



Empowering Pasifika Communities: Strengthening Wellbeing Through Community-Led Solutions

**SUMMARY REPORT ON THE
Pasifika Suicide Prevention Community Fund**
for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 May 2024



Pasifika for Life
Suicide Prevention Programme



LeVa

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Pasifika for Life
Suicide Prevention Programme



Purpose

E fofo e le alamea le alamea

The solutions for our issues lie within our own communities.

This report summarises the Pasifika Suicide Prevention Community Fund initiatives that Le Va administered from April 2020 to May 2024, with a focus on prevention activity and implementation strengths, informed by the seven critical elements for the successful implementation of community-based suicide prevention initiatives for Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand (Faleafa et al., 2021). The purpose of this report is not only to highlight the key successes of these initiatives, but also to celebrate the hard work, dedication, and collaboration of the diverse communities, partners, and stakeholders involved.

Throughout the period covered, these initiatives have played a crucial role in advancing suicide prevention efforts within Pasifika communities, providing valuable insights into culturally responsive, family centred, clinically safe and sustainable approaches that enhance mental health and wellbeing. By sharing these findings, we aim to acknowledge and uplift the resilience and strength of Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand, ensuring that the work done within these communities is recognised and celebrated.





Acknowledgements

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the recipients of the Community Fund for their dedication, insights, and commitment to supporting their communities. Your work continues to make a meaningful difference, and we appreciate the time you took to share your experiences and reflections.

We also acknowledge Health New Zealand (Te Whatu Ora) for their trust in us to administer this fund, ensuring resources reach those best placed to create positive change. Your support enables the ongoing development of impactful initiatives that strengthen community well-being.

Finally, to everyone involved in this collective effort—thank you. Suicide prevention is a responsibility we all share, and together, we are building a future where every individual and community feels supported, valued, and empowered. It is through collective efforts, innovative strategies, and community leadership that we will foster hope and reduce suicide rates. This report serves as a tribute to the commitment and passion of those who have contributed to these initiatives, while also providing a foundation for continued learning and growth in the pursuit of better mental health outcomes for Pasifika peoples.



Executive Summary

Executive Summary



For more than 10 years, Le Va has administered the Pasifika Suicide Prevention Community Fund, which aims to build the capacity of Pasifika and communities to prevent suicide, and to respond effectively if and when a suicide occurs. The Community Fund was established under the Ministry of Health's *Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2013-16 and continued under Every Life Matters - He Tapu te Oranga o ia Tangata: Suicide Prevention Strategy 2019-2029*. Both strategies aimed to reduce the inequitable rates of suicide in Aotearoa and highlighted the importance of tailored approaches for priority population groups, including Pasifika peoples.

Scope and methods of this report

This report summarises the Community Fund initiatives funded from April 2020 to May 2024, with a focus on prevention activity, and implementation strengths, informed by the 'seven critical elements' for the successful implementation of community-based suicide prevention initiatives for Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa (Faleafa et al., 2021). To do this, we consolidated reports submitted by Community Fund recipients over this period to summarise activities, and initiative 'reach'. In some instances, initiatives also reported on outcomes or community feedback to activities. Where clear methodological information was available to support outcome statements, this information is also included in the initiative highlight summaries.

A secondary objective was to examine recipient experiences of Le Va's management of the Community Fund, to identify areas of improvement. A survey was sent to all recipients to explore their experiences of the funding application process, contracting process, reporting, implementation support and evaluation activities.

As the Community Fund rounds open mid-year, initiatives were typically carried out over two calendar years. Henceforth, initiatives are referred to by the year in which funding was awarded (2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023).



Summary of initiative highlights

From 2020 to 2023 Le Va awarded \$3.55 million to 41 groups and organisations (representing 66 successful applications). The initiatives had an impressive reach, with over 590,000 individuals directly engaging in the initiatives and more than 2.4 million people reached on social media.

The Fund enabled Pacific communities to lead culturally grounded responses to suicide prevention that reflected their lived realities, identities, and strengths.

Through this work, Le Va grounded their support and guidance to fund recipients around the seven critical elements for the successful implementation of community-based suicide prevention initiatives for Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa (Faleafa et al., 2021). Case studies of initiatives demonstrate their efforts to embed these elements across their work:

- 1 **Culturally relevant** – Initiatives were deeply rooted in the cultural values, beliefs, languages, and practices of specific Pacific communities. Tailoring approaches to reflect diverse Pacific identities fostered meaningful engagement and cultural resonance.
- 2 **Family-centred** – Strengthening family connectedness was a core strategy across many initiatives. Recognising the central role of family in Pacific life, projects worked to reinforce healthy, supportive, open, and intergenerational relationships.
- 3 **Clinically safe** – Initiatives ensured both cultural and clinical safety through the use of evidence-based approaches, safe messaging, and collaboration with trained professionals. This helped build trust and ensured appropriate support pathways were available.
- 4 **Targeted approach** – Clearly defined populations and community-specific leadership were key. When initiatives were led by trusted champions from within the targeted group, they were better positioned to reach and resonate with prioritised groups.

- 5 **Sustainable** – Long-term relevance was considered through investment in community leadership, transferable tools, and enduring resources.
- 6 **Organisational competence** – Effective delivery relied on strong organisational capability, including the ability to manage funding, evaluate impact, and maintain quality assurance. Building and supporting these capabilities was essential to the success and credibility of initiatives.
- 7 **Trusted relationships** – Across all projects, credibility and connection were critical. Leaders who were known, respected, and trusted within their communities were able to engage authentically and provide support in ways that felt safe and grounded.

Together, these case studies provide clear examples of the seven elements for effective suicide prevention in action. Case studies highlight the importance of culturally grounded, community-led, and clinically safe responses that are tailored to the realities of Pacific peoples and sustained through trusted relationships and strong organisational foundations.

Summary of recipient survey responses

Feedback captured through the recipient survey highlighted the Fund's role in enabling impactful, community-led initiatives that foster resilience, well-being, and cultural responsiveness. Overall, recipients reported receiving exceptional support, emphasising clear communication and well-structured processes ensuring accessibility. While contractual obligations were understood, some found timelines challenging, particularly around the holiday period from December to January. Capacity-building efforts, including training in evaluation and reporting, were widely valued, with calls for further streamlining through digital tools/resources.



Background

Background



Strengthening Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Support in Pasifika Communities

Pasifika communities in Aotearoa New Zealand continue to experience significant mental health challenges, with high rates of psychological distress and lower levels of help-seeking from formal services. Findings from *Te Rau Hinengaro: The New Zealand Mental Health Survey* (Oakley Browne et al., 2006) and subsequent reports, including *Te Kaveinga - Mental Health and Wellbeing of Pacific Peoples* (Health Promotion Agency, 2019), highlight the critical gaps in mental health support and access for Pasifika peoples. The *Le Va Pasifika Suicide Prevention Community Fund* plays a vital role in addressing these inequities by ensuring culturally responsive, community-led solutions that align with the Samoan proverb *E fofo le alamea le alamea* - the answers lie within our communities.

Informal Supports Are Critical For Pasifika Communities

Data from *Te Rau Hinengaro* indicate that Pasifika peoples predominantly seek support from within their communities, prioritising family, friends, and church/spiritual leaders over clinical services (Oakley Browne et al., 2006). Over half (52%) of Pasifika respondents reported they would first talk to a friend, family, or whānau member when experiencing depression, with similar trends for anxiety (48%) (Health Promotion Agency, 2019). In contrast, only 21% would first consult a doctor for depression, and 25% for anxiety, indicating a strong preference for informal support networks over professional help (Health Promotion

Agency, 2019). Alarming, a significant proportion of Pasifika respondents (24%) did not know where to seek help for anxiety, and 15% were unsure where to turn for depression (Health Promotion Agency, 2019).

These findings underscore the importance of strengthening community-based mental health support systems, ensuring that culturally relevant and trusted avenues of support are available for Pasifika peoples. The *Le Va Pasifika Suicide Prevention Community Fund* directly supports this by empowering local Pasifika providers, churches, and community organisations to develop tailored initiatives that enhance mental health awareness and suicide prevention efforts within Pasifika contexts.

Addressing Stigma and Negative Attitudes Towards Mental Distress

Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa also report less positive attitudes towards those experiencing mental distress. Findings from *Te Kaveinga* indicate that Pasifika respondents score lower than their European/Other counterparts on measures assessing mental health knowledge, stigma, and willingness to engage with individuals experiencing mental health issues (Health Promotion Agency, 2019). These results suggest higher levels of stigma-related beliefs and a reluctance to interact with those affected by mental distress.

Mental health stigma unique to Pasifika communities is a significant barrier to help-seeking and suicide prevention. The *Le Va Pasifika Suicide Prevention Community Fund* supports initiatives that foster open conversations about mental health within Pasifika families, churches, and communities. By leveraging trusted community leaders and incorporating Pasifika values, these initiatives seek to shift attitudes and normalise mental health discussions within Pasifika spaces and among Pasifika peoples.

Community-Led Solutions: E Fofu le Alamea le Alamea

The proverb *E fofu le alamea le alamea* reflects a deeply held Pasifika belief that solutions to community challenges must come from within. The *Le Va Pasifika Suicide Prevention Community Fund* embodies this principle by investing in community-driven approaches that are grounded in Pasifika knowledge systems, relationships, and lived experiences.

Rather than relying solely on Western models of mental health care, the fund enables Pasifika-led initiatives to integrate cultural strengths, traditional healing practices, and collective support systems into suicide prevention strategies. By fostering resilience, strengthening protective factors, and reducing barriers to help-seeking, the fund seeks to ensure that Pasifika communities are empowered to lead their own mental health solutions.

The Pasifika Suicide Prevention Community Fund

For more than 10 years, Le Va has administered the Pasifika Suicide Prevention Community Fund. The Community Fund aims to enable Pasifika families and community groups to develop and deliver initiatives that tackle suicide within their communities, strengthen their capability to prevent suicide, and respond appropriately if and when a suicide occurs. The strategic objectives of the Community Fund were to support Pasifika families and communities to develop solutions to prevent suicide through:

1. Providing support to Pasifika families and communities that are experiencing suicide risk and/or are bereaved by suicide.
2. Prioritising population groups within their communities that are known to be at higher risk of suicidal distress, including men, young people, Rainbow communities, and rural communities.
3. Building inclusive communities and strengthening community resilience.
4. Encouraging a focus on mental well-being.
5. Raising awareness about available support services.

The Community Fund was established under the Ministry of Health's Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2013-16 and continued under Every Life Matters - He Tapu te Oranga o ia Tangata: Suicide Prevention Strategy 2019-2029. Both strategies have highlighted the inequitable rates of suicide in Aotearoa and the importance of tailored approaches for priority populations.

The following Community Fund outcomes were developed by Le Va, based on the above-mentioned strategic objectives:

1. People bereaved by suicide receive the support they need within their families and whānau. Families, whānau and communities are actively building resilience and reducing the risks of suicide.
2. Families, whānau, and communities are strongly connected, and people are actively participating in the wider community to prevent or cope with distress.
3. Community leaders empower people, foster resilience, and bring people and resources together for better mental well-being.
4. People are informed about and assisted in accessing support services.
5. Pasifika young people are connected to their culture and are supported to build a strong cultural identity to enhance mental well-being.
6. Families, whānau, and communities have stronger relationships and the confidence to talk about their mental health difficulties.

Funding requirements

Groups and organisations were eligible to apply to the Community Fund if they:

- were Pasifika-led;
- addressed unmet needs of priority groups (men, young people, Rainbow, and rural communities);
- contributed to the objectives and outcomes of Every Life Matters – He Tapu te Oranga o ia Tangata;
- aimed to enhance protective factors for suicide prevention and postvention;
- ensured collaboration and coordination;
- were innovative, inclusive of new, unfunded initiatives;
- were able to be sustained once the funding has stopped; and
- had access to the capacity, capability and systems required to manage and report on initiatives.

Between 2020 and 2022, organisations could apply for \$20,000 - \$100,000. In 2023, available funding was increased to \$50,000 - \$200,000.



Methodology



Methodology

Grant recipients were required to provide interim and final reporting of their funded initiatives as part of their contracted requirements. This reporting intended to cover key activities, risk management, project details, expenditure and outcomes. To summarise what was delivered by Community Fund recipients between April 2020 to May 2024, we collated information from recipient reports, a survey of grant recipients, and our experience as Le Va staff administering the fund. Our goal was to highlight key successes, implementation strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in supporting community-based suicide prevention initiatives for Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa.

Our work was underpinned by several principles of the Kakala framework¹ (Johansson-Fua, 2023), namely:

- **Luva | a gift from the heart** represents reporting and dissemination. This aligns with our commitment to share this report with Health New Zealand as the funder and Community Fund recipients, in response to their valuable contributions to preventing and responding to suicide within Pasifika communities.
- **Mālie | an expression of 'well done'** represents shared understanding and evaluation. This review has been undertaken with the intention of being valuable and accessible for Community Fund recipients, for the ultimate benefit of Pasifika communities.
- **Mafana | warmth** represents appreciation and transformation into a new solution or understanding. The aim of this review was to summarise the achievements of Community Fund initiatives, as well as key successes and opportunities for improvement, to inform our continuing administration of the Community Fund and thereby continuing to support organisations in meeting the needs of Pasifika communities.

Review of the Community Fund recipient reports

We reviewed annual reports from each year of the Community Fund (2020, 2021, 2022, 2023), which included interim (mid-contract) and final submissions by recipients. We then thematically analysed the reports with respect to the fund's outcomes and the seven critical elements for effective community-based suicide prevention identified by Faleafa and colleagues (2021). For recipients who did not submit a final report, the mid-point report was reviewed. Where direct quotes and testimonials are included in the report, they have been edited for brevity and clarity in some instances.

Survey to explore the experiences of the Community Fund recipients

A survey was distributed to all recipients to capture their experiences with the funding process, reporting requirements, evaluation activities, and engagement with support staff. Responses were analysed to complement findings from the report review.

Limitations

This review involved collating findings and feedback on initiatives across a range of existing reports. Key challenges included:

- Variability in reporting quality, making it difficult to interpret some data.
- Inconsistent use of evaluation measures, such as different measures used for similar outcomes.
- Variable evaluation design used for measurement of outcomes, such as pre and post evaluation design, and post evaluation feedback only.
- Limited reporting on social media reach and participant numbers
- No independent verification of reported outcomes.

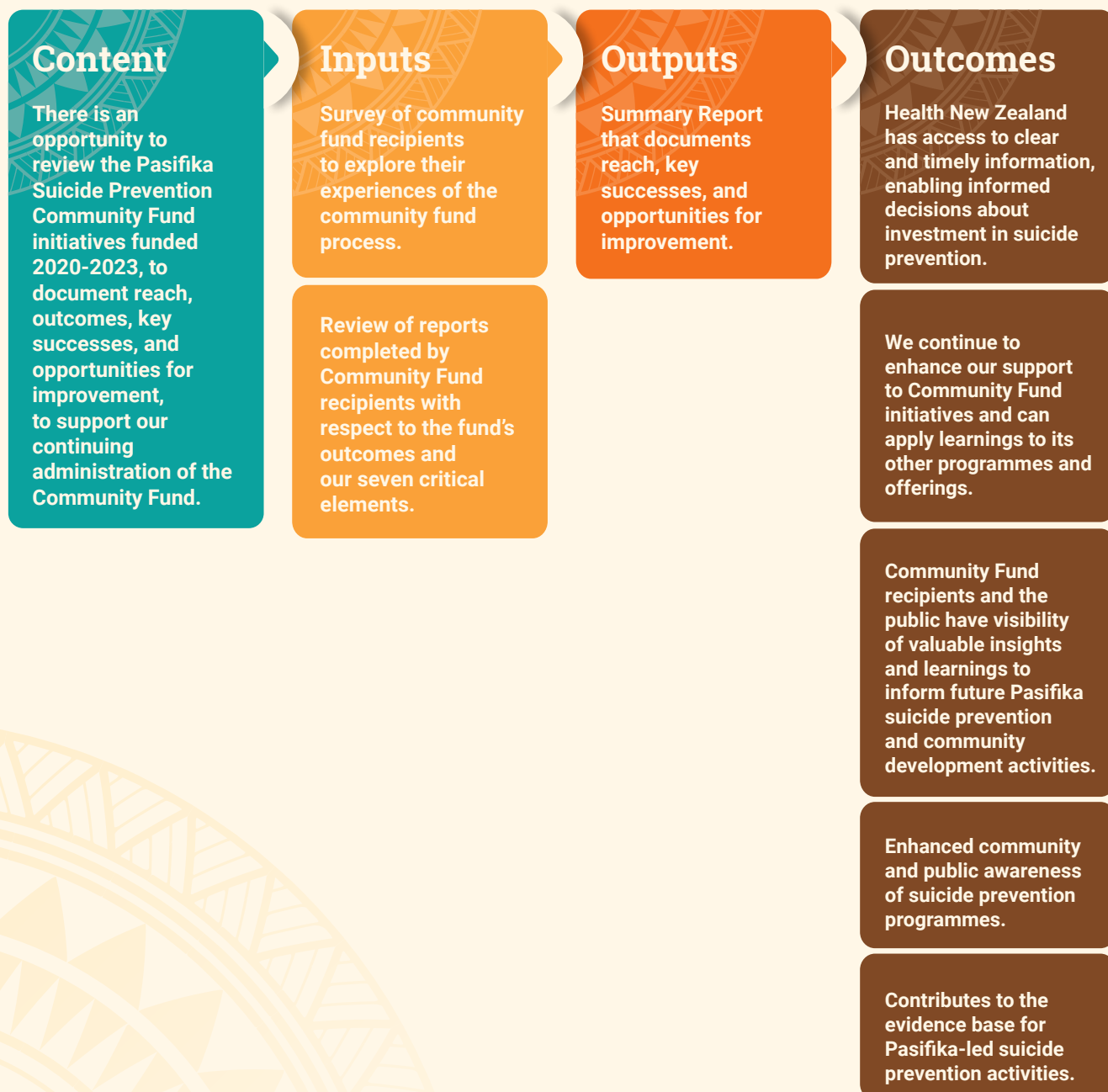
Despite these limitations, this review provides valuable insights into the Community Fund's achievements and implementation strengths, helping to strengthen future initiatives for Pasifika communities.

1. The Kakala research framework is a Tongan research methodology based on traditional Tongan knowledge of making a kahoa or garla



Review logic

Within the diagram below, we have summarised our review methodology and intended outcomes for Health New Zealand, Community Fund recipients, the broader public, and the evidence base for Pasifika suicide prevention





Initiative highlights

Initiative highlights

This section highlights examples of the diverse suicide prevention activities delivered by funded initiatives, showcasing their implementation strengths, and the voices of community members involved. The selected case studies presented emphasise the wide range of communities served, the culturally tailored approaches employed, and the broad reach of the Community Fund across Aotearoa. Rooted within communities, these initiatives often aimed to address multiple wellbeing outcomes, illustrating the power of community-led solutions in suicide prevention.

Initiative strengths align with the seven critical elements for effective community-based suicide prevention identified by Faleafa and colleagues (2021) (Figure 1), which guided Le Va's programme design and implementation support for each initiative. Faleafa and colleagues provide an evidence-based, Pasifika-focused framework that underscores the importance of culturally relevant, family-centered, clinically safe, and targeted approaches, alongside sustainability, organisational competence, and trusted relationships. By tailoring this framework to meet the specific needs of Pasifika communities, we have used it effectively both as a funding tool and as a means to evaluate initiatives. This summary explores how these elements were embedded into initiative design and implementation, highlighting key successes, challenges, and learnings to inform the future administration of the fund.

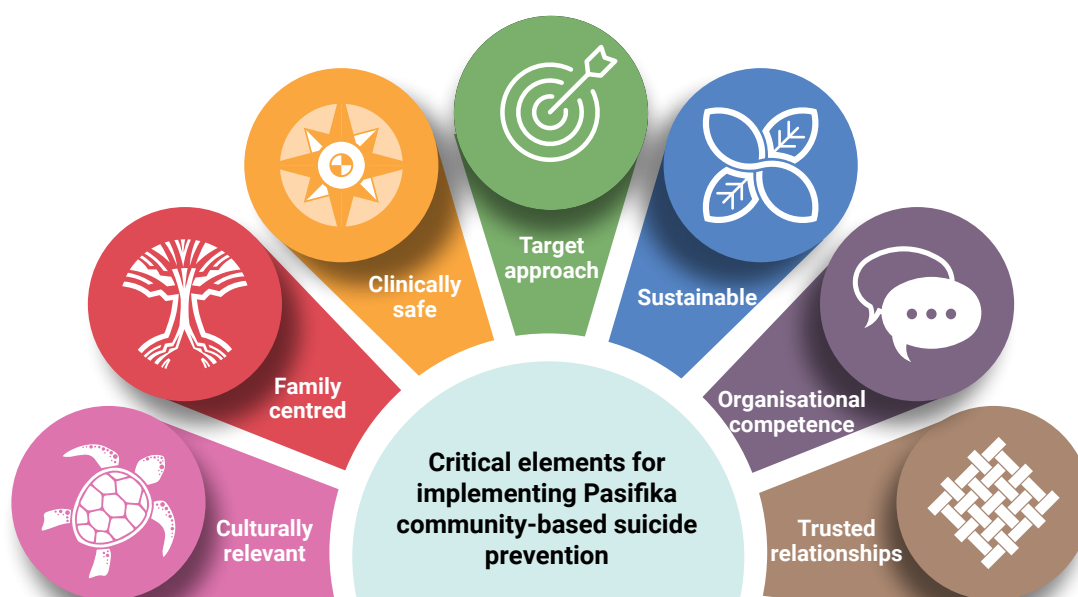


Figure 1. Critical elements for implementing community-based suicide prevention initiatives in Pasifika communities.

The seven critical elements are:

- **Culturally relevant:** Initiatives must be tailored to the specific cultural values, beliefs, and practices of Pasifika communities.
- **Family-centred:** Initiatives should promote family connectedness.
- **Clinically safe:** Clinically and culturally safe messaging and evidence-based approaches are essential.
- **Targeted approach:** There needs to be a clearly defined target population and initiatives should be led by champions in that community.
- **Sustainable:** Resources, leadership or methods used must have ongoing relevance and utility.
- **Organisational competence:** organisations need to have capability for evaluation, quality assurance and financial management.
- **Trusted relationships:** leaders should be credible and have strong relationships.

Culturally Relevant Initiatives: Embracing Pasifika Cultures, Values, and Languages for Community Impact

This critical element recognises the need for initiatives to be culturally relevant, delivered by culturally competent leaders to engage prioritised populations and strengthen cultural identity. Many initiatives promoted connection to Pasifika cultures, values, and languages, recognising that when participants see their cultures and values reflected and respected, they are more likely to engage with and benefit from an initiative.

All funded initiatives were designed and delivered by Pasifika, for Pasifika. Existing evidence demonstrates the power of enabling Pasifika leadership to (i) enhance the cultural safety of initiatives, and (ii) deeply embed initiatives within communities they serve for local responsiveness.

Initiatives aligned to various aspects of the Fonofale model (Ministry of Health, 2008), for example:

- **Physical:** exercise programmes and sports tournaments.
- **Spiritual:** church and Polynesian meditation.
- **Mental:** journalling, music, video workshops, photography, art installations, and theatre.
- **Culture:** workshops about language and culture identity, resources in Pasifika languages, and Fiafia nights.
- **Family:** family workshops and community events.
- **Other:** financial workshops, planting, and fashion design.

Case studies:

- Zeal - Lupe Programme
- Failoa Famili: 21 Day Life Journal
- Tongan Society South Canterbury

Zeal: Lupe Programme

A ten-week photography and mentoring programme designed to support young people facing mental health challenges.

The Zeal Education Trust received funding to deliver the Lupe programme, which focuses on Pasifika young people experiencing mental health challenges and at risk of suicidal distress. Its main goals are to help these young people identify their strengths, build resilience, navigate life's challenges, and create a supportive community that continues to offer help beyond the programme timelines.

The programme applies the Fonofale model of health (Ministry of Health, 2008) and involves Pasifika youth workers and an experienced photography tutor who mentors the participants. The programme includes workshops and mentoring delivered over a 10-week period, with a family exhibition at the end.

Over four years, 79 young people participated in the programme. Feedback from programme participants, captured through a post-programme survey, highlighted extremely positive feedback. For example, in 2023, 100% of participants surveyed said they enjoyed the programme and would recommend it to a friend. Participant survey responses also showed that 80% of participants felt the programme helped them learn more about themselves, 86% reported a stronger connection to their identity and 73% felt more connected to their community. Additionally, 86% experienced increased confidence, and 87% felt more positive about their future.

One participant had lost her mum about six months before the programme. Naturally, she was struggling with this immense loss, and her mental health was concerning. Her community reached out to the organisers to enrol her, recognising her need for support. Initially, she was very shy and hardly spoke. However, as the programme progressed, she began to open up about her feelings.

During the photography component, she captured a beautiful photo of a butterfly, which she exhibited at the whānau celebration night. Her father shared that her late mother had been photographed holding the same type of butterfly, making the photo deeply meaningful. Witnessing this moment was powerful, as it marked the beginning of her healing process following significant trauma.

2021 RECIPIENT OBSERVATION

One of the participants discovered a new passion for photography. She quickly embraced it and excelled, turning what began as a journey of self-discovery into a potential career path. Currently, she is in discussions with the programme coordinator about taking photos at events to build her portfolio.

2023 RECIPIENT OBSERVATION

Failoa Famili: 21 Day Life Journal

A 21-day journal specifically designed for Pasifika peoples and workshops to address depression and anxiety.

The Failoa Famili initiative developed a 21-day life journal specifically designed for Pasifika peoples, accompanied by workshops to address depression and anxiety. The journal served as an interactive learning tool with activities designed to activate and strengthen the brain's frontal lobe. The initiative and its resources were based on a strengths-based holistic model of care, emphasising Pasifika values such as spirituality, culture, family, and community connections.

In 2021, the journal surpassed expectations, reaching 480 people—nearly double the anticipated 250. In 2022, the programme was scaled up for delivery to 600 participants, with 1,000 copies distributed to the Pacific Health and Wellington Whānau Ora programme for families. Reported testimonials highlight positive feedback from participants in 2021 and 2022, including benefits to relationships, and strengthened protective factors such as sleep hygiene, physical activity, coping and resilience skills, and relationships.



“I go through it with my daughters. It's helped build a positive relationship.”

2021 TESTIMONIAL

“I stopped screen time before bedtime and started reading. I now get up early and get some exercise. And I'm slowly challenging my thought processes.”

2021 TESTIMONIAL

My child is a very active sports student, especially in rugby, volleyball, and netball. She was unhappy and angry when she got injured playing rugby. Unable to participate in sports, she had to focus all her efforts on getting better and finding a new hobby. Her aunty gave her the journal, and she instantly loved reading it.

Besides sports, she also loved reading. The journal was a good read and helped motivate her to get out of the place where she was feeling sorry for herself. It taught her to cope with her injury and not feel down all the time. Thank you, Failoa Family, and thank you, 21-Day Life Journal.

2022 TESTIMONIAL

Tongan Society South Canterbury

A holistic well-being programme, and development of mental health and wellbeing resources in the Tongan language.

Recognising the crucial gap in Tongan language resources for Tongan New Zealanders, in 2020 the Tongan Society South Canterbury received funding to develop a resource on mental health and well-being in Tongan.

The 16-page booklet explores key themes around Tongan mental wellbeing, including the importance of cultural values, intergenerational relationships, and the role of faith and community in healing. Launched during Mental Health Awareness Week 2021, more than 300 booklets and posters were distributed within the local community, (then) District Health Boards, and General Practices. A Family Health Day and the second round of COVID-19 vaccinations were other key opportunities to promote the resource, with Tongan families reading and taking home the booklets after their vaccinations. The booklet was also shared with Pasefika Proud recipients and all Suicide Prevention Coordinators.

Feedback from families on the resource, highlighted their excitement to see familiar faces and Tongan values reflected in the resource.

In 2022, the Tongan Society South Canterbury received funding to deliver a holistic well-being programme for Tongan people in Canterbury. Designed with a Tongan and Pasifika lens, the programme incorporated the 5 Ways of wellbeing, focusing on nutrition, physical exercise, sobriety, healthy sleep habits, digital detox, and mindfulness or positive psychology practices (e.g. breathing techniques, optimism, and gratitude). It aimed to empower their participants and enhance social activities and connections.

“

Joining the programme has helped me with my anxiety of missing my family. These women have truly become my family.”

2022 TESTIMONIAL

“

It has been hard to deal with my four very young children when my husband works and plays rugby most of the time.

But my children love coming to this programme, because they play with other children and are cared for by others too. We feel the love and warmth - it makes me and the kids happy. I don't feel isolated anymore.”

2022 TESTIMONIAL

Family-Centred: Strengthening Connections and Mental Wellbeing in Pasifika Suicide Prevention Initiatives

Given the importance of family within Pasifika cultures, it is essential that initiatives focus on fostering healthy and safe familial relationships and maintaining or strengthening extended family ties. This requires adopting a family-centred approach to engaging with Pasifika communities.

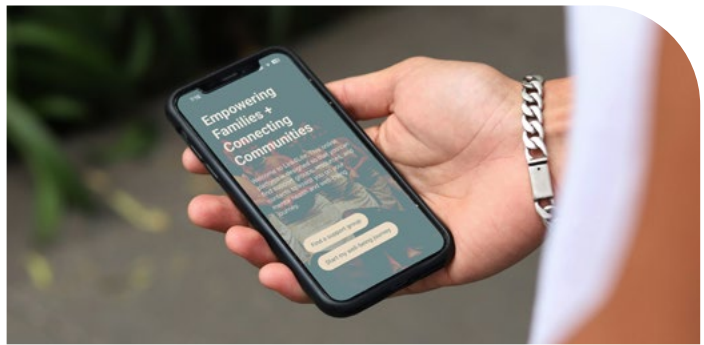
Family-centred approaches were implemented by initiatives in a variety of ways, such as a focus on improving parent-child relationships (see P4CIFIC: Niu-Generation (as profiled in this section), and intentional efforts to involve families in young people's initiatives. For example, as spectators (Tupu Ora by Cannons Creek Business Owners Collective), in celebrations (Aiga programme by Bay of Plenty Development Trust), and at events (Lupe Programme by Zeal). These initiatives showcased participants' progress and allowed families to connect and celebrate their achievements.

Pacific Trust Otago's Ke Tatala Mental Health initiative ran suicide prevention workshops for all ages. One father reflected: "We want the best for our children, but perhaps our aspirations can push our children to the brink." This quote underscores the importance of bringing families together to reflect, share, and work towards mental well-being together.

The following case studies showcase how Pasifika communities have embraced a family-centered approach in their suicide prevention efforts, emphasising the strength of familial support systems as a mental health protective factor, while also addressing family dynamics that can contribute to mental health risks. By focusing on strengthening family relationships and creating spaces for shared reflection and healing, these initiatives have provided invaluable resources and support for individuals and families affected by suicide.

Case studies:

- Gateway Community Trust: Link4Life
- Niu P4CIFIC: Niu-Generation
- Auckland Rotuman Fellowship Group



Gateway Community Trust: Link4Life

Link4Life is a programme dedicated to supporting and empowering families affected by suicide through a support website, support groups, and a range of digital resources.

Link4Life, delivered by Gateway Community Trust, received funding in 2020, 2021 and 2022. Their efforts focused on enabling, equipping, and empowering families affected by suicide to strengthen family bonds and cohesion, allowing them to become valuable resources for their families and communities.

In 2020, Gateway Community Trust held workshops for families and identified community champions. In 2021, Link4Life conducted co-design workshops to develop the Virtual Village Website, which includes various resources such as photos, podcasts, and videos. The website garnered engagement from 3,600 people watching their videos and 129 listeners tuning in to their podcasts.

During the 2022 funding round, Link4Life organised five support groups for people and families affected by suicide, which included a mix of fortnightly meetings and programmes lasting between 4 and 12 weeks, attracting over 150 participants. Additionally, they developed a support group application (app) to facilitate connections among users seeking support groups.

Sina*, a 49-year-old Samoan woman, was devastated after her husband of 20 years suddenly passed away from a heart attack. She struggled with depression and lacked the energy to care for her three children. In 2022, her brother encouraged her to join the Link4Life wellbeing programme, which focused on mental and physical health. Sina signed up, hoping to improve her situation.

Over three months, Sina regularly attended the programme, connecting with others in similar situations. The activities and workshops helped her focus on her wellbeing. She started eating healthier, exercising more, and lost 10 kg. She also began to open up about her emotions.

By the end of the programme, Sina felt grateful and empowered. She had gained confidence, improved her health and found happiness again. Reflecting on her journey, she knew her husband would have been proud, and she was thankful for the opportunity to participate in the programme.

2022 FUND RECIPIENT OBSERVATION *=pseudonym.



P4CIFIC: Niu-Generation

An initiative for Pasifika Year 8 students designed to strengthen parent-child connections through sports and exercise.

The Niu-Generation initiative for Pasifika Year 8 students included workshops, leadership mentoring sessions, TikTok content, talanoa with parents, and a young people's conference. A total of 132 students and their parents participated in the family-centred initiatives, and an impressive 392 individuals took part in the youth event which provided a vital space for open discussions on mental health and suicide, topics often left unspoken due to limited resources and support. Just days before the event, one young person shared with the Niu-Generation that he had contemplated suicide, and the messages of hope shared at the event saved his life. Many other youth came forward, to talk about their issues.

Feedback from both parents and children demonstrate the transformative power of this initiative to foster stronger relationships and enhance the overall wellbeing of young people and their families. Pre-and-post survey responses from participants showed a percentage increase in students' self-reported sense of empowerment, from 25% to 40%.

Student participants experienced a notable improvement in the quality of their friendships, with friendship quality ratings rising by 20% from pre- to post-programme surveys. Since friendships serve as central informal supports for Pasifika youth during times of distress (Le Va, 2024) and play a key role in improving mental health (Le Va, 2024), these findings underscore the profound impact of the programme in strengthening youth supports and well-being.

Parents reported feeling more connected to their children and their child's needs. The programme also assisted some parents with permanent job opportunities helping to release financial pressure on the family units.

Overall, both parents and children's feedback on the initiatives was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting initiatives were well received by participating community members.

“

I feel more confident to meet new people and socialise now. Coming in, I wasn't all that confident.”

2022 TESTIMONIAL

“

I am now coaching my daughters rugby team because I see how important it is to put time into her sport”

2022 TESTIMONIAL

“

It is so important for our kids to understand their Pasifika cultures, and how to adapt to New Zealand culture without losing their identity. That was an important discussion for me.”

2022 TESTIMONIAL

“Thank you for allowing me to share my story.”



Auckland Rotuman Fellowship Group: Pacific Suicide Prevention initiative

Family wellness workshops and mentoring sessions for the Auckland Rotuman community.

The Auckland Rotuman Fellowship Group received funding in 2021 to deliver family wellness workshops and mentoring sessions aimed at strengthening community resilience and connection and providing self-help tools and resources to improve self-esteem and wellbeing. Across eight workshops and 140 mentoring sessions, the activities engaged 124 individuals (mostly men), ranging in age from 7 to 83 years.

Anecdotes and testimonials captured in funding recipient reported suggests that the initiative helped enhance and strengthen existing connections within the Rotuman community, especially with Rotuman church groups, and helped facilitate new connections with churches, other Pasifika communities, and Māori communities. The initiative also highlighted the ability of Rotuman young people, resulting in the formation of a new Youth Group, which will provide an ongoing space dedicated to developing and connecting youth.

“You have instilled a great lesson in me. This is a real win. I cannot hold back my tears.”

Clinically Safe: Ensuring Safe Approaches to Suicide Prevention in Pasifika Communities

Successful community-based suicide prevention initiatives use messaging about suicide that is both clinically and culturally safe, alongside evidence-based methods for preventing suicide (Faleafa et al., 2021).

To enhance the clinical safety of community initiatives, leaders from all funded projects were required to complete Le Va's suicide prevention training. Le Va also provided essential free clinical support to ensure their safety. Where possible, this included content review to support framing and delivery of safe suicide prevention messaging, and availability of clinicians' guidance in the event of any concerns about the well-being of community participants.

Initiatives used various methods to ensure clinical safety. Some had access to psychologists and registered health professionals within their teams and communities. Others connected with regional suicide prevention coordinators or external clinicians. For example, the Tama Wellbeing initiative by Empowerment Training had a clinical oversight to ensure clinical safety. Le Va also facilitated connections to Pasifika psychologists and registered health professionals as needed.

Case studies:

- Brown Pride
- Empowerment Training: Tama Wellbeing Initiative



Brown Pride: Yeah The Boys and Yeah The Girls

Training and gaming sessions for Pasifika men, expanding to include counselling and mental health workshops and sessions for Pasifika women.

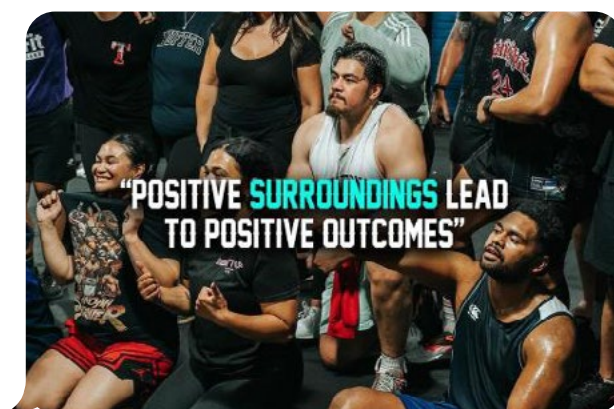
Brown Pride delivered the 'Yeah The Boys' initiative, which offered free training and gaming nights. The goal was to encourage men to talk about their experiences and mental health, leveraging activities and events that appeal to their needs and interests to support engagement.

The programme included three training sessions per week, featuring HIIT, powerlifting, and CrossFit. For the gaming nights, there were card games, board games, and PlayStation games, with mini prizes available for each event. These game nights incorporated mental health workshops covering different topics such as tools to deal with stress, checking in on people, and finding confidence.

In 2022, 55 Pasifika men between the ages of 18 and 40 years participated. The programme included 20 gaming sessions and 20 training sessions. A pre and post survey conducted by Brown Pride showed improved well-being among participants by the end of the programme.

With a captured and engaged audience, 2023 marked a pivotal expansion of the initiative. Based on guidance from Le Va and the application panel, the team took the next step by focusing on how to deepen the impact. Le Va supported this next phase by facilitating connections to clinical professionals, ensuring the programme had clinical oversight and access to appropriate guidance to ensure safe suicide prevention messaging. They partnered with trained counsellors and mental health professionals already embedded in their community.

This shift reflected a deliberate village-based approach—strengthening the collective response to suicide and mental distress. The initiative grew to include Yeah The Girls, which extended the same mental health-focused programming to Pasifika women. Over 100 community members engaged in the expanded programme, demonstrating the power of trusted relationships and culturally safe spaces in growing a stronger, more connected community of care.



Empowerment Training: Tama Wellbeing Initiative

Culturally safe wellbeing workshops and journals for Pasifika young men, grounded in identity, connection, and clinical care.

Empowerment Training delivered the *Tama Pasifika Wellbeing Project*, an initiative focused on improving the mental well-being of young Pasifika men through identity-affirming talanoa spaces and the use of a custom-designed *Tama Pasifika Wellbeing Journal*. The project created opportunities for participants to connect, share openly, and develop practical strategies to support their well-being.

In 2022, the initiative reached 135 young men from eight schools. Workshops supported participants to strengthen their sense of identity, build understanding of healthy relationships, and gain confidence in speaking about their challenges. By the end of the programme, 93% of participants reported improvements across these areas and a commitment to applying the journal tools in their everyday lives.

In 2023, the programme expanded, with 229 young men participating in 12 sessions. Evaluation data showed:

- 97% of participants felt a strong connection to their identity
- 100% enjoyed the workshops
- 95% acknowledged the importance of seeking support
- 99% found the journal useful for their wellbeing

“Fa’afetai lava Mani, this was such a fun day.

This workshop was really good. More of these please. We hope to see you again.

I really liked today we got to hang out and do different activities together - connection.

I really enjoyed this. I wish we had this everyday. I really loved today’s session, fa’afetai lava.”

2023 TESTIMONIAL

The Tama Wellbeing Initiative prioritised both cultural and clinical safety throughout its design and delivery. Project leaders completed Le Va’s suicide prevention training. Support systems were embedded across the initiative. Professional counsellors and local youth service providers were engaged and available when required. The facilitator’s awareness of his own mental well-being led to the intentional inclusion of time for reflection and decompression after heavy sessions. The initiative’s content was clinically reviewed and approved by Le Va’s clinical team to ensure safe messaging and to uphold high standards of care.



Targeted Approaches in Initiative Design: Tailoring Solutions to Community Needs and Settings

For initiatives to be effective, it is crucial to have a clearly defined intended population and include community champions from within that population (Faleafa et al., 2021). This enables initiative design that is more likely to be responsive to the needs and aspirations of the intended groups.

Community Fund initiatives aimed to support families, whānau and communities to actively build resilience and reduce the risks of suicide in a range of ways, including targeted approaches to priority groups known to have a higher risk of suicide. All recipients took a tailored approach in the development, delivery, and reporting of their initiatives. Some initiatives used existing leaders in their communities through church and cultural groups, while others developed and nurtured new leaders.

There were numerous examples of the use of community champions by various initiatives. A notable instance is Taimalelagi Mataio Faafetai (Matt) Brown (MNZM) from She Is Not Your Rehab, who received funding in 2023 to promote a new app, InnerBoy. Brown, a survivor of family violence and childhood sexual abuse, developed the InnerBoy app as a free mental health resource for men, featuring a guided support programme. He describes it as a “school of healing for inner boys,” where users learn new ways to understand their inner world, in-turn affecting their outer world. Illustrating the significant impact that community champions have within communities, one app user shared:

“Kia ora Matt Brown.

I had a rare sick day and saw you on the Breakfast show. I feel I was meant to stay home so that I saw this. Day two now. Thank you for this. What a gift to all the brothers. Therapy is out of reach for most.”

The arts played a pivotal role in engaging priority groups, with activities such as photography, digital storytelling, TikToks, murals, songwriting, dance and fashion design. Strong relationships with schools were crucial in reaching underserved and at-risk young people. Sports club-led initiatives were successful in engaging rural communities, while sports and fitness programmes were used to reach men, as well as men’s groups, church groups and apps. Utilising diverse settings and forums helps expand programme reach by engaging different community groups from within existing spaces or places of safety and trust. Such approaches also help to ensure key messages resonate across varied audiences.

Underpinning all of these activities were by Pasifika, for Pasifika approaches, community-led strategies and carefully tailored approaches for priority groups.

Case studies:

- FAFSWAG: Matala initiative
- Love Somebody: Tama Toa and Teina Toa Programme
- Pasifika o Aoraki Services
- Resonate: I AM | THE SHOWCASE
- Kila’s Style Trust: Dressed in Confidence



FAFSWAG: Matala Project

The Matala Project offered a series of audio essays exploring themes of manhood, identity, relationships, sexuality, and intimacy specifically for Pasifika men.

FAFSWAG are a NZ Arts Laureates and a Queer Indigenous, Interdisciplinary Arts Collective based in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland.

FAFSWAG's Matala initiative explored Pacific masculinity, focusing on themes of manhood, identity, relationships, sexuality and intimacy. The name of the initiative is derived from the term Matala 'oe fonua', meaning growth and regeneration.

Centring the voices of Moana/Oceania/Pasifika men living in Aotearoa away from their ancestral homelands, the initiative aimed to create safe spaces for talanoa (open dialogue) and normalise conversations about issues affecting Pasifika men. It featured a series of audio essays where Pasifika men shared their experiences with culture, identity, gender and sexuality.

The initiative was officially launched in July 2021 at Basement Theatre. The first online episode (released later) has garnered 716 plays.

Love Somebody: Tama Toa and Teina Toa Programme

A comprehensive mental health and wellbeing initiative accompanied by a series of digital resources.

Love Somebody received funding in 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 for their Tama Toa and Teina Toa programmes. The initial focus of the programme was on Pasifika young men through the Tama Toa programme. Since 2021, the programme has expanded its focus to include women, through the Teina Toa programme. The programme aims to promote mental health and wellbeing through support groups and digital resources.

Love Somebody have delivered the Tama Toa/Teina Toa programme to almost 800 Pasifika individuals, primarily young people. They have also developed digital resources, launched a social media marketing campaign promoting messages of mental health resilience in Samoan. The campaign reached over 80,000 people, connected with health recipients, and trained multiple facilitators.

The feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive and demonstrates that the campaign messages resonate with intended audiences. According to data collected as part of the 2023 funding round, 92% (n=25) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the skills they learned helped them manage their emotions and make better decisions. Ninety-six percent (n=25) of participants stated that the programme and its 'slice of heaven' metaphor effectively represented the importance and purpose of protecting personal identity, loved ones, goals, and peace of mind.



“A well overdue, in-depth course. For me, an open forum of reflections about self-worth, anxiety and depression. Hugely helpful in my own famili/aiga/whānau situation, having had three attempted suicides - two by my daughters and one by my dad - over the last three years.

I felt really supported by the brotherhood within the programme/journey, so to speak... God willing this has the same impact on others searching for help, guidance, and support, as it has given me.

My loved ones have definitely benefited from this over time, and long may this long continue.”

2022 TESTIMONIAL

“Having spent 20 years in the field of mental health as a social worker, the programme aligned really well with researched and widely adopted principles and practices within the mental health space. I came away feeling hopeful and excited for the programme.”

2022 TESTIMONIAL

Pasifika o Aoraki Services

Sporting activities, talanoa sessions, and suicide prevention awareness raising with the Aoraki Pasifika community.

Sport imbues benefits for the mental and physical well-being of individuals and communities, fostering teamwork, discipline, resilience and promoting endorphins and community connections.

This initiative to connect the Aoraki Pasifika community leveraged sporting activities and talanoa sessions, to strengthen mental health protective factors and raise awareness about suicide prevention. Talanoa sessions aimed to provide a safe space for open, raw, and honest discussions about suicide, identify signs of distress emotionally, physically, and on social media, and learn how to approach and talk to someone in distress. The sessions explored self-care and what forms this can take.

There were two kickoff events designed specifically for men and women, providing opportunities to tailor events to the unique needs of these gender groups and identities. The men's event, which focused on sports and food to facilitate talanoa, attracted around 70 attendees. The women's dinner had 40 participants. Additionally, talanoa sessions were held in Ashburton, Oamaru, and Timaru, with separate sessions for Pasifika men and women. In total, 53 participants attended these sessions, including 27 men and 26 women, aged between 23 and 38 years.

Alongside the talanoa sessions, the programme aimed to provide social opportunities for the Pasifika communities, addressing the lack of organised community events in the Aoraki region. They organised a friendly volleyball tournament in Timaru, allowing community members to socialise and enjoy themselves.

The tournament saw participation from six women's teams and twelve men's teams.





Resonate: I AM | THE SHOWCASE

A creative showcase and social media campaign that tells the story of a young Pasifika male's experience with depression and anxiety.

I AM | THE SHOWCASE by Resonate was a two-stage creative arts initiative that used contemporary and Pasifika art forms to tell the story of a young Pasifika male's experience with depression and anxiety. The first stage was a live showcase, and the second stage involved posting online content from the showcase to their Instagram page. The live showcase featured three sold-out shows with over 600 attendees.

The showcase had a powerful impact on attendees, fostering well-being and highlighting the creative arts as a meaningful tool for emotional expression. 94% of attendees reported a positive impact on their overall well-being, and 100% felt that the showcase enabled them to see the creative arts as a valuable way to connect with their emotions in a safe way. In addition, the social media campaign reached over 10,000 people, some of the posts are shown here.

NO HEADLINE CAN DEFINE THE WAY THAT I SEE MYSELF, OR MY PEOPLE - BEAUTIFUL, BROWN, BRILLIANT HUMAN BEINGS CAPABLE OF LOVING ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING THEY CHOOSE TO, REGARDLESS OF EVERYTHING THEY'VE BEEN THROUGH

JP | "I AM" | THE SHOWCASE DIRECTOR



“

I resonated deeply with the story. I work in mental health and have had a client pass away to suicide this year.

Seeing this showcase gave me a deeper insight into what my clients are going through and helped me to see the creative arts as another tool to help Pasifika get through tough times.

What a wonderful and beautiful way of expressing ourselves as Pasifika. Definitely need our young people to see this showcase so they will be inspired to use creative arts as a way of working through their pain and challenges.



Kila's Style Trust: Dressed in Confidence

An initiative to promote the mental health and wellbeing of Pasifika young people and support them to explore the field of fashion design.

This initiative included workshops that explored the field of fashion design, supported students to prepare for a fashion show event, and promoted mental well-being and suicide prevention. Participants designed and created garments using repurposed fabric and clothes they no longer wore, and incorporated cultural elements such as their ta'ovala (traditional Tongan mat) and lavalava. Their creations were then modelled by themselves or family members at the runway fashion event.

Eighty-two Pasifika young people participated in this initiative. Feedback from the workshops was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of participants stating that these kinds of workshops were helpful in empowering and informing Pasifika communities. Creative workshops were used as an avenue to inform participants about mental health support services such as 1737 and Aunty Dee.

Additionally, 53% of participants self-reported an improvement in their mental health after participating in the programme.

Sustainable: Creating lasting impact after funding ends

Sustainability ensures that the benefits of the initiative continue to resonate within the community and provide ongoing support, even after the formal programme has concluded (Faleafa et al., 2021). For initiatives to have lasting impact, they must create culturally relevant resources, leadership structures, networks, and methods that remain meaningful and useful to communities beyond the duration of contracted funding periods. Sustainability requires shifting toward building or disrupting systems or cultures that extend the initiative's reach. This can include embedding mental health capability within different community settings, such as school, churches, or sporting communities. Further, this could involve supporting organisations to collect data that demonstrates the initiative's long-term value, attracting future support and funding.

Across the community initiatives, several efforts build sustainable change and impact were observed. Initiatives have created ongoing strategy and action plans, and community networks that continue to provide meaningful support after the initial funding period. From the development of suicide prevention strategies and actions plans in churches settings (Vaka Pasifika) to the creation of wellbeing champions within sports clubs (Wellbeing Waka), these examples offer valuable insights into how initiatives can be designed to maintain their effectiveness and relevance over time, continuing to empower communities to address mental health challenges and reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness.

Another key way in which funding recipients sought to make their initiatives more sustainable, was through the development of digital and technological resources. These provide ongoing access to educational materials, tools, and support networks that can be utilised by communities long after the formal funding ends. Digital platforms like podcasts, websites, apps, and videos allow for the broad dissemination of resources, making them available to a wider audience and reinforcing the initiative's impact over time.

By focusing on building sustainable initiatives from the start, communities are empowered to continue benefiting from mental health and suicide prevention supports, supporting lasting positive change that evolves with their needs. The following case study highlights a community initiative that exemplifies the principle of sustainability in action.

Case studies:

- New Zealand Rugby League: Wellbeing Waka

New Zealand Rugby League: Wellbeing Waka

The Wellbeing Waka is a multifaceted initiative aimed at improving wellbeing within the rugby league community.

Sports settings, particularly in male-dominated environments like rugby, present both challenges and opportunities for mental health initiatives. Cultural barriers and the stigma surrounding vulnerability may discourage open discussions about mental health. Athletes, especially high-profile role models, have the power to challenge these norms by openly addressing mental health, to reduce stigma. Over a four-year period, the New Zealand Rugby League (NZRL) worked to drive cultural change, promote mental wellbeing, and establish sustainable support networks within rugby league clubs.

Initially launched as a series of workshops at rugby league clubs nationwide, the programme reached approximately 170 athletes and their families in 2020. By the end of the initiative's four-year journey, the initiative had expanded significantly, delivering 86 workshops and engaging nearly 1,800 athletes and families. The workshops focused not only on mental health education, but also on equipping participants with practical tools to manage stress, build resilience, and support one another in navigating mental health challenges.

The long-term sustainability of the initiative's impact was a key focus for NZRL. To ensure ongoing support and maintain momentum, NZRL identified and trained well-being champions in each rugby league club. These champions were equipped with the skills and knowledge to support their peers, promote mental health awareness, and act as a local point of contact for those affected by mental health issues and suicides. This approach empowered clubs to maintain a sustainable, community-based support system, ensuring that the initiative's impact would continue well beyond the initial funding period—embedding mental wellbeing into the everyday culture of grassroots rugby league.

In addition to the workshops, NZRL developed a suite of valuable wellbeing resources that have proven to be indispensable tools for athletes and their families. These resources include the *Staying at the Top of Your Game* wellbeing guide, *Adults Journal to Wellness*, *Youth Journal to Wellness*, *Be Real Guide*, and the *Inner Strength Journal*. These



resources were not only well-received by the rugby league community—described as “life-saving” in testimonials—but they continue to be accessible to communities across Aotearoa.

Further extending the initiative's reach, NZRL revamped their wellbeing webpage, which continues to serve as a vital hub for resources and guidance. The initiative attracted attention from other rugby leagues, with Queensland Rugby League seeking advice from NZRL on how to replicate the initiative in their own region. This speaks to the unique and innovative nature of the Wellbeing Waka initiative, which has set a new benchmark for mental health initiatives in sport.

In 2023, NZRL launched a series of nine podcast episodes featuring professional athletes who shared their personal experiences with mental health. These podcasts garnered over 45,000 views on YouTube, showcasing the initiative's ability to engage audiences and spark conversations about mental health in the sports community. The resources, podcasts, and wellbeing page continue to be accessible to communities across Aotearoa New Zealand, ensuring that the Wellbeing Waka initiative's impact is long-lasting and continually evolving.

Through these efforts, the Wellbeing Waka initiative laid the groundwork for sustainable mental health support systems that will continue to benefit athletes, families, and communities for years to come.

“At Glenfield in Auckland, we were able to support a club that had some recent suicide incidents.

We were able to create a safe space, then lead a conversation about how to strengthen the club's wellbeing. One of the outcomes was the forming of an older men's walking club, as they were felt to be the most vulnerable members of the club.

2021 FUNDING RECIPIENT TESTIMONIAL

“The Wellbeing Waka initiative was the most rewarding experience of my time in rugby league.

Aware of the high prevalence of suicide in our communities, I was excited to launch this initiative in our Clubs, Districts, and Zones.

Despite the stigma around mental health and suicide, especially in rural communities, our collaboration with Le Va was groundbreaking and deeply meaningful to me. The highlights included bringing parents and young people together at a hui...

The openness to discuss these issues and the shared stories of struggle and courage left us with a sense of hope and empowerment.

2020 FUNDING RECIPIENT TESTIMONIAL

Organisationally competent: Strengthening Evaluation and Reporting Capacity in Pasifika Suicide Prevention Initiatives

This critical element recognises that organisations should possess the capacity and capability for evaluation, outcome reporting, financial management, and quality assurance (Faleafa et al., 2021). Of the seven critical success factors, this one was most in need of strengthening for future work.

The small size of many organisations often meant limited evaluation capacity across the team. This resulted in challenges with providing outcome-focused monitoring and evaluation, with a tendency to focus more on reporting outputs. Similarly, despite efforts to track social media engagement through activities like videos or podcasts, capturing detailed metrics on views, unique users, comments, likes, or shares proved difficult. There was also a lack of outcome data on how media messages were received, understood, and valued by the community. These limitations highlighted the need for additional support to strengthen outcome-focused reporting, and more generally, improve the quality of reported data.

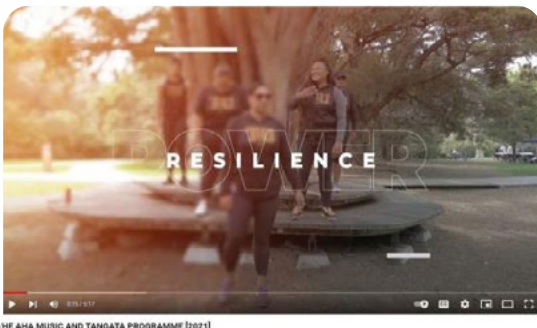
To enhance the capability of all recipients, Le Va introduced Zonos (Zoom fonos or meetings) on reporting and evaluation for recipients in 2021. Following this, the quality of reporting improved, and we have identified additional capability-building topics to introduce in future funding rounds. This progress highlights the potential for recipients to enhance their evaluation methods and reporting with tailored support and evaluation experience, and the opportunity for Le Va to continue building the evaluation capacity and capability of groups and organisations. We anticipate this will provide broader benefits back to community, including enhanced capability of recipients to demonstrate the value of their work, for future grant or funding opportunities.

Case studies:

- Bay of Plenty Youth Development Trust: Aiga programme
- Life Supporting Communities: Hustle programme



Aiga Programme by Bay of Plenty Youth Developmental Trust, 2022



A-Ha Music and Tangata programme, by Tunuma Creative, 2020

Bay of Plenty Youth Development Trust: Aiga programme

A youth development programme to empower young people to discover their strengths and connect with their cultures.

The Aiga programme, delivered by the Bay of Plenty Youth Development Trust, supported young people at risk of long-term benefit dependency, could benefit from enhanced educational engagement, and/or who experienced adverse early-life events. The term 'aiga' is from the Samoan language, referring to the extended family and community network that play a central role in Samoan culture.

The Aiga programme has been designed to help Pasifika young people discover and enhance their underlying strengths and purpose, connect with their cultures, and meet life's challenges with confidence and enthusiasm. Term-long workshops focus on mental wellbeing, resilience, breathwork, and Pacific cultures, culminating in a Fiafia night at the end of the term.

To meet reporting expectations and improve programme quality, BOPYDT leveraged its multidisciplinary team—including registered psychologists, educators, and former professional athletes—to build a culture of evidence-based practice. The team also attended Le Va's reporting and evaluation zonos, which they found useful.

The programme has expanded its reach each year it has received funding. In 2020, it had 15 participants, which grew to 78 in 2021, 131 in 2022, and 171 in 2023, with consistent and enthusiastic engagement in Fiafia nights throughout this period. The programme was extended to Pasifika student leaders in 2023. The programme consistently received excellent feedback from participants and school staff members.

Participants in the Aiga programme experienced transformative positive changes in their mental and emotional health. In 2022, self-reports from programme participants showed a percentage decrease in participants reporting suicidal thoughts, from 20% pre-programme to 9% post-programme. Furthermore, post-programme evaluations indicated improvements in wellbeing measures, with the most significant increase in participant scores related to cultural connection. The highest-rated statement, "I feel connected to my culture," reflects a strengthened sense of belonging and cultural identity among participants, highlighting the programme's impact in fostering meaningful connections to culture.



Life-Supporting Communities: Hustle programme

Life-Supporting Communities NZ Trust: Strengthening Capability Through Financial Literacy and Community Leadership

Life-Supporting Communities NZ Trust delivered the Hustle project in 2021 and 2022, a financial literacy initiative designed to equip Pasifika youth with essential knowledge and tools to navigate financial stress, support their families, and build future financial resilience. Despite it being their first time applying for funding, the Trust engaged fully with the support offered, including Zonos, and demonstrated a clear commitment to developing their organisational competence.

In 2021, they reached 70 participants (56 youth and 14 emerging leaders). By 2022, participation increased to 97, including 61 youth and 36 trained leaders.

As they approached their 10th Hustle delivery, they expressed a clear vision for sustainability—developing new teams, offering relevant training, and partnering with other capable organisations to extend their reach. This growth mindset and commitment to community-led development demonstrate how tailored support can help build lasting capability and impact.

“The programme has been incredible for our Pasifika students. Our students that attend the programme come together with Pasifika students from other local schools to participate in circuit training, networking, and learning how to apply the Fale Tapa Wha model to their own lives. It’s so important to have a programme like this that encourages self-determination for our developing Pasifika students.”

2021 TESTIMONIAL

“It’s so cool, because you get to learn different fitness exercises and techniques. It is also a safe space where no one judges you. Everyone is accepted, just as they are.”

2021 TESTIMONIAL

“The format and structure provided very useful to understanding of the various projects being delivered. Using the knowledge from the group was well managed, and the way Liz managed the discussion and kept content simple and clear was beneficial. Context to how this data is used was useful, a long with planning for future projects moving forward.”

2022 TESTIMONIAL

“Thank you for you support, its accessibility and availability has been absolutely comforting helping us feel supported along this way.

I must say this is the very first time we have applied for funding from anywhere so we appreciate how user-friendly and safe you have made this for us as a team here at the Life-supporting communities NZ Trust. Fa’afetai lava”

2021 TESTIMONIAL

Trusted Relationships: Building Community-Led Initiatives through Credible Leadership and Collaboration

Strong pre-existing community relationships, led by credible and respected leaders, were essential to the success of these initiatives (Faleafa et al., 2021). Ensuring initiatives leverage trusted relationships was embedded within the grant application evaluation processes managed by Le Va, requiring applicants to demonstrate this before receiving funding.

All funded initiatives were community-led, with recipients already deeply embedded within their communities through a variety of settings and forums such as schools, churches, sports clubs, health providers, media, and other local groups.

Having established relationships aimed to enable effective collaboration, coordination, community engagement, and mobilisation of the initiatives. For example, Tunuma Creative delivered the A-Ha Music and Tangata programme for Pasifika communities in South Auckland. Facilitator TJ Taotua, a well-known leader with extensive community ties, leveraged these relationships to build strong partnerships that supported the programme’s success.

Community-leadership is critical to ensuring relevant, culturally grounded initiatives that are responsive to local needs (Faleafa et al., 2021). Le Va staff reported that this approach cultivated a sense of ownership and commitment among community members, further enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of the initiatives.

Case studies:

- Please Blow My Mind - Campfire Studios: Lets Get Pre-Sifik

Please Blow My Mind – Campfire Studios: Let's Get Pre-Sifik

Podcasts and short videos focused on mental health and wellbeing.

'Let's Get Pre-Sifik!' season one was an educational video and audio podcast series promoting good mental health and wellbeing. It explored how Pasifika peoples could minimise the impact of suicide in the community through in-depth talanoa with specialists and community leaders, providing new perspectives, tools, and resources. The series aimed to foster a greater understanding of mental health and strategies to combat depression. Featuring 15 guests, the series garnered 13,500 viewers with a watch time of 860 hours at the time the initiative's report was submitted. Additionally, the series achieved almost 11,000 impressions on LinkedIn, 6,800 views on TikTok, and 7,700 Instagram accounts.

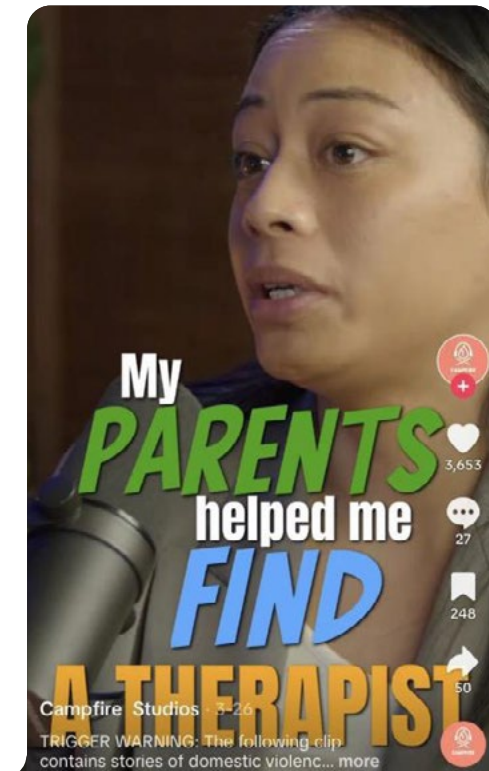
Season two of 'Let's get Pre-Sifik!' focused on Pasifika young people. Shorter highlight reels suitable for TikTok and Instagram were created, featuring interviews with six guests. The series achieved almost 500,000 views on TikTok. On YouTube, the 'Let's get Pre-Sifik!' podcast had a total of 19,300 viewers.

“Respect bro, for sharing your personal stories with everyone to help others dealing with the same experiences. Everyone has their own invisible suitcase we carry around, and ways to help others.”

2022 TESTIMONIAL

“Absolutely true
Josh, loved listening
to your talanoa.”

2023 TESTIMONIAL





Recipient Survey



Recipient survey

Overview

To better understand the experiences of Community Fund recipients, we conducted a survey to gather feedback on what worked well and where improvements could be made to the grant administration process, and Le Va's support for funded initiatives. A total of 26 recipients participated, achieving a 63% response rate. Key findings are presented as key themes, including: (i) timely and professional support and communication; (ii) clear contractual obligations, but mixed views on the contracting timeline; (iii) effective training and templates; and (iv) meeting community needs.

Timely and Professional Support and Communication

Recipients highlighted the exceptional support provided throughout the application process. Nearly 90% of respondents found staff to be highly helpful, appreciating prompt responses and clear guidance.

"We were well supported during the application process; the communication was consistent."

"Staff were very courteous and helpful, with quick responses."

Clear Contractual Obligations, but Mixed Views on the Contracting Timeline

Most recipients (75%) found contractual obligations clear, though there were mixed views on the contracting timeline. Some recipients found the holiday period and reporting deadlines challenging, while others appreciated the structured approach.

"We had a 6-month window for delivery. A longer period would have given us more time to deliver. We also received funds before Christmas, which created a gap of a month due to Christmas holidays."

Effective Training and Templates

- 73% of respondents found report-writing training invaluable, strengthening their ability to share impact stories effectively.
- 75% found evaluation training beneficial, with 90% feeling confident in demonstrating their initiative's success.
- 80% appreciated the well-structured report templates, with suggestions for further streamlining through a digital portal.

“The report writing training provided by Le Va was highly beneficial and significantly improved my report writing skills... The instructors provided practical tips that were easy to implement. The feedback provided during these exercises was constructive and helped me identify areas for improvement. Overall, the training has enabled me to produce higher-quality reports that are more coherent and impactful.”

Meeting Community Needs

The Community Fund was crucial for community initiatives, with many respondents stating their initiatives would not have been possible without it. This financial support allowed organisations to develop and implement initiatives focusing on building resilience, personal development, and wellbeing. It also covered essential costs such as training facilitators, producing educational materials, and conducting outreach activities.

Furthermore, the funding was instrumental in increasing the capacity and capability of recipients, ensuring that initiatives are sustainable.

Success stories from various respondents underscored the significant impact of the funding. These included creating safe spaces for discussions, engaging priority groups, and providing easy accessibility to professional support in local communities. The impact of the funding was evident in the positive outcomes and testimonials received from participants, highlighting the critical importance of this fund in making a difference in their communities.

“...the impact of the funding is underscored by personal testimonials from participants, with one individual stating that the initiative saved their life.

This powerful feedback highlights the profound difference the initiative makes in the lives of community members, emphasising the critical importance of the financial support we received. Without this funding, many of our planned activities would not have been possible, significantly limiting our ability to make a positive impact.



“The funding has been instrumental for the Niue community in Wellington, particularly in bolstering mental health initiatives and suicide prevention efforts.

It has enabled crucial support services and programs that promote mental wellbeing and resilience among residents. The continuity of funding would have further strengthened these efforts, ensuring sustained progress in addressing mental health challenges and reducing the incidence of suicide in the community. A community-driven approach, conducted in the language spoken by the participating community, has been essential in ensuring these initiatives resonate effectively and are embraced by the Niue community.



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Appendix A

List of Funded initiatives



2020 Successful Recipients

Organisation/Group

Bay of Plenty Development Trust

Du Val Foundation

FAFSWAG

Feel technologies

Gateway Community Trust

Love Somebody

Mission4Men

NZRL

PHAB Association

Resonate

South Seas Healthcare

South Waikato YMCA

Te Papalaulelei Youth

Tongan Society South Canterbury

Tunuma Creative

Vaka Pasifika

Waikato Pacific Youth Network

Zeal

2021 Successful Recipients

Organisation/Group

Auckland Rotuman Fellowship Group

Bay of Plenty Development Trust

Failoa Famili Trust

Gateway Community Trust

Hawkes Bay Fijian Christian Fellowship

Positive Vibrations Limited

Life Supporting Communities

Love Somebody

NZRL

Ribinaia

South Waikato YMCA

Takatakai Moana

Yes Disability

You Thrive

Zeal



2022 Successful Recipients

Organisation/Group

Bay of Plenty Development Trust

Brown Pride

Cannon Creeks Business Owners Collective

Empowerment Training

Failoa Famili Trust

Fale Pasifika o Aoraki Incorporated Trust (previously
Fale Pasifika o Aoraki)

Gateway Community Trust

Life Supporting Communities

Love Somebody

NappyBoyz

NZRL

P4CIFIC

Pacific Trust Otago

Please Blow My Mind - Campfire Studios

Positive Vibrations Limited

Potplant Studio

Snapback Gym

Tongan Society South Canterbury

Vavega Community Trust

Zeal

2023 Successful Recipients

Organisation/Group

Bay of Plenty Development Trust

Brown Pride

Please Blow My Mind - Campfire Studios

Empowerment Training

Kila's Style Trust

Life Supporting Communities

Love Somebody

Martin Hautus Foundation Trust

NZRL

She is not your rehab

Waitakere Methodist Parish

Yes Disability

Zeal

A large, stylized circular graphic on the left side of the page. It features a central circle with a white number '8' inside. Surrounding this are concentric rings of geometric patterns, including triangles and lines. The outer edge of the circle is decorated with stylized leaves and plant motifs. The entire graphic is rendered in shades of teal and blue.

8

Appendix B

Profiles of Funded Initiative



Profiles of Funded Initiatives

This section includes profiles for all Community Fund recipients funded from 2020 to 2023 in alphabetical order, summarising outputs and outcomes (where possible) achieved based on our review of recipient reports submitted during the period covered by this report. Please note that these outcomes have not been independently verified with the report authors. Additionally, when the report content was unclear, it was not included in the profiles.



Pacific Education by Yes Disability, 2021

Auckland Rotuman Fellowship Group



Priority group: Men



Ethnicity: Rotuman



Region: Auckland

The 2021 Auckland Rotuman Fellowship Group delivered family wellness workshops and mentoring sessions aimed at strengthening community resilience and connection, and providing self-help tools and resources to improve self-esteem and wellbeing.

Outputs:

- 124 participants (mostly men) across eight workshops.
- 140 mentoring sessions.
- A new Youth Group was formed as a result of the initiative.

Bay of Plenty Youth Development Trust

Aiga Programme



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Bay of Plenty

The Aiga initiative catered to young individuals of Pasifika heritage, along with their families and communities, and was funded in 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. It helped Pasifika youth discover and enhance their underlying strengths and purpose, connect with their Pasifika cultures and meet life's challenges with confidence and enthusiasm. They delivered term-long programmes, with a Fiafia night at the end, and wellbeing sessions for schools.

2020 Outputs and outcomes:

- 15 participants took part.
- Participant wellbeing improved on five of eight metrics. The most significant was "when my friends go through tough times, I know how to support them."
- Over 100 people attended Fiafia night.
- 740,000 viewers on TV.

2021 Outputs and outcomes

- 78 participants took part.
- 175 people attended Fiafia night.

- Participant wellbeing improved on nine of ten metrics. The most significant was "How confident are you at socialising with others?".

2022 Outputs and outcomes

- 131 participants took part.
- 150 people attended Fiafia night.
- wellbeing measures improved post-programme; the most significant increase was in the statement, "I feel connected to my culture."

2023 Outputs and outcomes

- 171 participants took part.
- Social confidence improved post-programme.

Brown Pride

Yeah the Boys (2022, 2023), Yeah the Girls (2023)



Priority group: Men (2022), Multiple (2023)



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

Brown Pride delivered the 'Yeah The Boys' initiative, which offered free training and gaming nights. The goal was to encourage men to talk about their experiences and mental health. Forty gaming and 20 training sessions were held. In 2023, the programme expanded to include counselling and mental health workshops, as well as 'Yeah The Girls,' which catered to women. The expanded programme featured 50 training sessions, 50 gaming sessions, over 10 mental health workshops, and 46 counselling sessions.

2022 Outputs and outcomes:

- 55 men participated.
- Reported improved wellbeing by the end of the programme. Do we know how wellbeing was measured?

2023 Outcomes:

- Over 100 people participated in training/gaming sessions, mental health workshops, and counselling sessions.
- There was a 40% overall increase in confidence sharing personal experiences in group settings.

Cannon Creeks Business Owners Collective

Tupu Ora



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Wellington

The 2022 Tupu Ora initiative aimed to eliminate cultural barriers and provide a safe space for families and youth in Porirua East to address and navigate issues related to youth suicide. They held four Pasifika Youth workshops with parents and guardians attending as supporters. After the workshops, youth participants contributed inspirational messages to a mural, which were then used by local artists to create a mural on a takeaway shop's roller doors to raise awareness about youth suicide prevention. T-shirts were also given to all participants and their parents with numbers to call if they need help, e.g. Youthline.

Outputs:

- 32 youth participated.
- Positive feedback from participants.
- 270 views on social media.

Du Val Foundation & She Is Not Your Rehab

InnerBoy app



Priority group: Men



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Digital

The InnerBoy App is a free mental health app for men, featuring a guided support programme. Funding in 2020 supported the development of the app, while 2023 funding facilitated a 90-day media marketing campaign for the app. The campaign focused on a strengths-based, mana-enhancing approach to empower men and encourage positive actions in their lives.

2023 Outputs:

- 663 app users and 151 participants attended webinar training about the app.
- Reached 500,000 on social media accounts across Facebook and Youtube.
- Spoke at 30+ events.
- Media releases and stories broadcast across local and mainstream media.

Empowerment Training Tama Pasifika



Priority group:
Youth, Men



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Wellington, Canterbury (2023 only)

Funded in 2022 and 2023, the Tama Pasifika Wellbeing Project involved the creation of a Tama Pasifika Wellbeing Journal and wellbeing workshops for Pasifika young males, creating safe spaces for them to connect, talanoa, and heal. It implemented proven tools and strategies that positively impact their wellbeing and ensured they feel seen, heard, and valued as themselves.

2022 Outputs and outcomes:

- 135 young men from eight schools participated.
- 93% of participants showed improvements in their connection with their identity, understanding of relationships, confidence discussing challenges, and commitment to using the tools in their journal to improve wellbeing.
- Multiple positive testimonials from participants.
- 450 likes on Instagram.

2023 Outputs:

- 29 young men took part in 12 sessions.
- The survey showed high agreement with the following statements capture post workshop:
 - 97% valued a strong connection with their identity,
 - 100% enjoyed the workshops,
 - 95% recognised the importance of seeking support,
 - 99% found the journal useful for wellbeing, and
 - 100% would recommend the workshop to other Tama Pasifika.
- 460 likes on Instagram.

FAFSWAG Queer Indigenous Arts Collective

The Matala Project



Priority group: Men, Rainbow



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Digital

Funded in 2020, FAFSWAG's Matala initiative explored Pacific masculinity, focusing on themes of manhood, identity, relationships, sexuality, and intimacy. The initiative aimed to create safe spaces for talanoa and normalise conversations about issues affecting Pasifika men. It featured a series of audio essays where Pasifika men shared their experiences with culture, identity, gender, and sexuality.

Outputs:

- The first episode has garnered 716 plays.

Failoa Famili Trust

21 Day Life Journal



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland, Wellington, Hawkes Bay, Digital

The Failoa Famili initiative developed a 21-day life journal specifically designed for Pasifika peoples, accompanied by workshops. The journal served as an interactive learning tool with activities aimed at activating and strengthening the brain's frontal lobe to address depression and anxiety. The initiative and its resources were based on a strengths-based holistic model of care, emphasising Pasifika values such as spirituality, culture, family, and community connections.

2021 Outputs and achievements:

- 480 people, mainly youth took part in five community workshops.
- 500 21 Day Life Journals printed and distributed.
- The 21-Day Journal was featured in mainstream news media and Radio Samoa
- Positive testimonials from participants.

2022 Outputs and achievements

- 600 youth took part in community workshops.
- 1600 21 Day Life Journals printed and distributed.
- Positive testimonials from participants.
- Failoa Famili received a COVID-19 response award from Prime Minister Chris Hipkins.

Feel Technologies HAAAA Polynesian Meditation App



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Digital

Funded in 2020, the HAAAA app offers a distinctive Pasifika meditation series, blending Polynesian sounds, instruments, and voices in a culturally relevant manner. Developed with the support of Pasifika practitioners, the app allows Pasifika individuals to practice meditation and mindfulness in a relatable way from the comfort of their own homes.

Outputs and achievements:

- 10 meditation tracks created.
- 5 star review on Apple App Store

Gateway Community Trust Link4Life



Priority group: People affected by suicide



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

A programme dedicated to supporting and empowering families affected by suicide through a support website, support groups, and a range of digital resources. Efforts were focused on enabling, equipping, and empowering families affected by suicide to strengthen family bonds and cohesion, allowing them to become valuable resources for their families and communities.

In 2020, Link4Life held workshops with families affected by suicide. Family champions were identified and underwent a four week leadership training to build strategies to enhance family wellbeing.

In 2021 funding round, Link4Life conducted co-design workshops to develop the Virtual Village Website, which includes various resources such as photos, podcasts, and videos.

During the 2022 funding round, Link4Life organised five support groups, which included a mix of fortnightly meetings and programmes lasting between 4 and 12 weeks. Additionally, they developed a support group app to facilitate connections among users seeking support groups.

2020 Outputs:

- 194 people from 32 families took part in two meetings.
- 10 family champions underwent leadership training.

2021 Outputs:

- 30 people attended Virtual Village Co-design workshops.
- 3,677 people viewed on social media.
- Positive testimonials from workshop attendees.

2022 Outputs:

- At least 159 people participated in support groups.

Hawkes Bay Fijian Christian Fellowship

Tuvatuva Ni Tiko Bulabula: Wellness Programme



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: Fijian



Region: Hawkes Bay

Funded in 2021, Tuvatuvani tiko bulabula: Wellness Programme provided a 'wrap around' service for the Hawkes Bay Fijian Christian Fellowship congregation and followers through the promotion of Faith-Based self-care during weekly church sessions. Key initiatives included after-church discussions, support groups, and guidance in seeking professional help when needed. Additionally, the programme hosted quarterly events focused on mental health awareness and community engagement, fostering a supportive and well-informed community.

Outputs:

- 372 people participated.
- Positive testimonials from participants.
- 13 events were held.

Kila's Style Trust

Dressed in Confidence



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

This 2023 initiative included workshops that explored the field of fashion design and supported students to prepare for a fashion show event, and additionally promoted mental wellbeing and suicide prevention. Participants designed and created garments using repurposed fabric and clothes they no longer wore, and incorporated cultural elements such as their ta'ovala (traditional Tongan mat) and lavalava. Their creations were then modelled by themselves or family members at the runway fashion event.

Outputs and outcomes:

- 82 youth took part.
- 53% reported they felt their mental health had improved after participating in our programme.
- Multiple positive testimonials from youth who took part.

Life Supporting Communities Hustle Programme



Priority group: Youth only



Ethnicity: Fijian



Region: Auckland, Wellington/
Hawkes Bay (2022 only)

The Hustle project (funded in 2021 and 2022) was focused on financial literacy for Pasifika youth, aiming to equip them with essential knowledge and skills to manage finances and understand the impact of financial stress on families. By educating young people about financial distress signs and available support services, the initiative sought to reduce anxiety and despair within families. They carried out financial literacy workshops, leadership training, and held get-togethers.

2021 Outputs and outcomes:

- 70 people took part, 56 youth participated in the financial workshops and 14 leaders were trained.
- Participants enjoyed the programme and showed increased financial literacy post-programme.

2022 Outputs and outcomes:

- 97 people took part: 61 youth participated in the financial workshops and 36 leaders were trained.
- Participants enjoyed the programme and experienced increased financial literacy and comfort in talking about money.

Young Pasifika Wellbeing Programme – Ta'ita'i O Le Moana



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: National

This 2023 initiative established a network and delivered workshops to Pasifika Prefect Leaders to support one another as they transitioned into tertiary education.

2023 Outputs and outcomes:

- 200 students took part.
- 200 workbooks and 200 wallet cards were distributed.
- Feedback from students was positive, with students reporting increased leadership skills, tools to manage stress, and cultural knowledge for leadership.

Love Somebody Tama Toa and Teina Toa Programme



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland, Online

The Tama Toa and Teina Toa programme aims to promote mental health and wellbeing through support groups and digital resources. Initially focused on Pasifika young men, the programme expanded its focus to include women in 2021.

2020 Outcomes:

- 260 Pasifika participated in two 12 week programmes.

2021 Outcomes:

- 52 participated: 27 males and 25 females.
- Three facilitators trained.
- Five animated videos made with 200 views on Youtube.
- 100% satisfaction from participants and 100% agree that it is an effective suicide prevention programme.

2022 Outcomes:

- 328 people participated.
- Generally, there was positive feedback across a variety of metrics, including 81% of participants who were now extremely or very aware of helpful tools to manage emotional responses to challenging situations.
- 130,000+ people reached on social media.

2023 Outputs and outcomes:

- 149 people engaged with 69 people participating in the programme and 80 people attending the digital launch.
- 180 workbooks printed.
- Over 330,000 views on social media.
- 92% of participants agreed that the skills learned in the programme helped them manage emotions and make better decisions.
- Positive testimonials from participants.

Martin Hautus Foundation Trust Mafoufou Maloloina – Healthy Mind project



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

Mafoufou Maloloina - Healthy Mind was a project that reached out to the South Auckland and West Auckland communities of Pacific descent. It provided support and strengthened families experiencing stresses and strains due to unemployment, family constraints, or the aftermath of COVID-19 and recent weather events that left many people homeless or without income. The programme involved a series of guided journaling workshops and follow-up mentoring sessions designed to improve mental wellbeing and resilience.

2023 Outputs and outcomes:

- 36 families, 72 people overall participated in eight workshops.
- 520 mentoring sessions provided.
- 100% of participants reported feeling empowered and better informed, and connected to their community.
- 89% reported increased confidence in discussing difficulties and felt more connected to their culture.
- 79% found the programme helpful in building resilience and reducing the risks of suicide.

Mission4Men Malietoa Project



Priority group:
Men, Rural



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Manawatū-Whanganui

The Malietoa Project, funded in 2020, aimed to prevent suicide among Pasifika men by promoting wellbeing through meaningful connections with family, church and the community.

Outputs:

- 100 participants participated.
- 100 food parcels distributed.
- Three community wellbeing events held.

NappyBoyz Milk and Honey



Priority group:
Youth, Rainbow



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

Milk & Honey depicted the stories of six Pasifika youth and their families adapting to life in Aotearoa, recreating iconic sitcoms like Fresh Prince of Bel Air through a South Auckland Pasifika lens. The show blended New Zealand pop culture with the Pasifika experience, addressing serious issues such as suicide awareness and mental health wellness. The Māngere Arts Centre foyer was transformed into an 80's PI household, providing a culturally safe space where dance and conversations around mental health fostered self-discovery and artistic expression.

Outputs:

- 421 tickets were sold for two shows.
- 27 dancers and 10 production team members were involved.
- 180+ people engaged via social media.

New Zealand Rugby League Wellbeing Waka



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Nationwide

NZRL's Wellbeing Waka initiative was delivered over a 4-year period to promote mental health and wellbeing and sustainable support networks within the rugby league community. Initially launched as a series of workshops at local clubs, the initiative grew exponentially with NZRL developing a series of wellbeing resources, sharing information across social media, launching their wellbeing webpage, training community champions, and producing 9 podcast episodes.

2020 Outputs:

- 171 participants across 12 workshops.
- Positive feedback from facilitators.

2021 Outputs:

- 809 participants across 27 workshops.
- 32 wellbeing champions identified to support the programme.
- Positive feedback from facilitators.
- Promotional stories and news articles shared on NZRL website and across national and local news media.

2022 Outputs:

- 427 participants across 19 workshops.
- Six zonal wellbeing teams formed, each with zone champions, chaplains and ambassadors.
- 15 project teams members completed Life Keepers training.
- The NZRL wellbeing website was launched, and feedback received indicated that it was "life-saving"
- Multiple media appearances with mainstream media about Wellbeing Waka.
- Positive feedback from facilitators.

2023 Outputs:

- 333 participants across 27 workshops.
- The nine wellbeing podcasts have collectively received 45,000 views on YouTube.
- Five mental health resource materials developed and published.
- Positive feedback from facilitators.

P4CIFIC Niu-Generation



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Hawkes Bay

The Niu-Generation initiative for Pasifika Year 8 students aimed to strengthen parent-child connections through sports, exercise, and promoting healthy relationships. It included workshops, leadership mentoring sessions, TikTok content, talanoa with parents, and a young people's conference.

Outputs:

- 524 took part: 132 students and their parents took part in the workshops, 392 took part in the youth conference.
- Year 8 students reported a marked increase in feelings of empowerment and the quality of their friendships. Parents reported feeling more connected to their child and their child's needs.
- Positive testimonials from participants.

Pacific Trust Otago Ke Tatala Mental Health Project



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Otago

Funded in 2022, Ke Tatala, derived from the Tongan saying "Ke tatala e pulonga" meaning "Lift the dark clouds," aimed to raise awareness of mental health for Pasifika people by peeling back the stigma associated with it.

The project focused on improving mental health literacy and outcomes by addressing misinformation and enhancing access to health services. It adopted a community-specific approach for Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands communities, with a smaller islands group for Fiji, Tokelau, Niue, Kiribati, Tuvalu, and Wantoks communities.

Key components included raising awareness about suicide prevention and support, exploring cultural perspectives on wellbeing, and empowering communities to develop their own strategies to manage and strengthen wellbeing. Each community had a coordinator to ensure all voices were heard in a safe environment, with support from Pacific Trust Otago's steering group for planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Outputs:

- At least 96 people took part across four workshops.
- Positive feedback from participants.

Pasifika o Aoraki services (previously Fale Pasifika o Aoraki)



Priority group: Youth, Men



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Canterbury

This 2022 initiative aimed to connect the Aoraki Pasifika community through sporting activities and talanoa sessions, raising awareness about suicide prevention by creating safe spaces for open discussions, understanding suicide trends, identifying signs of distress, and learning how to support those in distress. Two kickoff events were held: a men's event focused on sports and food and a women's dinner, they then held talanoa sessions in Ashburton, Oamaru, and Timaru for both men and women. The programme also addressed the lack of organised community events by hosting a friendly volleyball tournament in Timaru.

Outputs:

- The initiative saw over 271 participants: 70 attended the men's sports day, 40 attended the women's dinner, 53 attended talanoa sessions, and 18 volleyball teams participated in the tournament.
- All participants were satisfied or very satisfied with the volleyball tournament.

PHAB Association Pasifika Disability Workshops



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

PHAB organized three co-design workshops to gather insights from participants regarding the unique needs of young Pasifika individuals with disabilities. These workshops provided opportunities for collaboration and sharing of experiences. In addition, PHAB conducted two two-day workshops facilitated by youth workers and Pasifika leaders. These workshops aimed to develop resources that explored the culture and shared experiences of the participants. As a result, the youth wrote and recorded a song called 'Moving on Up'.

Posters and postcards were also created and distributed within the community to share the outcomes of the workshops.

Outputs:

- 42 participants took part.

Please Blow My Mind - Campfire Studios

Let's Get Pre-Sifik



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Digital

The project featured a 15-episode educational video and audio podcast series in 2022, along with short-form reels of six speakers in 2023, promoting good mental health and wellbeing while examining how Pasifika people could minimise the impact of suicide in their communities. Through in-depth conversations with specialists and community leaders, the podcast/reels provided new perspectives, tools, and resources to better understand mental health and combat depression. The series included research-based advice and methods for improving mental wellbeing, designed to educate those unfamiliar with suicidal feelings and support those directly or indirectly affected.

2022 Outputs:

- 13,500 viewers on Youtube and Spotify.
- 25,595 reached on social media.
- Positive feedback from listeners.

2023 Outputs:

- 500,000 views on TikTok
- 19,300 views on YouTube.
- Positive comments from watchers.

Positive Vibrations Limited

Ko Yau - I Am programme



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: Fijian



Region: Hawkes Bay (2021 only),
Wellington, Auckland, Digital

Funded in 2021 and 2022, the Ko Yau Initiative aimed to equip Pasifika young people with the tools to become self-reliant and positive contributors to society. The Ko Yau programme was initially designed to support at-risk youth by addressing suicidal thoughts, pre-criminal behavior, and other behavioral issues, particularly for those not fitting into mainstream schooling and support services. Over time, the programme has expanded and been tailored to meet the unique needs of the communities it serves.

2021 Outputs and outcomes:

- 73 participants, 64 youth and nine parents.
- Sponsored Bula Fiji 7's tournament.
- Supported the community with postvention and referred one person to a GP.
- 93% of participants were very satisfied or satisfied with the programme,
- Increases in personal development were observed with:
 - 91% reporting higher confidence,
 - 82% noting improved character
 - 96% experiencing greater connection, and
 - 82% indicating enhanced caring for others.

2022 Outputs and outcomes:

- 186 people participated across six workshops, majority youth.
- 28 people participated in mentoring.
- 95% of participants were very satisfied or satisfied with the programme.
- Increases in personal development were observed, with:
 - 89% reporting higher confidence,
 - 79% noting improved character,
 - 96% experiencing greater connection, and
 - 88% indicating enhanced caring for others.
- Multiple positive testimonials.

Potplant Studio Grow



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Wellington

Potplant Studio (2022) engaged with various organisations across Wellington through the Grow workshop. This initiative aimed to normalise conversations around mental health and increase awareness of mental health services for young people. The hands-on, interactive workshop used plants to initiate discussions on mental health and ran for an hour per session, catering to 10-20 participants.

Outcomes:

- 75 young people took part.
- After the workshop, 49% strongly agreed they had gained more knowledge about available mental health services
- 65% felt more comfortable talking about mental health, with 29% strongly agreeing and 36% agreeing.
- Comparing self-reported mental health before and after the workshop,
 - 35% felt Excellent before, increasing to 76% after,
 - Those feeling 'Neutral' or 'Not Good' decreased.

Resonate I AM | THE SHOWCASE



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

Funded in 2020, I AM | THE SHOWCASE was a creative showcase and social media campaign that told the story of a young Pasifika male's experience with depression and anxiety. The first stage was a live showcase, and the second stage involved posting online content from the showcase to their Instagram page.

Outputs and outcomes:

- Three live sold-out shows with over 600 tickets sold.
- 70 cast members participated.
- 10,000+ reached on social media.
- The majority (95%) of those who engaged with the showcase reported that it was a positive experience for their wellbeing. Additionally, 95% agreed that a strong sense of cultural identity results in an increase in wellbeing.
- 100% felt that the showcase enabled them to see the creative arts as a valuable tool for connecting with their emotions in a safe way.

Ribinaia Women's Club

Mental Health and Wellbeing Awareness Programme for I-Kiribati in New Zealand



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: Kiribati



Region: Wellington, Digital

The 2021 project aimed to introduce suicide prevention topics in a culturally safe manner by engaging with the Kiribati community through the maroro. Maroro is a Kiribati cultural approach involving deep conversations to gather information and understand individuals' perspectives on mental health and wellbeing.

Outputs:

- 150 people attended across four workshops.
- Positive feedback from participants.

Snapback Gym

Pacifica Faasoa Programme



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Wellington

The 2022 Faasoa programme prioritised Pasifika youth aged 12-24 years, delivering four 10-week wellbeing programmes focusing on preparing, adapting, and transforming Pasifika people to be healthy, confident, thriving, and resilient as a key intervention for suicide prevention. The programme used a four-pronged approach—Support Villages, wellbeing Faasoa Sessions, Communities of Care, and Celebrating Our Journey—to strengthen the mental health and wellbeing of Pacific peoples.

Outputs and outcomes:

- 104 people participated across four cohorts.
- Pre-programme 90.6% of young people expressed that their mental health was impacting their daily life, post-programme, only 46% reported that mental health was impacting their daily life. There was also improvements in physical health post-programme.
- Positive feedback from participants.

South Seas Healthcare MYSTORY – Mentoring Programme



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

The 2022 MYSTORY Wellbeing Mentoring Programme was an evidence-based vocational and personal development initiative designed for Pasifika youth in South Auckland. The programme aimed to enhance key protective factors for suicide prevention and overall wellbeing. It encouraged participants to understand, share, and connect with their personal stories, fostering a deeper sense of self-awareness and community. As part of the programme, mentees participated in weekly meetings with a mentor.

Outputs:

- 16 youth mentors trained.
- 21 youth participants.
- 25 workshops held
- Almost 20,000 reached on social media.

South Waikato YMCA Barber Chair Mentoring



Priority group:
Young Men



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Waikato

The Barber Chair, funded in 2020, was a one-on-one mentoring programme where young men could connect with a mentor while getting a fresh fade. In collaboration with schools, the program identified and supported at-risk youth, connecting them with youth workers. This safe and supportive environment allowed the young men to express their worries and challenges while building self-confidence. The programme involved mentoring sessions and the creation of individual plans to help guide and empower the youth.

Outcomes:

- 20 participants took part in the programme.

Up2YOUth mentoring programme



Priority group:
Young Men



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Waikato

Up2YOUth was a program aimed at creating a platform for Pasifika youth and potential leaders in the community. The programme aimed to develop youth into leaders and trailblazers in the community. A ten week programme was delivered to youth which involved group mentoring team bonding and developing individual mentoring plans.

Outcomes:

- 21 participants took part in the programme.
 - Positive feedback from participants.
-

Takata kai Moana Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention Programme



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: Niuean



Region: Wellington, Digital

This 2021 project was a series of workshops designed to support Niue peoples in developing local solutions to promote health and wellbeing and to prevent suicide in the community. The workshops were informed by discussions with Wellington Niue community leaders to seek their guidance, input, and support for the project. Five workshops were held focussing on Niuean culture, holding space for talanoa for various groups and financial wellbeing.

Outcomes:

- 128 people participated across five workshops.
 - Positive feedback from participants.
-

Te Papalaulelei Youth Youth Workshops



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: Tokelauan



Region: Wellington, Digital

Te Papalaulelei Youth (funded in 2020) hosted three youth engagement workshops to educate and empower young Tokelauans. Created by youth for youth, these workshops aimed to address suicide prevention from multiple perspectives. Topics covered included cultural identity, intergenerational engagement, mental wellbeing, and resilience. The workshops were live-streamed, enabling participants from other areas to join in.

Outputs:

- 123 people participants in three workshops.
- 3,300 views on Facebook during the workshop.

Tongan Society South Canterbury Mental Health Resources



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: Tongan



Region: Canterbury

The 2020 Tongan Society South Canterbury developed a comprehensive well-being programme and mental health resources specifically for the Tongan community. As part of this initiative, a 16-page booklet on mental health and wellbeing in Tongan was created and distributed to various local community organisations, including DHBs, GPs, Pasefika Proud recipients, and Suicide Prevention Coordinators.

Outputs:

- 100 booklets and 200 posters printed and distributed.
- A family health day was held, 40 booklets were taken by families.

Wellbeing Workshops



Priority group: All



Ethnicity: Tongan



Region: Canterbury

The Tongan Society South Canterbury received funding in 2022 to deliver a holistic well-being programme. The programme incorporated the '5 Ways of wellbeing,' focusing on nutrition, physical exercise, sobriety, healthy sleep habits, digital detox, breathing techniques, optimism, and gratitude to empower their participants and enhance social activities and connections. It was designed with a Tongan and Pacific lens.

Outputs:

- 145 participants from over 50 families.
- Resources from 2020 were clinically reviewed and refreshed.
- Six programmes targeting women, men and youth were completed.
- 30 boys from Timaru Boys High School were supported to participate in Polyfest.

Tunuma Creative A-Ha Music and Tangata Programme



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

This was a six-week programme that used music and performance to enhance mental wellbeing. Initially aimed at young men and their families, it was later expanded to include women. Each participant received key resources and access to online digital support tools. The program also provided education about mental health resources and guidance on how to support loved ones experiencing mental health issues. A song 'Never Give Up' was written, recorded and a music video was created:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtsrdAtnjhc>

Outputs and outcomes:

- 44 participants took part across two cohorts.
- All participants reported improvements in their mental health since participating in the programme.
- The majority of participants did not require further support post-programme engagement.
- 1,200 views on Youtube.

Vaka Pasifika Suicide Prevention and Management Strategy Framework for Pacific Island Church Groups



Priority group:
Young Men



Ethnicity: Tongan



Region: Auckland

This community-driven project, funded in 2020, comprised of two initiatives: a suicide education awareness programme for young males who are part of the United Church of Tonga in New Zealand, and the development of a suicide management framework to support families and church members affected by suicide. The suicide awareness programme was delivered in English and Tongan.

Outputs:

- 348 people took part, including 300 youth.
- Participant feedback was positive.

Vavega Community Trust

Fakatupu Te Atamai – Aitiake Te Makeke



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: Tokelauan



Region: Nationwide

In this 2022 project, Vavega Community Trust hosted three national roadshows and a pilot workshop targeting the Tokelauan communities, aiming to develop and maintain a national shared approach to identifying and addressing the prevention or assistance with distress. The workshops were facilitated by a trusted Tokelau facilitator, leveraging Te Vaka Afataga—a Tokelau model for health and wellbeing encompassing physical, social systems, family, mental health, belief systems, and the environment.

Outputs and outcomes:

- 242 people attended across three roadshows and pilot session.
- Post-workshop, participants reported increased confidence in defining suicide, discussing the topic, validating their feelings, and asking for help.
- Participants also felt more comfortable identifying signs of someone struggling with suicide, supporting those with suicidal thoughts, and navigating available support systems for themselves and their families.
- Positive feedback from participants.
- Over 350 reached on social media.

Waikato Pacific Youth Network

Filling Your Cup Youth Retreat, Pasifika Youth Bowl and Social



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Waikato

This 2020 project aimed to enhance the wellbeing of both youth and youth leaders within the Waikato Pacific Youth Network, empowering them to better serve young people. Two youth events (Filling Your Cup Youth Retreat and Bowl and Social event) were organised to provide a safe space for young Pasifika to be authentic, embrace their culture and be fully present. During COVID-19, additional digital resources were developed and promoted via social media.

Outputs:

- 146 participants across two events:
 - 95 youth workers attended Building & Filling Your Cup Youth Retreat and
 - 51 attendees at the Pasifika youth - Bowl & Social.
- Majority (96%) of participants were very happy with the Bowl and Social event.

Waitakere Methodist Parish Ola Manuia - Living Well



Priority group: Multiple



Ethnicity: Samoan



Region: Auckland

The Ola Manuia - Living Well programme, funded in 2022, aimed to support the physical and mental wellbeing of the community while building resilience among its most vulnerable members, such as the elderly, youth, young mothers/parents, and men. By targeting these groups, the programme sought to address issues of isolation, loneliness, and pressure experienced during the pandemic, providing support, friendship, and reconnections to community and social networks.

Outputs:

- Over 300 people took part in the programme.
- 100 sessions were held of six programmes.

Yes Disability Pacific Education



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

Yes Disability (2021) hosted educational sessions two afternoons a week. The first hour was dedicated to homework completion using free WiFi and laptops, followed by two hours where participants could further their education in areas like technology, music production, and art, supported by Pacific leaders.

Outcomes:

- 103 participants took part in the programme.
- Positive testimonials from participants.

Empowered



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

Empowered (2023) is designed to guide participants towards realising their full potential by helping them gain confidence, overcome fear of failure or rejection, and become informed decision-makers. The program includes workshops co-designed by the participants, focusing on the spoken word, music writing, and art, all supported by professionals. Three workshops, one programme launch, one showcase day and a family celebration were held.

Outcomes:

- 36 participants completed the programme.
- Many positive testimonials from participants; with achievements such as gaining full-time employment and passing their driving tests.

You Thrive Lālanga Koloa



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Auckland

Funded in 2021, Lālanga Koloa was a three-month mentoring programme for Māori-Pasifika students. The vision was to empower Pasifika youth to grow confidently in the value of their lives and the contributions they make to the world. The program aimed to equip them with the knowledge, skills, support, and tools they needed to be positive role models and leaders for their generation. Workshops and mentoring sessions were held.

Outcomes:

- 210 students took part from three schools.
- 100% of students said the workshops were helpful to them.

Zeal Lupe Programme



Priority group: Youth



Ethnicity: All Pasifika



Region: Wellington

The Lupe programme (funded in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023) is a ten-week photography and mentoring programme designed to support Pasifika young people facing mental health challenges and at risk of suicidal distress. They run term-long photography workshops with individual mentoring and have an exhibition at the end of the term.

2020 Outcomes:

- 20 participants took part.
- Positive testimonials from participants.

2021 Outcomes:

- 12 participants took part.
- 20 mentoring sessions held.
- Positive testimonials from participants.

2022 Outcomes:

- 24 participants took part.
- 200 mentoring sessions held.

2023 Outcome:

- 23 participants took part.
- 200 mentoring sessions held.
- Participants indicated that they enjoyed the programme (100%), felt more connected to their identity (86%) and the community (73%) and felt more positive about the future (87%).



Pasifika for Life
Suicide Prevention Programme



LeVa