



Social Sector Comissioning

A relational approach

18 July 2023

Kaupapa

**Transforming the way
social supports and
services are
commissioned so that
they best support people,
families and whānau to
live the lives they value.**

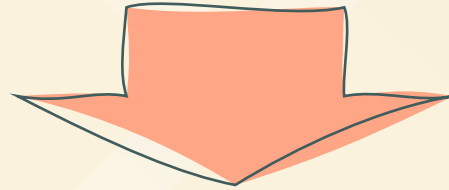
Looking back...



What type of supports and services are in scope?

Social supports and services available to individuals, families and whānau that lead to improved wellbeing.

These supports and services might span across welfare, housing, health, education, child and youth, justice.



Government

National, regional, or local government departments, Crown Entities

Non-government

Non-government organisations, community organisations and philanthropic organisations

iwi, hapu, Māori communities

Through iwi trusts and affiliated kaupapa Māori organisations

Government funded and delivered supports and services

Commissioned social supports and services

- Fully-funded by government
- Delivered through non-government organisations (for profit and not for profit) and/or iwi, hapū trust or affiliated organisations

Commissioned social supports and services

- Funded by a collection of government funding, philanthropy, organisational fundraising,
- Delivered through non-government organisations (for profit and not for profit) and/or iwi, hapū trust or affiliated organisations

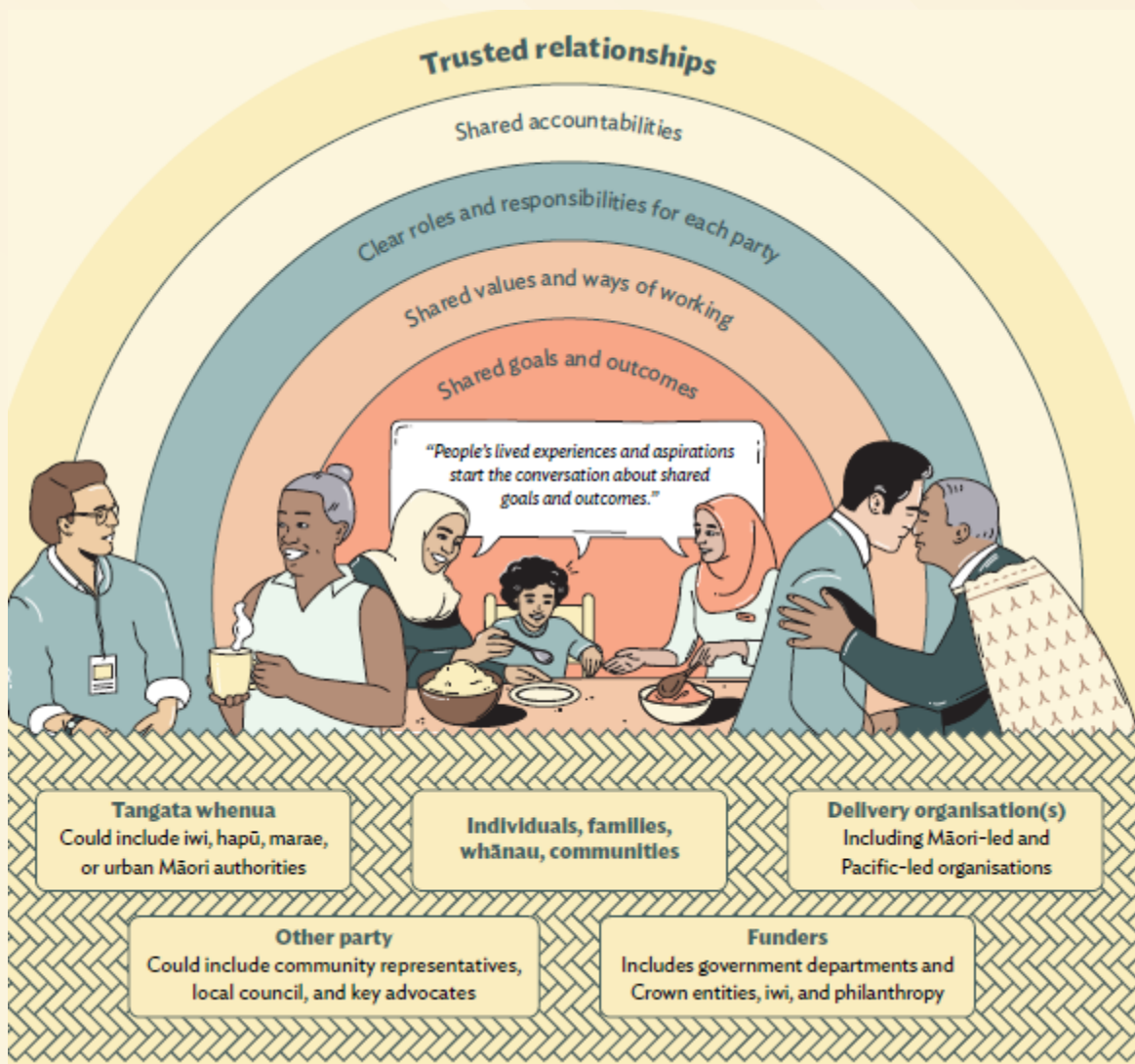
Government grants issued to community organisations

Non-government or iwi trust funded and delivered supports and services and/or iwi trust or affiliated organisations

Philanthropic funded supported services and services delivered by the sector

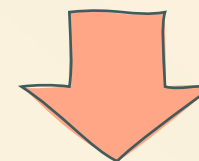
The portion of supports and services we're focused on in this work

A relational approach to commissioning ...



Six key features

- 1 Grounding our work in the needs and aspirations of the people we serve.
- 2 Entering relationships around a common set of outcomes.
- 3 Recognising and giving practical effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi.
- 4 Agreeing how we will work to deliver on these common outcomes.
- 5 Committing to shared accountability.
- 6 Agreeing on clear roles across the commissioning process.



Trusted relationships that will

- ✓ Used lived experiences to inform support and outcomes.
- ✓ Encourage new ways to fund and co-fund services.
- ✓ Empower self-determination on how to engage with services to support aspirations.
- ✓ Emphasise policy, progress, or practice changes to support a high trust approach, for example, common goals, guidelines on how to navigate local service provision, and sustainable funding models.

... underpinned by commissioning principles

A set of principles underpins a relational approach to commissioning

This includes the individuals, families and whānau being supported, tangata whenua, non-government and community organisations, the philanthropic sector, and government agencies.

The principles are interdependent, equally valuable, and indivisible. They should also complement and enable Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi-led commissioning through the emphasis on building trusted, meaningful relationships centred on the lived experiences and interests of individuals, families, whānau, and communities.



Individuals, families, whānau and communities exercise choice



Māori-Crown partnerships are at the heart of effective commissioning



The sector works together locally, regionally, and nationally



The sector is sustainable



Decisions and actions are taken transparently



Commissioning is responsive to the equity of unique and diverse populations



The sector is always learning and improving

Social Sector Commissioning action plan: 2022 – 2028



9 Actions



Clarity and support

Creating a common understanding of a relational approach to commissioning.

- 1 Learn how a relational approach can be applied to commissioning.
- 2 Provide the social sector with guidance on how to work in a relational way.
- 3 Change commissioning system rules and processes to better allow the sector to work together.



Change

Implementing a relational approach to commissioning.

- 4 Support reform work programmes in government to implement relational approaches to commissioning.
- 5 Government agencies and Crown entities make operational change to deliver the government endorsed 'commitments' to practice change.
- 6 Government agencies and Crown entities outline the actions and approach they will take to implement a relational approach to commissioning.



Oversight and learning

Learning, tracking changes, and maintaining momentum through good oversight.

- 7 Create a governance group that is representative of the people involved or impacted by commissioning to guide, promote and protect system transformation.
- 8 Build a team who are responsible for implementing the Action Plan.
- 9 Monitor and learn how social sector commissioning is impacting individuals, families and whanau.



Growing and extending

Mid 2022 to mid 2024

- Develop capability building tools to support uptake of a relational approach.
- Identify options for addressing system barriers like compliance burden.
- Start introducing more pragmatic approaches to reporting that's focused on outcomes.
- Start measuring the impact of working in a relational way.
- Have all agencies prepare and start to implement their scale-up plans.
- Community voices and lived experiences shape commissioning at the local, regional and national levels.
- Start finding more ways to join-up across government to commission together.



Sector wide scale up

2024-2028

- Scaling up pockets of success.
- Government agencies have adopted 'commitments' to practice change.
- Relational agreements or more outcome agreements become commonplace.
- Reduced competition amongst delivery organisations.



Normalising

2028 onwards

- A relational approach is common place.
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi has practical affect in commissioning of social supports and services.
- The sector embodies the commissioning principles.
- We continue listening with our communities and growing what we know works.
- We are sowing the seeds for intergenerational wellbeing.

Action 1: Deepening our understanding

"Government is learning from us about how we work in a relational way."



1

Learn how a relational approach can be applied to commissioning



Why are we doing this?

We want to deepen our understanding of what matters and what works when taking a relational approach so we can build capability across the sector.

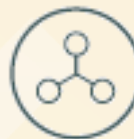


What we plan to do

A series of case studies where we sit and learn from other combined with research and literature reviews.

Produce insights that can be shared across the sector.

Build our understanding of relational approaches across all sorts of commissioning activities.



Who will be involved?

Observing the relational approach in practice means talking with all the actors in the commissioning process:

- delivery agencies
- funders
- communities where supports and services are located
- those receiving supports and services.

Action 2: Building Capability

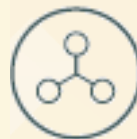


2

Provide the social sector with guidance on how to work in a relational way

Why are we doing this?

Moving to a relational approach involves significant change. We want to support the transformation in order for it to reach its full potential by developing capability tools, guidance and training.



Who will be involved?

We will also be working with Te Puni Kōkiri, MBIE, New Zealand Government Procurement Group, NGO's and community leaders to develop tools, guidance and training.



What we plan to do

We will use the insights gathered from Action 1 to create learning material to share how a relational approach has been applied.

Develop capability building tools, guidance and training to support the sector's uptake of a relational approach to commissioning.

A Community of Practice has been established to provide opportunity to share ideas and experiences.

Action 3 – System Barriers



“We can spend more time providing support rather than writing countless reports to provide assurance that we are providing the right type of support.”

3

Change the commissioning system’s rules and processes to enable the sector to work together to provide social services



Why are we doing this?

Some issues that stop us from adopting a relational approach can’t be addressed by any one community or government agency alone. It requires system level change.

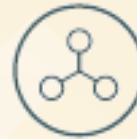
We’re starting with compliance burden and sustainable funding.



What we plan to do

Undertake some deep dives and advice for options for change:

- Funding models/costing model consistency
- Budget Process recommendations
- Procurement Rules changes
- Quality assurance framework that is focused on capability building



Who will be involved?

Working groups have been established across compliance burden and sustainable funding.

These groups are made up of voices from:

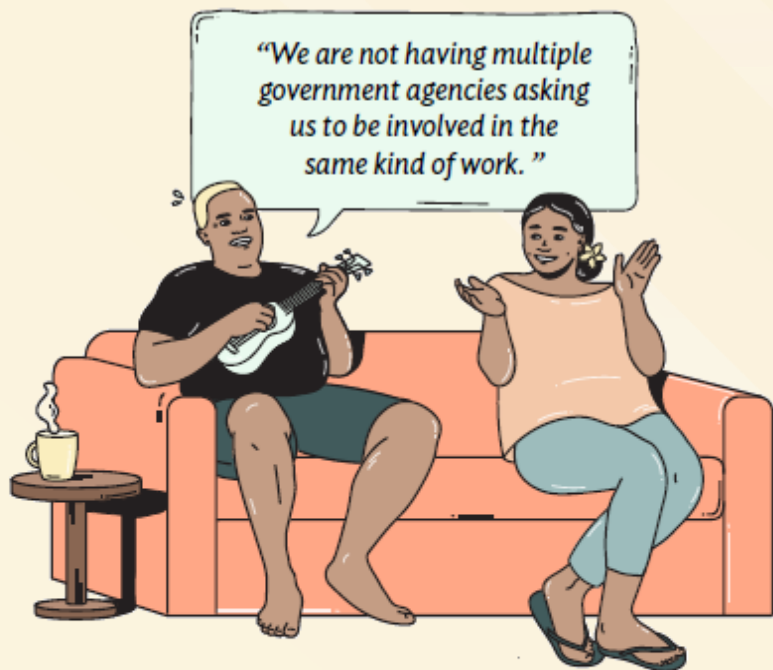
- non-government/community organisations
- Māori, Pacific communities
- Government agencies
- Philanthropic organisations
- Pou Tangata

Action 3 - Deep dives on a page

We are working collaboratively with two groups, with a mix of NGO leaders and government experts; to identify the key system barriers and the shifts required. This year we will develop change proposals on:

- **Investment approaches:** increasing adoption of investment approaches which support collaboration and sustainability.
- **Funding practices:** improving government agency funding practices to better support relational approaches.
- **Procurement settings:** moving away from a competitive default and removing barriers to collaborative approaches.
- **Shared assurance and accountability:** improving current approaches as well as exploring options to transform to shared management of service quality and risks.
- **Relational agreements:** formalising collaborative relationships in ways which equalise the roles of parties and fairly share risks.
- **Meaningful reporting:** moving away from burdensome low value reporting to shared data collection which delivers insights for continuous improvement.

Action 4 – Supporting reform programmes



Why are we doing this?

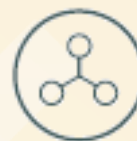
Major cross-government social reform programmes that require a change to commissioning will have opportunities to work together to solve common problems and share knowledge.



What we plan to do

We Will:

- Support aligned implementation
- Facilitate the sharing of success stories
- Use changes that are being implemented in reforms to test concepts



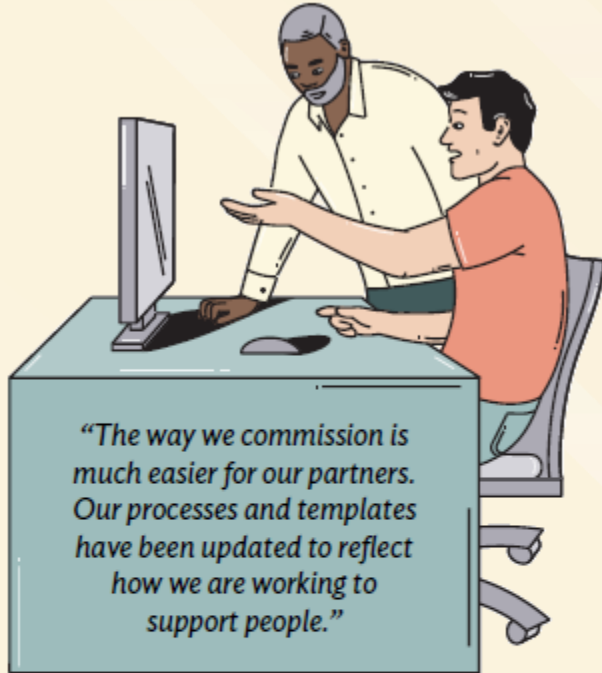
Who will be involved?

Relevant government agencies for major reforms

Individuals, families, whānau, hapū, iwi, NGOs and communities

4 —————
Support reform programmes to work smarter and in a joined-up way to implement relational approaches to commissioning

Action 5 – The Commitments



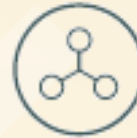
Why are we doing this?

15 commitments have been developed to set expectations of good practice for government agencies. The commitments aim to remove barriers, lift standards of practice and reduce complexity.



What we plan to do

We will support agencies to implement the government – endorsed commitments including providing guidance, training and tools (Action 2).



Who will be involved?

All social sector government agencies and Crown entities

5

Government agencies and Crown entities make operational changes to deliver the government-endorsed ‘commitments’ to commissioning practice

Action 6 –Scale Up planning

“We can prepare for the future with more confidence because we have a better understanding of how government agencies are planning to implement relational approaches to commissioning.”



Why are we doing this?

A big part of change needs to start with how government agencies approach commissioning of social supports and services.

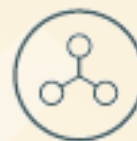
Implementing change often gets stuck at pockets of excellence and not enough time is spent on planning to scale up.



What we plan to do

Work with government agencies to support them to build scale up plans that are agreed by their Ministers and the Social Wellbeing Board.

Spend more time than supporting these scale up plans to be delivered (under the second phase of the Action Plan).



Who will be involved?

Government agencies should be taking responsibility for this work.

There's a strong expectation that government agencies should be working with their partners to understand what's going to work in their context.

6
Government agencies and Crown entities outline the actions and approach they will take to implement a relational approach to commissioning

Action 7 – Stewardship



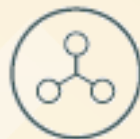
7 **Create a stewardship group that represents people who are involved in or impacted by the social sector, so they guide, promote, and protect the transformation of the system**



Why are we doing this?

Change needs to be guided by a group of people who can ensure that the work underway has the right impact and delivers to the aspiration of this work.

We need to do this at the national, regional and local levels.



Who will be involved?

Sector representatives who have a strong understanding of the complexity of the sector, including:

- iwi and hapu representation
- non-government and community organisations
- significant commissioners of social supports and services across government.



What we plan to do

Establish a stewardships group, following further discussions with sector representatives, including further kanohi ki te kanohi engagement with Māori stakeholders.

Work is also planned through the Regional Public Service Commissioners who have also identified social sector commissioning work as essential to their purpose.

Action 8 – The Social Sector Commissioning Hub



Why are we doing this?

The Social Sector Commissioning work programme have a team that provide support and guidance, and facilitate change management.

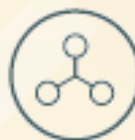
The Hub works across government, provides a holistic overview and has the ability to take leadership and support change that is beyond the scope of any one agency.



What we plan to do

Encourage fundamental change by:

- Convening stewardship groups and facilitating working groups
- Developing and implementing regular monitoring and reporting
- Supporting the move to relational commissioning
- Develop tools and guidance
- Address system policy issues



Who will be involved?

The Social Sector Commissioning Hub.

8

Build a team that is responsible for implementing the 2022-2028 Social Sector Commissioning Action Plan

Action 9 – monitoring and learning



“The support we are receiving impacts our life. Our experience is valued as it is being used to either demonstrate how well social services are being provided, or to make improvements.”



Why are we doing this?

We want to see a sector that is learning and improving.

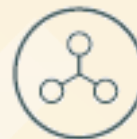
We can only do this if we build the processes and monitoring arrangements that allow us to do this across the sector.



What we plan to do

Establishing a monitoring framework where we can collect and share insights at least annually.

Use a collection of quantitative and qualitative information sources.



Who will be involved?

Working groups have been established across compliance burden and sustainable funding.

These groups are made up of voices from:

- non-government/community organisations
- Māori, Pacific communities
- Government agencies
- Philanthropic organisations
- Pou Tangata

9

Monitor and learn how social sector commissioning is impacting individuals, families and whānau

Working together ... what changes might you see?

By adopting a relational approach, we allow people's aspirations, experiences, lived realities, and goals to shape their futures. As we place trusted relationships at the heart of social sector commissioning, you may see:

- ✓ More trusting, flexible and transparent relationships with government
- ✓ Reduced compliance burden, including a more pragmatic approach to reporting and increased use of cross-sector contracts
- ✓ Consideration of real world delivery costs
- ✓ Increased role for tangata whenua to working in partnership on local commissioning
- ✓ More support to NGOs and community organisations to build capability and support a diversity of providers
- ✓ More skilled government partners, including cultural competencies
- ✓ NGOs engaging with government as equal partners
- ✓ Increase the sharing of learnings about what matters and what works.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out: social_sector_enquiries@msd.govt.nz

You can visit our page: [Social Sector Commissioning Action Plan and reform](#)