

Better data, better decisions, better outcomes

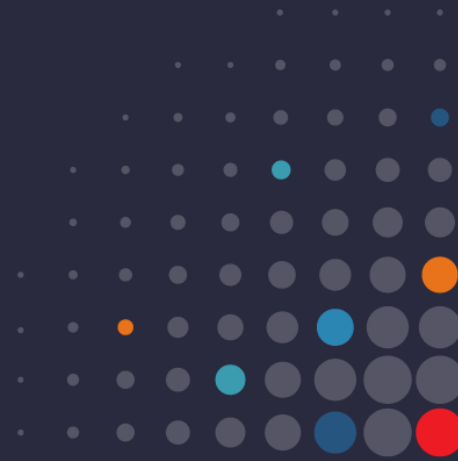
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Whakamanawa 2026



Social Investment Agency
Toi Hau Tāngata

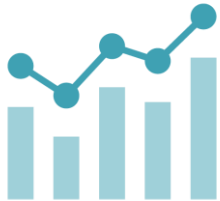
Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government



‘Social investment’ is...

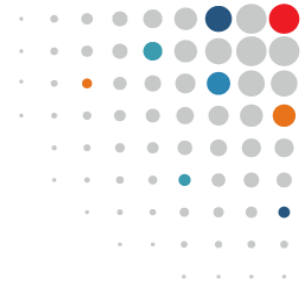
Social investment describes a range of activities and methods that use data and evidence to drive investment that improves people’s lives.

Commonly, social investment:



- Takes a **long-term view across multiple domains** and **outcomes**
- Supports investment in **early intervention** and **prevention**, not just crisis response
- **Targets investment** to improve the lives of people who need it most
- Provides **holistic** support to people and their families and whānau

The social investment approach



- **A way of allocating resources**

Taking an **evidence-based approach** to social services, understanding the impact and value of investments made in social services, and prioritising resources to where impact and value is highest, particularly for communities and families that need more support to achieve positive outcomes.



- **A way of investing in services**

Establishing outcomes-based contracts that allow service providers to **innovate and adapt** approaches to achieve well-defined outcomes.



- **A way of delivering services**

Actively monitoring outcomes for people and adjusting interventions in response to **learning what is working** to achieve the desired results for them.

Social Investment Agency

Established in July 2024 as a central agency to lead, develop, and show a social investment approach in action.

In the initial establishment phase SIA has been looking at the system changes required to apply a social investment approach.

While universal services and specific social services are working as designed – to support the majority – there is a growing group of people with more complex issues that are not addressed well within current arrangements.

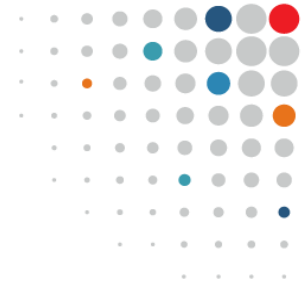


We're changing the way government works, so that:

- Resources are directed where they can have most impact
- Investments focus on outcomes for people not on outputs
- Communities can commission services to meet local needs
- Providers have stability and flexibility to determine the best approach
- Services prioritise early intervention, prevention and innovation
- People get tailored services and support in a way that works for them, from providers they trust



We're working to make the shift by:



- **Helping the system see early**

Building better tools, standards and evidence so decisions are informed by what is happening and what is likely to happen.



- **Helping government trust those who know best**

Supporting smarter commissioning and more locally informed responses, with greater flexibility and clearer outcomes.



- **Helping prove what works**

Testing, measuring and growing promising approaches – including through the Social Investment Fund – so investment is guided by evidence.

Social Investment Fund

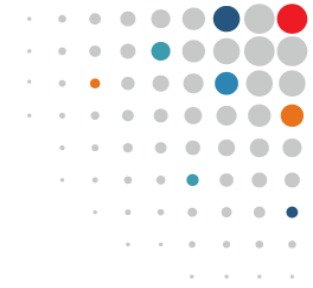
Invests directly and develops the architecture

The Fund will:

- focus on priority outcomes and cohorts agreed by Fund Ministers
- invest early to help New Zealanders overcome a range of challenges to achieve their goals
- enable us to test and scale the social investment approach
- work in partnership with social sector organisations, iwi, and other agencies.

The end goal is to see more Government funding in arrangements that align with the social investment approach. The Fund is designed to catalyse change – setting a bar for wider social spending.





Social Investment Fund pathways

Four pathways to funding

Pathway One: New Investment

- New investments in initiatives that focus on priority cohorts and outcomes and demonstrate the social investment approach. Priority outcomes and cohorts set by Social Investment Ministers.
- Demonstration – show it is possible

Pathway Two: Contract Consolidation

- Consolidation of existing contracts held by social sector or community organisations with one or more government agencies into a single outcomes-based agreement, administered by the Social Investment Fund.
- Defragment – more \$ in outcome-based agreements

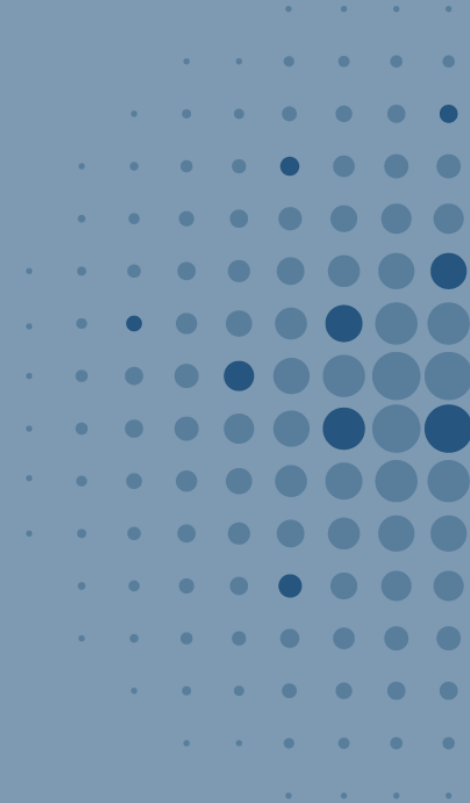
Pathway Three: Community-led Commissioning

- Devolve decision-making authority for social service investment to local leaders, empowering communities to tailor solutions to their specific needs. The intention is to support local collectives that include regional organisations, iwi, hapū, philanthropists, and non-government entities to design and deliver services that meet local needs.
- Defragment – more \$ in outcome-based agreements – shift to local decisions

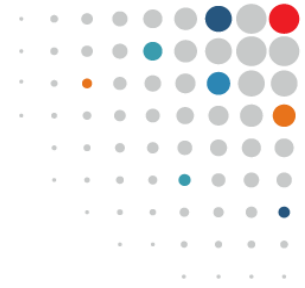
Pathway Four: Co-investment

- Enable partnerships with philanthropic organisations or other funders to co-invest in initiatives that amplify collective impact and drive innovation. Support larger scale pilots of initiatives have already been successfully tested.
- Alignment of govt and non-govt funding – engine for public service modernisation

Better data

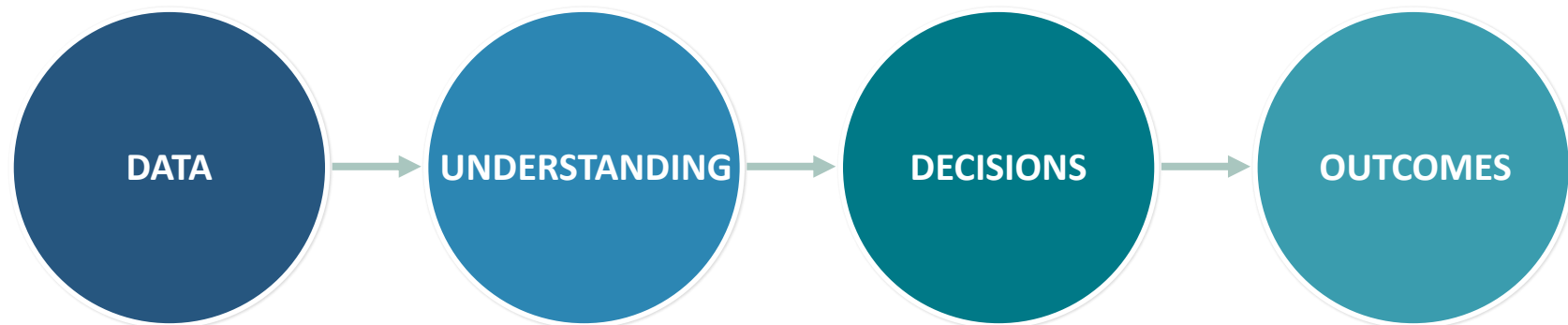


Why we use data



Inform decisions with information already collected

- Data helps us understand needs
- Data supports accountability and transparency
- Data enables targeted investment where it might have the greatest impact
- Data helps us paint a picture of what works

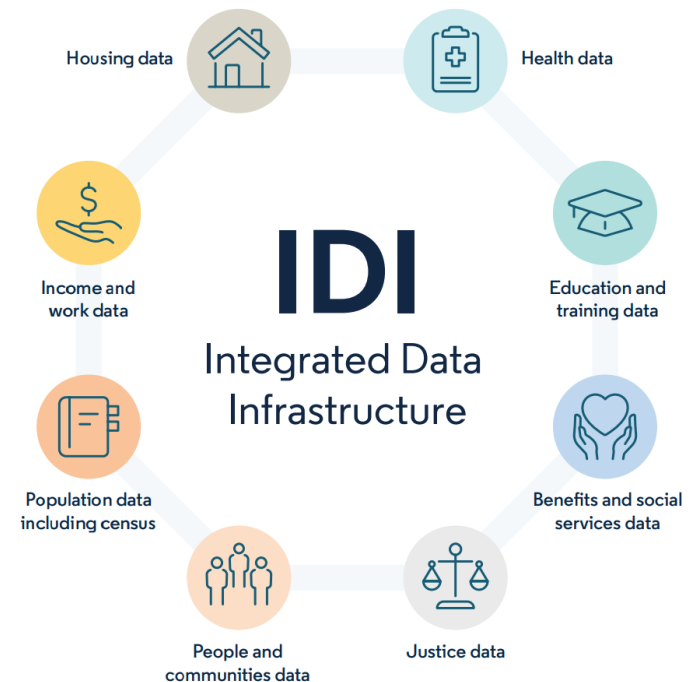


What data we use

SIA does not collect its own data – we use the IDI

About the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI)

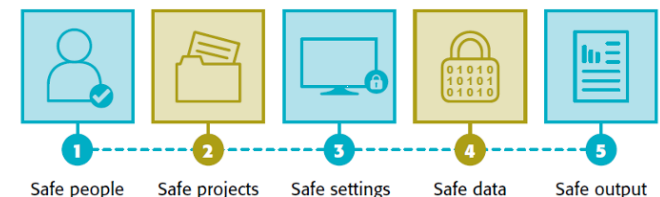
- The Stats NZ IDI is a large collection of information (database). It holds de-identified data about people and households.
- The data is about life events, like education, income, benefits, migration, justice, and health.
- It comes from directly from individuals via Stats NZ surveys, and in-directly from public sector agencies and private organisations such as social service providers.
- The data is linked together, or integrated, to form the IDI.



How we protect data

Data privacy and governance

- The IDI does not contain names or personal details. Identifying information is removed or encrypted so people can not be (re)identified.
- You can't look up information about a specific person. The database is for research about groups of people not about individuals.
- Stats NZ uses the '**Five Safes**' and '**Ngā Tikanga Paihere**' frameworks to manage safe access to the IDI
- All data output is checked by Stats NZ to ensure it adheres to confidentiality rules, and then it is stored on SIA's secure platform.



Data sovereignty

Underlying principles

Rangatiratanga

- Control
- Jurisdiction
- Self-determination

Whakapapa

- Context
- Disaggregation
- Future use

Whanaungatanga

- Balancing rights
- Accountabilities

Kotahitanga

- Benefit
- Capacity
- Connect

Kaitiakitanga

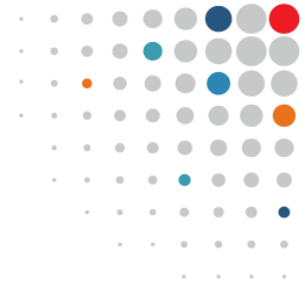
- Guardianship
- Ethics
- Restriction

Manaakitanga

- Respect
- Consent



How we share data



Empowering the community with information

Government collects a wealth of data, but it is seldom shared back. SIA has designed its data practice to share data back to communities, whānau, and service providers.

Some ways we do this:

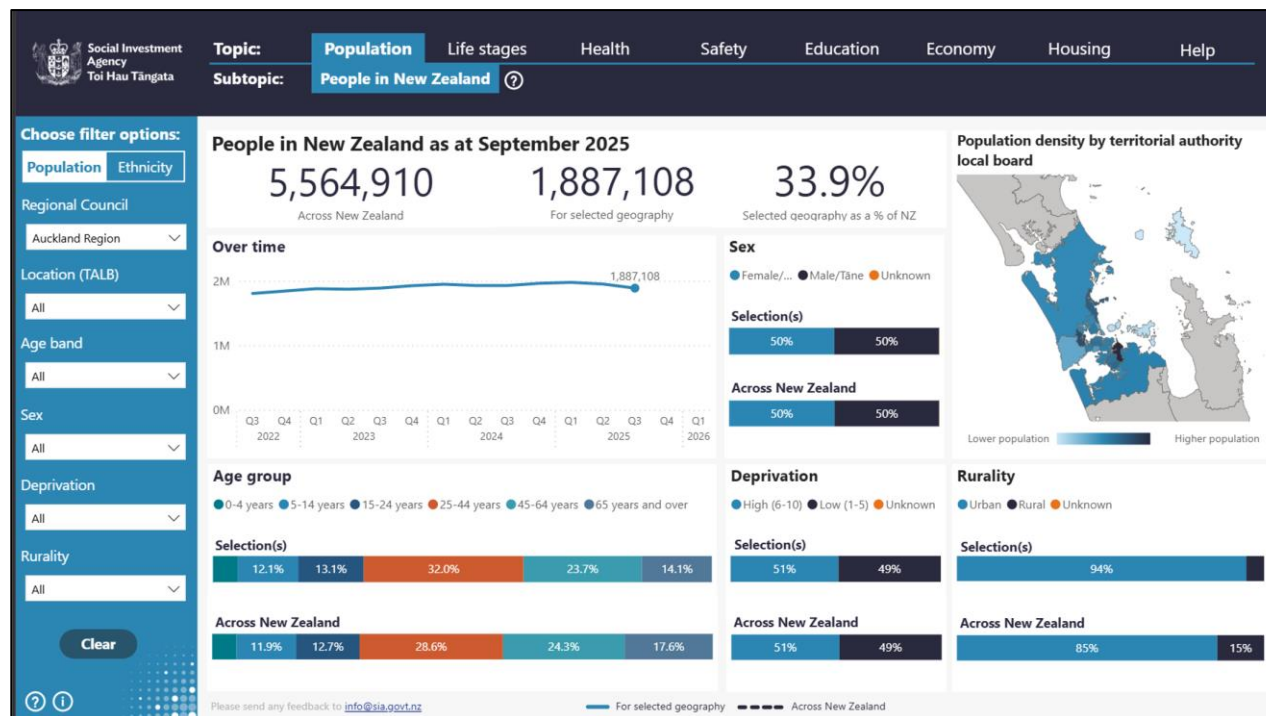
- **Regional data explorer**
An interactive explorer that lets users explore information about their communities, including demographics and experiences across health, education, employment, housing, and social support.
- **Community Insights Explorer**
An older explorer that provides a suburb level view of information on communities, including demographics, housing, employment, and income.
- **Partner Insights Dashboard**
A provider-specific dashboard prepared with our Social Investment partners to explore the groups of people they work with and intend to work with.
- **Bespoke analysis with iwi for iwi**
Data and dashboards designed with iwi partners which are specific to their rohe or iwi.

Regional Data Explorer

Explore demographics by region along with experiences across health, education, employment, housing, and social support

<https://www.sia.govt.nz/what-we-do/regional-data-explorer>

Image: Front page of the explorer

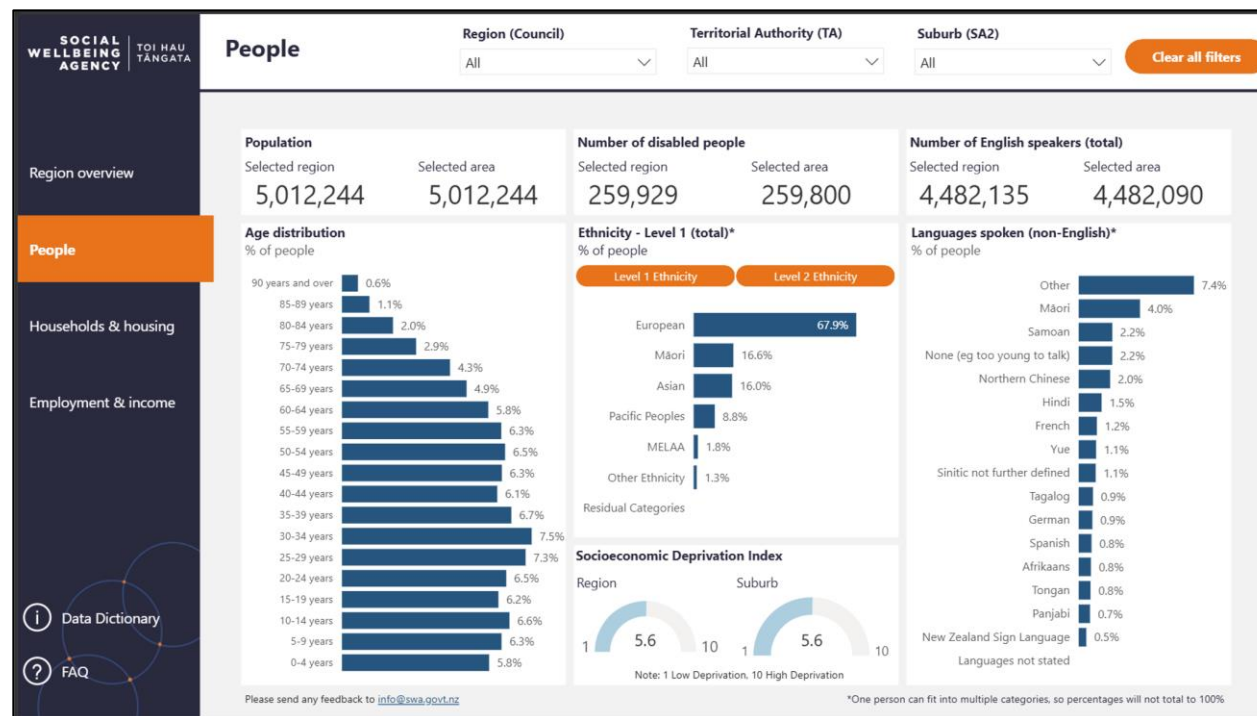


Community Insights Explorer

A suburb level view of information on communities, including demographics, housing, employment, and income

<https://www.sia.govt.nz/what-we-do/community-insights-explorer>

Image: Front page of the explorer

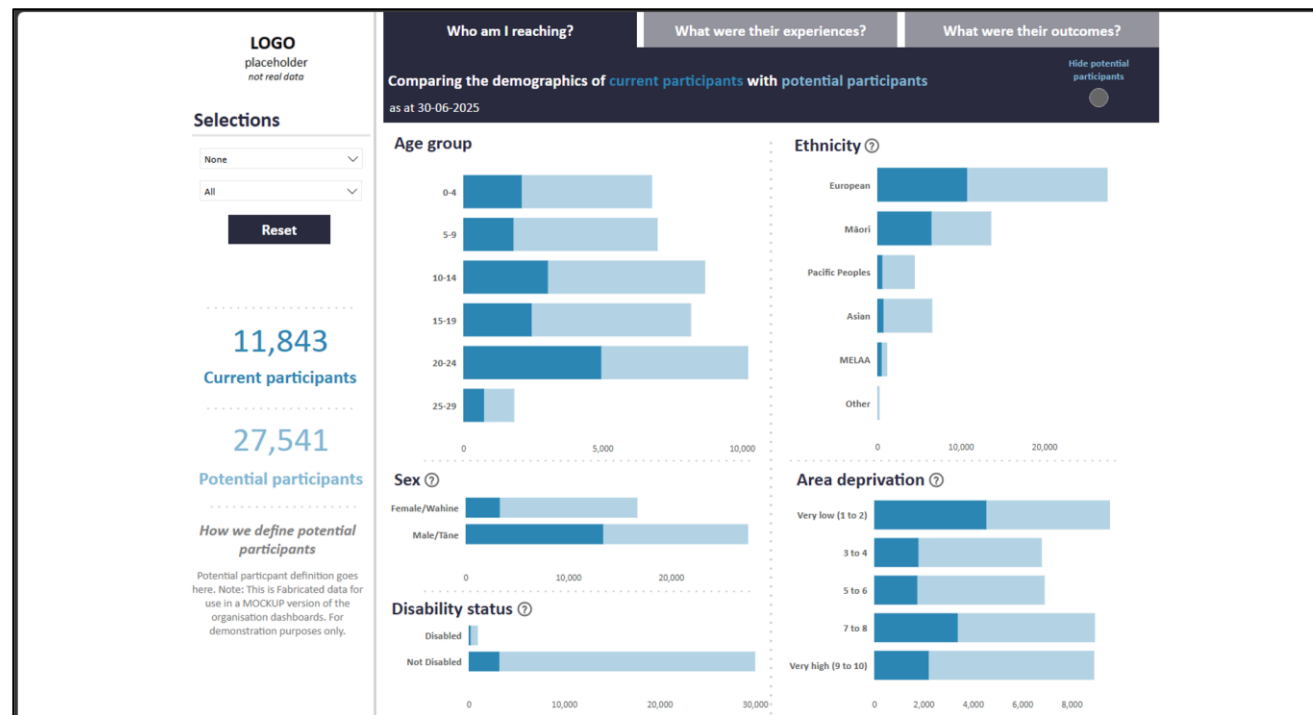


Partner Insights Dashboard

Organisation specific dashboards allowing our SIF partners to explore the groups of people they work with and intend to work with

Shared with Fund Partners directly via a secure login

Image: Example dashboard with fictional demonstration data



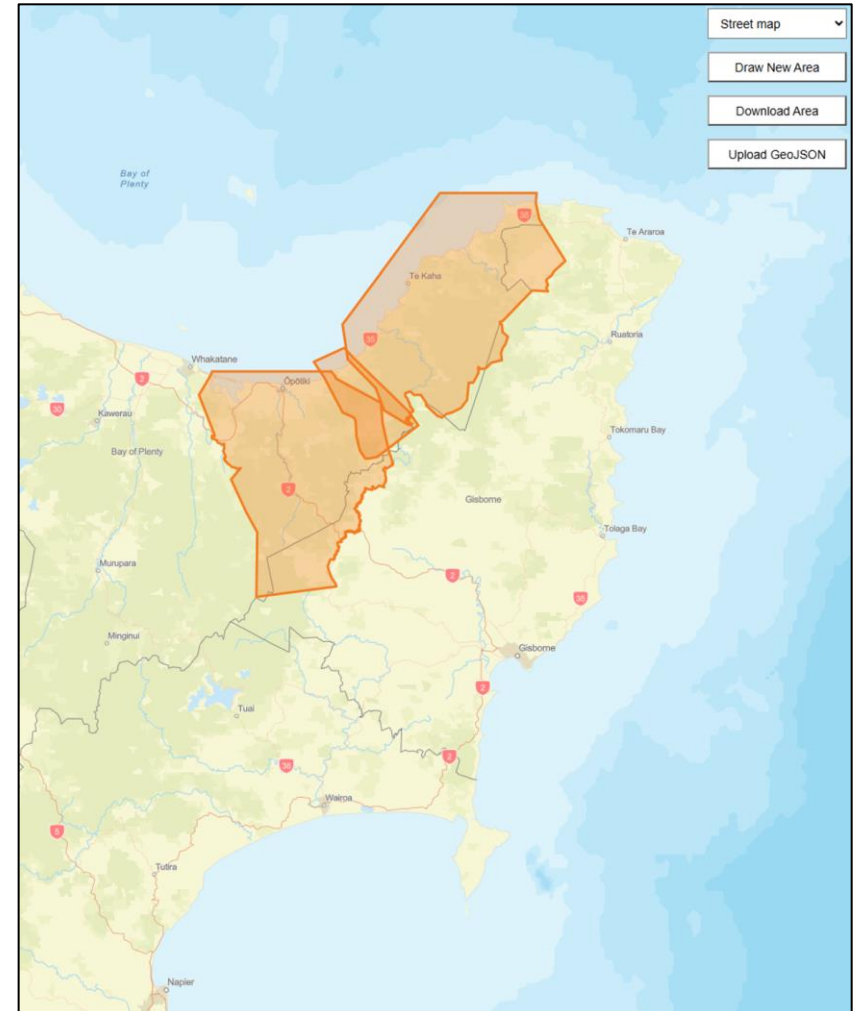
Bespoke analysis with iwi for iwi

Summaries focused to iwi requirements

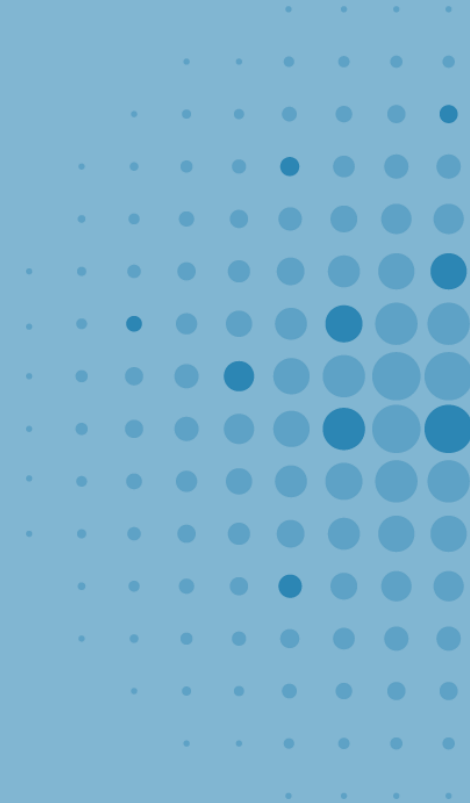
- By affiliation
- By rohe
- By cohort-specific characteristics

Or a combination of the above

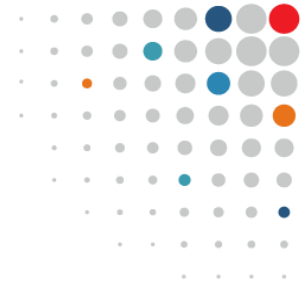
Image: Drafting of custom rohe boundaries to demonstrate flexibility for bespoke region(s).



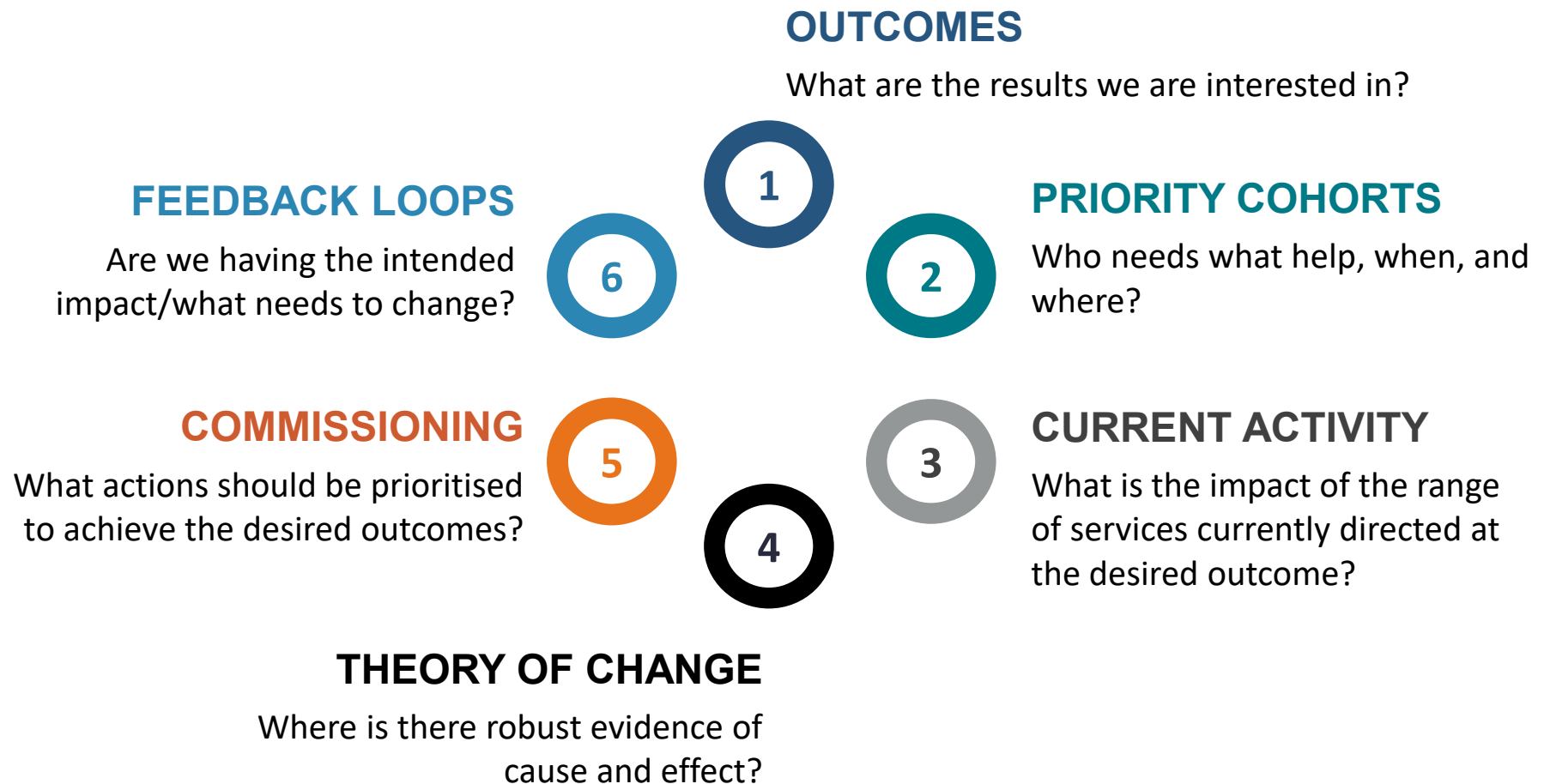
Better decisions



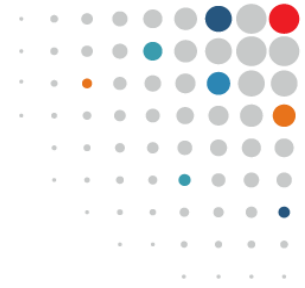
Decision areas for Social Investment



How the questions are phrased may change, but the underlying decision remains

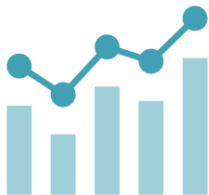


Better decisions require better evidence



Evidence is strongest when it is combined

- Data provides a kind of evidence and for some audiences, relevant context for decision making.
- Data can provide insights which help focus questions, test assumptions, and allow communities to form their own narratives.
- Data from the IDI cannot tell the whole story, it is only complementary to community level knowledge, lived-experience and whānau voice.



Data helps show the breadth of experiences



Where are people based?

- How is the priority population distributed geographically?

Where do we see experiences of adversity?

- Where are outcomes less positive, or where do we see experiences that may create additional challenges for children, young people and whānau?

What are their experiences across the system?

- What do we see across education, health, social services, justice and other parts of the system?

Where do we see strengths?

- Where are people doing well despite experiences of adversity?



Responding to data needs

SIA is expanding the ways we use data as we work with communities and partners

What might different life trajectories look like?

What might life trajectories look like without support or intervention?

When might support matter most?

Are there particular ages, transitions or circumstances where timely support could make a meaningful difference?

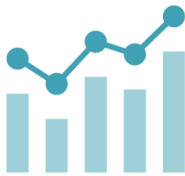
What outcomes actually matter?

Rather than only measuring the outcomes that are easiest to count, what would meaningful progress look like for children, young people and whānau?



How data & evidence can inform decisions

An example: Local rangatahi are leaving school early without qualifications...



Data

- Who is most affected?
- Where do they live?
- What do trajectories look like?
- What government contact are they having?



Frontline knowledge

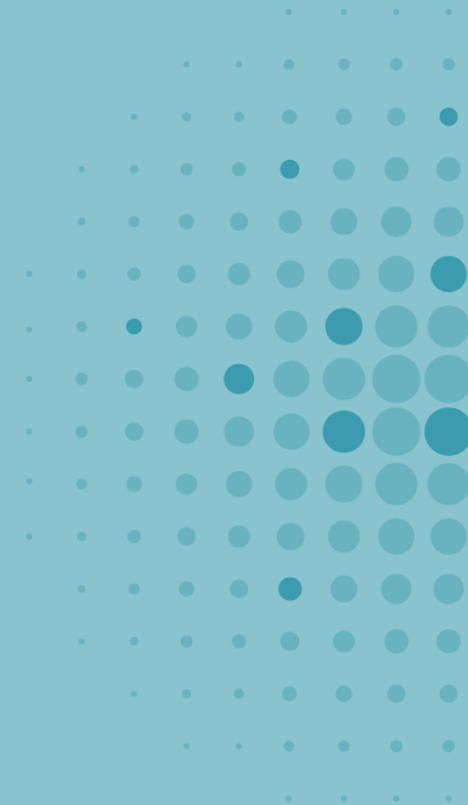
- What support exists?
- When might support matter most?
- What hasn't worked in the past?
- What outcomes matter for our community?



Lived experience and voice

- What does my whānau need?
- What strengths already exist?
- What outcomes matter to my whānau?

Better outcomes



Improving outcomes



More prevention, less response

Act before challenges become more significant.



More connected support

Reduce the need for people and whānau to navigate disconnected parts of the system.



More equitable outcomes

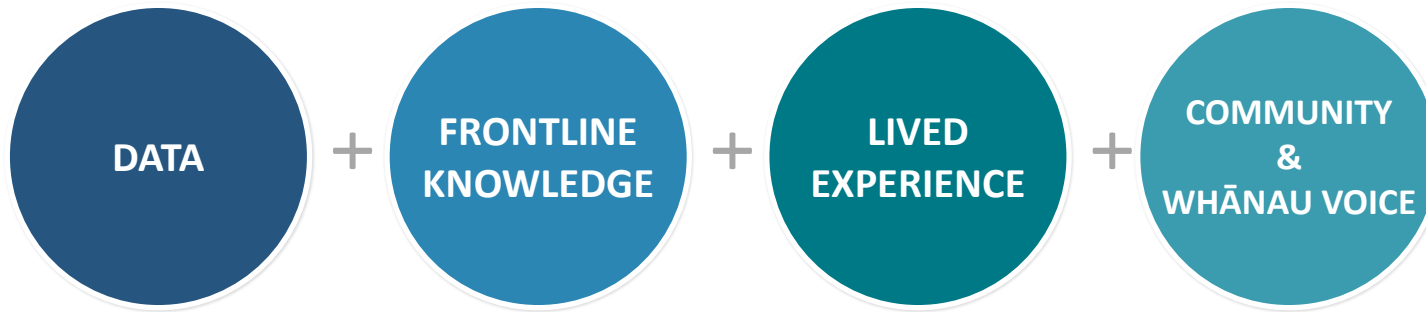
Understand where existing approaches are not working equally well and adapt them.



Continuous learning

See what is changing, learn from what works and adjust our approach over time.

Learning and adapting



Government evidence can tell us:

- How many of the priority cohort we are reaching
- What's going on in the lives of the priority cohort we aren't yet reaching
- The kinds of experiences people have had
- What government outcomes are being achieved (education, income, justice, housing...)

Community evidence can tell us:

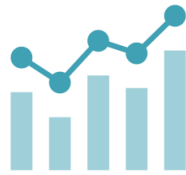
- What is working well on the ground
- What's not working well
- How the support is translating immediately into people's lives
- What other changes are occurring (behaviours, skills, attitudes, feelings, aspirations...)
- What barriers are getting in the way?

Thought exercise

Consider a cohort, outcome, or situation that is a priority for you:



What change are we trying to make, and for whom?



What data could help make decisions?



Whose experience and expertise must sit beside the data?



What would we observe, and when would we adapt?



What outcomes are important, and how might data help measure them?

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