood of participants exiting the programme early.

### *Review the process for website enquiries*

The process for managing website enquiries across the country is unclear, as is the extent to which work brokers are resourced to respond fully to these enquiries. This may be a missed opportunity to support rangatahi are motivated and who meet the criteria for the programme.

### *Increase participant knowledge of transition to work and study assistance entitlements*

Transitioning from the benefit into employment can create financial uncertainty for those new to the workforce. Evaluation participants were unaware of the Work and Income assistance available to support this transition. With the right support and information from case managers and employers about supports and entitlements that are available, employees will be better equipped to succeed.

Awareness of Additional Education Support entitlements was also low amongst evaluation participants. Access to this support is likely to enhance participant experience of the study components of the programme and success in attaining qualifications.

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<sup>22</sup> Their guiding principles focus on partnership, protection, and participation – principles that whānau, hapū and iwi told them were essential for “doing right by Māori”.

In relation to access to assistance entitlements, it is recommended that MSD:

- d) review the process for, and outcomes of, website enquiries
- e) review processes to ensure that employees (and their employers) are aware of the transitional support they are entitled to, and make this support easily accessible
- f) review the effectiveness of communications to employees about the Additional Education Support funding and monitor and report on its uptake (by key demographics).

*Increase awareness and uptake of pastoral care support*

The evaluation findings clearly highlight that programme participants face multiple challenges external to the workplace. These impact their reliability and readiness to settle into a work routine. For some, these challenges continue for the duration of their participation in the programme. Quality pastoral care is key to empowering employees with strategies and life skills to mitigate these challenges. Participants were not aware of the three virtual pastoral care services available to them during the programme. This suggests that the way these services are currently promoted isn't effective.

As part of their contract with MSD, employers are expected to provide pastoral care support to employees. However, some weren't prepared for the complexity of challenges employees faced or the level of support required. While large employers had the scale to respond to pastoral care needs (through targeted programmes), this was more challenging for small employers. In addition, there was an indication that some employers do not see the need for, or value in, providing pastoral care support.

The findings indicate that there are participants whose complex circumstances are likely to impede their success on the programme. Without the right supports, they are at greater risk of non-completion and having a poor work experience, risking long-term benefit dependency. Further, the nature of their needs are such that they are unlikely to be met through virtual online support. In some regions, external providers were contracted provide intensive pastoral care support. This worked well for those participants and was especially valuable support for small employers.

In relation to pastoral care support it is recommended that MSD:

- g) review the effectiveness of the promotion of virtual pastoral care services to ensure that employees are aware they can access these services
- h) monitor the uptake of the services (by key demographics) and seek client feedback on their satisfaction with the services
- i) increase investment in intensive pastoral care support services and target them towards employees that were previously beneficiaries and employees with complex needs
- j) require work brokers to ensure that:
  - all employers are aware of their pastoral care obligations
  - all employers are assessed for their commitment to, and capacity to provide pastoral care
  - all employers are aware of, and actively promote, the remote pastoral care services available to employees
  - small businesses are able to connect their employees with complex needs to intensive pastoral care services.

*Reduce the likelihood of participants exiting the programme early*

Since its launch, 861 Māori participants (42%) have exited the programme early. Administrative data shows that one in three Māori who exit early are currently receiving a benefit and that they are more likely to be doing so than non-Māori. Evaluation participants who exited early experienced a range of outcomes including going back to the benefit and moving on to low-skilled occupations. Further research is required to identify why participants exit the programme and where they go.

Given the investment required to identify and place a participant (and the cost of early placement employer subsidies), there would be value in seeking to reduce the level of early exits from the programme. Further analysis is required around the extent to which poor employer practice/unfair treatment of employees contributes to early exits by Māori participants. Some of the examples provided by evaluation participants, if substantiated, would bring into question the suitability of the employers concerned for the programme. Assurance is required that there are sufficient processes in place to safeguard participants from unfair treatment by employers.

Evaluation participants who encountered what they perceived to be unfair employment practices did not have the confidence or skills to raise issues with their employer. Instead, they felt their only option was to leave their job. MSD's In Work Support team receives queries for employment relations advice but weren't able to quantify the volume. They refer employees to relevant information sources (like websites). In these situations, proactive support from In Work Support and/or pastoral care providers may have help to resolve the issues between the employees and employers and in turn, reduce early exit rates.

In order to reduce the number of early exits from the programme, it is recommended that MSD:

- k) undertake research into the reasons why participants exit early, and where they go
- l) put in place processes to safeguard employees from unfair employment practices and support employees and employers to resolve workplace issues including:
  - case managers and work brokers inform participants of their basic employment rights prior to entering employment (such as minimum pay rates, working hours and health and safety regulations)
  - In-Work Support monitor the volume of requests for employment relations advice and offering employees seeking employment relations advice mediation by a third party if appropriate
  - In-work Support contact participants as soon as they are notified they have exited to understand why and connect them to Work and Income if appropriate
  - work brokers follow up with employers with multiple early exits to ensure their workplace practices are of an acceptable standard.

*Kotahitanga – Partnering for greater impact**We will form genuine partnerships with Māori and support Māori to lead the way in terms of service design and delivery models that we commission for Māori*

As an organisation, MSD has acknowledged it needs to deliver better for Māori and help lift social and economic wellbeing for whānau. It has committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership and wants to embed a Māori world view into the organisation.<sup>23</sup> Mana in Mahi is now an established programme that has had multiple design changes, with only limited consideration more recently given to the needs of Māori.

The Māori Crown Capability Framework for the Public Service sets out expectations about how agencies will meaningfully reflect their roles as partners in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The expectation is that (at a minimum) agencies work with Māori to design services from an effectiveness for Māori perspective or ideally partner with, or empower Māori, to identify, design and deliver services.

Partnering with Māori for greater impact is at the heart of the Kotahitanga strategic shift. In the context of the programme, this would involve partnering with key Māori stakeholders to inform the design and delivery of the programme in order to maximise the success of the programme for future Māori participants. There are a range of Māori stakeholders who could offer valuable insights on the programme design and potentially partner to provide work broker and/or pastoral care services. These could include Māori industry experts, Māori employers, iwi, and as a starting point.

Finally, the majority of the programme placements continue to be into the construction industry. Continuing to grow the volume of young Māori in the construction industry may create vulnerability for the Māori workforce overall in the event of future downturns in this sector. MSD should engage with Māori stakeholders about the extent to which the design of the programme aligns with their aspirations for the future Māori workforce (for example industries and occupations that Māori consider will be important for the future wellbeing of whānau, hapū, iwi).

It is recommended that MSD partner with Māori stakeholders to:

- m) review the design and delivery of the programme to inform how success for future Māori participants can be maximised
- n) better understand Māori aspirations for the growth and development of the Māori workforce and how the programme might be aligned with these.

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<sup>23</sup> Ministry of Social Development (2020). *Te Pae Tata – Māori Strategy and Action Plan*.

*Kia takatū tātou – Supporting long-term social and economic development**We will support Māori aspirations and champion and support initiatives which see Māori develop and grow as Māori.*

The evaluation findings show that the programme has created skilled employment opportunities for participants. Longitudinal research would provide insights into the extent to which the programme contributes to long-term social and economic outcomes for participants and their whānau.

Mana in Mahi was designed to target young men in particular. While wāhine participation on the programme has been low, wāhine Māori participants reported they had a positive experience and achieved positive outcomes from the programme. However their participation has been in a narrow range of traditionally female industries and occupation. Consistent with wider industry trends, there is potential for wāhine Māori to achieve success on the programme within construction and other non-traditional industries and occupations.

Similarly, evaluation participants' who had been on the benefit more than two years, have achieved well on the programme. Their experience had been a game-changer for them and their whānau. Increased involvement by this cohort over time, would lead to the impact of the programme having greater reach to vulnerable whānau Māori.

Māori employers create a work environment that enables Māori to develop and grow as Māori. They have made an important contribution to the success of the programme so far and there is an opportunity increase number of Māori employers that support the programme. Similarly, Māori organisations that provide work broker and pastoral care services are well attuned to the aspirations and needs of Māori participants. Increasing the level of commissioning of these services from Māori providers will support participants to grow and develop as Māori.

In order to increase the long-term social and economic impact of the programme, it is recommended that MSD:

- o) enable increased access to the programme by wāhine Māori and Māori who have been on the benefit for more than 2 years
- p) grow the number of Māori employers offering placements in the programme
- q) increase the number of partnerships with iwi/Māori organisations who provide work broker and pastoral care services.

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## Appendix A: Background – Māori employment context

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This provides more detail on the Māori employment context.

*Benefit receipt is disproportionately high among Māori*

*Māori are over-represented among clients with a family benefit history. 54% of current under 25 year-old clients who were supported by parents (or a parent) on benefits for more than 80% of their teenage years are Māori. Family benefit history is a factor in influencing higher average lifetime costs for Māori.*

– MSD, 2015<sup>24</sup>

Rates of unemployment and benefit receipt are higher for young Māori than for non-Māori. In its 2018-21 Employment and Social Outcomes Investment Strategy, MSD's first priority was to increase the effectiveness of support to enhance the employment potential of young people. In part this was because 16-19 year olds who start receiving the youth payment or youth parent payment have the highest predicted future years of receiving a benefit at 15.2 years. This early dependency affects the individual but also undoubtedly their children and wider whānau. Current figures show that 65.2 percent of those receiving a youth payment or youth parent payment (of 1,146) and 50.4 percent of those receiving sole parent support (of 71,049) are Māori.<sup>25</sup>

Between December 2016 and December 2021, the rate of Māori receiving Jobseeker Support increased by almost 56 percent, higher than across all recipients.<sup>26</sup> MSD has been aware for some time that "the outcomes gap between Māori and non-Māori is getting worse".<sup>27</sup> Māori disproportionately receive most forms of benefit support and have the highest likelihood of returning to a benefit.

In response to its own data and analysis, MSD intended to better understand what contributes to successful outcomes for Māori in their social investment strategy to 2021. During this period, the Mana in Mahi programme was conceived and operationalised.

*Māori employees are more likely to have experienced significant social disadvantage*

Internal analysis by MSD, based on IDI data, shows its Māori clients face disproportionate social deprivation and challenge early in life. The data includes, among other indicators, parents with a Corrections sentence and tamariki having spent time in the care and protection system. Young people who have interacted with child protection services, for example, face greater challenges in

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<sup>24</sup> Ministry of Social Development (2015). 2014 Benefit System Performance Report for the year ended 30 June 2014, p.44.

<sup>25</sup> Ministry of Social Development (June 2023). *Characteristics of working age recipients of main benefits*. [Quarterly benefit fact sheet].

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Social Development (2021). *Characteristics of working-age recipients for Jobseeker Support – last 5 years*. [Benefit tables]

<sup>27</sup> Ministry of Social Development (2021). *Employment and Social Outcomes Investment Strategy, 2018-2021*, p.16.

trying to achieve lasting, positive outcomes and Māori are vastly over-represented in that system.<sup>28</sup> The data also indicates that the level of disadvantage experienced by Māori clients is higher than other clients. This is important context for programme design, delivery, and resourcing in order to try and achieve equitable and sustainable outcomes.

*COVID-19 has impacted those in low-skilled occupations, especially young people*

There was a significant increase (of almost 44 percent) among young people aged 18-24 years receiving jobseeker support between the March and June quarters of 2020. This was likely connected to the number of young people in low-skilled employment such as hospitality and retail who were impacted by COVID-19 lockdowns. Many businesses, despite government subsidies, closed their businesses or reduced their hours which meant unsustainable income for some employees. Total population uptake of Jobseeker Support over the same period increased by 24 percent. However, over the last three years the rate of Māori in skilled occupations has been increasing and the rate of Māori not in education, employment, or training (NEET) has dropped slightly over the last year.<sup>29</sup>

*MSD acknowledges it has not served Māori clients well and is committed to increasing its effectiveness for Māori*

MSD has acknowledged its social investment approach has previously been largely based on the lifetime cost of providing client support – a deficit approach. It revised this from 2018 to a model that recognised a range of social outcomes and a focus on partnering, as described in its organisational strategy, Te Pae Tawhiti.<sup>30</sup> The three strands of this strategy include:

Mana manaaki – a positive experience every time

Kotahitanga – partnering for greater impact

Kia takatū tātou – supporting long-term social and economic development.

Under its Māori strategy, Te Pae Tata, MSD committed to increasing employment opportunities for whānau and hapū. For iwi and communities, MSD said a primary action is to “build sustainable employment opportunities to enable whānau, hapū, iwi and communities to develop and grow”. Success for MSD, under Te Pae Tata, is connected to whānau, hapū and iwi having economic security, part of which is sustainable employment.

*Studies support a focus on stability and recognising the mana of beneficiaries*

A 2018 review by Te Puni Kōkiri into MSD’s Auckland-based work programmes found that Māori clients, including rangatahi, wanted to find work but also “shared the goal of wanting support from MSD that met their basic needs”. The report noted that there were increased risks of poor mental health, substance abuse and worsening employment prospects for young and unemployed Māori. Other research has also concluded that there must be stability in order to fully engage in meaningful work that allows you to develop your potential: “harmony between work and personal

<sup>28</sup> Oranga Tamariki (2021). *Report on Disparity and Disproportionality Experienced by Tamariki Māori* (to June 2021). <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/About-us/Research/Data-analytics-and-insights/Report-on-disparities-and-disproportionality-experienced-by-tamariki-Maori.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (2021). *Māori in the Labour Market* (June 2021).

<sup>30</sup> Ministry of Social Development (2021). *Employment and Social Outcomes Investment Strategy, 2018-2021*, p.16.

life, between the working self and the personal self. None of these factors can exist by itself and none is more important than the others".<sup>31</sup>

Around the same time as the Mana in Mahi programme was being implemented, the Welfare Expert Advisory Group recommended a continued shift towards whakamana tāngata. This would build the mana of others and uplift them in a way that honours their dignity.<sup>32</sup> The idea is that if a person has their basic needs met, is not in a state of crisis, and is supported in a way that gives them dignity, they may be in a stronger position to find meaningful and sustainable employment.

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<sup>31</sup> Grama, B & Todericiu, R. (2017). "What makes work meaningful?" *Studies in Business and Economics*, no 12(2)2017, p.48.

<sup>32</sup> Welfare Expert Advisory Group (2019). *Whakamana Tangata*: <http://www.weag.govt.nz/assets/documents/WEAG-report/aed960c3ce/WEAG-Report.pdf>

## Appendix B: Detailed evaluation methodology

### Overview

The evaluation took a staged, multi-method approach that was informed by documentation review and interviews with key informants from MSD's National Office, regional MSD kaimahi, employers, programme participants and their whānau where possible.

### Evaluation scope

The scope of this evaluation and information sources are set out below.

Included in scope	Information sources
Design and policy settings. We will explore how Māori perspectives were considered during the initial design of the programme and its features, and during any subsequent, significant changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review</li> <li>Key informant interviews (MSD Policy and Service Delivery)</li> </ul>
Recruitment process. We will look at how the programme is/has been communicated and the process clients go through to join the programme. We will be exploring MSD's goals around recruitment and engagement, and how Māori needs and aspirations are considered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications material</li> <li>Programme resources for frontline staff</li> <li>Role descriptions of, and interviews with, case managers/work brokers</li> </ul>
Programme experience. We will capture Māori experience of the programme and if its features are supporting clients towards sustainable outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews with Māori clients, whānau where possible, and employers</li> </ul>

Mana in Mahi programme administration was out of scope unless raised by an interviewee as relevant to Māori participation or outcomes.

### Key evaluation questions

The key questions for the evaluation are set out below:

Design	1. How were the needs and aspirations of Māori considered in the design of Mana in Mahi (including phase one, phase two and expansion)?
Delivery	2. How have Māori clients experienced Mana in Mahi and how effective are its various design features, roles, and settings for them?
	3. Does Mana in Mahi reduce existing barriers to employment or training experienced by Māori clients? If so, how?
	4. What is the experience of Māori and non-Māori employers engaged on Mana in Mahi in terms of supporting Māori clients to positive outcomes?
Outcomes	5. Is Mana in Mahi supporting Māori towards positive outcomes and meeting clients' needs and expectations?
	6. Has participation in Mana in Mahi by Māori individuals had a wider impact on their friends and whānau?

### *Evaluation approach*

A staged, multi-method approach was employed that was informed by the views of key informants from MSD National Office, regional MSD kaimahi, employers, clients and in some cases, their whānau. This approach was intended to provide MSD with an in-depth understanding of how well the programme is working for Māori.

The evaluation was undertaken in three phases. Phase 1 involved a review of documentation<sup>33</sup>; an analysis of the Māori employment context; engagement with Te Puni Kōkiri and an ethical review. Phase 2 involved key informant interviews with MSD's National Office staff who had knowledge of the design and delivery of the programme, fieldwork planning and the development evaluation tools. Following MSD approval of the evaluation plan and Ethics approval, we engaged with MSD regional leads for the programme to introduce the evaluation and discuss fieldwork logistics. Phase 3 involved two sense-making hui with MSD stakeholders and preparation of the draft and final report.

### *Selected regions*

Case study interviews were held in three regions: East Coast, Waikato, and Nelson. These regions have high, medium, and lower proportions of their populations on main benefits, respectively. They also provide contrasting representation of Māori population, age cohorts, deprivation, and types of industry, see box below. Northland and Auckland were omitted due to the evaluation team's concern over evaluation fatigue in those regions.

**Table A: Mana in Mahi/other statistics supporting regional selection**

Indicators	East Coast	Waikato	Nelson
<b>Total no. of Mana in Mahi placements</b>	519	473	374
<b>Māori on Mana in Mahi (no. and % of all placements)</b>	290 (56%)	189 (40%)	67 (18%)
<b>% Māori on main benefits in region (June 2022)<sup>34</sup></b>	61% (11,619)	47% (13,527)	22% (2,460)
<b>Māori population (June 2018 Census)<sup>35</sup></b>	74,000*	115,200	21,060**

\* Indicative for region based on data for Gisborne and Hawkes Bay.

\*\* Indicative for region based on data for Tasman, Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast.

The MSD 'East Coast' region covers the coastal area from Opotiki down to and including the Hawkes Bay. These are governed by separate councils and different iwi. Ngāti Porou is the largest of 11 iwi in Tairāwhiti with Ngāti Kahungunu (one of 11 iwi) centred in the Hawke's Bay (and Wairarapa) region. In 2020, Māori accounted for:

- 54% of the population in the Gisborne District Council region (with a total population of 50,700).
- 28% of the population in the Hawkes Bay Regional Council region (with a total population of 178,600)

<sup>33</sup> Documentation included: intervention logic and planning documents, business cases, Ministerial advice and Cabinet papers, public programme information, guidance and tools for staff, performance data and reports, ethnicity data / IDI Māori profile, previous evaluations of Mana in Mahi and MSD strategy and performance documents.

<sup>34</sup> Ministry of Social Development Quarterly benefit fact sheets. Work and Income regions tables (June 2022)

<sup>35</sup> Statistics NZ (March 2022). Subnational ethnic population projections, 2018 (base) -2043 update.

General unemployment is higher in Gisborne at 6 percent compared to 4.5 percent in the Hawke's Bay (2019), but both have the same rate (14.8 percent) of young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET).<sup>36</sup>

The East Coast enjoys a dry, sunny climate which has fostered fruit and vegetable growing industries. Sheep, cattle, and grain farming are the largest employer sector in Tairāwhiti, followed by school education and agriculture and fishing support services. In the Hawke's Bay, fruit and tree nut growing is the largest employing sector, followed by school education, agriculture and fishing support services. Residential building construction is in the top three self-employment industries in both areas.

Waikato is the fourth largest region of New Zealand in area and has 9.5 percent of the population, over 450,000 people. Almost 110,000 identify as Māori, bringing it close to the New Zealand average. It has an above-average rate of population growth and its largest city, Kirikiriroa Hamilton, has the youngest median age of all cities and districts.<sup>37</sup>

Waikato-Tainui are tangata whenua with four principal tribes in the area: Hauraki, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Raukawa and Waikato. They are kaitiaki of the Kingitanga based in North Waikato.

The area has a long history of farming and forestry, and dairy cattle farming is the largest employing industry. Other significant employers are in the health industry, hospitality, and construction (largest sector growth since 2020). Waikato University is based in Hamilton and tertiary level study is also offered through Wintec and Te Wānanga o Aotearoa.

The Nelson region has the lowest Māori population of the regions visited for this evaluation and it has an older age demographic. Fishing and forestry are dominant industries and there is seasonal and holiday work around tourism, horticulture, and viticulture. There is no university in the area, but the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology offers programmes up to degree level.

Hospitality is the largest employing industry followed by grocery retail and health services. Residential building construction was the largest creator of jobs in the Nelson-Tasman area between 2020 and 2021, followed by employment services. Job losses have been most acute in retail and accommodation over the same period.

This is one of the last regions to still have a Regional Intersectoral Forum operating. This Forum brings together 13 Crown agencies, three territorial agencies and the eight local iwi to work on cross-cutting issues for the area. A key issue for the group and the region has been labour market shortages through COVID-19 and border closures.

In total, 54 interviews were conducted against a target of 36-51 interviews. Table B shows the target and actual number of interviews undertaken by role and regions.

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<sup>36</sup> Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (2020). Regional factsheets: Gisborne and Hawke's Bay.

<sup>37</sup> Waikato Regional Council fact file. <https://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/community/about-the-waikato-region/>

**Table B – Target and actual number of participants by role and region**

Location	MSD staff	Pastoral care providers	Employers	Employees	Whānau	Total
National Office	2	-	-	-	-	2
East Coast	3	1	4	5	0	13
Waikato	3	0	3	14	3	23
Nelson	3	1	2	9	1	16
Target number	6-9	-	6-9	18-24	6-9	36-51
Actual number	11	2	9	28	4	54

### *Phase 2 - Recruitment and fieldwork*

MSD provided contact details in a way that aligned with ethical and privacy standards. MSD regional leads forward the evaluation information sheet and invitation to participate in the evaluation to programme participants. Our team then contacted the participants to seek agreement to participant, consent and consent and secure interview times.

Many participants were difficult to contact via e-mail. We then employed a strategy of a rangatahi male member of the team texting participants and then calling them to discuss the process. This strategy proved effective.

We met some participants, kanohi ki te kanohi, at a location that was convenient and comfortable for them including their workplaces, community locations at times their homes. A few elected to speak with us via phone. To recognise the costs associated with participating in the interview, participants were given a \$50 petrol or grocery voucher.

Evaluators conducted the interviews using a semi-structured interview guide. The guide was designed to seek responses to the key evaluation questions, while allowing flexibility to gather additional relevant feedback from cadets. Informed and voluntary consent procedures were followed for each interview, which are consistent with the Australasian Evaluation Society's guidelines for the ethical conduct of evaluations. This includes advising participants verbally and in writing of the consent procedures, and asking them, if agreeable, to complete and sign an informed consent form before the discussion begins.

### *Phase 3 - Analysis and report development*

A grounded theory approach to data collection, coding and analysis was adopted. Each evaluation team member undertook a content and thematic analysis of interview transcripts. On completion of the fieldwork at each phase of the project, an evaluators' debrief and analysis workshop was held. This collectively engaged the whole evaluation team in the analysis and interpretation process to inform the evaluation findings.

Two sense-making workshops were held with MSD stakeholders, and feedback was integrated into the draft report. MSD then reviewed the draft report and feedback was addressed in the final report.

*Ethical considerations*

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Australasian Evaluation Society's guidelines for the ethical conduct of evaluations.<sup>38</sup> Given the evaluation focus on Māori, we also drew on the ethical framework set out in Te Ara Tika: Guidelines for Māori research ethics, commissioned by the Health Research Council.

We ensured that all participants in the evaluation indicated their willingness to participate voluntarily and explicitly, and without threat or undue inducement. Prior to interviewing, we provided participants with an information sheet about the evaluation and a consent form. At the start of each interview we talked participants through the consent form to ensure that they were aware of: the kinds of information to be sought, the procedures that will be used to assure confidentiality; the option to decline answering any question and the option to withdraw from the interview at any time.

We protected participant confidentiality and privacy through informed consent and the responsible use of information. We protect participant's identity by ensuring that any quotes presented in the reports may not be able to be attributed to any individual. As part of the consent process, employers were advised that they may be able to be identified and that they may wish to be mindful of this in their responses.

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<sup>38</sup> [www.aes.asn.au/about/Documents%20.../code\\_of\\_ethics.pdf](http://www.aes.asn.au/about/Documents%20.../code_of_ethics.pdf) The guidelines are based on four guiding principles of: acting to promote research participants' wellbeing; preventing harm and/or adverse effects to research participants; respecting the right of the participant to take responsibility for himself or herself and treating all participants in a fair and just manner.



## Appendix C: E-mail from Work and Income to new Mana in Mahi employees

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*Supporting you in your new job*

Kia ora [INSERT CLIENT NAME]

Congratulations on your new job. We can offer you support as you settle in – here's how we can help:

### **Financial and other support**

Help When You're Working: information about financial assistance you may be able to get while you're working.

Managing Your Money: budgeting and what it's about.

Help to understand employment agreements: your rights as an employee.

### **Regular check-ins with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD)**

Unexpected things can come up while you're working.

If you like, the MSD In-Work Support team can call or email you at a time that suits to check everything is going well at work and at home.

To opt into this support, email [InWorkSupport@msd.govt.nz](mailto:InWorkSupport@msd.govt.nz) or call **0800 559 497** between 8:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday.

### **Want free professional mentoring or counselling?**

If you have challenges with work, friends, whānau, life in general, or you feel anxious or uncertain, **Whītikī Tauā** mentors and **Puāwaitanga** counsellors can help.

They'll listen and support you judgement free by phone, or online.

Call Whītikī Tauā on **0800 089 898** for free mentoring.

Call Puāwaitanga on **0800 782 999** for free counselling.

### **Need extra training resources?**

Through Mana in Mahi, you can request **Additional Educational Support (AES)** of up to \$2,000 a year to help with training-related costs, like setting up a home workspace, or extra tuition.

Before your request is approved, we'll need to know the cost of the product or service, who you'll be buying it from, and how it will be used to support your learning.

Call In-Work Support on 0800 559 497 to apply.

### **Ask your employer to enrol you in training to get your incentive payments**

Mana in Mahi links you to solid industry training and recognised qualifications.

While you're employed with Mana in Mahi, you'll receive \$1,000 after three months, and if you've started your training, another \$1,000 after six months.

A further \$1,000 will be waiting for you after 12 months.

### **We take your privacy seriously**

While on Mana in Mahi, information you give us is used to provide you with financial and other support. This information is securely stored in our client management system and will be destroyed when no longer needed.

### **Evaluation of Mana in Mahi**

We may also use your information for research and reporting purposes.

You may in future be sent a request from MSD to take part in a voluntary, confidential evaluation of how well Mana in Mahi is performing. You can choose whether or not to take part in this evaluation. You will not be named or identified in any evaluation reports.

**[INSERT CLIENT NAME]**, on behalf of the Ministry of Social Development, we wish you all the best for your new job.

## Appendix D: Mana in Mahi Intervention Logic 2022 (Draft)

### Intervention logic: Mana in Mahi

**Problem Definition:** Mana in Mahi is currently funded in 22/23 and beyond to support 650 participants per year into work and to gain a formal industry qualification. Funding is based on a one-year programme at the original programme settings. This bid seeks to maintain expansion levels of support as a one-year programme for up to 1,000 people at risk of long-term benefit receipt, in line with both the strong labour market demand for apprenticeships and trades training. There was also significant demand for this product in 2020/21 by employers who saw the programme as an incentive to take on new 'at-risk' jobseekers. At times of labour market disruption, untrained and unqualified job seekers become even more at risk of long periods of time on benefit. In response to COVID-19 disruptions, Mana in Mahi assistance was increased as part of the Apprenticeship Support Programme to provide a higher subsidy for employers and greater support for participants across two years. While there was high take-up post-expansion, take up of the second-year contracts to date has been relatively low. As a result, we are seeking to revert back to a one-year programme. We believe the real strength of Mana in Mahi is its ability to provide significant incentives to employers and participants at the time they need it most, to ensure participants are supported until they are securely engaged in training. By the end of the first year, they are becoming a more valued addition to the workforce, which makes them less vulnerable to being let go in times of labour market stress. Reverting to a one-year programme will also improve the cost effectiveness of the programme, while maintaining the level of support needed in the first year. Formative and process evaluations of Mana in Mahi and anecdotal evidence indicate that the supports provided through the Apprenticeship Support Programme expansion (such as higher wage subsidy rate, additional educational supports and course fees, where not already covered through fees free initiatives) would help incentivise employers to participate in Mana in Mahi (and therefore support the hiring of at-risk jobseekers). The expansion resulted in an immediate increase in employer interest and take up of the programme. If we were to remove these supports (and revert to a lower subsidy level), employers may be much less inclined to take the risk of employing someone who needs more support in their first year, particularly as COVID-19 is likely to continue to cause uncertainty in the labour market as new variants emerge. An earlier version of Mana in Mahi is rated as effective when analysing IDI data (de Boer & Ku, 2021) (i.e. has a statistically significant positive impact) in increasing income and time in employment and decreasing time on benefit. Early indications also show effectiveness in keeping people enrolled in study or training. It is too soon to rate the effectiveness of the current service level. However, it is likely still effective as we have provided more supports.

