

# Socialink Tūhono Pāpori

Building a Thriving Social Sector

Western  
Bay of Plenty



## Report on Training and Workforce Development Needs for the Social and Community Sector in the Western Bay of Plenty

Summary and Recommendations

DECEMBER 2022

Socialink was established in 2012 at the request of the social and community sector in the western Bay of Plenty to support and empower the work of community organisations.

Our vision is “a resourced, skilled and cohesive for-purpose sector enabling communities to flourish”.

Our purpose is “building capability, confidence, sustainability and voice of community organisations in the Western Bay of Plenty.”

We deliver a range of services, including:

- Professional development
- Advice on all aspects of the operations of community organisations
- Support in enabling community organisations to work together to achieve great impact on social issues
- Work with community organisations to improve their ability to effectively utilise internal and external data
- Encourage people to volunteer and support organisations to attract and retain volunteers
- Operate The Kollektive, a co-working space for community organisations
- Give a voice to the sector on issues of relevance to community organisations

## **Acknowledgements**

Socialink thanks everyone who participated in the Training Needs Assessment’s (TNA) focus groups or undertook the survey and shared their thoughts and ideas on learning and development. The effectiveness of the TNA is entirely reliant on it being sector driven and we hope as a result of your input that Socialink can better support the social, iwi and community sectors training needs.

Thank you to Tauranga City Council which funded the training needs assessment. We appreciate your support and look forward to continuing to work with you for the betterment of the social, iwi and community sector.

## Executive Summary

### The training and needs assessment

SocialLink undertook a training and needs assessment (TNA) with organisations in the social and community sectors in the Western Bay of Plenty during November 2022, funded by Tauranga City Council. The aim was to identify training needs to inform SocialLink's delivery of learning opportunities and to gain a better understanding of training and workforce development issues for the social, iwi and community sector on which SocialLink could take further action.

The TNA involved an online survey (55 responses) and five focus groups with participants from 24 organisations in the following sub-sectors: Māori and Pasifika; disability; social services; mental health addictions and neurodiversity, and management/other local peak bodies. Both the survey and focus groups were directed to CEO/managers, team leaders or training coordinators because of their role and perspective in identifying organisational and staff training and development needs. The TNA also included an environmental scan of relevant workforce development issues and stocktakes of relevant training, including professional development, certificates, diplomas and degrees.

The TNA objective was successfully met in understanding the sector training needs, with some clear priorities emerging at an organisational level and for staff and volunteers.

### The sector in the Western Bay of Plenty

The not-for-profit sector covers iwi organisations, charities, incorporated societies, social enterprises and Māori land trusts working in a wide range of areas from community development, family/whānau, children, young and older people, health, alcohol related or family harm, disability, food and housing security, environmental groups, sporting organisations and the arts.

As an example of its size, according to Charities Services' information there are at least 377 registered charities based in the Western Bay of Plenty working in these areas, 54% (202) of which indicate they are run entirely by volunteers. The remainder have up to 2,400 part and full time staff. There is an average of 1,563 voluntary hours spent weekly across all the charities.

### Broad workforce and training issues and challenges affecting the sector

The health and social sectors are seen as fundamental to the health and wellbeing of communities in Aotearoa New Zealand, according to regional workforce development research. It is also a large source of employment in most regions, employing around 10 - 11 percent of the general workforce, including in the Bay of Plenty (the health workforce forms most of this). Demand for health and social services will grow, driven by the growth in the aging population, regional population growth and increase in need for mental health services.

Workforce development and upskilling are affected by several broader contextual factors according to several published reviews. Traditionally the not-for-profit sector has made up for reduced remuneration with flexibility of working, workplace culture and the ability to make a positive impact on wider society. However, as the government and commercial sector are now increasingly also offering these benefits, along with higher remuneration, the not-for-profit sector

no longer is seen to have this advantage. The cost of living and changes to the way people work due to Covid 19 have also contributed to employees changing work and leaving the not-for-profit sector. The sector is also considered to not invest sufficiently in workforce training and development.

These findings were echoed in the focus group discussions and survey responses: undertaking sufficient investment in providing staff learning and development was a common challenge. Respondents generally agreed that if overall funding was tight, then the training budget would be the first to go. The exception was one organisation which protected the training budget because it believed it was important to strategically invest in its staff.

The role of training and development was discussed in the context of staff retention, and organisations advised that they were more likely to lose staff because of better pay offers in other sectors rather than lack of training opportunities.

Regarding volunteers, some organisations found it difficult enough to attract and retain volunteers, never mind then asking them to undertake necessary training to do the role. In many cases, unpaid volunteer training was delivered 'on the job.'

## **Training priorities for organisations and workforces**

The priorities are based on feedback from the focus groups and surveys.

### ***Understanding Te Ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi***

It was seen as important for providers and their staff to have relationships with hapū and iwi and to understand Te Ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi in order to effectively engage with tamariki, rangatahi and whānau.

### ***Increasing cultural competence***

A need was identified for greater organisational cultural competence in working with the growing number of people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD).

### ***Governance and management***

Training in governance was commonly raised, including ongoing development of Trustees and Board Members particularly around their legal responsibilities and the differences between governance and management. Opportunities for training in operational and team management were highlighted as well.

### ***Staff mental wellbeing***

Helping staff with self-care and resilience was seen as a top priority as was safety of teams and volunteers and training in mental health first aid.

## **Other training and workforce development needs and opportunities**

The outcome of the stocktakes of available training identified that some of the training being requested is already available but organisations may not be aware of it, or it is not delivered when an organisation needs it. Collation of available relevant training in one place on Socialink's website will make it easier for local organisations to access training and development opportunities.

Participants in the TNA highlighted the importance of valuing staff and volunteers, especially given the challenges facing the sector and had several ideas and suggestions for other not for profit organisations to use in order to support recruitment and retention and a positive workforce culture. SocialLink will review these and plan further action as appropriate.

## **Training**

SocialLink will liaise with training and development providers and provide sector feedback on needs and discuss gaps in training and development. With greater emphasis on vocational education through workforce development councils, apprenticeship learning and regional workforce development plans, SocialLink has a role in liaising with those agencies about the sector's needs and challenges.

Organisations had to be innovative about what training they could offer and how to deliver it at the least cost. A number of innovative ideas came from both the focus groups and the survey group that involve sharing of resources, information and broader collaboration between not for profit organisations. A number of these ideas could be facilitated by SocialLink.

In terms of broader funding, organisational and workforce development and training matters, the TNA highlighted a range of initiatives and concerns such as regional workforce development plans, pay equity issues for the not for profit sector and demographic (eg aging population) and social trends (eg changes in volunteering). These are all part of the context to sector recruitment, retention and delivery of services and programmes in the western Bay of Plenty. The not for profit sector is a significant and essential contributor to the wellbeing of the diverse people and communities in this region and addressing its workforce and organisational training and development needs will require an ongoing focus and engagement within and on behalf of the sector.

## Recommendations

1. SocialLink draws on the training needs assessment responses to inform the training and workforce development initiatives that it will deliver from 2023.
2. SocialLink provides the sector with feedback on organisational and workforce training needs; and discusses gaps in training and development with training providers and other relevant organisations and stakeholders to help identify ways forward in meeting needs, for example in cultural competency.
3. SocialLink's website and other communication channels will include information about existing relevant training opportunities for the social and community sector.
4. Approach the Chamber of Commerce about:
  - a. offering places on their training programmes for not-for-profit organisations at a discounted rate and to
  - b. gauge interest in piloting a 'lend an expert' initiative to ask businesses if they may be prepared to lend a hand to a for-purpose organisation as part of their commitment to social responsibility. SocialLink could do a call out for tasks that NFP organisations need that require some expertise, and these could be posted to interested businesses through the Chamber of Commerce.
5. Facilitate the trial of different types of networking opportunities for the sector:
  - a. Organise targeted networking groups or events with the aim of transferring knowledge and sharing ideas, such as Volunteer Managers Network.
  - b. Fora for sub sectors within the social and community sector such as Kaupapa
  - c. Māori providers.
  - d. Hold events such as Business after 5 (BA5) – similar to that offered by the Chamber of Commerce - so that organisations get to meet each other and find ways to collaborate.
6. Investigate an online platform where organisations can ask each other for help at the time they need it. That could be advice, a trade of skills or services, and partnering to deliver workshops or specialised training.
7. Run a networking meeting inviting Careerforce to explain and discuss its training options and support for employers and employees in 2023.
8. Investigate creating a network for administration/front-of-house staff in the social sector so they can network, learn from each other and share resources.
9. Pilot a shared services in 2024 to make available an advanced administrative person to work with organisations on tasks such as file management, database management, basic IT etc.
10. Advocate for social workers and other professions not covered by pay equity settlements (ie social workers and others not funded by government contracts).
11. Instigate a networking forum for Managers of volunteers.
12. With greater emphasis on vocational education through workforce development councils, apprenticeship learning and regional workforce development plans, SocialLink will liaise with relevant regional and national agencies about the sector's needs and challenges.