

Social
Service
Providers

Te Pai
Ora o
Aotearoa



Te Pai Ora SSPA Impact Report

2023 - 2026

Foreword

This report provides a snapshot of the impact we strive for everyday.

Where possible, we measure the changes we have contributed to, and in other areas our members and network have kindly shared their stories about how being part of Te Pai Ora SSPA has helped them to grow their own impact and better serve their whānau and communities.

A message from our Chief Executive and Co-Chairs

Kei aku rangatira tēnei rā te mihi maioha ki a koutou nā mātou o Te Pai Ora SSPA.

Our journey to measure the impact of our collective efforts has felt ambitious and energising. We've been walking with Aotearoa's community sector for 25 years, and this reflection point comes at a critical time for the social services sector and communities alike as we endure in the face of growing hardship and uncertainty. Collectivism is a choice. This report illustrates the value and meaning in coming together to tautoko each other and stand firm to support mokopuna and whānau. Ultimately, we seek to collectively shape the system to better serve our communities.

We owe an enormous amount to those who took the time to contribute to this report and all of you who have provided feedback over the years so we remain connected, useful and relevant to your mahi on the frontline in communities.

Mā tō rourou me tāku rourou ka ora ai te iwi.
With your contribution and mine the people will thrive.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou kia ora tātou katoa.

Belinda Himiona, Chief Executive · Marihi Langford and Victoria Newcombe, Co-Chairs
— Te Pai Ora SSPA

“Te Pai Ora provide a voice for us in Government's political and senior management spaces. They unite us with other NGO's and advocate for us (and primarily, the people we serve).”

— Response to 2025 member survey

“The leverage that SSPA provides, in terms of information and wisdom and knowledge that's passed on, for the sector...it just gives us greater confidence in who we are as an organisation, and that we're on the right track.”

— Participant in our Provider Impact Workshops

All of Te Pai Ora SSPA's work builds toward one outcome:
**mokopuna, whānau and communities across Aotearoa flourish,
supported by a community-based social sector that is strong,
trusted and here for the long term**

The operating environment

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The context: Aotearoa's community-based social services are under sustained strain, navigating rising, more complex demand and real workforce pressures, and a fragmented system which rewards short-term outputs over long-term wellbeing.



The result: duplicated effort, gaps between services, and frontline knowledge that struggles to reach decision-makers in a coordinated, timely way. Whānau feel the ultimate effects of this – being left to navigate a system which doesn't align to the realities of their lives.

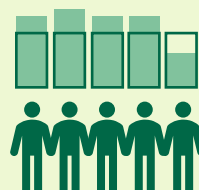
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Of true delivery cost covered by government contracts — a \$630m/yr gap



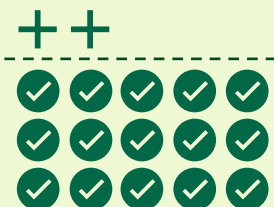
85%

Of social workers report burnout and workload strain



40%

Of contracted providers over-deliver by 26%+ — yet funding stayed flat or fell for 58% of providers



1 in 7

NZ children in material hardship — a ten-year high (169,300 tamariki)



How we respond to the needs of the sector

As a trusted, non-partisan bridge between more than 260 community-based organisations and decision-makers, Te Pai Ora SSPA exists to make that connection at a moment when a connected, well-supported sector matters more than ever.

- **Advocacy and Sector Leadership:** we act as the unified voice for 260+ community-based social services organisations
- **Convening and Collaboration:** we host national and regional gatherings, including Whakamanawa, the National Social Services Conference
- **Learning and Development:** we deliver accessible training, workshops, and professional development for social service providers
- **Information and Knowledge Sharing:** we publish weekly e-pānui, a biannual magazine Kia Mauri Ora, and share resources that keep the sector informed, connected, and equipped to navigate change
- **Relationship Building and System Navigation:** we are the connection between frontline providers and government

Sources: Te Pai Ora SSPA (sspa.org.nz) · CNA State of the Sector 2024 · MartinJenkins funding-gap study (2019) · Stats NZ Child Poverty Statistics (Feb 2026) – Social Workers Registration Board Annual Workforce Survey 2025

“Some contracts are 150% by volume over what we are funded to provide, but we have an unspoken rule never to turn people away.”

— Provider, State of the Sector survey 2022

“Constantly chasing funding is a real burden. It takes away from vital frontline work.”

— Belinda Himiona, Chief Executive, Te Pai Ora SSPA (2026)

Our Impact

Our impact at a glance
Values as behaviours
Our Impact Model

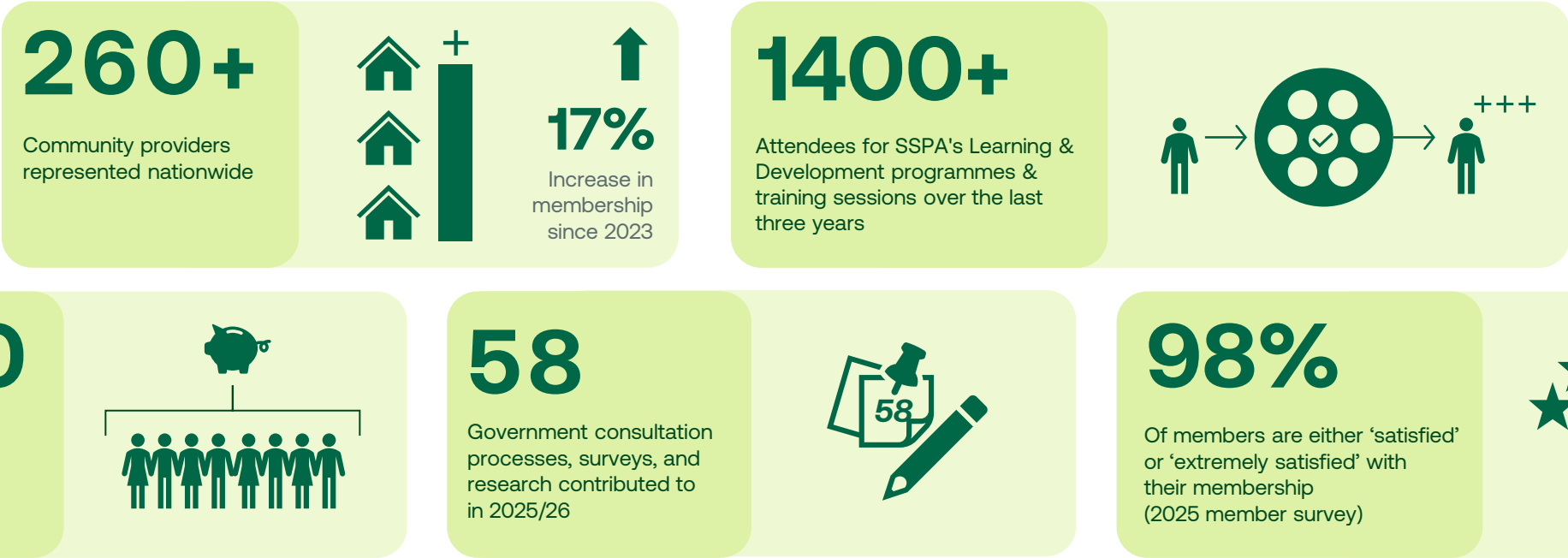
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Our impact at a glance

See the ‘Our Impact Measurement’ section for more detailed evidence and case studies.
See appendix for data sources.



Mokopuna and whānau outcomes become the shared focus of the system

“We had a number of social workers who received generous pay increases because of the pay equity work...The impact for them was immeasurable. It made such a difference to their quality of life.”

“There’s always that leverage there that I find that SSPA provides, in terms of information and wisdom and knowledge that’s passed on, for the sector. It just gives us greater confidence as well in who we are as an organisation, and that we’re on the right track.”

Values as behaviours

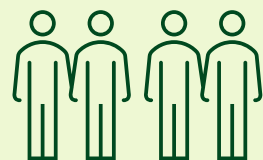
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In June 2026, our National Executive considered and confirmed a new set of organisational values. These refreshed values represented a move towards ideal organisation and kaimahi behaviours. Rather than simply nouns, these are values that a member, a Minister or a new staff member could watch us do.

In order to be meaningful, these values will need to be woven into all our mahi. They are therefore inseparable of the impact that we hope to have on providers and the sector.



Kotahitanga

We will line up behind shared priorities, build one collective position, advocate powerfully together and learn from one another.

Hononga

We will invest in the relationship before the transaction and meet kanoahi ki te kanoahi when it counts.

Māia

We will say the hard thing to those in power, on the record, when our members direct us to.

Manaakitanga

We will make membership a place of warmth and safety, looking after each other and our members in equal measure.

Whakatō

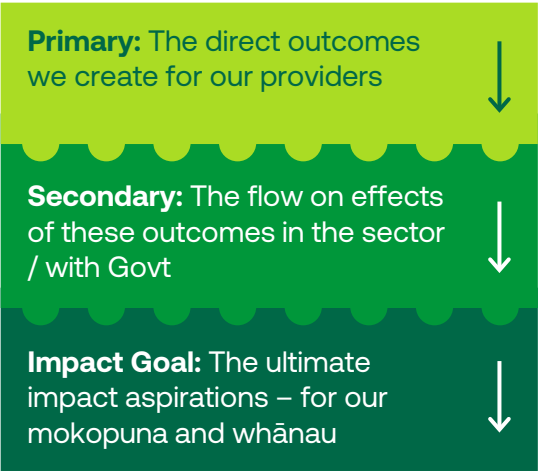
We will test, learn and adjust, not waiting for certainty before we act.

This impact model has helped us focus our mahi and is the basis for our impact measurement.

The top half of the model sets out our operating environment, our stakeholders, and our activities and approach. This is the foundation.

The lower half of the model explains the different outcomes we create as a result of our mahi.

The flow of outcomes to impact:



Te Pai Ora | SSPA Impact Model September 2026

Our story of the change we create and what we aspire to build for our mokopuna and whānau.



Our Environment

New Zealand’s social service providers hold deep knowledge of what communities need and what works for them. When their expertise is recognised and their collective voice is elevated, whānau are better served.

As a Te Tiriti honouring organisation, Te Pai Ora SSPA ensures Māori perspectives, leadership, and solutions are respected and upheld. This commitment strengthens our ability to deliver equitable and culturally grounded outcomes for whānau.

Stakeholders: Te Pai Ora SSPA's Ecosystem

We play a connecting role within a dynamic system where multiple voices and interests intersect around the wellbeing of mokopuna and whānau. Each stakeholder brings unique perspectives, priorities, and power, creating an excellent opportunity for collective impact.

Mahi: Connecting, Strengthening, and Amplifying

Te Pai Ora SSPA connects people and organisations across the social services system. Engagement is inclusive, mana-enhancing, and grounded in genuine partnership with Māori. Our mahi includes:

1. Advocacy and Sector Leadership
2. Analysis, Convening and Collaboration
3. Learning and Development
4. Information and Knowledge Sharing
5. Relationship Building and System Navigation

Approach: Inclusive, trusted, grounded in reality

What makes Te Pai Ora SSPA effective is our unique position as a trusted, non-partisan bridge between frontline providers and decision-makers, with credibility across government, funders, and community organisations at local, regional, and national levels.

How we make an impact:

Primary Outcomes

What changes for social service providers

We enable shifts for providers:

- Connecting providers to build collective, evidence-based capability
- Improved awareness and preparedness
- Key issues reach decision-makers
- Providers are supported when dealing with government
- Improved skills and confidence

What changes for Government decision makers

We create shifts in how current and future governments understand, engage with, and support the social services sector - in order to improve the lives of mokopuna and whānau:

- Policy and funding decisions become better informed and grounded
- Engagement becomes more efficient and effective
- Government credibility with the sector increases

Secondary Outcomes

Change in the system

As member organisations grow stronger and engagement with decision-makers improves, Te Pai Ora SSPA’s influence contributes to meaningful shifts in how the social services system works for mokopuna, whānau, and communities:

- Whānau outcomes, supported by evidence, become the shared focus
- Services respond to how whānau live, not how systems are structured
- Whānau voice shapes funding and policy
- The sector is trusted to act in the interests of whānau

Te Pai Ora SSPA Impact Goal

All of Te Pai Ora SSPA's work builds toward one outcome:

Mokopuna, whānau and communities across Aotearoa flourish, supported by a community-based social sector that is strong, trusted and here for the long term.

Whānau, Community and Te Tiriti



Our Impact Measurement

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Our reach & scale
Equity and Te Tiriti outcomes
Evidence of positive change
Looking forward



Our reach & scale

The scale of the network behind our impact.

Our mahi ensures that the voice of the sector and issues for children and whānau reach decision makers

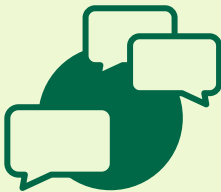
260+

Community providers



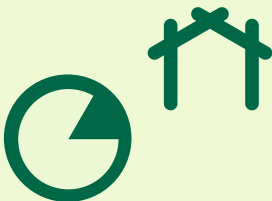
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Organisations who had received social investment funding participated in our social investment roundtable



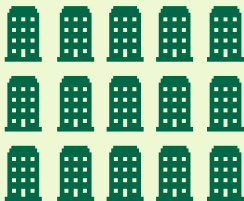
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Iwi, hāpu, and kaupapa Māori providers



15

Government Departments provide funding for our members



Activity this year

- 466 attendees at Whakamanawa, the national social services conference
- 22 Learning and Development sessions and workshops for over 1000 participants
- 7 submissions to Ministers and agencies
- Weekly Te Whakahou e-pānui to 1169 subscribers; Kia Mauri Ora magazine x2
- Presence on 20 leadership groups and national bodies over the last three years

Coverage across Aotearoa



Equity & Te Tiriti outcomes

New Zealand's social service providers hold deep knowledge of what works and are natural partners in upholding Te Tiriti — and when their collective voice is elevated, whānau are better served.

Upholding Te Tiriti and advancing equity is central to how we work — and to what we measure.

Our long-term commitments

- Te Tiriti partnership is embedded in our Executive Committee through co-governance and co-chairs, ensuring equal power sharing with Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti representation across key decision making.
- Te Pai Ora team is Tiriti-led and supported by a Māori Advisor working across internal capability build, Te Tiriti engagement with iwi/kaupapa and community across the sector.
- Our sector engagement is led with a Te Tiriti lens and acknowledges the diversity of organisations in our membership that support all mokopuna and whānau across Aotearoa.



Our actions

- Our membership contributes to Tangata whenua and Tangata Tiriti forums at our annual conference, informing and strengthening collective impact of iwi, kaupapa Māori and community organisations to uplift whānau across Aotearoa and provide equitable outcomes for all.
- We understand the issues and opportunities for our Māori members and we amplify these. We integrate Māori member perspectives into advice to decision-makers.
- Te Pai Ora advocated for integration of Te Tiriti into legislation and service delivery models.
- Championing the use of te reo Māori in our team, within sector communications and our work.



Progress we are seeing



Iwi, Kaupapa Māori and Community providers led through co-governance together shape the priorities Te Pai Ora SSPA will commit to support mokopuna and whānau across Aotearoa.



Māori provider voices are amplified through Te Pai Ora SSPA's relationships and communication channels with government decision makers.



“The aroha and manaakitanga shown was awesome. As a pākehā learning how to become Tangata Tiriti, I love the Te Ao Māori approach to this hui and kōrero. Ngā mihi nui.”



“Māori caucus was a great idea and I commend Te Pai Ora for its bravery by making that space - especially considering the current climate. It was a great opportunity for networking.”

Evidence of positive change

Primarily, we create outcomes for our members – setting them up to deliver more impactful outcomes in their communities.

Priority outcomes

Feedback from participants in our Provider Impact Workshops

Better connection with their peers and the wider sector

“

“Our connections and the intel and information sharing that comes from Te Pai Ora certainly gives us a temperature check as to where the rest of the sector and the country are at.”

“I think that's one of Te Pai Ora's greatest strengths, is its ability to connect people and grow those relationships, and enable people to work together on shared concerns and sometimes shared celebrations.”

“it's good to have someone to reach out to to have those conversations. I don't feel as alone as I did three years ago.”

A clearer understanding of their Te Tiriti obligations and responsibilities

“

“It's connections to have with other providers and how they incorporate Te Tiriti. There's always something that you take away, and you go, gosh, this is something that I could actually pick up...”

“One of the things that I've noticed that Te Pai Ora is strong at is really ensuring that Māori organisations have a voice. And that voice is heard.”

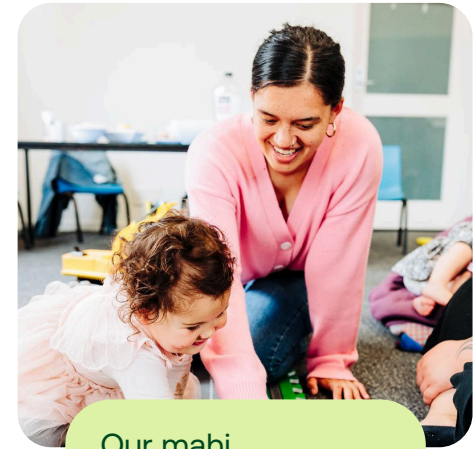
More able to focus on the issues that matter to the organisation

“

“You lobby on behalf of our organisations and our social workers, and it's something that we don't always have the time to do, because we're very busy on the ground.”

“If I was to try to get to that information as an individual provider, that would have been incredibly difficult for me to find the time.”

“I don't have to worry about whether I should go to my contract manager or my relationship manager to ask a difficult question about the timing of my OT contract because Belinda and the team, Te Pai Ora are on it.”



Our mahi contributes towards **whānau and local providers shaping services** in ways that reflect their realities

Evidence of positive change

Te Pai Ora SSPA influences the sector to shift towards a shared focus on mokopuna and whānau outcomes.

Priority outcomes

Feedback from participants in our Provider Impact Workshops

Whānau voice shapes funding and policy

“

“Your advocacy really lends strength to our community. It gives the smaller providers an opportunity to have a voice that we would not necessarily get, just on our own.”

“I think that SSPA gives quite a powerful voice to government... and I think that their advocacy and lobbying is probably the key function that I see for the organisation on behalf of the sector.”

Services respond to how whānau live, not how systems are structured

“

“I had a concern about some comms out of government department, I signalled it to you, and you went and raised that with a senior official and brokered a discussion.”

“Te Pai Ora listen to the members, to understand what the members are saying, to be able to present it back to government in a respectful way that challenges how they made decisions and executed those decisions.”

Devolution / more community-led decision making

“

“What we're starting to see is pockets of decision-making happening at community level, organisational level, where they're taking a more nuanced view of what is needed.”

“I'm so excited that Te Pai Ora has made the commitment and mahi is underway so we can have the voice and leadership of our Māori uplifted to make the changes we need.”

Our mahi influences **public policy** to be more grounded and better informed by frontline and community insights



Story of change:

In its feedback to the Social Workers' Registration Board (SWRB) on its review of the Social Workers Registration Act 2003, we suggested SWRB consider mandating a service charter to ensure a strong relationship with the sector.

Following our feedback, SWRB published a Code of Service setting out the standards that the sector can expect across its functions.

Looking forward

Our priorities ahead

Over the next five years, we intend to focus on three areas:



Sector voice and system influence

Shift funding, contracting and the design of social investment toward whānau outcomes.



Member strength and capability

Grow and renew the membership into a rich, diverse and connected community, building the capability members need for the social investment era.



A future-fit Te Pai Ora: Intent

Secure the organisation's independence, sustainability and resourcing, care for kaimahi wellbeing and build the capability the sector now needs from us.

In support of this, we will deepen our impact measurement and build on the workforce evidence base and outcomes data. **We expect future impact reports to:**

- Sample a broader cross-section of members about key impact areas.
- Provide further evidence of the link between our own mahi and the change that is happening at the community level.
- Reflect a more deliberate approach to incorporating impact measurement into all activities at Te Pai Ora SSPA.



Appendix

| Our data sources

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Data sources for impact measurement

Our impact claims rest on a consistent measurement framework aligned to our Impact Model. We pair quantitative indicators with qualitative stories and are explicit about what we can evidence and what we can only contribute to.

Our data sources

- Annual member survey — 67 response, 25% response rate, April 2025
- Other surveys of the sector related to the fuel crisis, AI usage and Whakamanawa
- Administrative data — membership, events, submissions, training, e-pānui
- In depth interviews with our members — 14 interviews conducted
- September 2026 roundtable with social investment fund recipients
- External evidence — CNA State of the Sector, Stats NZ, MartinJenkins and similar

Confidence & limitations

- We acknowledge the possibility of sampling bias in having a small sample of providers taking part in our interviews. These were voluntary sessions, creating the possibility of selection biases. For this reason, we did not extrapolate their feedback as representative for our entire member-base.
- In future impact measurement we will be:
 - using mixed methods to gather feedback from a wider range of members.
 - expanding our focus to a broader range of outcomes than what was presented in this report, including focusing on the broader change happening in communities – and how we contribute to those changes as Te Pai Ora SSPA.

Contribution, not just attribution

We work through and alongside members, so many outcomes are shared. We report our contribution honestly and flag where impact is harder to attribute — particularly system- and whānau-level change.





Ngā mihi

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