

## **In Confidence**

Office of the Minister for Social Development and Employment  
Cabinet Extreme Weather Recovery Committee

# **A Social Sector Recovery Plan to ensure a coordinated approach to social sector recovery over the medium term**

## **Proposal**

- 1 This paper seeks agreement to:
  - 1.1 the Social Sector Recovery Plan (the Plan), which sets out the approach to social sector recovery from the recent North Island extreme weather events and brings together activities to ensure a coordinated approach to social sector recovery across government; and
  - 1.2 draw down a first tranche of \$20.65 million from the \$30 million social sector recovery tagged contingency to support the implementation of the Plan.

## **Relation to government priorities**

- 2 This paper relates to the Government's ongoing response to the 2023 North Island extreme weather events.
- 3 The proposals in this paper align with a 2020 Labour party Manifesto commitment to ensure Aotearoa New Zealand's emergency management systems are geared towards an inclusive, community-led response to natural disasters.

## **Executive Summary**

- 4 A broad array of activities was undertaken swiftly following the 2023 North Island extreme weather events to provide relief to communities and businesses in the immediate crisis, including economic, environmental and social support. Significant activity undertaken by the social sector has been supported by government, for example, through funding for communities and community providers.
- 5 However, further support is needed to support social recovery and minimise the risk of negative medium and long-term social impacts. In particular, the extreme weather events have placed additional stresses on disadvantaged communities and are likely to have an ongoing impact of exacerbating social and economic inequalities. Lessons learned following previous events including the Canterbury earthquakes in 2011, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Buller floods in July 2021 and February 2022 emphasise the importance of investing into longer-term strategies to ensure that communities' recovery is

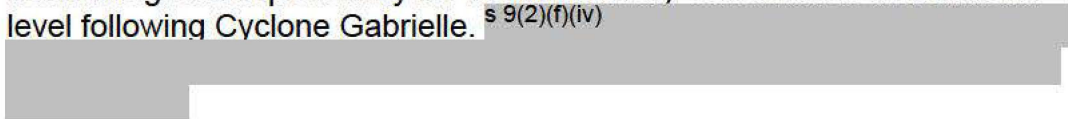
sustainable and demonstrate that certain population groups may be more likely to face challenges following a disaster.

- 6 These lessons have informed the development of a Social Sector Recovery Plan (the Plan), which provides a framework to guide longer-term investment for social recovery over the next two years. The Government has allocated \$30 million to a tagged contingency under the North Island Weather Events Response and Recovery Package (NIWE Budget Package) to support implementation of the Plan through initiatives that support communities, households and whānau in regions affected by the North Island extreme weather events [CAB-23-MIN-0140 refers]. The authority to draw down the tagged contingency funding was delegated jointly to the Minister of Social Development and Employment and the Minister of Finance, subject to Cabinet's endorsement of the Plan.
- 7 This support will sit alongside funding available for social recovery through other NIWE Budget Package initiatives, Budget 2023 investments and existing or reprioritised allocations. Whilst funding under the Plan is provided centrally, it will be allocated locally, with funding decisions informed by Regional Public Service Commissioners (RPSCs) and Regional Leadership Groups.
- 8 The Plan provides a framework for a coordinated approach to social recovery which will ensure effective, targeted investment, recognising pressures felt as a result of the current economic climate. The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has worked with impacted regions and relevant agencies to understand where additional support for social recovery is required by different regions or specific population groups and identify gaps in support where further investment may be required. The Plan aims to ensure that activity and investment is targeted towards these areas of need in a way that supports regional priorities.
- 9 Strategic oversight for delivery of the Plan will be provided through the existing Caring for Communities (C4C) group of Chief Executives, and regional oversight, alignment and connection to regional recovery plans will be provided through RPSCs.
- 10 This paper seeks agreement to the Plan and to draw down the first tranche of funding from the All-of-Government Response – Social Sector Recovery Plan \$30 million tagged operating contingency.

## Background

- 11 In January and February 2023 significant disruption was caused by extreme weather events to communities in the Upper North Island, including in Te Tai Tokerau, Tāmaki Makaurau, Waikato, Tairāwhiti, the Bay of Plenty, Hawke's Bay, Taranaki and the Wairarapa.
- 12 The Cabinet Extreme Weather Recovery Committee (EWR) was established following the extreme weather events to coordinate and direct the government response to recovery. Membership includes lead recovery Ministers for each

region, who were put in place to work directly with local councils on the local response, and Ministers responsible for overseeing recovery across different areas, including the social sector.

- 13 EWR is supported by the Cyclone Recovery Unit (CRU), which was established in March 2023 within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) to organise and coordinate the activity of central government in respect of overall cyclone recovery.
- 14 With regards to social sector recovery, the Caring for Communities governance group (C4C), which brings together Chief Executives from across social sector and population agencies, has been formalised to ensure an effective system-wide response to social sector issues. C4C is chaired by the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), and MSD has been assigned responsibility for social recovery coordination at a national level following Cyclone Gabrielle. <sup>s 9(2)(f)(iv)</sup>  

- 15 On 14 March, I advised EWR of my intention to develop a social sector response plan to support a coordinated response across the social sector to respond to immediate need, while also planning ahead to mitigate the negative impacts of increased inequalities that can arise following natural disasters.
- 16 \$941 million has been secured through the North Island Weather Events Response and Recovery Package (NIWE Budget Package) to support cyclone recovery [CAB-23-MIN-0140 refers]. This is in addition to support provided through agencies' business as usual processes, and initiatives that will support cyclone recovery which are being funded through Budget 2023 outside of the NIWE Budget Package.
- 17 A tagged contingency of \$30 million was secured through the NIWE Budget Package to support initiatives to implement the Plan which support communities, households and whānau in regions affected by the extreme weather events [CAB-23-MIN-0140 refers]. From this, the All-of Government Response – Social Sector Recovery Plan \$30 million tagged contingency was established, with authority to draw down the tagged contingency funding delegated jointly to the Minister of Social Development and Employment and the Minister of Finance subject to:
  - 17.1 Cabinet's endorsement of the Social Sector Recovery Plan;
  - 17.2 Joint Ministers being satisfied that the initiatives to be funded from the tagged contingency established above do not duplicate existing support and that any risks are managed appropriately; and
  - 17.3 Joint Ministers being satisfied that the initiatives funded from the tagged contingency have appropriate report- back conditions.

**The social sector has played a significant role in responding to the North Island extreme weather events**

- 18 The social sector responded quickly following the 2023 extreme weather events, undertaking significant activity to support communities in the impacted regions. Organisations, including Māori providers, marae, and iwi organisations, rapidly mobilised themselves to support and provide for whānau, including through facilitating access to essential goods and supporting impacted communities facing challenges in relation to financial hardship, school attendance, psychosocial wellbeing and housing.

*The Government has provided significant funding to support with the North Island extreme weather events response*

- 19 Social sector activity has been supported by Government, with \$889 million allocated to the flood and cyclone response prior to Budget 2023. Government activity undertaken to date to assist communities is outlined at **Appendix A**.
- 20 The additional \$941 million secured through the NIWE Budget Package comprises further support for communities agreed through the NIWE Budget Package, including investment to support accommodation, food, transport, health and education provision and into employment schemes, among other initiatives.
- 21 Funding provided to initiatives through Budget 2023 outside the NIWE Budget Package also supports social recovery, for example, by supporting education and housing provision, and investment in family and sexual violence services.

**A continued focus on supporting communities' longer-term social recovery is needed**

- 22 Lessons learned following the Canterbury earthquakes, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Buller floods emphasise the importance of work focused on long-term recovery from large-scale disasters. Research suggests that it can take between five and ten years for communities to fully recover from a disaster, and that the full extent of impacts experienced as a result of a disaster may not be realised until a later stage. Learnings from the Canterbury earthquakes stress the need for consideration of the fact that people's ability to think beyond the immediate response phase of a disaster might be compromised by the immediate impact of that disaster<sup>1</sup>.
- 23 Decisions taken around how communities are physically rebuilt following natural disasters (including adverse weather events, earthquake events, volcanic events, industrial events or climate change-related events) – for example, in relation to red zoning housing, relocation, or rebuilding social or community infrastructure – will have an inevitable impact on social wellbeing. For example, if whānau or communities are required to move because of the extreme weather events, there is a risk of long-term social impacts arising

<sup>1</sup> Greater Christchurch Group, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2017). Whole of Government Report: Lessons from the Canterbury earthquake sequence.



from the dislocation, including further erosion of community networks and resilience.

- 24 Many communities impacted by recent extreme weather events were already facing socio-economic challenges, compounded by the lingering impacts of COVID-19 and resulting inflationary pressures. Recent extreme weather events have placed additional stresses on disadvantaged communities which are likely to exacerbate social and economic inequalities, compounding the impact of rising debt levels, interest rates and increases in the cost of living, and increasing demand for financial and mental health support.
- 25 Certain population groups may be more likely to struggle following a disaster. For example, a wellbeing survey completed following the Buller floods highlighted that women, Māori, those in one-adult households, those renting and those living with more extended whānau or friends were among the most likely to be struggling. Challenges may be compounded for people who belong to more than one of these groups.
- 26 A continued focus on providing and improving access to community and government social sector supports is critical to communities' recovery across all dimensions of wellbeing and will in turn support wider economic recovery. Decisions in relation to supports need to be made in a timely manner to reduce uncertainty around possibilities for rebuilding and thus minimise the risk of negative long-term social impacts on communities.

**A Social Sector Recovery Plan has been developed to respond to the need for longer-term support**

- 27 In recognition of the need for longer-term support for communities, the Government has developed a Social Sector Recovery Plan (the Plan). This Cabinet paper attaches the Plan at **Appendix B** for Cabinet endorsement.
- 28 The Plan aims to:
  - 28.1 Minimise the negative psychosocial and socio-economic consequences of the early 2023 North Island extreme weather events on individuals, whānau and communities;
  - 28.2 Preserve and enhance the resilience of individuals, whānau and communities to respond to future events;
  - 28.3 Acknowledge Treaty partnerships and support iwi-led recovery for whānau and hapū within their rohe.
- 29 The Plan responds to North Island extreme weather events that happened between January and February 2023, acknowledging that there may be subsequent events that while excluded from this plan could reflect the same principles. The Plan covers actions for the next two years but recognises that recovery may take longer than this.
- 30 Noting that social dimensions of need are highly interconnected with environmental and economic recovery, the Plan incorporates actions from

across the social sector, including cultural, psychological, social, economic and physical (including housing and infrastructure) dimensions of wellbeing.

*The Government has allocated \$30 million to a tagged contingency to support implementation of the Plan*

- 31 The NIWE Budget Package secured a tagged contingency of \$30 million for initiatives to implement the Plan and support communities, households and whānau in regions affected by the recent North Island extreme weather events.
- 32 This support will sit alongside funding available for social recovery through other NIWE Budget Package initiatives, Budget 2023 investments and existing or reprioritised allocations.

**The Plan facilitates a coordinated cross-agency response to social recovery**

- 33 The Plan guides a coordinated approach to social recovery that is locally led, regionally enabled and nationally supported. Recognising current economic pressures, the Plan enables social sector agencies to maximise the effectiveness of social recovery activity through minimising the risk that activity is duplicated, ensuring that support is targeted to identified areas of need and making sure initiatives are delivered using a framework that builds on lessons learned from previous disaster responses.
- 34 Learnings from the response to COVID-19 and Canterbury earthquakes and the initial response to the North Island extreme weather events have highlighted the benefits of approaches which are locally led, coordinated, able to be flexible and innovative, based on trusting relationships (including with iwi and Māori), and recognise the need for long-term support. The provision of support should be evidence-based, recognising that disasters may impact different populations in different ways. The Plan is underpinned by the following set of working principles and assumptions:
  - 34.1 Empower and support existing community, locally led responses, plans, structures and leaders;
  - 34.2 Use existing regional public service structures and channels as set out in the Plan;
  - 34.3 Facilitate rapid, transparent and inclusive information-sharing, decision-making and communication;
  - 34.4 Coordinate, align and not duplicate social sector support and funding approaches, in line with social sector commissioning principles, through establishing a cross-sector Funders' Forum for funding allocation with input from Regional Public Service Commissioners (RPSCs), overseen by C4C Chief Executives;
  - 34.5 Leverage existing activities and partnerships;

- 34.6 Incorporate and be transparent about exit and transition plans for providers once time-limited funding ends;
  - 34.7 Provide flexibility to meet the changing and ongoing recovery needs of affected communities;
  - 34.8 Make sure to continue to prioritise the most vulnerable where resources are constrained (for example housing) to avoid making things worse for those who are more vulnerable but were not impacted by the extreme weather events; and
  - 34.9 Build on community strengths and protective factors to enhance community resilience and preparedness.
- 35 Agencies and organisations involved in designing or implementing initiatives under the Plan would need to deliver activities in line with these principles at a national, regional and/or local level as appropriate.

**The Plan facilitates the provision of targeted support to regions and population groups**

*MSD carried out engagement to understand emerging areas of need in each region*

- 36 MSD carried out engagement on a region-by-region basis to canvass emerging needs following the extreme weather events and understand particular challenges that are being felt across social sector dimensions in different regions.
- 37 Engagement was undertaken to understand regional needs with stakeholders including RPSCs and their support staff, regional agency staff and national agency staff who deal directly with community providers.
- 38 Particular impacts for different population groups were explored through engagement with key population and community representatives such as the Māori and Pacific Reference Groups (advisory groups that sit within MSD), Pou Tangata (responsible for the social development portfolio of the National Iwi Chairs Forum) and the Children's Convention Monitoring Group (which monitors progress made on implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in New Zealand), as well as with governmental population agencies and non-governmental organisations.
- 39 Some common concerns were raised by regions, including concerns around preparedness for winter and communities experiencing anxiety about further extreme weather events. Region-specific concerns vary and are compounded in areas where the extreme weather events have exacerbated pre-existing needs. Regional challenges are set out in more detail in the Plan and encompass key issues faced in relation to communications, employment, housing, infrastructure, healthcare, psychosocial support and education among other areas.
- 40 Particular population groups have specific dimensions of need that may require additional consideration, and disasters can exacerbate existing

disparities. Learnings from engagement to better understand these challenges (set out in the Plan and in the population impacts outlined at **paragraph 72**) include the following:

- 40.1 The affected regions have a high proportion of people of Māori descent, including high numbers of Māori in rural communities, requiring specific consideration of access to services, mental wellbeing support, adequate accommodation and employment opportunities.
- 40.2 Pacific peoples are also greatly affected, requiring flexible support that reflects the diversity among Pacific communities.
- 40.3 Children and young people may be facing particular challenges through disruption to schooling and impacts on mental wellbeing.
- 40.4 Women may be disproportionately affected by certain impacts, for example, job losses, increased rates of family and sexual violence or extended caring duties.
- 40.5 Disabled people are likely to experience significant risk and impact on their wellbeing following a disaster due to barriers to accessing services including suitable temporary accommodation, transport, carer services and power for critical equipment.
- 40.6 Barriers to accessing services may also be more prevalent for seniors, ethnic communities and rural and isolated communities.
- 41 Dimensions of need can be more complex for some people, who belong to more than one population group and may thus have compounding dimensions of need. Equally, not all people within each population group will need extra assistance.

*MSD identified where further support was required to address these needs*

- 42 Acknowledging that support was already being provided in regions, MSD sought a range of views from the stakeholders outlined in **paragraphs 37 and 38** to understand by region and by social sector dimensions of need whether existing levels of investment were sufficient.
- 43 MSD used this information to develop the heat map presented in the Plan which identifies for each region and by dimension of need areas where:
  - 43.1 Supports are in place (in this instance, existing supports are deemed likely to be sufficient to meet identified need or able to be pivoted to meet identified need);
  - 43.2 More support is required (some additional investment in existing supports is deemed required to meet identified need, likely over the medium term); or
  - 43.3 Significant support is needed either across the region or in specific communities (significant additional investments into existing or new



supports is required to meet identified need, possibly over a longer term).

*The Plan proposes a comprehensive package of support to target investment towards this identified need*

- 44 MSD collated information on actions that are already being delivered and that would be delivered through funding secured under the NIWE Budget Package or through existing or reprioritised funding and cross-referenced this against the analysis of areas requiring further support to identify gaps. Where gaps were identified, new actions were developed to target specific regions and areas needing additional support.
- 45 The Plan brings these existing and new actions together into a comprehensive package of support that will respond to the areas of need that have been identified for particular regions or communities. Actions under the Plan also recognise the importance of building resilience and preparedness to ensure that communities are strongly-positioned should they need to respond to future events, including future climate change-related adversity.
- 46 The Plan does not cut across agencies' existing responsibilities and investment in these areas, and actions under the Plan are intended to support regional priorities and the delivery of regional recovery plans, which are currently in development.
- 47 Proposed actions under the Plan, alongside any priority population group or community that the actions intend to target, are set out in full in the Plan.

**Gaps in funding for proposed actions can be met using the contingency allocation tagged to support implementation of the Plan**

- 48 Whilst a number of actions proposed under the Plan, including funding for initiatives for temporary accommodation provision and repairs to schools, can be supported through funding secured through the NIWE Budget Package or funded through existing or reprioritised allocations, new actions proposed to address identified gaps in support do not currently have an agreed funding source.
- 49 I propose that these actions be funded through the tagged contingency of \$30 million secured through the NIWE Budget Package to implement the Plan.
- 50 I consider that funding is best drawn down in two tranches, with a first tranche of \$20.65 million targeting short-medium term need, and a second tranche of \$9.35 million addressing medium-long term gaps. This paper seeks agreement to draw down the first tranche of funding from the tagged contingency.
- 51 The second tranche of funding would be allocated in light of finalised regional plans (which are currently in development) and based on a refreshed assessment of particular regions or population groups that might require additional support for social recovery. Reserving some funding for a second

tranche will enable the Plan to address outstanding areas of need which are expected to become clearer over time, recognising that needs may change and that people may be able to think further ahead at a later point in time. I expect this refreshed assessment to be undertaken once local and regional plans have been completed <sup>s 9(2)(f)(iv)</sup>

- 52 Proposed actions to be funded through the first tranche are set out below and in the Plan. These have been informed by consideration of identified areas of need alongside areas where support is already being provided or will be provided through other funding streams.

Domain	Proposed action	Priority population	Funding	Lead agency
Mental Wellbeing	Funding for community activities to support communities to build optimism, increase their protective factors and build resilience through coming together	Rural and isolated communities that have been severely impacted (Thames Coromandel, East Coast, parts of Hawke's Bay and Northland)	\$3 million	Ministry of Social Development
Mental Wellbeing	Targeted and time-bound personalised support and referral services for people impacted by land zoning changes	People in categories 2 and 3 for land zoning changes in Hawke's Bay, Tairāwhiti and Auckland	\$1.5 million	Ministry of Social Development
Education	Fund additional support for akonga to catch up on lost learning post weather events	'At risk' young people who are disengaged or not achieving at school. Māori and Pacific young people are over-represented in this group	\$5 million	Ministry of Education
Iwi and Community Infrastructure	Fund to support building resilience in community and/or Iwi organisations in *Hawke's Bay, Auckland and Tairāwhiti, linked to regional and local plans. The purpose of this fund is to build on identified strengths and protective factors to increase future resilience including preparedness for future events. Includes staff to administer	Māori, Pacific people, youth, disabled people, and ethnic communities	\$8.5 million	Ministry of Social Development

\* Note added - the geographical coverage for this action has been extended to cover any region affected by the North Island extreme weather events following agreement by the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee on 2 August 2023

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Iwi and Community Infrastructure	Additional support to build resilience and capacity for volunteers and community workers suffering burnout in Te Tai Tokerau, Auckland, Tairāwhiti, Hawke's Bay	Volunteers, hapū members and community workers in in Te Tai Tokerau, Auckland, Tairāwhiti, Hawke's Bay	\$1.5 million	Department of Internal Affairs
Iwi and Community Infrastructure	Funding for groups outside of affected areas that have capacity or resource pressures from supporting people who have migrated from affected areas	Iwi and community groups outside of affected areas. People who have left their home	\$0.5 million	Ministry of Social Development
Provider Infrastructure	Education/training for providers on how to support whānau, rangatahi and tamariki with rain anxiety and mental health concerns through upskilling, specific content and new resources for existing mental wellbeing programmes (MH101, Addiction 101 and Rural MH101)	Auckland, Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti	\$0.15 million	Te Whatu Ora
Communication	Advise agencies and/or provide translation, interpretation and other services to improve accessibility including culturally appropriate and accessible formats	Ethnic communities, Pacific people, disabled people	\$0.5 million	Ministry for Social Development, Ministry for Ethnic Communities, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Whaikaha

## Implementation

### *Delivery of actions under the Plan*

- 53 Implementation of the Plan will leverage existing governance structures which have been formalised and/or set up to support ongoing recovery following the North Island extreme weather events. The Plan provides a visualisation of

these structures, including how they interact with regional and local governance groups.

- 54 Relevant agencies will take responsibility for implementing different actions proposed under the Plan. In many cases, this will mean a continuation or ramp-up of existing supports through existing mechanisms.
- 55 Actions undertaken through the Plan will be contributory to the delivery of regional recovery plans, which are currently in development, and decisions around implementation need to take this into account. Agencies recognise their responsibility to work with regional community organisations and providers and iwi organisations to ensure communities are empowered to develop and deliver recovery initiatives, and that delivery of actions under the Plan aligns with regional and local recovery plans.
- 56 RPSCs will provide regional oversight, alignment and connection to regional recovery plans and support agencies to effectively partner with iwi/Māori, local government and local organisations. The NIWE Budget Package secured funding to retain existing RPSC support staff in regions affected by the North Island extreme weather events to June 2024.
- 57 Social sector agencies will use the existing C4C group for oversight and problem-solving in relation to the Plan. Cross-agency membership will facilitate alignment across initiatives delivered under the Plan, and C4C's links to regional decision-making structures through RPSCs will facilitate alignment with regional recovery plans. C4C's connections to overall national recovery coordination through the CRU will facilitate strategic alignment with the Plan, including with other sector plans and frameworks (for example, the Housing Recovery Framework).

*Process for directing funding under the Plan*

- 58 Funding provided to support actions under the Plan, including funding drawn down to respective agency appropriations from the \$30 million tagged contingency to support actions under the Plan, will contribute to the delivery of regional recovery plans, which are currently in development. Decision-making processes to direct the use of funding need to reduce risks around duplication of activity or misalignment with existing or developing national or regional approaches. This will require a centrally coordinated approach that enables cross-agency and regional input into decision-making.
- 59 A cross-agency Funders' Forum has been established, bringing together key agencies and RPSCs, with oversight from C4C, to enable coordination on the funding of regional recovery plans<sup>2</sup>. A Charter for the Funders' Forum is currently in development and will be endorsed by C4C. RPSCs convene

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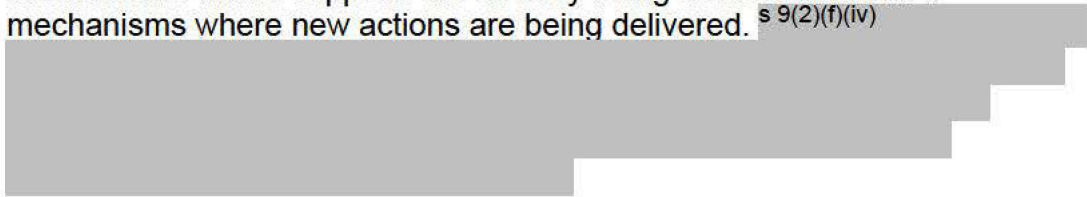
<sup>2</sup> Current membership of the Funders' Forum includes the Department of Internal Affairs, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry for the Environment, the Ministry for Ethnic Communities, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, the Ministry for Primary Industries, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry for Women, Oranga Tamariki, New Zealand Police, Te Arawhiti, Te Puna Aonui business unit, Te Puni Kōkiri, Te Aka Whai Ora, Te Whatu Ora, Whaikaha, and Regional Public Service Commissioners.



Regional Leadership Groups (RLGs) in their regions, comprised of iwi, local and central government and community leaders, and will be able to represent these perspectives at the Funders' Forum.

- 60 In particular, this group will be responsible for:
- 60.1 Providing advice on how funding should be allocated between regions; and
  - 60.2 Providing direction and guidance for the distribution of funds within each region's allocation.
- 61 Decisions coordinated by the Funders' Forum will be taken in line with the objectives and principles established through the Plan, in light of areas identified under the Plan where additional support is required for social recovery, and with consideration of areas where support is already being provided.
- 62 Funding coordination through the Funders' Forum will align with the proposed triage, direction and analysis process for funding proposals discussed at EWR on 21 June 2023 [EWR-23-SUB-0049 refers].

#### *Reporting and assurance*

- 63 I propose that assurance and reporting on activity carried out under the Plan be proportional to investment and aligned to existing practice within lead agencies, and support equity for priority populations. The Funders' Forum will have oversight of reporting related to the Plan.
- 64 System-level monitoring and reporting will be designed in alignment with the overall cyclone recovery reporting coordinated by the CRU.
- 65 Mechanisms to facilitate summary reporting on delivery of the Plan are still being developed and will need to bring together existing reporting mechanisms where supports are already being delivered with new mechanisms where new actions are being delivered. § 9(2)(f)(iv)
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#### *Evaluation*

- 66 Actions under the Plan that will be implemented through a continuation or ramp-up of existing supports will be evaluated through existing mechanisms. Where the Plan involves the delivery of new actions, effectiveness will be evaluated through a reassessment of outstanding areas of need in relation to social recovery alongside feedback loops.

#### **Financial Implications**

- 67 Actions set out under the Plan draw on funding from different sources. These include existing allocations, reprioritisation of existing funds, and funding secured through the North Island Weather Events omnibus budget process. Through the North Island Weather Events omnibus budget process, a tagged contingency of \$30 million was secured to support implementation of the Plan. Funding sources for each of the actions proposed are set out in the Plan.
- 68 As set out in this paper, I propose that the contingency funding be used to support actions set out under the Plan for which no funding stream has been identified. I consider that funding from this tagged contingency is best drawn down in two tranches, with the first tranche of \$20.65 million targeting short-medium term need, and a second tranche of \$9.35 million addressing medium-long term gaps. This paper seeks agreement to draw down the first tranche of funding from the tagged contingency.

### Legislative Implications

- 69 There are no direct legislative implications arising from this paper.

### Impact Analysis

#### Regulatory Impact Statement

- 70 There are no regulatory proposals in this paper, and therefore Cabinet's impact analysis requirements do not apply.

#### Climate Implications of Policy Assessment

- 71 The Climate Implications of Policy Assessment (CIPA) team has been consulted and confirms that the CIPA requirements do not apply to this proposal as the threshold for significance is not met.

### Population Implications

- 72 Social sector agencies will consider the specific needs of different population groups in the design, targeting and delivery of services, recognising that needs may be more complex for people who belong to multiple population groups. Agencies with a focus on specific population groups are a part of C4C and will be able to monitor and advise on the impacts on those particular groups as the Plan is implemented. Further detail on population impacts for specific groups is set out in the Plan.

Population group	How the proposal may affect this group
Māori	The affected regions have a high population of people of Māori descent, including rural Māori communities. Access to services tailored to the specific needs of Māori communities (including rural Māori communities, Māori agricultural businesses and landowners, and tāngata whaikaha Māori) will continue to be focuses for recovery.
Women	Areas where women, girls and marginalised groups may be disproportionately impacted include (but are not limited to) a lack of

	transport, higher likelihood of job losses and more limited potential of realising the employment benefits resulting from the infrastructure rebuild (as women do not typically work in these sectors), an increase in unpaid work and the associated impacts on mental health that come with this, a more limited ability to relocate, an increase in family and sexual violence rates, and challenges in relation to access to healthcare.
Disabled people	Barriers to social dimensions will be exacerbated for disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori and whānau, such as where there are barriers to accessing supports or information or issues relating to isolation. The availability of suitable temporary accommodation and transport is often limited where people have physical access needs. Disabled people may also face challenges relating to continued access to carer services and access to power for critical equipment.
Young people	Interruption to schooling, training or work and other disruption to normality may have long-term consequences, including impacts on mental wellbeing.
Pacific peoples	Pacific families, businesses and communities in Northland, Auckland and Hawke's Bay were amongst those greatly affected by flood and cyclone Gabrielle. Tailored approaches are required to support the social recovery of these communities.
Seniors	Labour shortages may impact care services and increase demand for respite care. Older people typically have less resilience to respond due to fixed incomes. Issues relating to isolation may be exacerbated.
Rural and isolated communities	Rural communities often live and work in the same place, meaning damage may affect them in multiple ways and may have greater emotional, mental and social costs than for those living in urban areas.
Ethnic communities	Diverse ethnic community members will require access to culturally and linguistically appropriate services, which will need additional investment and promotion. Ethnic communities are also likely to need ongoing culturally appropriate support.

## Human Rights

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

## Consultation

- 74 The following agencies have been informed of proposals in relation to the Plan: the Ministry of Education, Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry for Ethnic Communities, the Social Wellbeing Agency, Whaikaha, the Department of Internal Affairs, Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, the Ministry for Women, Te

Puna Aonui, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Treasury, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the Ministry for Primary Industries and Kāinga Ora.

## Communications

- 75 I intend to announce this support following Cabinet endorsement and to make the Plan publicly available.

## Proactive Release

- 76 I intend this Cabinet Paper to be proactively released within standard timeframes.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet Extreme Weather Recovery Committee:

- 1 **note** the significant role that the social sector has played, and continues to play, in response to the North Island extreme weather events, supported by government investment;
- 2 **note** that there is a need to continue to provide and facilitate access to community and government social sector supports to support communities' longer-term recovery across all dimensions of wellbeing;
- 3 **note** that the Social Sector Recovery Plan (the Plan) provides a framework to guide activity and longer-term investment for social recovery and covers actions for the next two years;
- 4 **note** that in April 2023, joint Ministers, with delegated authority from Cabinet [CAB-23-MIN-0140 refers]:
  - 4.1 **agreed** to establish a tagged operating contingency for initiatives that will implement the Social Sector Recovery Plan to support communities, households and whānau in regions affected by the North Island extreme weather events of up to the following amounts to provide for this plan:

	\$million – increase/(decrease)				
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27 & Outyears
All-of-Government Response – Social Sector Recovery Plan – tagged operating contingency		30.000			
<b>Total</b>		<b>30.000</b>			



- 4.2 **agreed** that the Minister for Social Development and Employment and the Minister of Finance (Joint Ministers) will jointly draw down the tagged operating contingency, subject to:
- 4.2.1 Cabinet's endorsement of the Social Sector Recovery Plan;
  - 4.2.2 Joint Ministers being satisfied that the initiatives to be funded from the tagged contingency established above do not duplicate existing support and that any risks are managed appropriately; and
  - 4.2.3 Joint Ministers being satisfied that the initiatives funded from the tagged contingency have appropriate report-back conditions.
- 4.3 **noted** the Ministry of Social Development will provide a report back to Joint Ministers on the use of funds allocated under the Social Sector Recovery Plan.
- 5 **note** that the Plan will facilitate a coordinated cross-agency response to social recovery;
- 6 **note** the working principles and assumptions that underpin the Plan (set out at **paragraph 34**), that have been developed with consideration of lessons learned from previous disaster responses;
- 7 **approve** the proposed Plan attached at **Appendix B**, noting that actions proposed under the Plan respond to areas of need that have been identified as requiring additional support for social recovery, and that this approval fulfils the requirement set out in recommendation 4.2.1 in relation to draw down of the tagged operating contingency;
- 8 **agree** that authority be delegated to the Minister for Social Development and Employment to make minor editorial changes to the Plan ahead of its publication;
- 9 **note** current funding, including through the North Island Weather Events Response and Recovery Package, that will support actions under the Plan, and actions for which gaps in funding have been identified (as set out in the Plan at **Appendix B**);
- 10 **agree** to draw down the first tranche of funding of \$20.65 million under the tagged contingency to fund the following actions:
- 10.1 Funding for community activities to support communities (particularly rural and isolated communities) to build optimism, increase their protective factors and build resilience through coming together (\$3 million);
  - 10.2 Targeted and time-bound personalised support and referral services for people impacted by land zoning changes (\$1.5 million);

# IN CONFIDENCE

- 10.3 Fund additional support for akonga to catch up on lost learning post weather events (\$5 million);
  - 10.4 Fund for support for building resilience for community and/or Iwi organisations in \*Hawke's Bay, Auckland and Tairāwhiti, linked to regional and local plans. The purpose of this fund is to build on identified strengths and protective factors to increase future resilience including preparedness for future events. Includes staff to administer (\$8.5 million);
  - 10.5 Additional support to build resilience and capacity in volunteers and community workers suffering burnout in Te Tai Tokerau, Auckland, Tairāwhiti, Hawke's Bay (\$1.5 million);
  - 10.6 Funding for groups outside of affected areas that have capacity or resource pressures from supporting people who have migrated from affected areas (\$0.5 million);
  - 10.7 Education/training for providers on how to support whānau, rangatahi and tamariki with rain anxiety and mental health concerns through upskilling, specific content and new resources for existing mental wellbeing programmes (MH101, Addiction 101 and Rural MH101) (\$0.15 million); and
  - 10.8 Provide translation, interpretation and other services to improve the accessibility including culturally appropriate and accessible formats (\$0.5 million).
- 11 **approve** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decisions in recommendations 10.1, 10.2, 10.4, 10.6 and 10.8 above, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net debt:

	\$million – increase/(decrease)				
Vote Social Development Minister for Social Development and Employment	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27 & Outyears
<b>Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:</b>					
Community Support Services					
MCA					
<b>Departmental Output Expenses:</b>					
Developing and Managing Community Services (funded by revenue Crown)	-	0.500	-	-	-
<b>Non-Departmental Other Expenses:</b>					
Community Response to Adverse or Emergency Events	-	13.500	-	-	-
<b>Total Operating</b>		<b>14.000</b>			

\*Note added - the geographical coverage for this action has been extended to cover any region affected by the North Island extreme weather events following agreement by the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee on 2 August 2023

**IN CONFIDENCE**

- 12 **approve** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in recommendation 10.3 above, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net debt:

	\$million – increase/(decrease)				
<b>Vote Education Minister of Education</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27 &amp; Outyears</b>
<b>Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:</b>					
Primary and Secondary Education MCA					
<b>Non-Departmental Output Expenses:</b>					
Primary Education	-	1.800	-	-	-
Secondary Education	-	3.200	-	-	-
<b>Total Operating</b>		<b>5.000</b>			



- 13 **approve** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision recommendation 10.5 above, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net debt:

	\$million – increase/(decrease)				
<b>Vote Internal Affairs Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27 &amp; Outyears</b>
<b>Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:</b>					
Community Development and Funding Schemes MCA					
<b>Non-Departmental Other Expense:</b>					
Community and Volunteering Capability Fund	-	1.000	0.500	-	-
<b>Total Operating</b>	-	<b>1.000</b>	<b>0.500</b>	-	-

- 14 **approve** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision recommendation 10.7 above, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net debt:

	\$million – increase/(decrease)				
<b>Vote Health Minister of Health</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27 &amp; Outyears</b>
<b>Non-Departmental Output Expense:</b>					
Delivering Primary, Community, Public and Population Health Services	-	0.150	-	-	-
<b>Total Operating</b>	-	<b>0.150</b>	-	-	-

- 15 **agree** that the proposed changes to appropriations for 2023/24 above under recommendations 11, 12, 13 and 14 are included in the 2023/24 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increases be met from Imprest Supply;

- 16 **agree** that the expenses incurred under recommendations 11, 12, 13 and 14 above be charged against the All-of-Government Response Social Sector Recovery Plan tagged operating contingency established as part of the North Island Weather Events Response and Recovery Package to support cyclone recovery described in recommendation 4.1 above;
- 17 **note** that, following the adjustment(s) detailed in recommendation 16 above, the All-of-Government Response Social Sector Recovery Plan tagged operating contingency will have a balance remaining of \$9.350 million;
- 18 s 9(2)(f)(iv) 
- 19 **note** that agencies will have responsibility for relevant actions proposed under the Plan, with oversight provided through the Caring for Communities (C4C) group of Chief Executives;
- 20 **note** that a cross-agency Funders' Forum, bringing together key agencies and Regional Public Service Commissioners and with oversight from C4C, will support regional coordination on actions to be funded under the Plan;
- 21 s 9(2)(f)(iv) 

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Carmel Sepuloni

Minister for Social Development and Employment



**Appendix A: Government support to date to assist communities following the 2023 North Island extreme weather events**

- 1 Government support for the social sector response to the 2023 North Island extreme weather events includes, but is not limited to:
  - 1.1 A \$14 million All-of-Government Community Support package, time-limited to 30 June 2023, to support communities and community providers in the areas affected by the North Island extreme weather events;
  - 1.2 More than \$65.8 million in Civil Defence Payments;
  - 1.3 A \$15 million Cyclone Gabrielle Māori Communities Response Fund, which provides funding for Māori-led responses which help prevent vulnerable whānau falling through the cracks, supporting a faster transition to recovery;
  - 1.4 \$5 million provided through Mayoral Relief Funds;
  - 1.5 The reprioritisation of \$3.25 million in funding to support the immediate mental health needs of those impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle;
  - 1.6 \$4 million in rural sector funding;
  - 1.7 Support for access to education and housing, including through the Temporary Accommodation Service;
  - 1.8 A Cyclone Gabrielle business and primary sector support recovery package of \$25 million; and
  - 1.9 Emergency relief through the Lottery Ministers Discretionary Fund, Emergency Natural Disaster Relief Fund and Community Organisation Grants Scheme.

## **Appendix B: The Social Sector Recovery Plan**

[Please see separate attachment]