

# **Productivity Commission interim report**

## **Submission from Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective**

### **Introduction**

This submission is on behalf of Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective, in response to the New Zealand Productivity Commission's recently released 'A fair chance for all: Breaking the cycle of persistent disadvantage' interim report.

Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective is made up of our founding partners The Salvation Army, Christchurch City Mission, The Wellington City Mission, VisionWest, Auckland City Mission and the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services and networks across community food organisations and other who are committed to eliminating food related poverty and realising a food secure Aotearoa New Zealand.

Our approach to creating a food secure Aotearoa New Zealand by bringing together community food organisations, including foodbanks, producers, retailers, philanthropy, local and central government and others to build Te Tiriti grounded, long term sustainable solutions to enable a Food Secure Aotearoa. This means supporting a network of Foodbanks and community food organisations across Aotearoa, while undertaking the slower, deeper work of addressing the root and systemic causes of poverty-related hunger.

### **Our Submission**

Kore Hiakai applaud the endeavours of the productivity commission to spotlight the areas of our public management systems that hold persistent disadvantage in place. We affirm the importance of explicitly naming the challenging issues of the ongoing impacts of colonisation, institutional and systemic racism. The more we name and talk about the reality of these, the more people appreciate the need to change and the greater likelihood of increasing the appetite of government and population to address them.

We applaud the vision of social inclusion that is predicated on Maori and Pacific peoples' perspectives on wellbeing. The vision expressed in He Ara Waiora is one that will benefit all

in Aotearoa New Zealand. A framework that centres on the mana of individuals and communities sits at the heart of who we uniquely are as Aotearoa New Zealand and is to be embraced. A mana centred framework is the foundation of the work of Kore Hiakai and is articulated in our [mana to mana practice framework](#). Embedding this foundation across government helps guide and shape all policy. The recent work of the Mana Kai Initiative, contributed to by several government agencies also puts Mana at the centre. Mana o te Taiao, Mana o te Tangata, Mana o Kai <https://www.theaotearoacircle.nz/mana-kai-initiative>. We thank and applaud the work of the Productivity Commission in continuing to put this unique value at the centre of our way of being as a citizenship.

The Commission note that eliminating persistent disadvantage would create substantial social and economic benefits and improve the wellbeing of all. Along with improving the regular measurement of persistent disadvantage, we would love to see work done across government departments to quantify the benefits of social investment to enhance social inclusion. As noted, there stands to be substantial cost savings in terms of healthcare if poverty-related health conditions could be reduced. The research of Kore Hiakai into the impact of government debt on those experiencing ongoing need and therefore seeking regular food assistance highlights the impact of such government debt in terms of healthcare costs, and other social exclusion costs. We have included our research [Overpayment of government debt and need for ongoing food assistance Oct 2022](#), [Evidence of ongoing need for food assistance April 2022](#) and [Ka Mākona - basic incomes and cost of living Oct 2022](#).

We appreciate and affirm the call of the commission to encourage cross-sector efforts to standardise and embed wellbeing approaches, and to address the barriers of power imbalances, discrimination and the ongoing impact of colonisation, siloed and fragmented government as outlined in Chapter 5 of the report. In undertaking our recent debt research, we found the work of the Social Wellbeing Agency on debt to government to be informative in spotlighting the systemic racism and gender discrimination in our government systems that reinforce this power imbalance and discrimination. The current different legislative status within departments sees debt to government departments managed differently, manifesting in systemic inequity that reinforces persistent disadvantage. When IRD will readily forgive the IR debt of a pakeha male high earner, but MSD penalise the holder of

MSD debt through benefit deduction, typically impacting a Maori or Pacific female parenting alone, we have a broken system reinforcing persistent disadvantage on race and gender lines.

We would encourage the commission to identify this and other systemic inequities as areas for urgent action. The development of cross-government monitoring and evaluation to identify and remediate these examples of systemic racial and gender inequity is vital.

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute through a submission to the interim report, "A Fair Change for all."

*Nga mihi maioha,*



*Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective*  
*[www.zerohunger.org.nz](http://www.zerohunger.org.nz)*  
*November 2022*