



Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand

2023-24 Community
Wellbeing

North Island Weather
Events/Cyclone Gabrielle focus

Auckland overview

| SIL Research

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main aim of this research was to gain insight into the wellbeing of communities affected by the 2023 North Island Weather Events, including Cyclone Gabrielle. The research began with quantitative data collection to establish baseline wellbeing measurements. This was followed up with qualitative methods to explore the nuances and context behind the quantitative findings.

The survey was undertaken between 12 December 2023 and 29 February 2024. Multiple data collection channels were utilised to ensure representation, including: postal surveys (a total of 6,000 copies), computer-assisted telephone interviews, social media advertising, online panel and other online/web-based (available via Mental Health Foundation and Auckland Council channels). A total of n=1,524 surveys were used in the final analysis. Weighting (post-stratification) was applied to the collected survey data to reflect the actual proportions of sub-group populations (e.g. by age, gender and ethnicity) in the targeted regions (Hawke's Bay, Gisborne and Auckland), as determined by Statistics New Zealand's 2018 Census data.

This report presents survey results from an Auckland perspective, with n=644 Auckland-based respondents used in the analysis.

The main findings related to specific objectives of the research included the following:

Impacts of 2023 weather events

- The 2023 extreme weather events had a strong, diverse and widespread impact on local communities across multiple regions: half of Auckland respondents (51%) reported experiencing a direct negative impact on themselves or their families. In contrast, 21% of respondents in Auckland did not recall any impacts from the extreme weather events in 2023.
- Across the region, the most substantial impact was the physical damage to, or loss of, property and homes as a direct result of flooding.
- A large proportion of respondents experienced effects to themselves personally, particularly stress, mental health and emotional responses (30%); with some continuing to feel

anxiety about subsequent weather and rain long after the extreme events (20%).

- 56% of respondents not reporting any negative impacts as a result of extreme weather events in 2023 were still subject to secondary stressors (representing 27% of the total Auckland sample).

Psychosocial supports and resilience factors

- In the face of disruption and loss presented by Cyclone Gabrielle and other weather events, many positive factors came into effect to unite people, focus relief efforts, and provide a sense of resilience through difficult times – despite significant challenges posed by flooding,

communication issues, and perceived slow responses from authorities.

- Social connections remained high among respondents regardless of the impacts and provided valuable and effective support networks aiding communities in the aftermath of weather events. Psychosocial support networks were a crucial source of strength, practical assistance and coping. Specific support was most readily provided from knowing one's neighbours and/or having family or friends on hand to help each other.
- 6-in-10 respondents (60%) identified multiple things they now do differently as a result of the 2023 weather events; and particularly felt better prepared generally for future emergencies and weather events. Many had ensured their property is emergency-ready for future events (particularly for heavy rains).
- Behavioural changes were higher among those reporting primary negative impacts (71%); however, half (46%) of unaffected respondents, or those mentioning secondary impacts (50%), also reported some changes in preparedness.

Wellbeing measurement and benchmarks

- Several indicators proved effective as measures of community wellbeing and resilience, providing insights into regions affected by the 2023 weather events with the ability to distinguish between local communities based on their perceived level of impact. These indicators were related to and reinforced each other in expected ways, and together provide a valuable benchmarking and diagnostic toolkit to

identify areas of psychosocial strength, needs and opportunities.

- Overall, wellbeing is a multidimensional concept that reflects the balance and integration of various aspects of life. Wellbeing is influenced by numerous factors, including physical health, mental health, social connections, financial security, and other social and cultural factors.
- The survey identified moderately strong community wellbeing, with variations observed by region and key demographics.
- Life satisfaction (self-rated): 6-in-10 Auckland respondents (62%) reported satisfaction with their life as a whole. Also varied by age, income, and employment status.
- Wellbeing Index (WHO-5): The average index score was 53.2 out of 100. The wellbeing index was highly correlated with life satisfaction, the strongest predictors being self-reported personal health and mental distress. Younger adults (18-39), those with lower annual household income, beneficiaries, and parents exhibited a lower wellbeing index, on average.
- Mental Wellbeing (PHQ-4): There was a mild mental distress in the Auckland community (3.3 out of 12). Key factors associated with mental wellbeing were overall wellbeing index, sense of loneliness, cultural identity, personal health, and income adequacy. Mental health wellbeing varied by age (with higher distress among young respondents), income (lower income resulting in higher distress), and employment situation (with beneficiaries exhibiting highest distress).

- Personal health: 86% rated their personal health as fair or good, with half (50%) stating it was good. Respondents from rural locations, Māori, and beneficiaries were more likely to report their health was poor.
- Social Connections: Overall, social connections were strong in Auckland (76.0 out of 100).
- Sense of loneliness: 4-in-10 Auckland respondents (38%) felt lonely at least some of the time (in the past two weeks). Sense of loneliness was higher among younger respondents (18-39), and those in casual employment.
- Cultural identity: 63% of Auckland respondents agreed it is easy to be themselves in the area where they live. Younger respondents were less likely to find it easy to be themselves, and beneficiaries and Pacific Peoples, were more likely to find it hard to be themselves. 46% of respondents in Auckland reported personally experiencing, or seeing someone else experiencing, prejudice or intolerance. Respondents aged 18-39, Pacific Peoples, and beneficiaries were more likely to report perceived discrimination within their demographic groups.

Wellbeing literacy

- Wellbeing literacy (knowledge and personal expression of wellbeing) plays an important role in the way people see themselves and their own health, and how they respond to unexpected or stressful events such as the 2023 weather events.
- Measured over six self-rated statements, the Wellbeing Literacy score indicated that subjective knowledge about

wellbeing was high overall (average 76.6 out of 100) in Auckland.

- 'Wellbeing' is a broad term with a wide variety of meanings and definitions for respondents. While some see this in general terms (feeling good, happy or satisfied with life; a state of health or feeling healthy), wellbeing definitions most typically encompass a range of specific dimensions: especially physical (38%) and mental or emotional health (45%); and often spiritual, social, economic or financial health, connection to the environment or nature, and personal resilience; or a holistic concept balancing all dimensions.
- Talking to friends or family (61%) or conducting an online search (62%) were by far the most preferred methods to search for wellbeing information, with clear preferences for older and younger adults respectively.
- Most respondents (59%) experienced no barriers to finding information about wellbeing, with personal time or motivation, confusion/misinformation, financial/funding limitations or social stigma the most pertinent issues for small numbers of residents.
- Providing more community-based events or activities, increased communication of wellbeing-related information, improving access or reducing barriers to support and services, or provision of more affordable (or free) assistance (counselling, health-related courses, support groups, etc.) were considered viable options to improve wellbeing awareness, increase community spirit and facilitate connection to others generally.



METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH GOAL

In 2023, storms and severe weather events devastated large parts of the North Island. In January of that year, regions across the upper North Island of New Zealand experienced widespread catastrophic floods caused by heavy rainfall, with Auckland being the most significantly affected during the Auckland Anniversary holiday weekend.

Shortly afterward in February, Cyclone Gabrielle - a severe tropical cyclone - impacted various areas of the North Island.

As a leading charity promoting mental health and wellbeing, the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand (MHF) commissioned SIL Research to conduct research into the community-wide outcomes of these weather events.

The main aim of this research was to gain insight into the wellbeing of communities affected by the North Island Weather Events/Cyclone Gabrielle. Specifically:

- Highlight specific secondary stressors for each region/community and understand the impact of these, including rain and weather-related anxiety.
- Identify levels of 'wellbeing literacy' and the language that various communities use (or don't use) around this.
- Attempt to identify key psychosocial supports that can be built on (i.e. community strengths, assets, identities, culture).
- Establish a baseline of wellbeing measurement using a validated population wellbeing instrument.

Research findings were designed to inform development of future resources, messaging and campaigns; to inform recovery stakeholders including Te Whatu Ora and other government agencies and assist advocacy for affected communities; to support psychosocial recovery through listening and reflecting back to communities.

QUESTIONNAIRE AND PROJECT SPECIFICS

The research began with quantitative data collection (community survey) to establish baseline wellbeing measurements.

This was followed up with qualitative methods (focus groups, in-depth interviews, community meetings) to explore the nuances and context behind quantitative findings.

In November-December 2023, SIL Research together with MHF developed a Community Wellbeing questionnaire. The initial draft was based on international research conducted to assess flood impacts and community flood resilience and wellbeing, as well as SIL Research's previous post-cyclone community surveys.

The questionnaire was tested prior to full scale data collection to ensure the survey was fit for purpose.

Given the sensitivity of the topic, all surveys included additional information about the support available to the affected communities, such as free helplines, wellbeing tips, resources and tools, and post-cyclone regional assistance.

SIL used a multi-layered random sampling technique to ensure a representative spread of respondents by targeted areas, with a combination of simple random sampling, stratification, and quota sampling.

The targeted population was people aged 18 years and over from communities affected by the North Island Weather Events/Cyclone Gabrielle (particularly Hawke’s Bay, Gisborne, and Auckland).

To introduce a statistically robust sampling methodology, SIL Research set a minimum sample size of n=1,100, based on the Statistics New Zealand 2018 Census data (with minimum n=450 in Hawke’s Bay, n=150 in Gisborne, and n=500 in Auckland).

In addition, n=160 response targets across other affected areas (Northland, Wairarapa, Tararua n=40, and Coromandel) were used.

DATA COLLECTION

Survey data collection:

The survey was undertaken between 12 December 2023 and 29 February 2024.

Multiple data collection channels were utilised to ensure people were well-represented. The mixed-channels approach included:

(1) Postal survey. A total of n=4,000 freepost return survey forms were delivered to randomly selected households within Hawke’s Bay and Gisborne territorial units. In addition, n=2,000 survey forms were delivered to the Auckland Council for distribution.

(2) Telephone survey. Respondents were randomly selected from the publicly available telephone directories within each territorial units;

(3) Social media (available via SIL Research social media platforms, such as Facebook, TikTok). The invitation advertisement was randomly promoted to residents aged 18+ within territorial units;

(4) Online/web based (available via Mental Health Foundation and Auckland Council channels). Surveys were advertised to increase survey awareness.

(5) Online panel. The survey invitations were sent to a randomly selected sample of online panel respondents in Hawke’s Bay, Gisborne and Auckland.

The survey included a prize draw to win one of three \$200 Prezzy Cards.

A total of n=1,524 surveys were used in the final analysis.

Table 1 Number of responses by area

Area	n=	%
Auckland	644	42%
Hawke’s Bay	539	35%
Central HB	57	11%
Hastings	228	42%
Napier	210	39%
Wairoa	44	8%
Gisborne	152	10%
Northland	57	4%
Other areas*	132	9%

**Including Wairarapa, Tararua and Coromandel districts.*

SIL Research ensured quality control during the fieldwork period.

Further checks included, but were not limited to, removal of incomplete responses, duplicate responses (e.g. prize draw entries, IP-addresses) and responses coming from outside of the required areas. The final

dataset was checked for speeding, copy-paste answers, gibberish, straight-lining, etc.

For online responses, SIL conducted a quality control check using follow-up calls across a random selection of respondents to verify the key responses.

Focus groups, in-depth interviews and community meetings:

In addition to the main survey, focus groups, targeted interviews, community meetings, and hui were designed and conducted to obtain more in-depth, qualitative feedback, supporting and providing additional details to the overall quantitative findings. Fieldwork for focus groups, in-depth interviews and community meetings concluded end-March 2024.

The in-depth sample included n=54 participants.

Focus groups comprised participants recruited from the main survey across Hawke's Bay, Gisborne, and Auckland. In total, 6 focus groups were conducted online on different days and times. Each focus group participant received a \$50 Prezzy Card for their time.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders. Interviews were carried out online and face-to-face with representatives from the Napier City Council, Hastings District Council, Central Hawke's Bay District Council, Wairoa District Council, Gisborne District Council, Auckland Council, and Te Whatu Ora Te Matau a Māui, Hawke's Bay actively engaged in community response initiatives.

Other community meetings/interviews utilised purposive sampling to target specific demographic groups within Hawke's Bay, Gisborne, and Auckland (through marae, Te Whatu Ora boards, community groups, churches, and online).

DATA ANALYSIS

Weighting (post-stratification) was applied to the collected survey data to reflect the actual proportions of sub-group populations (e.g. by age, gender and ethnicity) in the regions (mainly Hawke's Bay, Gisborne and Auckland), as determined by Statistics New Zealand's 2018 Census data. SIL used this technique to minimise discrepancies between population parameters and the collected sample distribution.

The main demographic groups analysed in this report were: region, location (rural vs. urban), age, gender, ethnicity, living situation and annual income. During the analysis stage of this report, two sets of statistical testing were employed while reviewing data findings. Chi-square tests were used when comparing group results in tables, and ANOVA tests were used when comparing statement averages across groups. The threshold for reporting any statistically significant differences was a p-value of 0.05. Where differences were outside this threshold (less than 95%), no comments were made; where differences were within this threshold, comments have been made within the context of their practical relevance to MHF.

Open-ended (free-text) responses were also collected and analysed. SIL Research used a content analysis approach to determine certain themes, concepts or issues within this feedback. This represents a 'bottom up' data driven approach where identified themes are derived purely from the collective respondent feedback, rather than fitting responses into pre-determined categories. Results for reported themes may not add to 100% as several themes could be mentioned by a given respondent.

Examples of open-ended comments are provided verbatim, without editing.

The focus groups, interviews and community meetings were recorded; these recordings, and additional qualitative feedback, were then summarised (reader friendly, non-verbatim), processed (content/theme analysis) and included as part of the report as summary transcripts. These transcripts provide a summarised version of the focus group discussions, highlighting the main points, themes, and conclusions.

NOTES ON REPORTING

Due to rounding, figures with percentages may not add to 100%. Reported percentages were calculated on actual results not rounded values.

Overall '*satisfaction*'/'*agreement*' percentages presented in this report are aggregated responses of 4-5 on a 1-5 rating scale.

The regression and correlation analysis were used for key driver (relative importance) analysis and data relationship assessment. These statistical methods investigate the relationships between potential influential factors (e.g. predictors) and residents' overall perceptions (e.g. subjective wellbeing). Identified key drivers are factors that have a greater improvement potential.

Where research-validated wellbeing scales were employed in the study, these are elucidated in the main text of the report.

Overall results are reported with margins of error at a 95% confidence level.

Table 2 Margins of error

Responses n=	Reported percentages	
	50%	80% or 20%
Auckland	+/-3.9%	+/-3.1%
Hawke's Bay:	+/-4.2%	+/-3.4%
Central HB	+/-13.0%	+/-10.4%
Hastings	+/-6.5%	+/-5.2%
Napier	+/-6.8%	+/-5.4%
Wairoa	+/-13.0%	+/-10.4%
Gisborne	+/-7.9%	+/-6.3%
Northland	+/-13.0%	+/-10.4%
Other areas:	+/-8.5%	+/-6.8%
Tararua	+/-15.9%	+/-12.7%
Coromandel	+/-13.3%	+/-10.7%
Wairarapa	+/-15.5%	+/-12.4%
Total results	+/-2.5%	+/-2.0%

The maximum likely error margin occurs when a reported percentage is close to 50%. Where results are reported by some smaller sub-groups of residents, estimates of results may not be statistically reliable due to the high margins of error (small sample sizes).

This report presents survey results from an Auckland perspective, with n=644 respondents used in the analysis.

Auckland results are compared to the full sample (n=1,524, including Hawke’s Bay, Gisborne, Northland, Auckland, Wairarapa, Tararua, and Coromandel). For descriptive purposes, the number of responses received by Auckland local board area are shown in the following table (see Table 3) - indicating widespread participation across the Auckland region despite deliberate oversampling in the most affected areas. Due to the low number of responses in many of these local board areas (outside of this research scope), research results have been provided by type of weather-related impact. Broader region-wide comparisons have been made, where relevant, by urban versus rural respondents across the total Auckland sample.

Analysis focused more particularly on the level of weather-related impact reported by Auckland respondents: primary impacts, secondary impacts only, and no impact (see Table 2). These categories are described and analysed in more detail in the following section.

RESPONSES AS USED IN THE ANALYSIS*

Table 2 Auckland responses by level of impact

	Frequency	Percent
Primary impact	331	51%
Secondary impacts only	175	27%
No impact	138	21%
Total	644	100%

Table 3 Auckland responses by Local Board area

	Frequency	Percent
Albert-Eden	17	3%
Devonport-Takapuna	44	7%
Franklin	8	1%
Henderson-Massey	89	14%
Hibiscus and Bays	93	14%
Howick	12	2%
Kaipātiki	68	11%
Māngere-Ōtāhuhu	4	1%
Manurewa	4	1%
Maungakiekie-Tāmaki	6	1%
Ōrākei	8	1%
Ōtara-Papatoetoe	6	1%
Papakura	16	2%
Puketāpapa	13	2%
Rodney	38	6%
Upper Harbour	51	8%
Waiheke	3	0.5%
Waitākere Ranges	68	11%
Waitematā	16	2%
Whau	46	7%
Other (not fully specified)	35	5%
Total	644	100%

Table 4 Auckland responses by age

	Frequency	Percent
18-39	287	44%
40-64	256	40%
65+	101	16%
Total	644	100%

Table 5 Auckland responses by gender

	Frequency	Percent
Female	327	51%
Male	312	48%
Another gender	5	1%
Total	644	100%

Table 6 Auckland responses by ethnicity

	Frequency	Percent
NZ European	383	59%
European	69	11%
Māori	74	11%
Pacific Peoples	43	7%
Asian	152	24%
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	17	3%
Other	8	1%
Total	644	100%

Table 7 Auckland responses by location type

	Frequency	Percent
Urban	584	91%
Rural	60	9%
Total	644	100%

Table 8 Auckland responses by aggregated household income

	Frequency	Percent
Below \$70,000	188	29%
Above \$70,000	370	58%
Refused, other or no answer	86	13%
Total	644	100%

Table 9 Auckland responses by employment status

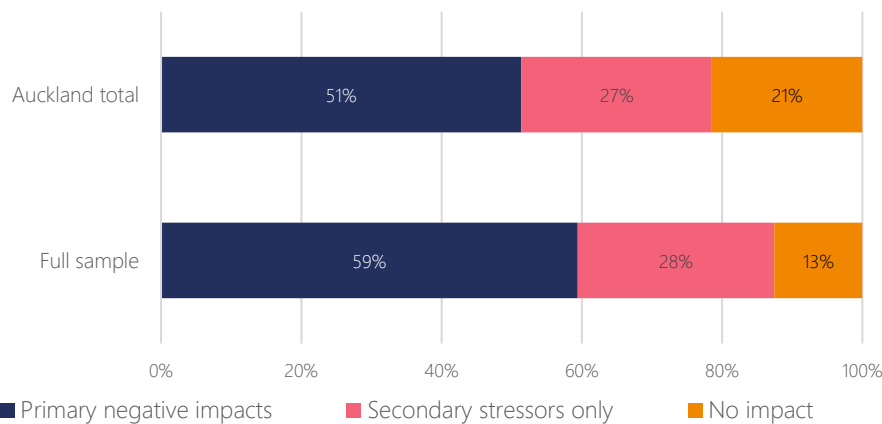
	Frequency	Percent
Employed / owner	457	71%
Casual	15	2%
Unemployed	39	6%
Parenting	18	3%
Retired	81	13%
Beneficiary	25	4%
Other	8	1%
Refused or no answer	1	<1%
Total	644	100%

Note: *final dataset was statistically weighted to increase accuracy of the reported results. The target was based on 2018 New Zealand Census information. Respondents can select more than one ethnic group; therefore, ethnicity totals add to more than 100%.



EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS — impacts overall

- 21% of respondents in Auckland were unable to recall any impacts from the extreme weather events in 2023, which was slightly higher compared to overall findings.
- Half (51%) of respondents reported experiencing some primary negative impacts; a further 27% cited prompted secondary worries and concerns.
- Primary negative impacts were largely represented by respondents from Waitākere Ranges, Kaipātiki, Henderson-Massey, and Hibiscus and Bays local board areas.
- Primary negative impacts were most reported by respondents aged 40-64, followed by younger respondents (18-39). Respondents aged 65+ were more likely to report no impact (34%) than younger adults.
- Respondents from rural locations were more likely to report primary negative impacts (82%). These impacts were also higher among beneficiaries (68%).



Aggregated impact:

Primary - respondents stating some primary negative impacts with the first question ("Overall, what impact, if any, have extreme weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle) had on you (or your family)?").

Secondary - respondents not stating primary negative impacts but named some secondary stressors when prompted (a multi-choice list of secondary stressors).

No impact - respondents stating no primary or secondary impacts.

		% Negative impacts
Age	18-39	50%
	40-64	55%
	65+	45%
Gender	Female	56%
	Male	47%
Location	Urban	48%
	Rural	82%
Income	Below \$70,000	47%
	Above \$70,000	54%
Employment	Employee / business owner	52%
	Casual	49%
	Unemployed	36%
	Parenting	52%
	Retired	46%
	Beneficiary	68%
Ethnicity	NZ European	54%
	Māori	56%
	Pacific Peoples	37%
	Asian	48%
	Other	44%

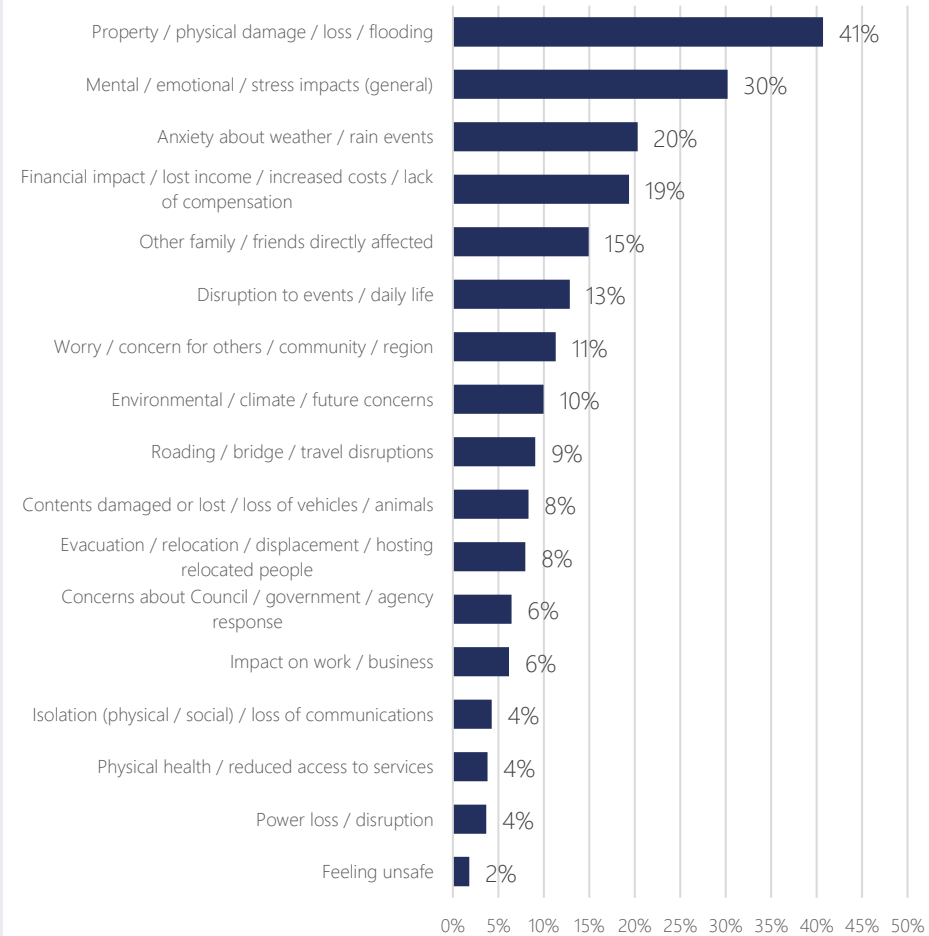
Note: survey methodology included deliberate oversampling in the most affected areas – resulting in potentially higher reported direct negative impacts in the sample than across Auckland generally.



EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS — primary impact types

- Half of Auckland respondents reported experiencing at least one primary negative impact from the extreme weather events, and 85% specified the type of impact; with many reporting multiple impacts.
- Most substantial was the physical damage to, or loss of, property and homes as a direct result of flooding (41%); this reported damage was higher compared to other areas in New Zealand.
- A large proportion of respondents experienced effects to themselves personally, particularly stress, mental health and emotional responses (30%); with some continuing to feel anxiety about subsequent weather and rain long after the extreme events (20%).
- Property and physical damage was reportedly higher in Puketāpapa, Waitematā, Howick, and Devonport-Takapuna.
- Power loss was of greater concern in Waiheke.
- The highest concern about Council and government response was highlighted by Albert-Eden respondents.
- Weather anxiety remained higher in Devonport-Takapuna, Ōtara-Papatoetoe, and Henderson-Massey.

Reported primary negative impacts overall - 51% (n=337)



All respondents were asked: "Overall, what impact, if any, have extreme weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle) had on you (or your family)?" Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent

Verbatim comments about negative impacts in Auckland

"Part of the house flooded during the Auckland floods. Roads closed couldn't go to see my new gran-daughter. Still roads are not fixed stop and go lights on two parts of the road on the way home. Dangerous to walk there. Now if there is heavy rain i get worried i clean the drain on my road myself as this is what caused the flooding."

"No utilities for more than 3 weeks Loss of income due to taking unexpected leave additional stressors to meet daily needs ie food/showering/parenting significant financial impacts from lost utilities and property damage which was not covered by insurance providers Damage to property, retaining walls and my home"

"New homeowners of about 2 yrs, and the anniversary and cyclone flooding have affected our property. Led to extreme stress and anxiety in the aftermath which persists currently and has affected work and relationships"

"Minor damage to property but mostly the psychological impact of unforeseeable events and uncertainty has caused me a lot of anxiety, particularly around leaving my children at school, daycare etc"

"I lost my home to flooding"

"Financial distress, our rental property was completely destroyed and tenants had to evacuate."

"Both daughters had roof damage to their homes. Grandchildren with Autism and ADHD hated the power cuts and not being able to drive out of their area. A son had water damage to his car. Water came into my flat and flooded the carpets etc 3 times. Having a respiratory disease the dampness impacted my health. Grandchildren has school shut because it's of flooding. So all of my 5 children and their families were impacted in some way"

"Flooding, daycare cancelled, local community flooded, clients cancelling or stressed"

"Financially unable to fix damage to property"

"It caused me to feel stressed whenever it rained. I had some minimal water enter my home."

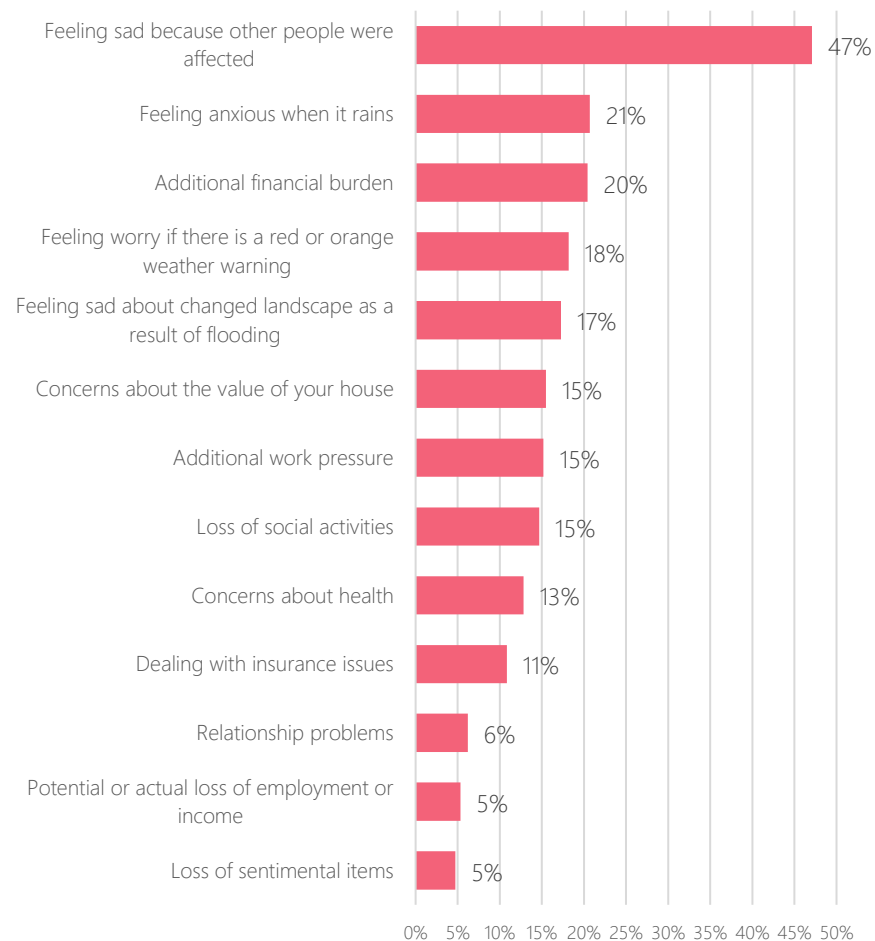
"Our drive was flooded and we managed to divert the water and clean up ourselves. A large slip occurred a few hundred yards away from our house. All this has been unsettling, indicates land and home maybe not stable. Worry that property might lose value."



EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS — secondary stressors

- 56% of respondents not reporting any primary negative impacts as a result of extreme weather events in 2023 were still subject to secondary stressors (27% of the total sample).
- Respondents were more likely to mention one or two stressors (37%), and less frequently five or more (3%).
- The most cited secondary stressor was empathetic distress, where people report feelings of sadness, discomfort, or emotional impact as a result of witnessing the challenges faced by others (47%).
- Reflecting regional differences in effects of weather events, fewer Auckland respondents reported feeling sad about changed landscapes (17%, vs. 32% overall findings).
- In addition, fewer Auckland respondents cited potential or actual loss of employment or income.
- Younger respondents (18-39) were more likely to report additional work pressure, additional financial burden, or feeling worry during weather warnings, compared to older respondents.
- Older respondents (65+) were more likely to report feeling sad about changed landscapes.
- Female respondents were generally twice more likely than male respondents to express empathetic distress or rain-related anxiety.
- Male respondents were more likely to report loss of social activities.

Reported secondary stressors - 27% (n=175)

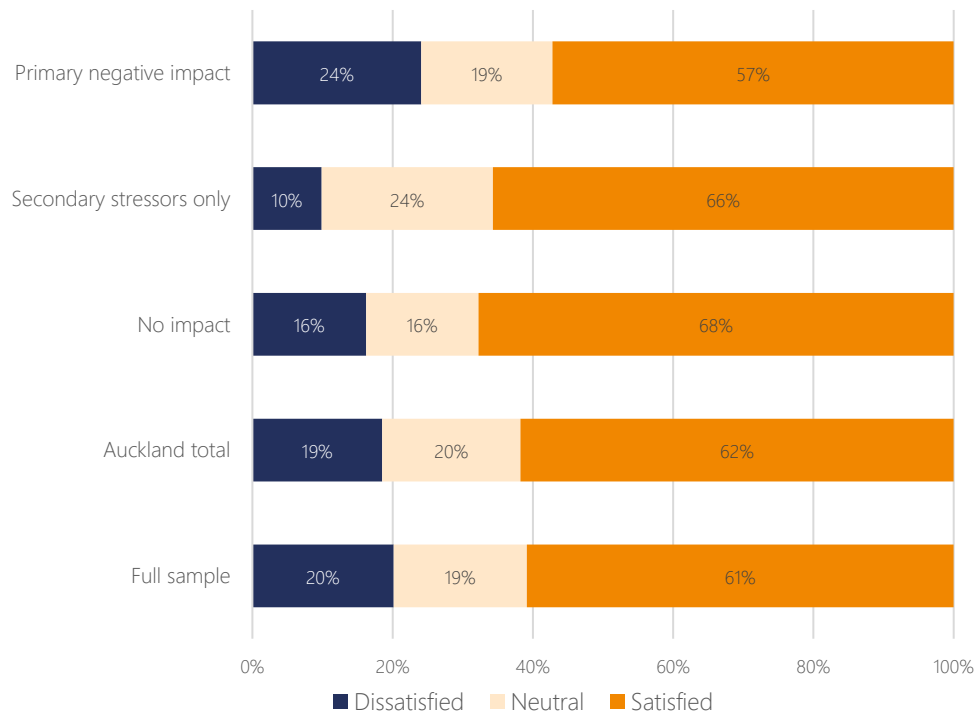


All respondents were asked: "After the extreme weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle), have you or someone in your household experienced any of the following?" Note: 'multichoice'.



WELLBEING — subjective wellbeing overall

- Overall, 6-in-10 respondents (62%) were satisfied with their life as a whole in Auckland (similar to other areas).
- Respondents experiencing primary negative impacts as a result of 2023 weather events were more likely to be dissatisfied with their life (24%).
- Life satisfaction also varied by age, average income, and current employment.
- Life satisfaction increased with age, with older respondents (65+) being the most satisfied.
- Respondents with an average household income below \$70,000, unemployed, beneficiaries, or those in casual employment, tended to be less satisfied with life.



		% Satisfied
Age	18-39	56%
	40-64	63%
	65+	75%
Gender	Female	63%
	Male	60%
Location	Urban	62%
	Rural	55%
Income	Below \$70,000	49%
	Above \$70,000	71%
Employment	Employee / business owner	65%
	Casual	41%
	Unemployed	38%
	Parenting	69%
	Retired	73%
	Beneficiary	18%
Ethnicity	NZ European	62%
	Māori	56%
	Pacific Peoples	62%
	Asian	60%
	Other	67%

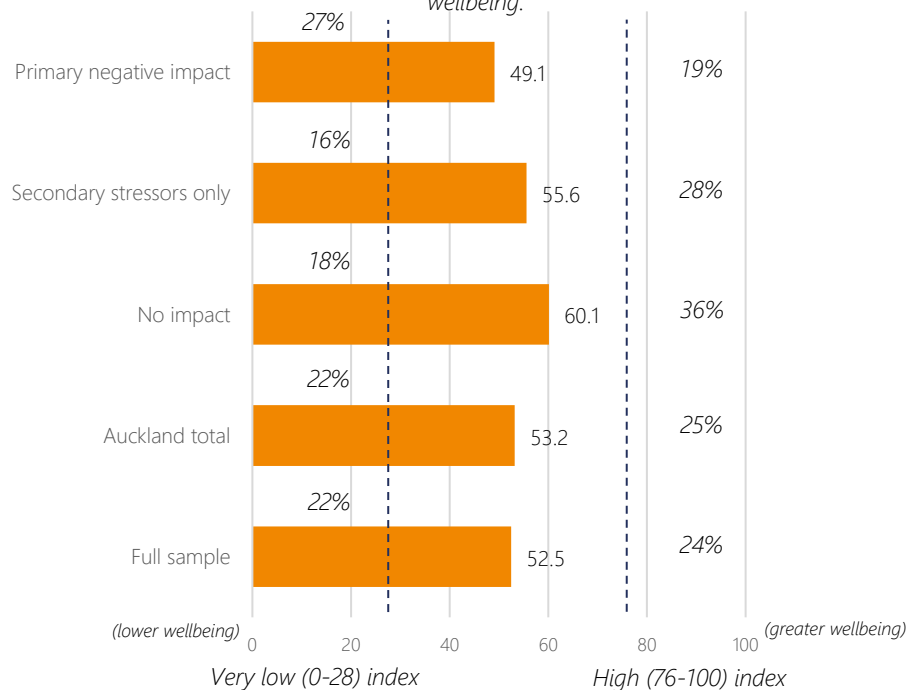
All respondents were asked: "Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life as a whole at the moment?"



WELLBEING — wellbeing index

- There was a positive correlation between the wellbeing index (WHO-5) and subjective wellbeing (life satisfaction) overall, with some variations by area.
- The 2023 extreme weather events had some impact on overall wellbeing, with those stating a primary negative impact recording lower average wellbeing score (49.1) than unaffected respondents (60.1), or those stating secondary stressors only (55.6).
- This was also impacted by personal health and mental wellbeing.
- Younger respondents (18-39), those with lower annual household income (below \$70,000), beneficiaries, and parents, were more likely to result in lower wellbeing scores.
- At the same time, reported wellbeing of those aged under 65 was slightly higher compared to the same age group in other areas.

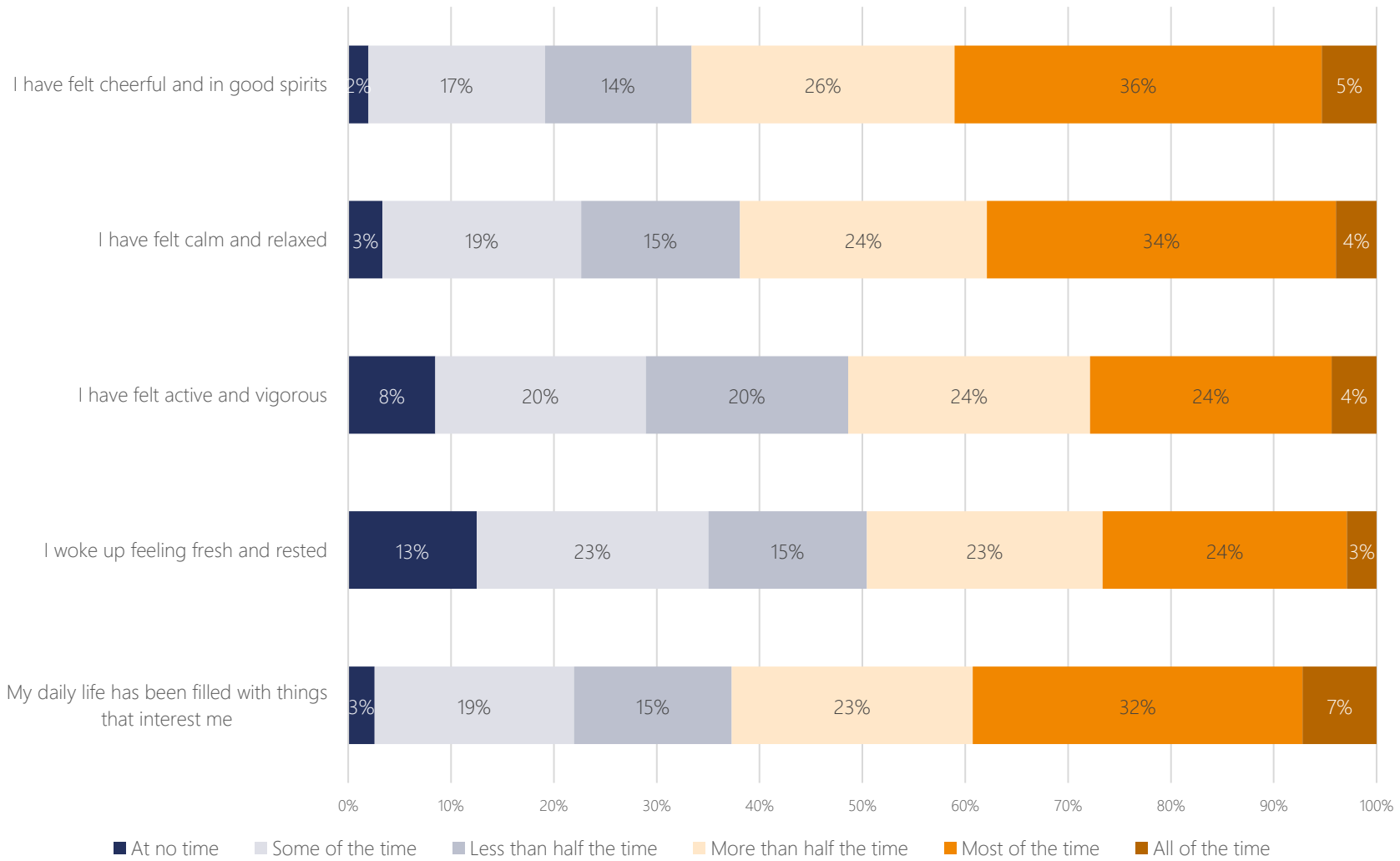
The World Health Organisation Wellbeing Index is a short (5 questions) self-administered measure of wellbeing.



		Index	Very low %	High %
Age	18-39	50.6	25%	23%
	40-64	54.2	19%	22%
	65+	58.2	20%	38%
Gender	Female	49.5	29%	20%
	Male	57.1	15%	30%
Location	Urban	53.6	21%	25%
	Rural	49.3	26%	22%
Income	Below \$70,000	49.0	27%	20%
	Above \$70,000	56.0	17%	27%
Employment	Employee / business owner	55.0	18%	26%
	Casual	43.8	51%	20%
	Unemployed	44.7	31%	12%
	Parenting	37.3	50%	4%
	Retired	58.9	17%	35%
Ethnicity	Beneficiary	33.6	46%	6%
	NZ European	51.8	23%	23%
	Māori	52.4	22%	25%
	Pacific Peoples	54.0	25%	33%
	Asian	56.1	16%	26%
Other	55.9	20%	30%	

All respondents were asked: "Please indicate for each of the five statements which is closest to how you have been feeling over the past two weeks". The WHO-5 Wellbeing Index was used to assess respondents' wellbeing overall. The 5-item World Health Organisation Wellbeing Index (WHO-5) is among the most widely used questionnaires assessing subjective psychological wellbeing, based on five simple non-invasive questions. The score is calculated by totalling the figures of the five answers and multiplying it by 4. The obtained score ranges from 0 (worst possible result) to 100 (best possible result).

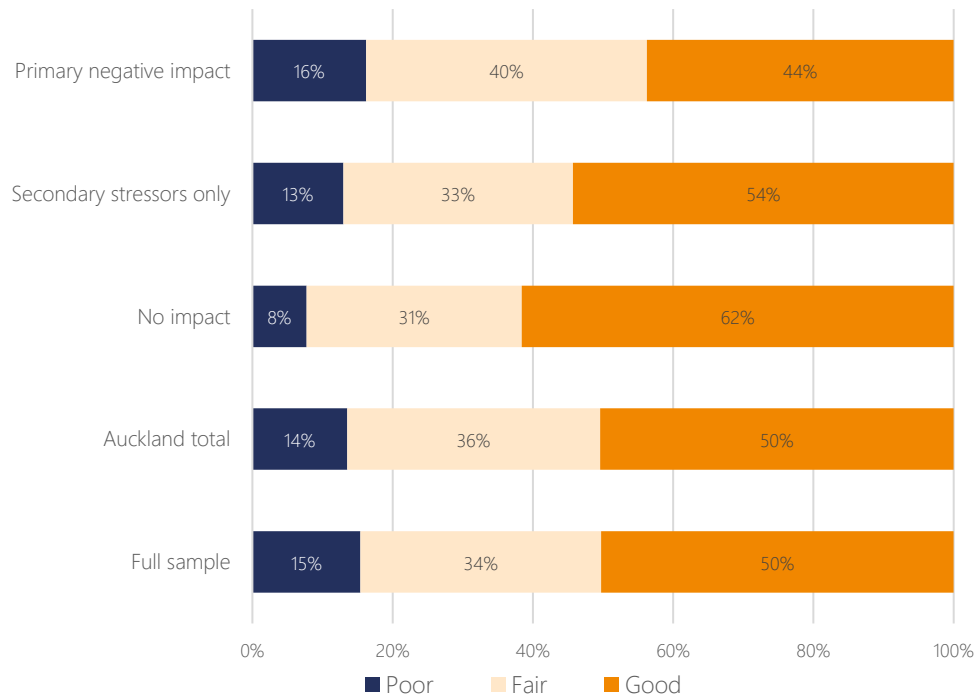
WHO-5 statements - overall





WELLBEING — personal health

- Overall, 86% of respondents rated their personal health as fair or good, with half (50%) stating it was good (similar to overall results).
- Personal health was found to have significant correlation with overall wellbeing and mental distress. Therefore, similar patterns were found between reported personal health and 2023 extreme weather impacts.
- Respondents from rural locations (27%), Māori (26%), and beneficiaries (60%, note this includes disability allowance, supported living, or ACC payments), were more likely to report their health was poor.



		% Good + Fair
Age	18-39	84%
	40-64	88%
	65+	91%
Gender	Female	83%
	Male	91%
Location	Urban	88%
	Rural	73%
Income	Below \$70,000	80%
	Above \$70,000	90%
Employment	Employee / business owner	88%
	Casual	80%
	Unemployed	79%
	Parenting	95%
	Retired	91%
	Beneficiary	40%
Ethnicity	NZ European	86%
	Māori	74%
	Pacific Peoples	78%
	Asian	89%
	Other	96%

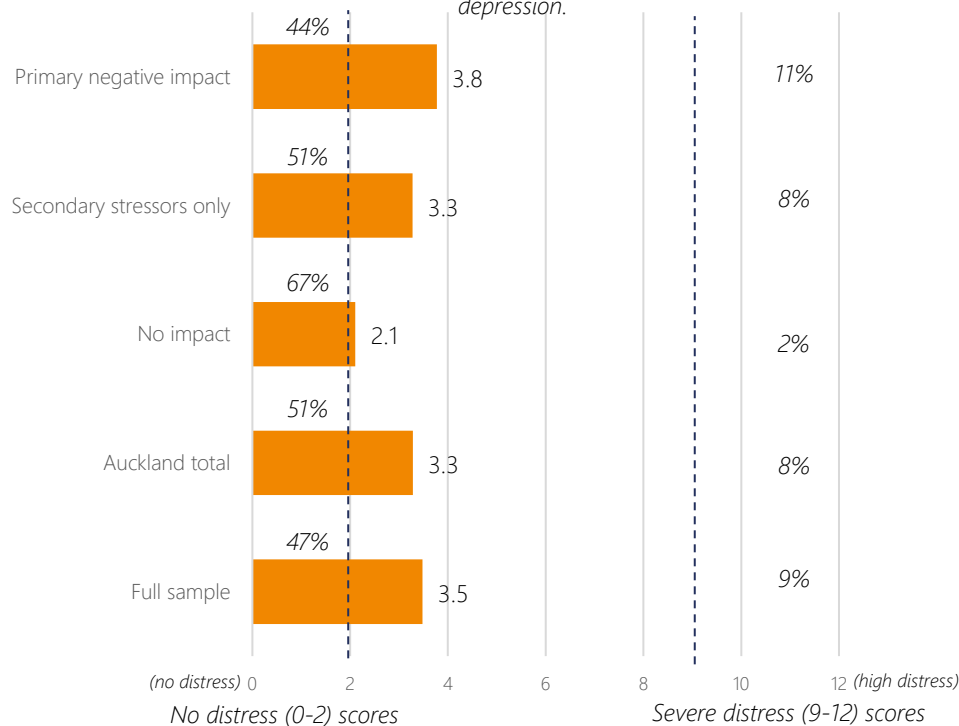
All respondents were asked: "How would you rate your own personal health at the moment?"



WELLBEING — mental distress

- Based on PHQ-4, there was a mild mental distress in the Auckland community (3.3), which was similar to overall findings.
- Mental distress was greatly impacted by overall wellbeing, personal health, and feelings of loneliness. Similar to overall wellbeing and health, mental distress exhibited expected differences based on 2023 weather impacts.
- Mental distress varied by age (with higher distress among young respondents), income (lower income resulting in higher distress), and employment situation (with beneficiaries exhibiting highest distress).
- Those aged 40-64 showed lower mental distress than the same age group in other areas.

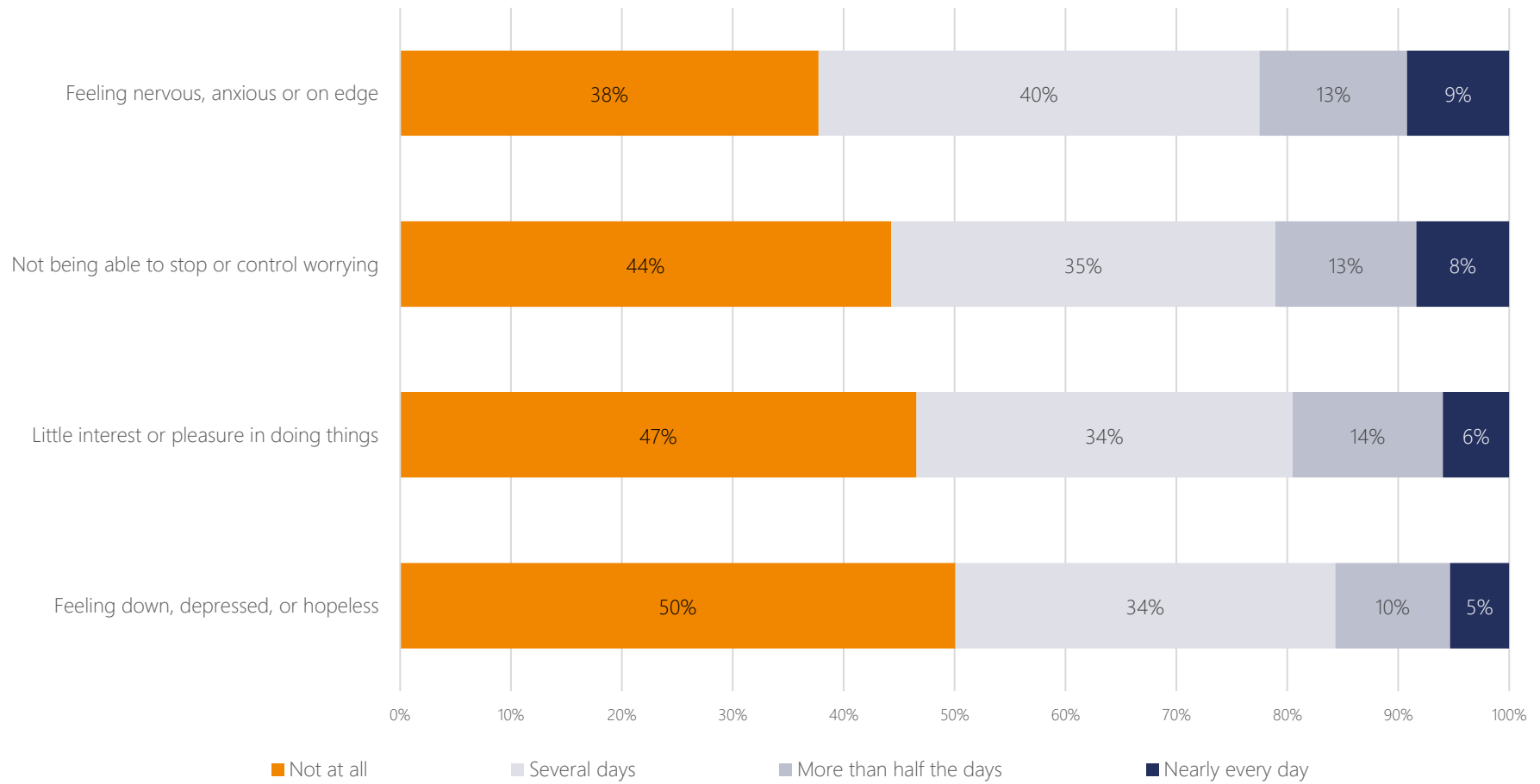
The Patient Health Questionnaire (4 questions) is a brief self-screening scale for anxiety and depression.



		Score	No distress %	Severe %
Age	18-39	4.1	40%	11%
	40-64	2.9	56%	6%
	65+	2.1	70%	3%
Gender	Female	3.7	46%	10%
	Male	2.8	56%	6%
Location	Urban	3.2	52%	8%
	Rural	4.1	40%	11%
Income	Below \$70,000	4.0	42%	14%
	Above \$70,000	2.9	56%	5%
Employment	Employee / business owner	3.1	53%	7%
	Casual	5.4	28%	10%
	Unemployed	4.8	26%	15%
	Parenting	3.8	41%	12%
	Retired	2.2	65%	3%
	Beneficiary	6.3	14%	27%
Ethnicity	NZ European	3.1	54%	9%
	Māori	3.9	45%	13%
	Pacific Peoples	3.9	39%	11%
	Asian	3.3	43%	5%
	Other	3.0	52%	0%

All respondents were asked: "Over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?". The PHQ-4 framework, an efficient four-questions tool for identifying individuals who may be suffering from anxiety and depression, was used to assess respondents' mental health wellbeing. The score is calculated by totalling the figures of the four answers. Scores are rated as normal (0-2), mild (3-5), moderate (6-8), and severe (9-12). Total score ≥ 3 for first 2 questions suggests anxiety. Total score ≥ 3 for last 2 questions suggests depression.

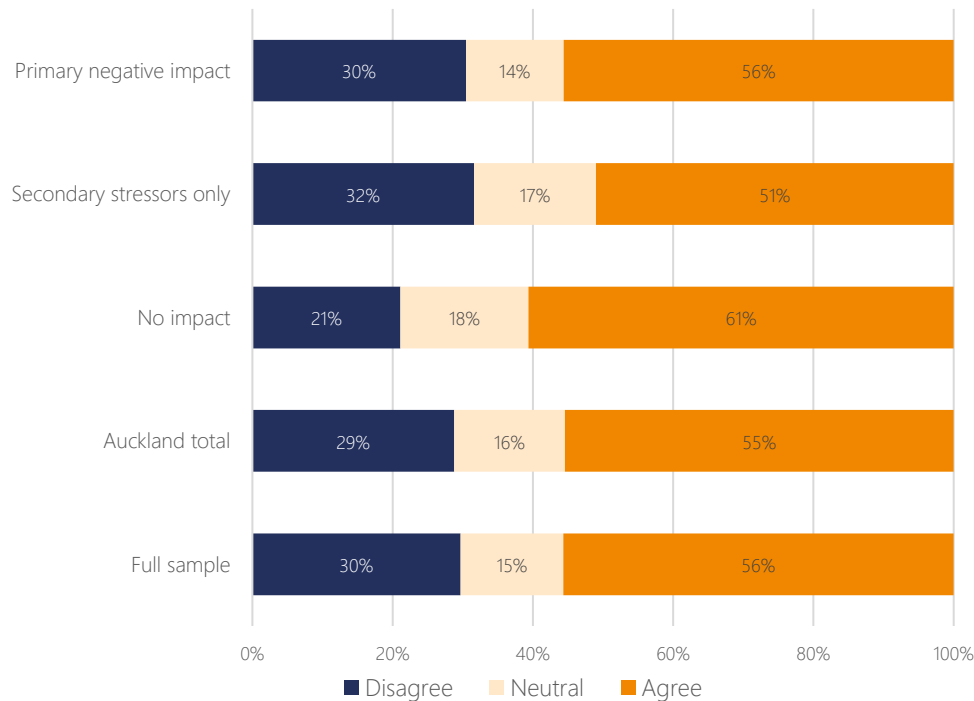
PHQ-4 statements - overall





WELLBEING — income adequacy

- Employment and average annual household income differed significantly in Auckland with a greater concentration of employed respondents (73%) and full-time employees (55%), with higher average income (39% \$100k+).
- 55% of respondents in Auckland believed they had enough money to meet everyday needs (similar to results overall). There were no significant differences between extreme weather impacts and perceived income adequacy.
- Age, household income and employment status had significant impact on income adequacy perceptions. Respondents aged 18-39, those with annual income below \$70,000, unemployed (or casual employment) respondents and beneficiaries, were less likely to agree they have enough money to meet their needs.
- In addition, Pacific Peoples, Asian and Māori respondents were also less likely to agree with this statement.



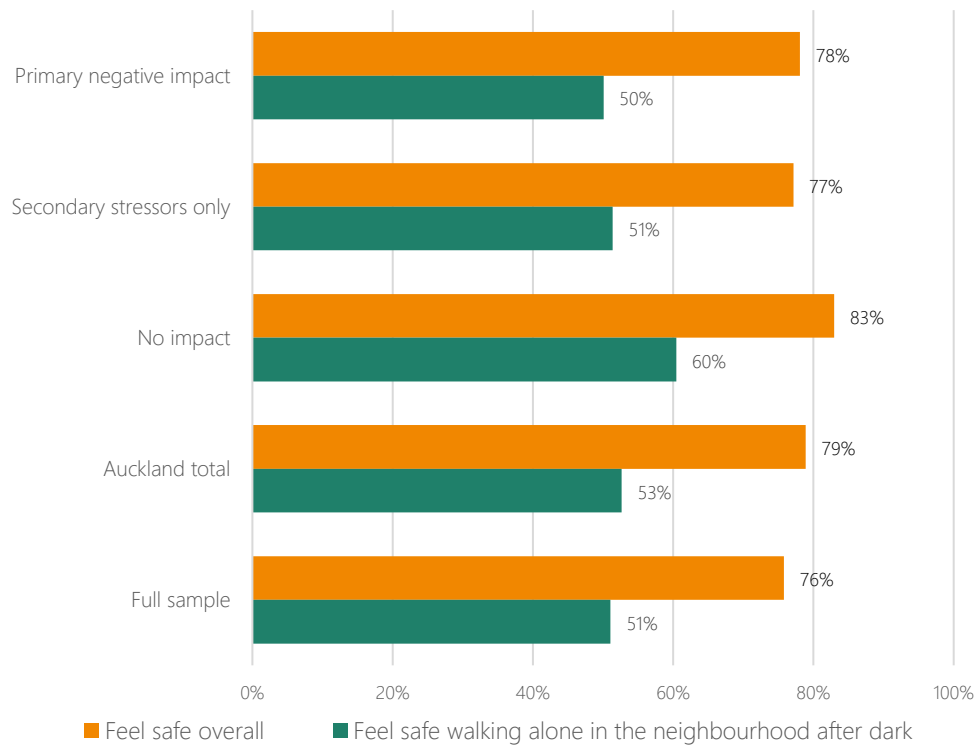
		% Agree
Age	18-39	49%
	40-64	58%
	65+	68%
Gender	Female	53%
	Male	57%
Location	Urban	56%
	Rural	48%
Income	Below \$70,000	40%
	Above \$70,000	67%
Employment	Employee / business owner	61%
	Casual	21%
	Unemployed	24%
	Parenting	47%
	Retired	64%
	Beneficiary	9%
Ethnicity	NZ European	60%
	Māori	44%
	Pacific Peoples	37%
	Asian	46%
	Other	56%

All respondents were asked about their highest academic qualification, current employment situation, household's annual income before tax, and wherever they agree or disagree with the following statement: "I have enough money to meet everyday needs".



WELLBEING — perceived safety

- Overall, 79% of respondents in Auckland indicated feeling safe in the area they live. Fewer respondents felt safe in their neighbourhood after dark (53%).
- After-dark safety perceptions were slightly lower among respondents reporting some impact from the extreme weather events, with 37% of respondents experiencing primary negative impacts believing they felt less safe.
- Safety perceptions overall did not exhibit significant differences by different demographic groups
- However, more female respondents felt unsafe after dark (43%, vs. 18% male respondents).



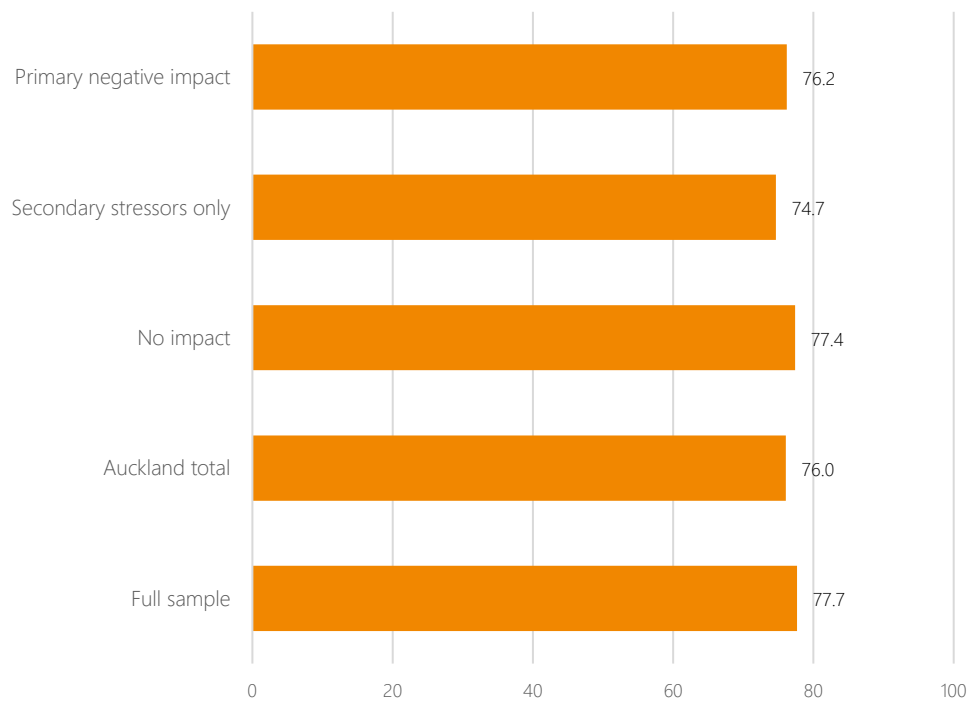
		Overall	After dark
Age	18-39	76%	50%
	40-64	83%	58%
	65+	76%	45%
Gender	Female	76%	39%
	Male	82%	66%
Location	Urban	78%	51%
	Rural	89%	70%
Income	Below \$70,000	75%	43%
	Above \$70,000	82%	60%
Employment	Employee / business owner	80%	56%
	Casual	80%	43%
	Unemployed	77%	56%
	Parenting	64%	32%
	Retired	78%	47%
	Beneficiary	68%	22%
Ethnicity	NZ European	81%	52%
	Māori	76%	49%
	Pacific Peoples	82%	53%
	Asian	78%	55%
	Other	79%	53%

All respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with the following statements: "Overall, I feel safe in the area I live" and "I feel safe walking alone in my neighbourhood after dark".



WELLBEING — social connections

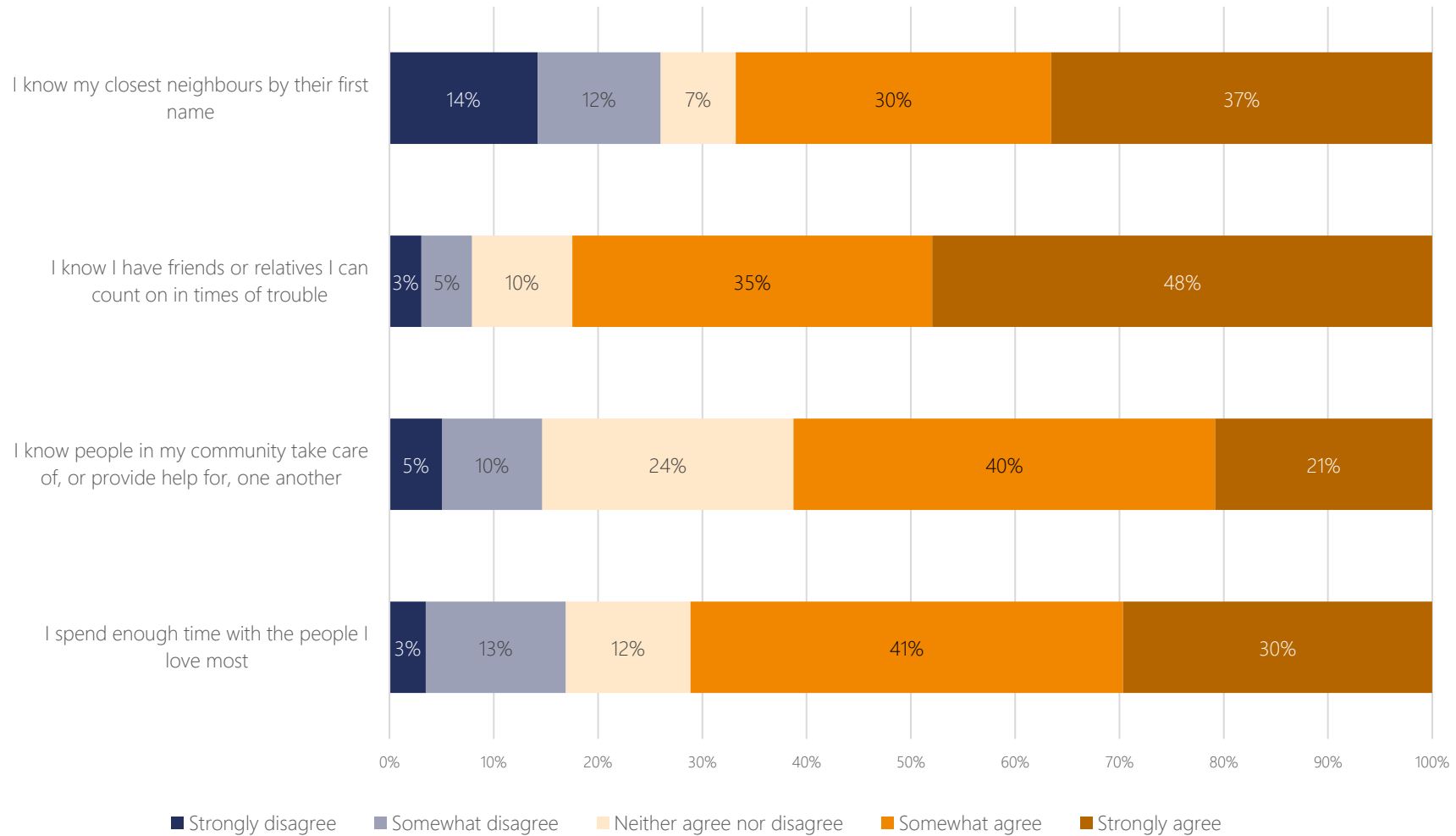
- Overall, social connections were strong in Auckland (76.0 out of 100), and similar to the overall results.
- There were no significant differences in the reported strength of social connections based on levels of impact from weather events.
- Similar to overall findings, social connections were rated lower among the youngest respondents.



		Score
Age	18-39	72.7
	40-64	78.1
	65+	80.2
Gender	Female	75.9
	Male	76.3
Location	Urban	75.6
	Rural	80.4
Income	Below \$70,000	73.7
	Above \$70,000	77.7
Employment	Employee / business owner	76.5
	Casual	70.2
	Unemployed	73.9
	Parenting	70.4
	Retired	80.7
	Beneficiary	63.9
Ethnicity	NZ European	76.9
	Māori	75.6
	Pacific Peoples	76.1
	Asian	73.3
	Other	76.4

All respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with the following statements: "I know my closest neighbours by their first name", "I know I have friends or relatives I can count on in times of trouble", "I know people in my community take care of, or provide help for, one another", "I spend enough time with the people I love most". The four statements were combined into a social connection score by totalling the figures of the four answers and multiplying it by 5. The obtained score ranges from 0 (worst possible result) to 100 (best possible result).

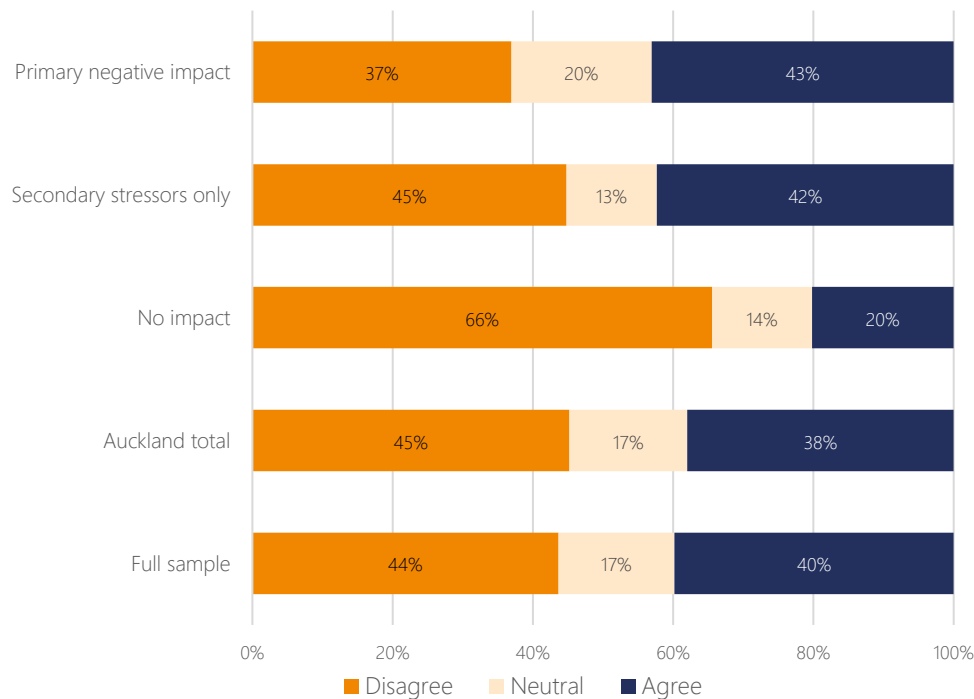
Social connections statements - overall





WELLBEING — experienced loneliness

- 4-in-10 respondents (38%) in Auckland agreed they felt lonely at least some of the time in the past two weeks (similar to the overall findings)
- Respondents stating no impact from the extreme weather events were less likely to report feeling lonely.
- Sense of loneliness was higher among younger respondents (18-39), and those in casual employment.
- Respondents aged 65+, and retirees, were the least likely to mention feeling lonely.



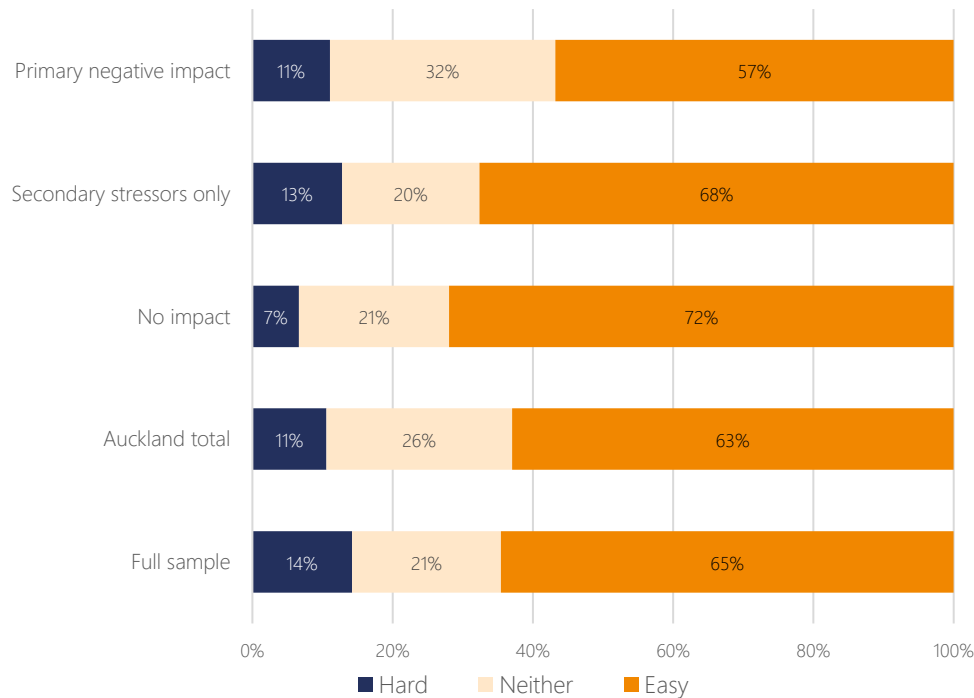
		% Felt lonely
Age	18-39	50%
	40-64	30%
	65+	25%
Gender	Female	43%
	Male	33%
Location	Urban	38%
	Rural	41%
Income	Below \$70,000	43%
	Above \$70,000	35%
Employment	Employee / business owner	36%
	Casual	70%
	Unemployed	56%
	Parenting	54%
	Retired	27%
	Beneficiary	44%
Ethnicity	NZ European	37%
	Māori	40%
	Pacific Peoples	35%
	Asian	42%
	Other	51%

All respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with the following statement: "I have felt lonely at least some of the time in the past two weeks".



WELLBEING — cultural identity

- 63% of Auckland respondents agreed it is easy to be themselves in the area they live (similar to overall findings).
- There were slight variations in perceived cultural identity based on extreme weather event impacts; however, this was also influenced by similarities in demographic groups represented by the level of impact.
- Younger respondents were less likely to find it easy to be themselves.
- Beneficiaries (38%) and Pacific Peoples (25%) were more likely to find it hard to be themselves.



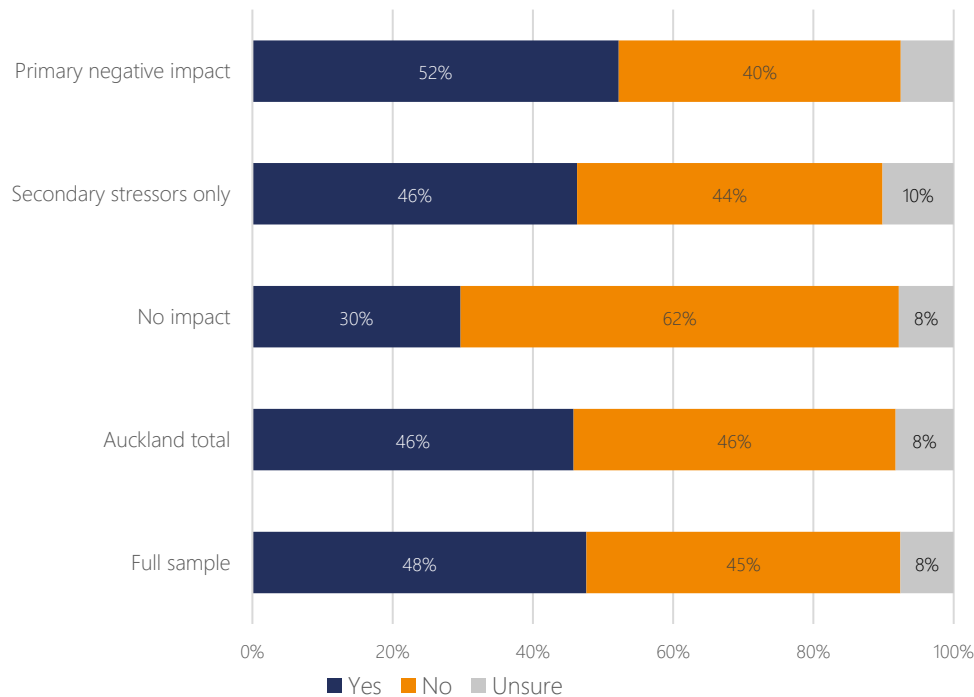
		% Easy
Age	18-39	55%
	40-64	69%
	65+	70%
Gender	Female	65%
	Male	61%
Location	Urban	64%
	Rural	56%
Income	Below \$70,000	60%
	Above \$70,000	65%
Employment	Employee / business owner	64%
	Casual	65%
	Unemployed	58%
	Parenting	50%
	Retired	70%
	Beneficiary	36%
Ethnicity	NZ European	66%
	Māori	60%
	Pacific Peoples	59%
	Asian	61%
	Other	57%

All respondents were asked: "People in New Zealand have different lifestyles, cultures and beliefs, that express who they are. How easy or hard is it for you to be yourself in the area you live in?"



WELLBEING — discrimination

- 46% of respondents in Auckland reported personally experiencing, or seeing someone else experiencing, prejudice or intolerance in the last 3 months (similar to overall results).
- There were slight variations in perceived discrimination based on extreme weather event impacts; however, this was also influenced by similarities in demographic groups represented by the level of impact.
- Respondents aged 18-39, Pacific Peoples, and beneficiaries were more likely to report perceived discrimination within their demographic groups. Ethnicity (54%) was cited as the main reason for this experienced prejudice or intolerance, followed by gender (21%).
- Ethnicity (as a discrimination factor) was more likely to be cited among younger respondents, and those of other ethnicities. Pacific Peoples were more likely to cite age as the reason for prejudice.



		% Yes
Age	18-39	52%
	40-64	42%
	65+	38%
Gender	Female	49%
	Male	42%
Location	Urban	46%
	Rural	46%
Income	Below \$70,000	52%
	Above \$70,000	45%
Employment	Employee / business owner	46%
	Casual	51%
	Unemployed	48%
	Parenting	31%
	Retired	38%
	Beneficiary	66%
Ethnicity	NZ European	45%
	Māori	60%
	Pacific Peoples	65%
	Asian	39%
	Other	43%

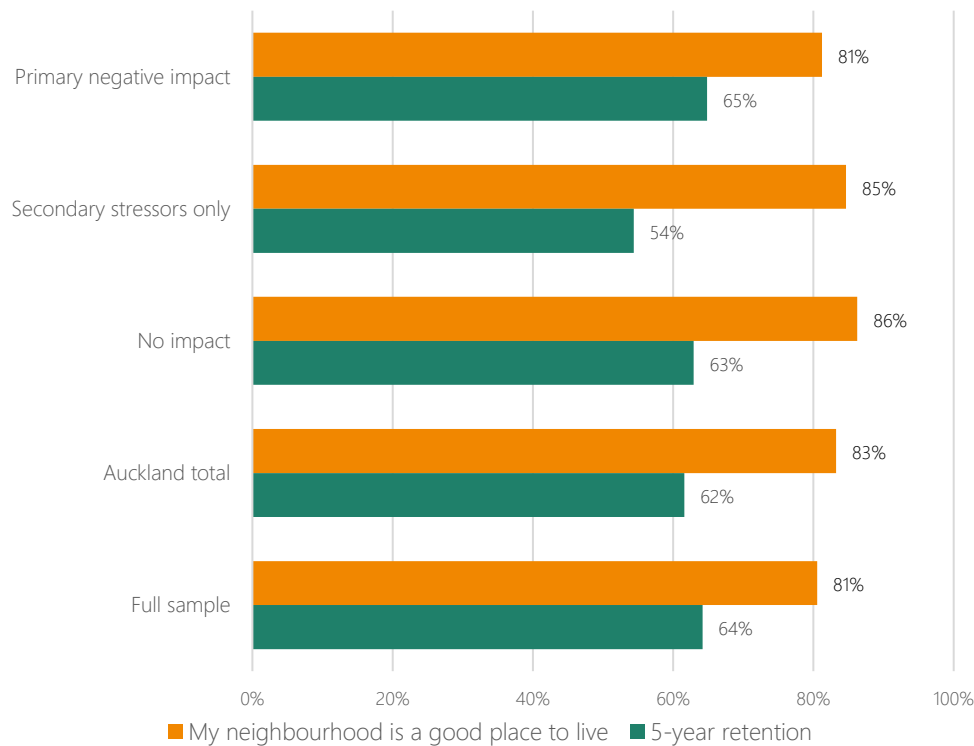
All respondents were asked: "In the last three months, have you personally experienced, or seen someone else experience, prejudice or intolerance, being treated unfairly or excluded?"



WELLBEING — place attachment

- 8-in-10 respondents (83%) in Auckland considered their neighbourhood as a good place to live, and 62% saw themselves living in the area in the next 5 years (similar to overall results).
- Retention perceptions were lower among younger respondents (18-39), and those unemployed, beneficiaries or in casual employment.

- Respondents citing secondary stressors reported lower perceived retention; however, there were no significant differences between respondents experiencing primary negative impacts or no impacts, suggesting that retention could be influenced mainly by other demographic factors.



		Neighbourhood	Retention
Age	18-39	78%	55%
	40-64	87%	64%
	65+	87%	76%
Gender	Female	82%	61%
	Male	85%	63%
Location	Urban	82%	61%
	Rural	94%	71%
Income	Below \$70,000	77%	56%
	Above \$70,000	89%	66%
Employment	Employee / business owner	85%	62%
	Casual	84%	42%
	Unemployed	79%	49%
	Parenting	67%	43%
	Retired	88%	81%
	Beneficiary	58%	45%
Ethnicity	NZ European	85%	64%
	Māori	76%	64%
	Pacific Peoples	82%	54%
	Asian	82%	54%
	Other	83%	66%

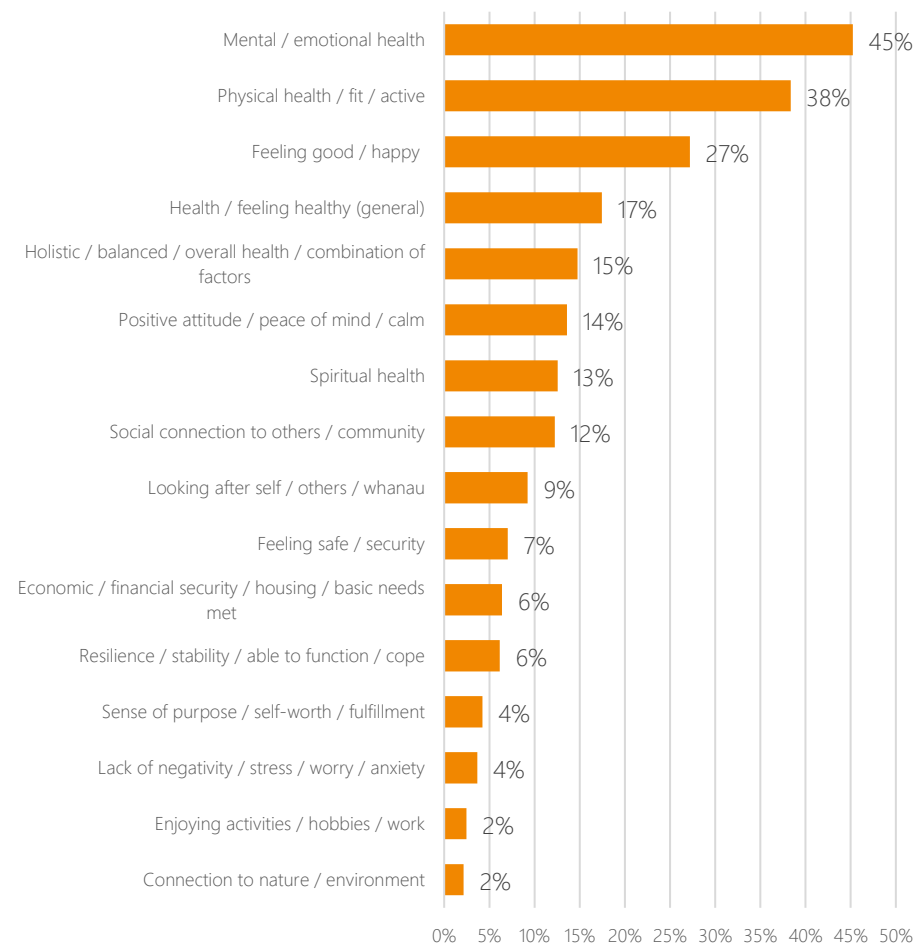
All respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with the following statements: "My neighbourhood is a good place to live" and "I see myself living in the area in the next 5 year".



WELLBEING KNOWLEDGE — understanding wellbeing

- 'Wellbeing' is a broad term with a wide variety of meanings and definitions for respondents. Some saw this in general terms as simply feeling good, happy or satisfied with life; or as a state of health or feeling healthy.
- Most typically, respondents in Auckland defined wellbeing as encompassing a range of more specific dimensions, especially mental or emotional (45%) and physical (38%) health.
- Younger respondents were typically more likely to associate wellbeing with mental and emotional health (53%), particularly compared to those aged 65+ (33%). Spiritual health was also more relevant to younger respondents.
- At the same time, for older respondents (65+) feeling good and happy (34%) and physical health (33%) were the two top concurring factors. Health, social connections, and financial security were also important factors for older respondents.
- Respondents with wellbeing literacy scores below 50 were more likely to attribute wellbeing to generally feeling good or satisfied with life.

Unprompted wellbeing perceptions ('no answers' excluded)



All respondents were asked: "In your own words, what does 'wellbeing' mean?" Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent.

Verbatim comments about understanding wellbeing in Auckland

"Your self, your mental, emotional, physical health"

"Your mental well being and physical well being. Ensuring you feel good and healthy in all aspects of life"

"When your basic needs are met. Food, clothing, shelter, work life balance, mental health support."

"Wellness of a person's body and mind"

"Wellbeing is overall health, including both physical and mental health."

"Wellbeing mean living healthy and happily."

"Wellbeing is feeling you are in a safe, productive environment, healthy, and/or with health needs met, with support networks that function efficiently, and you have hopes and dreams for the future which are realistic, and could easily be attained, this is an attitude shared by a lot of people around you. You do not fear the future, you do not think that big business is destroying the future for everybody, including themselves."

"Wellbeing is feeling self worth, having my physical, emotional, spiritual and mental health at a place I feel content."

"Wellbeing is a descriptive word that encompasses both the physical and mental status of an individual or an extended unit of family or whānau."

"Total health. Mental, physical, whānau and spiritual"

"Well being is how well kept a person is mentally, physically, emotionally, socially. The holistic care of a person."

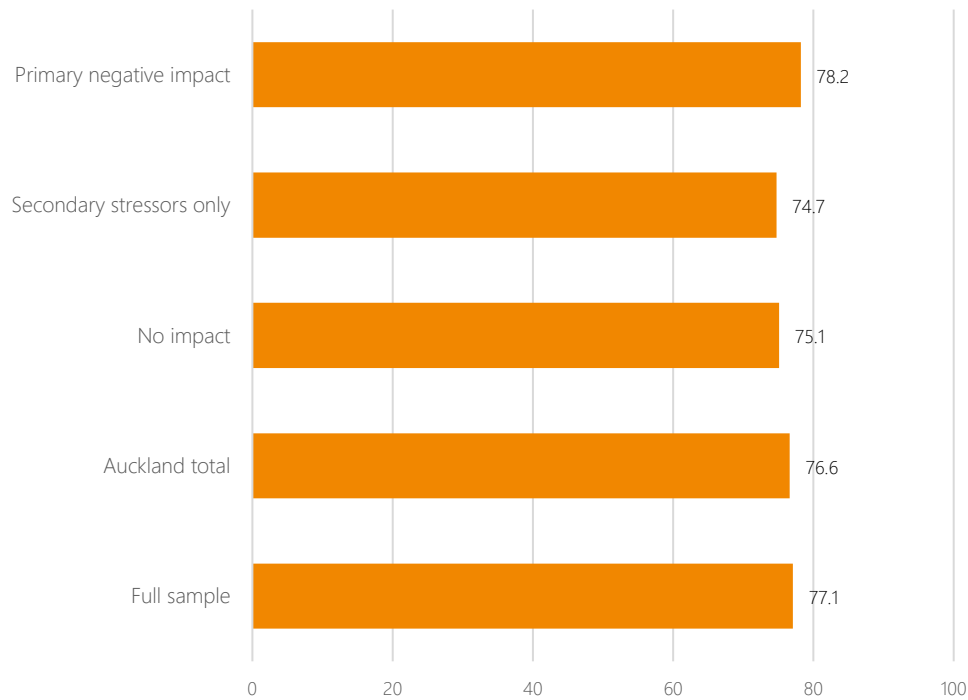
"To take care of all aspects of our being. Spiritual, social, physical"

"To live in a state of wellness that is supportive to both myself, my community and my environment. Freedom to make healthy decisions that are enabling me to live the best possible life I can"



WELLBEING KNOWLEDGE — wellbeing literacy score

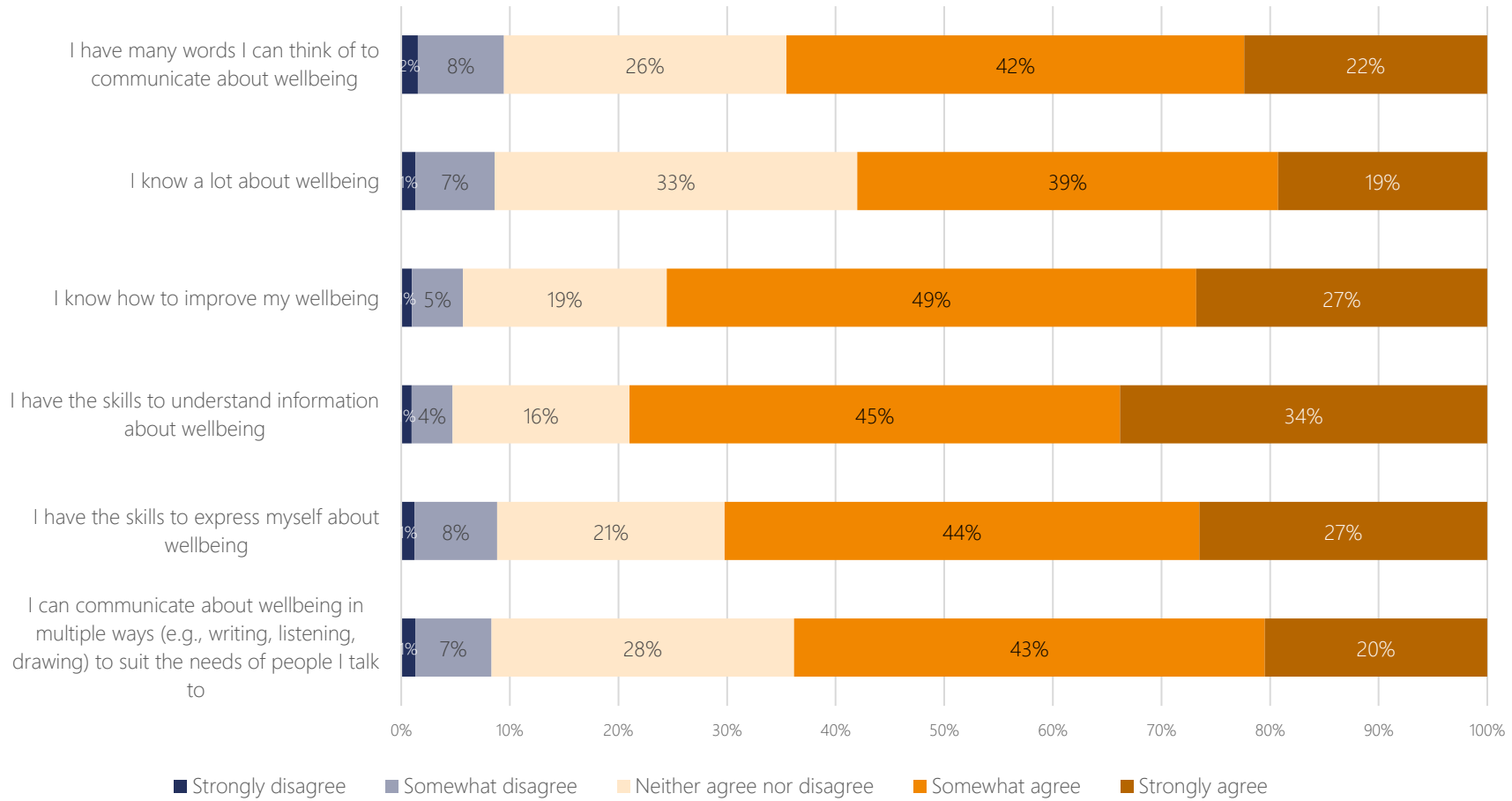
- Subjective knowledge about wellbeing was high in Auckland, with the wellbeing literacy score resulting at 76.6 out of 100 (similar to overall findings).
- Wellbeing literacy scores generally showed little variation between demographic groups or level of impact from extreme weather.



		Score
Age	18-39	75.0
	40-64	78.9
	65+	75.4
Gender	Female	78.3
	Male	74.9
Location	Urban	76.3
	Rural	79.2
Income	Below \$70,000	74.7
	Above \$70,000	78.2
Employment	Employee / business owner	77.8
	Casual	75.4
	Unemployed	74.7
	Parenting	72.1
	Retired	73.6
	Beneficiary	72.1
Ethnicity	NZ European	78.0
	Māori	78.8
	Pacific Peoples	75.6
	Asian	72.1
	Other	74.8

All respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with the following statements: "I have many words I can think of to communicate about wellbeing", "I know a lot about wellbeing", "I know how to improve my wellbeing", "I have the skills to understand information about wellbeing", "I have the skills to express myself about wellbeing", and "I can communicate about wellbeing in multiple ways (e.g., writing, listening, drawing) to suit the needs of people I talk to". The six statements were combined into a wellbeing literacy score by totalling the figures of the six answers and multiplying it by 3.33. The obtained score ranges from 0 (lowest possible result) to 100 (highest possible result).

Wellbeing literacy statements - overall

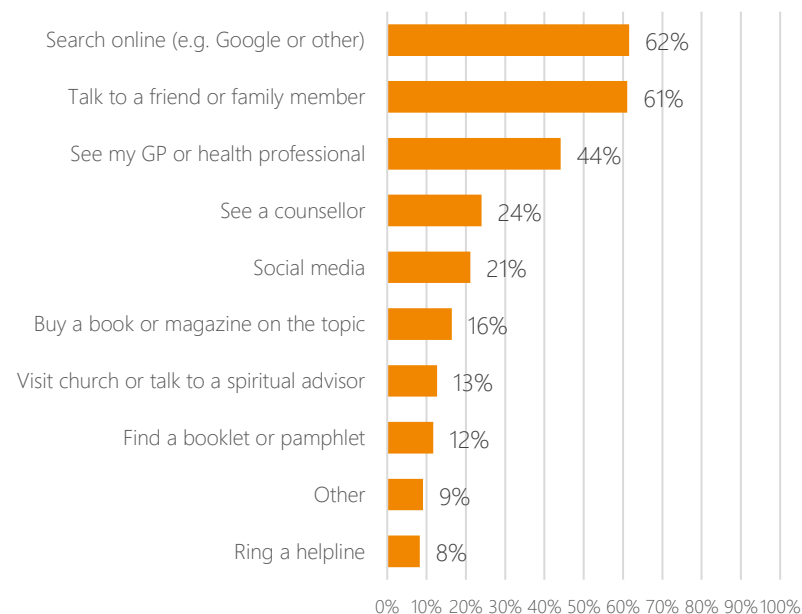




WELLBEING KNOWLEDGE — help-seeking approach

- Talking to a friend or family member (61%) or conducting an online search (62%) were by far the most preferred methods to search for wellbeing information in Auckland.
- Younger respondents (18-39) were more likely to search online (66%), or look up information on social media (28%).
- Older respondents (65+) showed a greater preference for talking to a friend or family member (60%) or consulting a health professional (51%)
- Asian respondents were less likely than respondents of other ethnicities to talk to a friend or family member (55%), but more likely to ring a helpline (11%). At the same time, Māori respondents were more likely to see a health professional (49%) than respondents of other ethnicities. Pacific Peoples were also more likely than other ethnicities to ring a helpline (12%) or visit a church (25%).

Source of wellbeing information



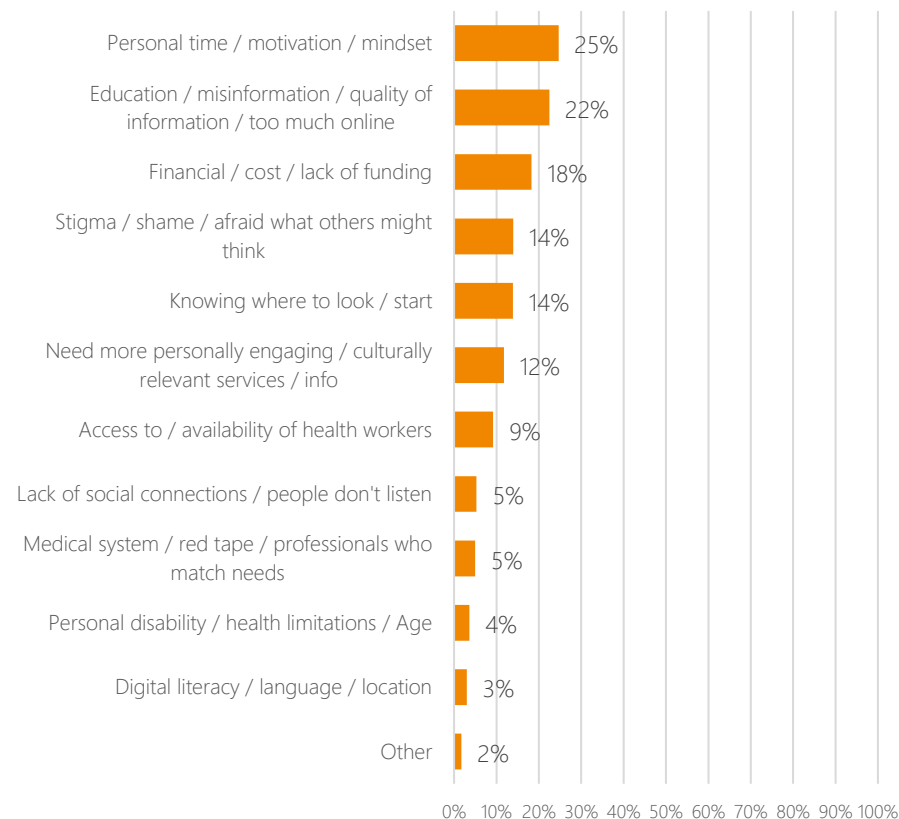
All respondents were asked: "How do you prefer to seek information about wellbeing?" Note: multichoice.



WELLBEING KNOWLEDGE — named barriers

- A large proportion of Auckland respondents (59%) indicated that they experienced no barriers to finding information about wellbeing (62% in overall results).
- Most typically, basic lack of personal time or motivation was to blame (25%). A degree of confusion or misinformation was a relevant concern for some, with the sheer amount of information (particularly online) being overwhelming or causing people to doubt the quality, reliability or currency of any given source.
- Financial limitations were also a barrier, with respondents unable to find free resources or lacking funds to access the specific information or services they desire; including access to or availability of health workers.
- Social stigma or personal shame remained a salient issue for a small number of residents who were afraid of what others may think if they seek certain resources or support.
- Younger respondents were slightly more likely to cite lack of awareness where to start looking for information, or stigma and shame associated with mental wellbeing.

Unprompted perceived barriers in finding wellbeing information



All respondents were asked: "Are there any barriers you face in finding information about wellbeing?" and "In your opinion, what could be done to improve awareness of wellbeing in your community?". Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent.

Verbatim comments about perceived barriers in finding wellbeing information in Auckland

"Working too much and not spending too much time for my self"

"Willingness to change it"

"Too much conflicting information out there! Social media is an absolute nightmare - would be a better world without it"

"Vulnerability in sharing my thoughts and feelings"

"Time and work pressure"

"Time constraints and a demanding job [...] which sometimes means I prioritise the wellbeing of others over myself."

"There is so many conflicting bits of info that I sometimes struggle I know what's true."

"There is an overload of information in regards to mental wellbeing, without the help of a professional it is hard to know where to start or what to seek"

"There is a lot of misinformation and disinformation on ways to improve wellbeing"

"The cost to get that help. who is the best to talk to."

"Personal insecurities and a general she'll be right attitude"

"Own limitations, health. Unwillingness to share feelings"

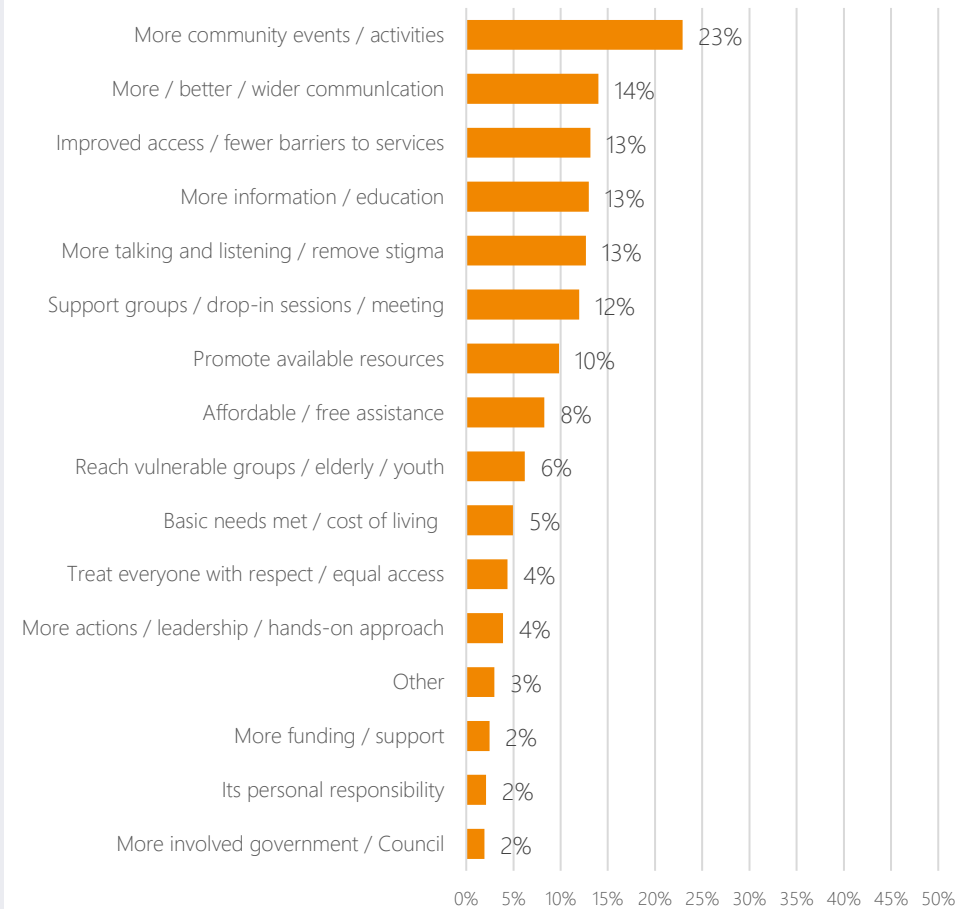
"Finding the right support for your own situation is difficult and overwhelming for some. Everybody's idea of wellbeing is totally different depending on the life they are living"



WELLBEING KNOWLEDGE — suggested improvements

- Auckland respondents provide a wide range of suggestions (62%) to improve awareness of wellbeing in their community.
- Providing more community-based events or activities (23%) was considered a viable option to increase community spirit and facilitate connection to others generally. Improving communication of wellbeing-related information (providing more, better or more widely available information) was considered necessary. Similarly, improving access or reducing barriers to support and services generally was desirable; more specifically this could be achieved through the community interactions noted above; through support groups, drop-in sessions or related workshops; or provision of more affordable (or free) assistance, including counselling sessions or health-related courses.
- There were relatively few differences in these suggestions across subgroups.
- Support groups and workshops were generally more popular among respondents aged 40-64.

Unprompted improvements for wellbeing awareness ('no answers' removed)



All respondents were asked: "Are there any barriers you face in finding information about wellbeing?" and "In your opinion, what could be done to improve awareness of wellbeing in your community?". Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent.

Verbatim comments about suggested improvements in Auckland

"Wellbeing shared dinners or picnics"

"Trust each other"

"The organisations offering this support to synergistically work with each other"

"There is absolutely no need for improving mental health awareness. The ROI on awareness raising is next to zero these days. Better to spend money on solutions."

"There's plenty of information. The issue is people accepting its importance and looking out for those who need help."

"Talking to each other about how we feel"

"Some community days, everyone joins in and its not forced, flows natural - you know the people around you, you can feel better about things."

"Social gatherings so people can meet their neighbours. Very little of this happens and people lack community support and cohesion"

"Short community seminars"

"Positive and honest communication"

"People to connect with similar issues"

"Out reach! Community engagement, community events and support. Phone calls, txt messages, people visiting the home and asking"

"More volunteer groups available to support all age groups to do activities together. For those people who do not have family or friends there does not seem to be much offered as a community to interact and meet with people."

"More local community activities"

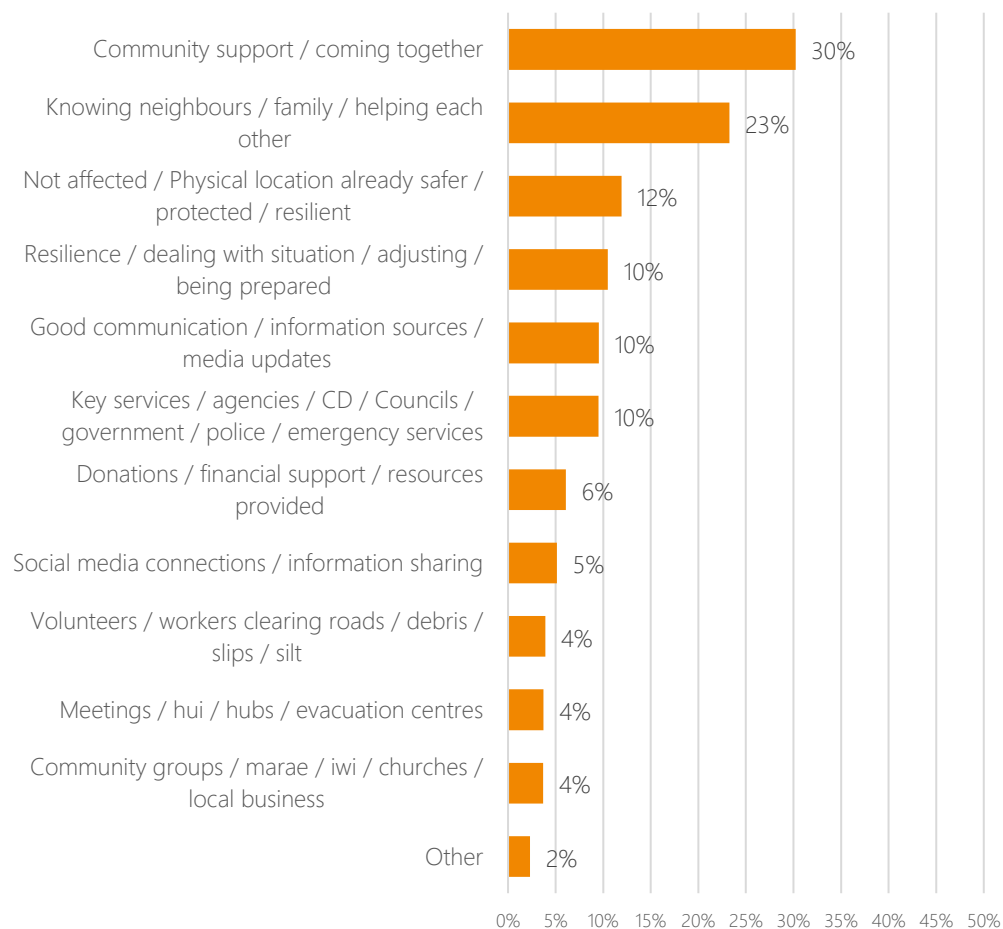
"Linking everyone together, providing support and encouragement for us to strengthen our community"



PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT — community strengths

- Auckland communities relied on multiple sources of strength and assistance to help them cope with the 2023 weather events (70%).
- Of most notable significance were the networks and ties within the community itself: community support and people coming together was most frequently cited as a coping tool (30%).
- Similarly, knowing one's neighbours and/or having family or friends on hand to help each other was of great importance.
- Overall, there were few variations by respondents' demographic groups regarding community strengths.

Community strengths unprompted ('no answers' removed)



All respondents were asked: "What do you believe are the key factors that helped?" Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent.

Verbatim comments about community strength in Auckland

"Working together. Street whats app page. Checking in on each other."

"Working together, communication, providing an emergency centre at the local school"

"Working together"

"We live in an area with good drainage with a wonderful community who all know each other and has a residents society with a team who oversee these weather events and prepare for it. This made such a difference. But it's our kids lives that were traumatised"

"Was great to see members of the community get stuck in and giving a helping hand"

"Togetherness"

"These things happen & the community got together and helped where needed."

"The help given by those who could. Digger owners were offering free assistance, people opened their homes."

"Strangers offered help to others onto he community pages"

"The kindness and generosity of the community"

"The community itself rallied together"

"Sense of community"

"People willing to help out and not wait for governmental bodies to rescue them"

"People were amazing at looking after other people"

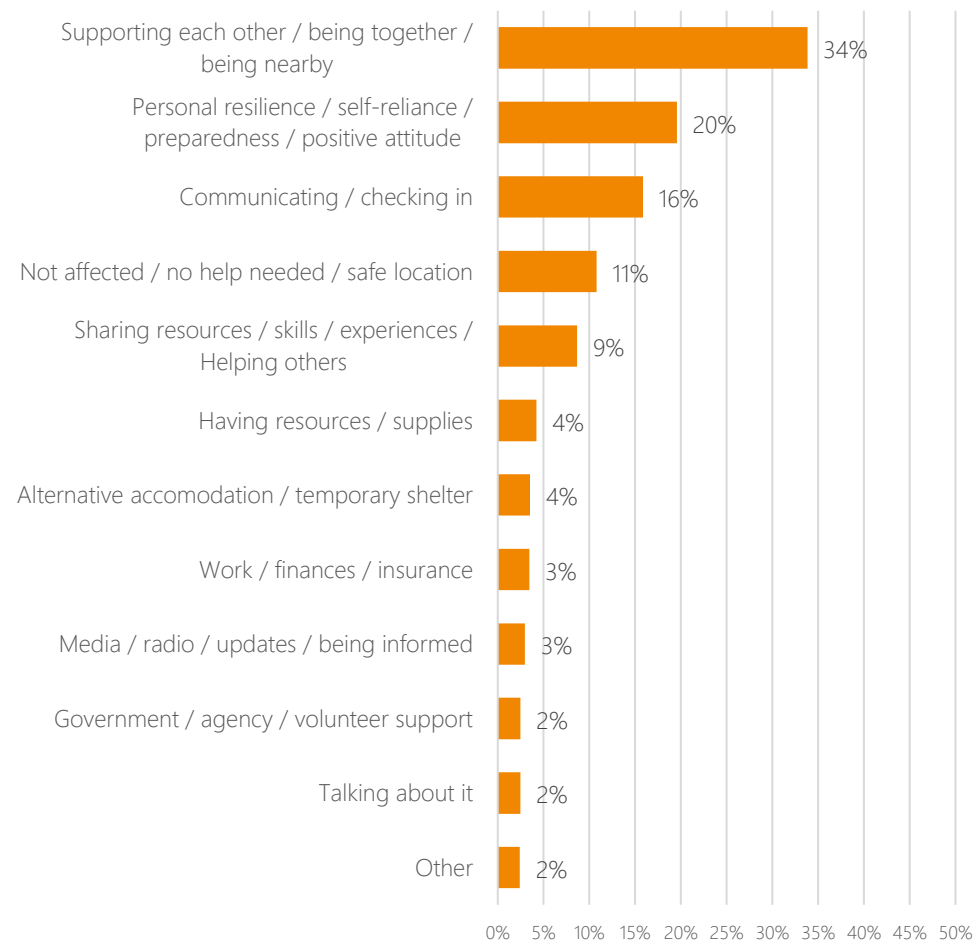
"Many local businesses organised collections of goods that they took to the big collection points"



PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT — family/personal strengths

- 69% of Auckland respondents indicated family and/or personal strengths helping them during the 2023 extreme weather events.
- In terms of what helped individuals or their whānau, just being together and supporting each other was critical (34%).
- Personal resilience and preparedness was considered a critical skill, with a positive attitude essential for many respondents.
- The above factors were common across respondents, with few differences by subgroups.

Family/personal strengths unprompted ('no answers' removed)



All respondents were asked: "What do you believe are the key factors that helped?" Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent.

Verbatim comments about personal or family strength in Auckland

"We talk and support each other, even when we are tired and grumpy."

"Support from family and friends and at work, each other - our colleagues."

"Keeping each other safe and comfortable"

"We kept in contact as best we could and supported each other"

"Just being together"

"Sticking together looking out for each other"

"Secure housing. Each other. Sense of humour."

"Support and understanding"

"Keeping calm for my son, being prepared with supplies as much as I can"

"Our whānau have always been a tight knit Unit. We have always s looked out for each other and all of the children including those with high needs will readily go to spend nights etc with an aunt or uncle. Whatever one whānau member is short of or needs the others will supply it. We often spend time together."

"Just making sure we were all safe"

"Family all helped with garden cleanup and further cleanup around decks and windows."

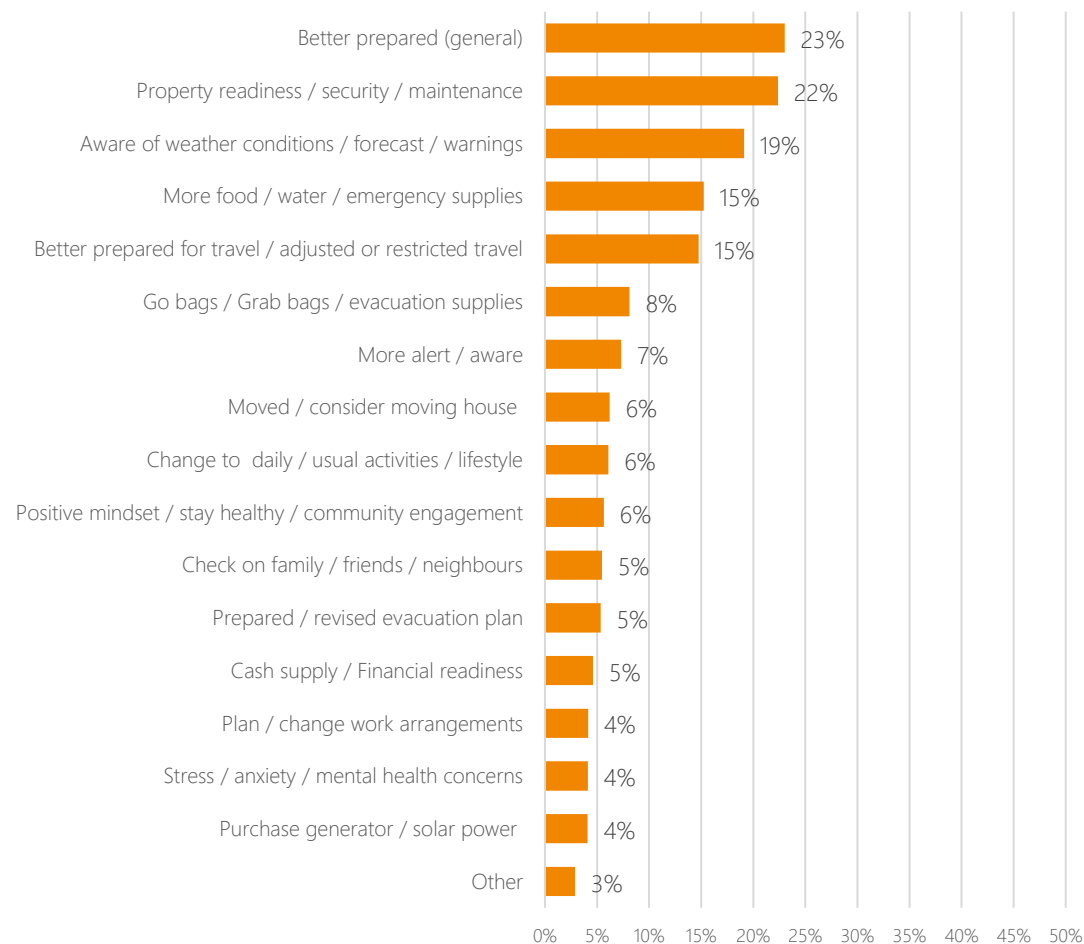
"Helping each other"



PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT — behavioural changes after 2023

- A large proportion of Auckland respondents (60%) identified multiple things they now do differently as a result of the 2023 weather events.
- Most pertinently, many felt they were now better prepared generally for future emergencies and weather events (23%).
- More specifically, 22% had ensured their property is emergency ready (particularly for heavy rains) – this type of preparedness was higher compared to overall results.
- Older respondents (65+) were more likely to ensure their property readiness for future weather events.
- Respondents' experience of weather events had a linear impact on consequent behavioural changes.
- Those reporting a primary negative impact were most likely to make additional changes in their preparedness (71%).
- In contrast, half of respondents mentioning additional stressors (50%) or no impact (46%) reported some type of changes.

Unprompted preparedness after 2023 events ('no answers/nothing' removed)



All respondents were asked: "Thinking about things you do differently as a result of the extreme weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle), what, if anything, do you do differently?" Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent.

Verbatim comments about behavioural changes in Auckland

"Work from home when this occurs. Leave work early and pick up kids to get home."

"We will try to be prepared, like fixing the house and prepare extra food in advanced"

"We have invested in private utilities including water tanks, power generators, signal boosters for cell phones i will leave work early to collect my child from care if there is any level of rain warning due to concerns around roading and safety had our home evaluated by insurance to ensure we have the best cover possible although our insurance premiums have also increased"

"We prep the house any time heavy rain is forecast"

"We try to be proactive and support each other a lot more. There are stronger community bonds. For example we have reviewed our Community Resilience Plan, are planning community events and fun days to prepare more in terms of equipment and resources. running Grow workshops to get more gardening going so we are more self-sufficient. We were two weeks without power and six weeks cut off from the rest of Auckland. We have also started a community Oral History project focused on the cyclone to ensure our stories of the bad and good days of trauma, challenges, resilience etc are told as a cathartic process to help healing and learn and build on what we can do to better support our communities and each other."

"We had to put in a trench behind our house to divert water away from the house."

"Paying more attention to our property."

"Obsessive about drains, worry in the rain keeps valuable and sentimental items above potential flood levels"

"Trying to adapt my terrain to prevent neighbours water discharge from entering my building"

"Regularly clear out the culvert halfway down the driveway to prevent overflow"

"No longer store anything on the floor in the garage as it got flooded. Had a talk about who would be responsible for grabbing each of our kids if a severe weather event was to occur at night."

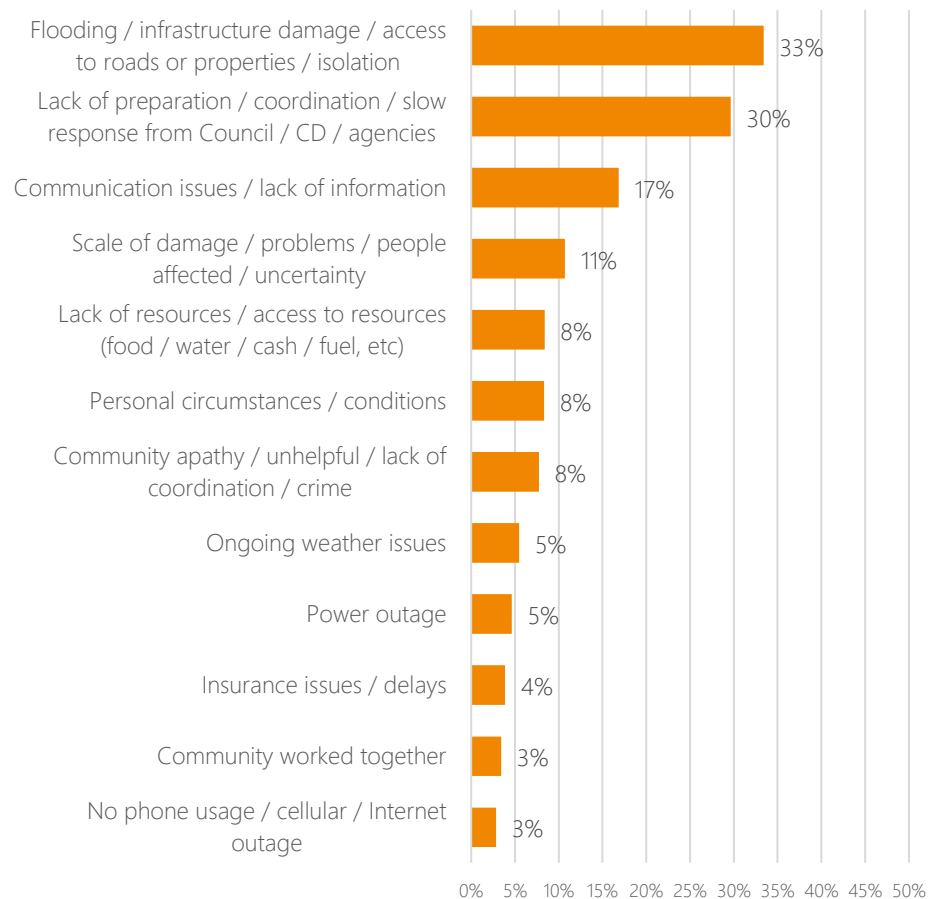
"More prepared for loss of water and power. Extra drains under the house"



PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT — perceived challenges

- Several key challenges (50%) impacted on Auckland residents' ability to respond to the extreme weather events, which was slightly below the overall results (60%).
- Flooding itself, with the resultant infrastructure damage, was considered a significant issue restricting access to roads and properties and causing isolation of many homes and communities (33%).
- Anecdotally, flooding, infrastructure damage and access were particularly noted in Ōrākei, Waiheke, Puketāpapa, Waitākere Ranges, Henderson-Massey, and Papakura.
- Respondents pointed to a lack of preparation for weather/flooding events hindering their own or the community response, in particular the perceived slow response or coordination from Council, civil defence or other support agencies (30%).
- Lack of preparation was particularly noted in Ōtara-Papatoetoe, Maungakiekie-Tāmaki, Waitematā, Kaipātiki, Puketāpapa, Papakura, Howick, and Albert-Eden.

Unprompted challenges faced by communities ('no answers' removed)



All respondents were asked: "And what, if anything, made it challenging or difficult for your community to respond to the extreme weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle)?" Open-ended comments sorted into categories. Totals may exceed 100% owing to multiple responses for each respondent.

Verbatim comments about perceived challenges in Auckland

"Poor communication from council. The fact that phones were down public transport Re-routed"

"Lack of coordination between different services and governing bodies, poor infrastructure in some parts"

"Even though the council knew about the landslide risk, they have not done anything to prevent what happened. Now, those who stay will have to make sure they prepare them selves for future events. The council will not help out much."

"Unpreparedness by authorities"

"Lack of preparation and council action during the Auckland floods"

"No assistance from local/central govt in early hours of disaster, no understanding from local govt about the severity of the impact, no clarity on categorisation of red stickers, uncertainty about the future. financial pressure on people with mortgages."

"We were cut off. People had to leave their homes. The uncertainty"

"The poor response by local authorities - friends who live in the Muriwai area, and other areas in Auckland, are still displaced due to flooding in their homes. The process of getting remedial work done on their homes is horrific. People just want to be in a HOME. Not a crappy rental where they might be asked to leave with relatively short notice. There is financial, social, emotional stress."

"Information not coming out fast enough from the authorities, streams and drains that were clogged up with debris and rubbish which exacerbated the flooding."

"Poor waste water management, if the drains were cleaner and bigger would have reduced impact in some places."

"Late evacuation notices, flooding"

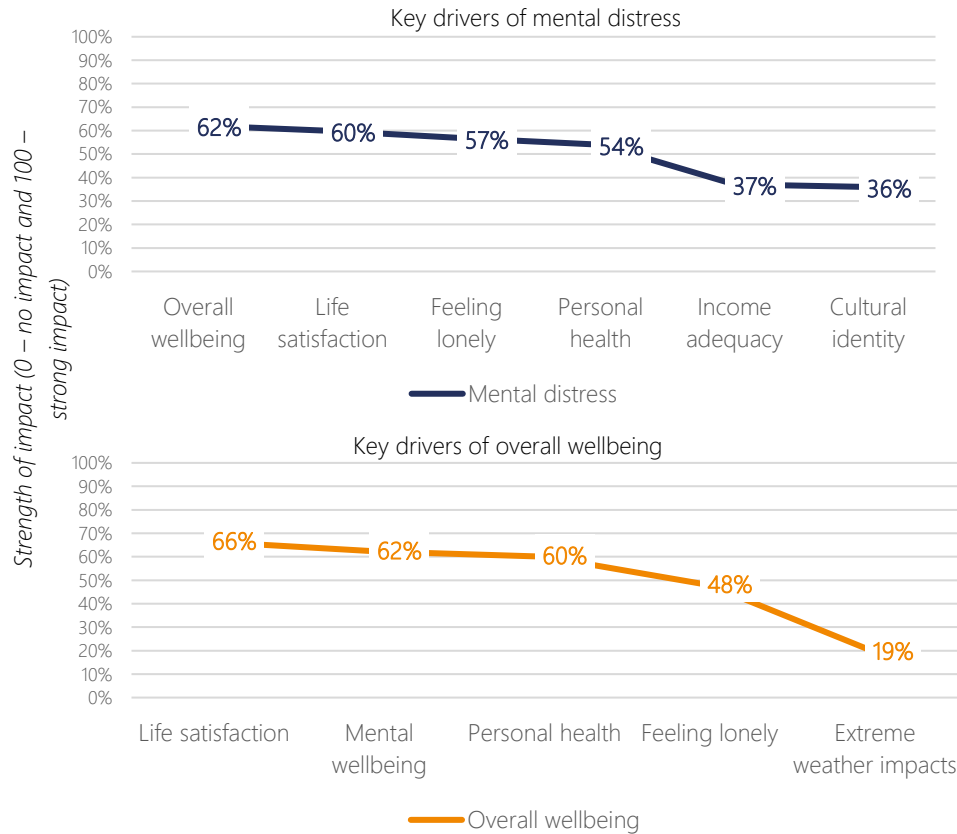
"Slips, flooding, washouts, trees blocking roads"

"A totally new unpredicted event. Inadequate storm water coping mechanisms. no infrastructure to handle the result of housing intensification and new development meaning no where for excess storm water to discharge to. All drains overflowing and past capacity. Excessive coverage of land with concrete by developers now allowed so soakage areas greatly reduced. Conjoined steep driveways just form rivers that flow onto neighbouring land."

"Traffic jams. City was gridlocked Lack of information around travel. Uncertainties around supports available. Getting the support to people that were out of their homes."



PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT — key drivers



Key driver analysis, based on regression and correlation using multiple factors from the research, helps understanding of the relationship between measured attributes and wellbeing outcomes, and how are they related to each other.

The analysis has identified a multitude of factors demonstrating a significant relationship with mental distress and overall wellbeing, with a strong inter-correlation between the two.

Life satisfaction, personal health, and feelings of loneliness were the common factors influencing both overall and mental wellbeing perceptions, and also exhibiting high inter-correlation between each other.

At the same time, mental distress was also impacted by income adequacy and cultural identity to some extent.

The 2023 extreme weather impacts had some impact on overall wellbeing, with those stating a primary negative impact reporting lower wellbeing score (49.1) compared to unaffected respondents (60.1), or those stating secondary stressors only (55.6).

Influencing factors (key drivers) identified as most plausible to contribute towards key measured outcomes (mental distress and overall wellbeing). Assessment of influencing factors is based on statistical modelling (regression analysis and correlation). The chart above presents the recalibrated results of strength of impact used to determine which factors influence mental distress (PHQ-4) and overall wellbeing (WHO-5) scores within each age group. Only statistically significant factors are shown.



IN-DEPTH FINDINGS

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Participant 1: Impact of Natural Disasters in a Smaller Rural Community

Personal and Community Challenges

- The respondent highlights their experience of being impacted more significantly by a cyclone than by the Auckland Anniversary floods, mentioning that their small town was cut off due to flooding, fallen power poles, and landslides.
- Loss of essential services like power, Wi-Fi, and water due to reliance on electric pumps was emphasised, underscoring the devastation within the community.
- The local dairy, a key community hub, nearly faced destruction due to a landslide, and several residents from low-lying areas were forced to evacuate.

Adaptation and Support

- The marae and the kura (school) served as crucial support centres, offering shelter and necessities to the affected individuals.
- Despite personal mobility challenges due to a broken leg and ankle, the respondent notes community solidarity and the rapid organisation of support, particularly praising the efforts led by the local hauora (health) centre and the resilience and quick action of the Māori community.

Community Response and Recovery

- Discussion around the establishment of a community hub and the activation of support mechanisms, including the provision of laundry facilities, showers, gas cookers, and food boxes to aid those affected.
- The respondent points out the proactive measures taken by the community and the council to ensure quicker access to funds for

marae in future emergencies, indicating a positive step towards improving disaster response efficiency.

Personal Reflections and Recovery

- The respondent shares their struggle with anxiety and stress following the cyclone, exacerbated by the damage to their property and the challenges of securing repairs in a timely and affordable manner.
- The community's collective trauma and the burden of empathetically carrying others' emotional and physical distresses contributed to the respondent's depression and eventual decision to seek medication.

Social and Cultural Insights

- A notable improvement in Māori and Pākehā relations within the community is mentioned, driven by shared disaster response efforts and continued collaboration on community projects.
- Personal growth and coping strategies, including the importance of taking time for recovery and the use of social media for mental distraction and support, are highlighted.

The input outlines the profound impact of a cyclone on a small town, emphasising the immediate challenges, community support mechanisms, and long-term emotional and social repercussions. The respondent's narrative provides insight into the resilience and solidarity of the affected community, the importance of effective disaster response planning, and the personal journey towards recovery and mental health management post-disaster.

Participant 2: Experiencing and Responding to Flooding in Auckland

Immediate Impact and Personal Experiences

- The respondent recounts how they and their wife were affected by flooding, emphasising the disruption to their daily commute from Papakura to work locations via the southwestern motorway.
- The wife's work vehicle was lost to the floods, causing significant distress and logistical challenges, including being stranded and the emotional turmoil experienced during the flood.
- The respondent's workplace was proactive, enabling remote work, while the wife faced immediate challenges at her residential service job.

Support and Insurance Response

- Insurance support was notably efficient, providing not only prompt service but also additional support like counselling, highlighting a comprehensive approach to the victims' wellbeing.
- The need for alternative accommodations for some family members was met through the support of friends and family in West Auckland, reflecting the importance of community networks during crises.

Long-Term Psychological Impact

- The flooding left lasting psychological effects, particularly on the respondent's wife, who experienced a loss of confidence in self-transportation, indicating the deep emotional impact beyond the initial physical damages.
- The respondent mentions the effort required to rebuild confidence and adapt to new circumstances post-event.

Community and Professional Engagement

- Community groups like Papakura Cares and local marae (Papakura Marae and Manurewa Marae) played crucial roles in providing immediate relief, including housing, food packs, and other essentials.
- The active involvement of community organisations and the increased solidarity among residents were highlighted, drawing

parallels to the communal support experienced during COVID-19 lockdowns.

Workplace Adaptations and Responses

- Employers took steps to ensure continuity of operations and care for staff affected by the floods, such as arranging transport for those who lost vehicles, showcasing adaptability and care in professional settings.
- The respondent's professional connections to educational and substance abuse prevention programs underscored the role of external agencies and community groups in crisis response and recovery.

Personal and Family Reflections

- The narrative touches on the difficulties in emotional regulation and communication within the family unit following the flooding, particularly for the respondent's wife and father.
- The father's experience of second-hand emotional strain while engaged in relief work in affected areas illustrates the broader psychological toll of disaster response on individuals, leading to significant personal reflections and decisions about life priorities and mental health.

Health and Wellbeing

- The respondent's father faced compounded challenges due to his health condition (post-double kidney transplant) and the emotional aftermath of participating in relief efforts, highlighting the intersection of personal health vulnerabilities and external crises.

Social Media's Dual Role

- The power of social media was underscored as both a tool for rapid information sharing and support mobilisation and as a source of constant exposure to disaster-related stressors, illustrating the complex role of digital platforms in modern crisis response and mental health management.

Challenges in Accessing Professional Help

- Identifiable barriers to accessing professional help post-disaster include cost, transportation, and extended wait lists, along with a general lack of awareness about available services, pointing to the need for improved information dissemination and accessibility.

This summary outlines the direct impact of flooding on the respondent and their family, emphasising the emotional, logistical, and professional challenges faced. It highlights the vital role of community support, the efficacy of insurance responses, and the lasting psychological effects of such disasters. The narrative also sheds light on broader themes of community solidarity, the importance of mental health support, and the challenges in accessing post-disaster professional services, offering insights into the multifaceted nature of disaster response and recovery.

Participant 3: Personal and Community Resilience in Crisis

Family Dynamics and Emotional Impact

- The respondent recounts living in Ōtara, South Auckland, with their elderly father during a period of intense weather. The events triggered traumatic memories for the father, reminiscent of tsunamis experienced in Samoa during his youth, causing significant distress and fear within the family.
- Despite the physical safety of their home not being compromised by flooding, the emotional atmosphere was fraught with tension, anxiety, and distress, exacerbated by media consumption.
- Efforts to manage the situation included hospital visits to ensure the father's wellbeing, highlighting challenges in managing mental health during crises.

Community Support and Engagement

- The strong Pacific community in Ōtara rallied together, setting up support stations and utilising social media platforms to coordinate aid distribution, such as food, water, and blankets, showcasing a robust communal response to crisis situations.
- Churches and local organisations played key roles in providing pastoral care and support, especially to those in more affected areas, underlining the importance of local networks and social cohesion during difficult times.

Insights on Preparedness

- The experience served as a wake-up call regarding emergency preparedness. The respondent acknowledges a lack of readiness in terms of having essential supplies and a plan for action in crisis situations.
- Discussions within the household on emergency planning highlighted the need for a comprehensive strategy that considers the diverse needs of their multi-generational family, from children to the elderly.

Mental Health Awareness and Support

- The events triggered anxiety and a heightened sense of vulnerability, not just in the respondent but across family members, leading to a deeper understanding of the importance of mental wellness and support systems.
- The respondent, who works in a primary school and is involved in mental health first aid, reflects on the application of these skills within their family context, emphasising the value of mental health education and support in real-life scenarios.

Community Solidarity and Future Directions

- The narrative highlights the solidarity within the Ōtara community and broader Pacific communities in South Auckland, demonstrating how social media and local networks facilitated effective support and resource sharing.

Personal and Community Growth

- The respondent shares personal growth through the crisis, acknowledging moments of anxiety and the need for self-care and support for support workers. This reflection points to an understanding of the continuous nature of resilience, both personally and within the community.
- The emphasis on learning from the experience and seeking ways to better support each other in future crises reflects a forward-looking perspective, aiming to strengthen individual and community preparedness and wellbeing.

This summary illustrates the profound impact of such events on individuals' mental health and the community's collective response. It brings to light the challenges of emergency preparedness in multi-generational households. The narrative underscores the resilience of the Pacific community in Ōtara and highlights the importance of solidarity, preparedness, and mental health support in building stronger, more resilient communities.

Participant 4: Coping with Crisis: Personal and Professional Perspectives from Kaipara Harbour

Professional Role and Challenges

- The respondent is a health improvement practitioner at Medical Centre in Helensville, focusing on providing free mental health support.
- The community faced significant challenges due to its proximity to Muriwai, where there were casualties among local volunteer firemen, adding to the emotional burden of the staff at Medical Centre.

Personal Connections and Impact

- Personal ties to the tragedies were highlighted, with the respondent's daughter knowing one of the first victims. The respondent's family was directly affected by the trauma of losing community members and helping those grieving.
- Living in a non-floodplain area, the respondent experienced logistical challenges such as being cut off due to surrounding floods, living without power for 11 days, and relying on a generator for electricity.

Community Resilience and Support

- Despite the hardships, the respondent witnessed community solidarity, with neighbours and local farmers actively assisting each other through the floods.
- The medical centre staff ventured into the community, including Muriwai, to offer support and connect people with necessary services, though the effectiveness of these efforts in the face of overwhelming stress was questioned.

Communication and Isolation Challenges

- A significant issue during the crisis was the lack of Wi-Fi and telecoms connectivity, which isolated the community from external communication, forcing reliance on those few with service for updates and check-ins.

- The disruption highlighted the importance of local hubs and personal visits for maintaining contact and offering support within the community.

Long-Term Effects and Observations

- The respondent reflects on the ongoing trauma and stress experienced by those still awaiting decisions on their homes, emphasising the financial and emotional toll of paying both mortgages and rent on uninhabitable properties.
- Observations were made on the long-term mental health impact, including the increased need for medication among community members and the challenges faced by families separated by the disaster.

Preparedness and Community Cohesion

- Personal preparedness and the support within the community, including checking on neighbours and sharing resources, were seen as positive outcomes, strengthening community bonds.
- The crisis underscored the importance of being prepared for emergencies, both in terms of physical supplies and mental health support, and the need for better community infrastructure to handle such crises.

This summary outlines the experiences and insights shared by a health improvement practitioner, focusing on the personal and professional challenges faced during a crisis that affected the Helensville area and surrounding communities. It highlights the emotional toll on individuals and families directly and indirectly involved, the community's efforts to support each other, and the challenges posed by isolation and lack of communication infrastructure. The narrative also reflects on the long-term implications of such events on mental health, community cohesion, and the need for improved preparedness and support mechanisms.

Participant 5: Personal and Professional Impact of the Auckland Emergency

Initial Underestimation and Subsequent Realisation

- The respondent initially underestimated the severity of the weather, realising its seriousness only after receiving a message from someone overseas and noticing Auckland's state of emergency. This led to the cancellation of client meetings and the need to navigate alternative routes to work due to cleanup efforts.

Disruptions to Personal Plans and Family Impact

- Plans with a visiting friend were disrupted, particularly the inability to visit Piha due to closures. Additionally, the respondent's brother had to temporarily move out of his house in Remuera due to the floods, highlighting the broad but indirect effects on the respondent's family and social life.

Professional and Financial Consequences

- The flood had a significant impact on the respondent's profession in sales, with several clients losing their businesses, affecting the respondent's salary and targets. This represents the most substantial effect of the flood on their personal and professional life.

Perception of the Event and Government Response

- Despite the disruptions, the respondent perceives the event as a rare occurrence and expresses trust in the government's capacity

to learn from the situation and improve infrastructure and emergency preparedness for future events. There is an optimistic view that the experience will lead to better planning and response strategies.

Concerns Over Mental Health Support

- While the respondent has confidence in the government's ability to improve physical infrastructure, there is a notable criticism of the current state of mental health support. The respondent and others feel that government-provided mental health resources are insufficient and inadequately executed, highlighting a need for significant improvements in this area.

This summary reflects the experiences and views of an Auckland resident affected by severe weather conditions, focusing on the personal inconveniences and professional challenges encountered. While direct impacts like flooding did not affect the respondent's home, the broader effects on work, family, and social plans were significant. Despite these challenges, the respondent trusts the government to improve infrastructure and preparedness for future crises. However, there is a critical view of the mental health support provided by the government, suggesting a gap in resources and accessibility that needs to be addressed.

Participant 6: Reflections on the Auckland Weather Event: Personal Experiences and Insights

Initial Reactions and Personal Impact

- The respondent shares their initial underestimation of the weather event, which changed upon realising Auckland was in a state of emergency. This shift in perspective was driven by the physical impact on their surroundings and the direct challenges faced, such as navigating floodwaters at home.

Community and Environmental Observations

- Observations of the environment and community highlight the visible devastation, including landslides and damaged infrastructure. The respondent notes a public walkway's destruction, emphasising the financial and logistical challenges in restoration efforts.

Emotional and Psychological Responses

- The event served as a wake-up call to the unpredictability of natural disasters and their capacity to disrupt perceived stability. It stirred discussions on values, emphasising the importance of health, preparedness, and self-reliance over material possessions.

Adapting to New Realities

- The respondent discusses becoming more proactive about local issues such as drainage and water use, highlighting the practical steps taken to mitigate future risks. This shift towards a more engaged and prepared mindset reflects a broader awareness of environmental and infrastructural vulnerabilities.

Insights on Public Services and Family Support

- Experiences during the weather event led to a greater appreciation and utilisation of available public services, such as the Citizen Advice Bureau. However, there was criticism of the city officials' handling of crisis situations, underscoring the need for better planning and communication.

Mental Health Considerations

- The respondent expresses concern over the mental health support available, especially in the context of their son who is under the care of mental health services. The lack of proactive support for vulnerable populations during the crisis highlighted systemic shortcomings in addressing mental health needs adequately.

This summary encapsulates the personal experiences and reflections of an Auckland resident in the aftermath of a severe weather event. It covers the initial reactions, the impact on the community and environment, and the emotional and psychological responses elicited by the crisis. The narrative reveals a journey towards increased awareness and preparedness, criticism of public service responses, and concern for mental health support. Through these insights, the respondent shares a nuanced perspective on living through and learning from natural disasters, emphasising the importance of resilience, community support, and the need for improved systemic responses to mental health.

Participant 7: Coping with Flood Impact: A Teacher's Reflection

Impact on Early Childhood Education

- The respondent, an early childhood teacher, describes the operational challenges faced during the floods, including moving premises and losing resources due to vehicles being flooded. This period also saw temporary closures of their centre, significantly impacting families who relied on their services.

Personal and Social Disruptions

- Plans for a special holiday with overseas visitors in the Bay of Islands were ruined due to the event, underscoring the emotional toll of disrupted personal connections. Additionally, a neighbour's tragic loss in a slip next to the respondent's son's flatting situation brought home the immediacy and severity of the disaster's potential personal impact.

Heightened Awareness and Preparedness

- The experience led to an increased consciousness about the fragility of life and the importance of emergency preparedness. It fostered a realisation of the need for practical measures at both the workplace and home, such as maintaining emergency kits and ensuring readiness for future events.

Community and Government Support Perspectives

- While the respondent values community support highly, they express scepticism about the efficacy of government and public health responses to mental wellbeing needs. Personal experiences with inadequate support services have led to a preference for relying on community and friends for assistance.

Reflections on Vulnerability and Support Needs

- The floods highlighted concerns for those with disabilities or requiring daily assistance, underscoring the lack of targeted support during crises. The respondent stresses the importance of inclusive planning and response strategies to ensure all community members receive necessary aid.

This narrative offers insights into the multifaceted impact of flooding on an early childhood teacher's professional and personal life. It illustrates the disruptions to daily routines, the emotional toll of lost opportunities for connection, and the stark confrontations with disaster's immediate dangers. The experience has catalysed a deeper understanding of vulnerability and the importance of preparedness and resilience. While community support emerges as a crucial resource, there's a clear call for improved governmental and institutional responses, especially in supporting mental wellbeing and ensuring inclusivity in emergency preparedness.

Participant 8: Reflections on Flood Impact: A Learning Support Coordinator's Perspective

Professional and Personal Challenges

- The respondent, a learning support coordinator in a secondary school, describes the flood's impact on students with learning differences and disabilities, emphasising the added layer of difficulty in ensuring their understanding and wellbeing. Personally, flooding nearly reached their home, and they experienced significant losses, including gardening efforts and stored mementos.

Concern for Vulnerable Students

- The psychological impact on students is highlighted, with instances of heightened anxiety during heavy rain and the prolonged effect of such events on their sense of security and routine. The story illustrates broader concerns about preparedness, especially among students in wheelchairs or with specific vulnerabilities during flooding.

Community Support and Lack of Resources

- While personal and iwi-based support played a crucial role in recovery, the respondent notes a lack of governmental or organisational assistance for their situation and the students they support. The absence of effective mental health services for individuals with disabilities is particularly emphasised, underscoring a systemic shortfall.

Reflections on Preparedness and Resilience

- Discussions about emergency preparedness and the reality of needing such measures resonate personally and professionally. The respondent points out the necessity of having practical plans in place, both at home and within educational settings, to ensure safety and continuity in the face of natural disasters.

Hope for Improved Response and Support

- Expressing a desire for better disaster preparedness and inclusivity in future planning, the respondent hopes for a shift in how support is provided, especially for those on the margins of society or with special needs. The narrative calls for a more comprehensive and considerate approach to disaster response and mental health support.

This summary encapsulates the insights of a learning support coordinator affected by flooding in Auckland, focusing on the dual challenges of managing personal losses and supporting vulnerable students through the crisis. It brings to light the heightened anxieties and specific needs of students with learning differences during such events, the community's role in recovery, and the glaring lack of adequate mental health and disaster support services for those with disabilities. Through this reflection, a call is made for greater preparedness, inclusivity, and a proactive approach to ensuring the wellbeing of all community members in the face of future natural disasters.

Participant 9: Navigating Flood Aftermath: A Resident's Experience in Mairangi Bay

Local Impact and Community Response

- The respondent from Mairangi Bay, North Shore, Auckland, discusses the flooding that hit their area, notably affecting the local supermarket and causing it to be knee-deep in water. This led to a positive outcome of a new supermarket but also the closure of several local shops, including a longtime bookstore, due to insurance challenges.

Personal Efforts and Neighbourly Concerns

- On a personal level, the respondent managed to prevent major damage to their home through immediate action, like digging trenches. However, the broader issue of inadequate stormwater infrastructure and the impact of nearby construction exacerbating flooding concerns for neighbours is highlighted.

Frustration with Policy Focus

- The respondent expresses frustration with the government's focus on climate change policies over preparedness and infrastructure to handle such flooding events. There's a sentiment that more practical measures are needed to prevent and mitigate the damage from natural disasters.

Mental Health and Community Support

- Reflecting on the broader picture, the respondent, who owns a mental health software platform, notes an uptick in platform usage following the floods, underscoring the mental health impact of such events. The discussion turns to the inadequacy of mental health services in New Zealand and the potential of technology and community support to fill these gaps.

This narrative from a Mairangi Bay resident details the immediate and ongoing impacts of flooding on the local community, infrastructure challenges, and personal experiences of navigating the aftermath. It brings to light concerns over policy priorities, the need for better preparedness and infrastructure to deal with such events, and the mental health implications for those affected. Through their professional lens in mental health, the respondent advocates for leveraging technology and community networks to improve mental health support, moving beyond awareness to actual service delivery.

Participant 10: Auckland Council Representative

Group Community & Social Recovery Lead Tāmaki Makaurau Recovery Office

Immediate Impact and Personal Involvement

- **Unexpected Involvement:** The respondent, formerly with local government, found herself unexpectedly volunteering for Auckland Emergency Management during the Auckland Anniversary floods, despite not having worked for the council for two years.
- **Direct Experience with the Flood:** Shortly after returning from Ireland, she and her family witnessed first-hand the severe flooding in Henderson, which escalated quickly, marking the beginning of a significant crisis in Auckland.

Professional Response Amidst Personal Concerns

- **Stepping into Action:** Despite her initial hesitation, she volunteered her weekend to support the emergency response, stepping into a chaotic situation without a clear role but ready to assist in any way possible.
- **Balancing Personal and Professional Roles:** Even as the respondent geared up to support the emergency efforts, she received distressing voice messages from friends in Waimauku, leading to immediate actions to ensure their safety, blending her professional and personal concerns.

Challenges in Emergency Management

- **Overwhelming Scale of Response:** The respondent described the initial triage efforts as a blur, with an impossible backlog of calls and the task of setting up welfare centres and needs assessment processes amid escalating needs.

- **Intense and Extended Commitment:** Initially volunteering for what she thought would be a two-week stint, her involvement extended as she took on the role of group welfare manager, coordinating a wide range of support services amidst the chaos.

Reflections on Community and Wellbeing

- **Community-led Responses:** The respondent highlighted the invaluable role of librarians and community-led centres in supporting affected individuals, despite insufficient recognition and support from Auckland Emergency Management.
- **Mental Wellbeing and Recovery Efforts:** She expressed concern over the mental wellbeing of both community members and responders, noting the need for better post-event debriefing and acknowledging the long-term impacts of such crises on individuals' mental health.

Insights on Adaptation and Future Preparedness

- **Adapting to a New Reality:** The respondent underscored the need for systems that can handle the constant cycle of response and recovery, emphasising community adaptation and preparedness for future events.
- **Unaddressed Mental Wellbeing:** She raised concerns that the full mental health impacts of the events have yet to manifest, pointing out the delayed trauma responses among those affected and the necessity for continued support and resilience-building in the community.

The respondent's narrative paints a vivid picture of the immediate and enduring challenges faced by Auckland's communities and emergency responders during and after catastrophic weather events, highlighting the importance of adaptability, support, and community-led initiatives in navigating the path from crisis to recovery.

Participant 11: Kindred Family Services

Engagement and Support Through Crisis

- **Adapting Services for Unprecedented Challenges:** Kindred Family Services played a crucial role during and after a significant crisis, providing counselling and support despite the respondent, not being there from the beginning.
- **Identifying Gaps in Mainstream Systems:** The crisis revealed limitations in existing systems to address unique and unprecedented challenges, highlighting the importance of adaptable and heart-led support mechanisms.

Counselling and Community Support

- **The Evolution of Counselling:** Counselling has become more normalised, encouraging more people to seek help. However, there's a recognition that real healing and resilience-building often occur in group settings, where individuals can find strength in community connections.
- **Barriers to Accessing Support:** Noted were challenges in accessing services due to traditional working hours, suggesting a need for more flexible service delivery that includes evenings and weekends.

Cultural Insights and Future Directions

- **Understanding Individual Resilience:** Insights were shared about personal resilience and adaptation, using examples like the diverse

reactions to blindness, to underscore the variability of coping strategies among individuals.

- **The Power of Group Dynamics:** Emphasised was the synergy found in group work for healing, suggesting a move towards community-based support systems that encourage social interaction and shared experiences.
- **Innovation in Service Delivery:** Mentioned were professionals who are breaking traditional moulds to offer services in more accessible and innovative ways, including those working internationally or in specialised fields.

Community Integration and Sustainable Support

- **Advocating for Community Presence:** The need for services to be delivered within communities rather than from distant locations was highlighted, to overcome barriers and maintain a level of anonymity for individuals seeking support.
- **The Role of Cultural and Familial Structures:** Acknowledged was the intrinsic value of cultural norms, protocols, and the influence of key community figures in facilitating healing and support within a structured yet hidden framework.

Kindred Family Services is navigating the continuum from crisis to community wellbeing, recognising the limitations of conventional systems and the transformative potential of communal support and innovative service delivery.

Participant 12: Auckland Māori

Facing Multiple Disasters:

- The respondent's experience spans across Auckland and Tokomaru Bay, Tairāwhiti, where both her home and her ancestral village were severely affected by floods and Cyclone Gabrielle. In Auckland, the floodwaters inundated the back of her house, while in Tokomaru Bay, the community faced isolation due to destroyed bridges.
- In the wake of these disasters, the respondent was torn between managing her own home's damage and fulfilling her role as a community worker in West Auckland, and also rushing to aid her family and community on the East Coast.

Community and Family Response:

- The respondent highlights the rapid communal response, including the reliance on marae for support and the collective efforts to aid those in affected areas. This response was critical in providing immediate relief and shelter.
- The Armed Forces' involvement in delivering essentials and aiding in recovery efforts in Tokomaru Bay demonstrated a vital support network for the isolated communities, emphasising the importance of external assistance in times of crisis.

Resilience Amidst Adversity:

- Amidst the physical and emotional toll, the respondent reflects on the resilience of her elders and the community, drawing from past experiences like Cyclone Bola. These moments were teaching and unifying, showcasing the strength found in shared knowledge and communal effort.
- The struggle with agencies and NGOs that promised but did not deliver aid exposed a gap in disaster response and support,

emphasising the need for more direct and effective assistance mechanisms.

Insurance and Practical Support:

- The ability to secure insurance for her Auckland property allowed the respondent and her family to find temporary accommodation quickly, demonstrating the importance of prepared insurance and support systems for those affected.
- Her proactive measures in preparing for evacuations and engaging with service providers like Vodafone, which offered essential communication support, underline the critical need for access to services in disaster recovery efforts.

Cultural Strength and Community Projects:

- The recount of rebuilding efforts and the emergence of community projects, like tiny houses and the rejuvenation of the Waima Rugby Club, illustrate the inventive and spirited recovery paths taken by communities. These efforts not only address immediate needs but also foster long-term community spirit and resilience.
- Cultural expressions of healing through haka and songs at events like Matatini and Pasifika festivals highlight the deep-seated resilience and the use of cultural practices as a means of coping and healing from the traumas of natural disasters.

Navigating Loss and Looking Forward:

- Discussions around the challenges of rebuilding, especially in farming communities and for those deeply connected to their land, bring to light the profound psychological and economic impacts of such disasters. The stories of loss, from livestock to ancestral lands, underscore the enduring heartaches that communities face.

- The respondent's active involvement in network building, resource mobilisation, and fostering cultural connections as means of recovery and resilience offers insights into the power of community and kinship in facing adversities.

Conclusion:

- Through personal stories of loss, resilience, and community solidarity, the respondent paints a vivid picture of the hardships

and triumphs faced by her family and wider community in the aftermath of floods and Cyclone Gabrielle. The narrative is a testament to the strength found in collective action, cultural identity, and the enduring spirit of aroha and unity amidst the challenges posed by natural disasters.

Participant 13: Auckland Māori

Impact on Home and Heart:

- The respondent's mother, residing in Puhoi, was forced to evacuate her home due to a landslide, initiating a period of significant stress for the family. Despite living on a hill, the precarious position above a valley led to their home being red-stickered and subsequently burgled, exacerbating their distress.
- Both the respondent and their mother have faced deteriorating mental health as a result of the ordeal. The constant worry about the possibility of future rain-related incidents has particularly affected the respondent, who also struggles with OCD, linking rain with impending disaster.

Financial Strains and Emotional Support:

- Financially, the situation has been burdensome, with the respondent's mother having to juggle mortgage payments while renting elsewhere, placing further stress on the family's wellbeing.
- The absence of extensive family support has left them reliant on community assistance and work-provided counselling sessions. However, these resources have been limited, with funded counselling sessions ceasing after a while, leaving gaps in much-needed emotional support.

Community Aid and the Path to Recovery:

- The local community and friends have offered support through invitations for meals and social care, showing a silver lining of communal solidarity in times of hardship.

- Efforts to obtain grants for essentials like food and furniture for their temporary rental accommodation have been partially successful, providing some relief from the financial and logistical pressures of starting over.

Preparedness for the Future:

- The repeated experiences of landslides and the ongoing threat posed by rain have led to a heightened state of preparedness. The respondent has taken practical steps to be ready for future emergencies, including assembling a grab bag for themselves and their new puppy, indicating a proactive approach to dealing with potential natural disasters.

Reflections on Resilience and Anxiety:

- Despite the passage of time, the impact of the landslide and the associated upheavals remain a source of anxiety for the respondent, especially during rainy weather. This enduring worry highlights the lasting effects of natural disasters on individuals' mental health and their perception of safety.
- The journey through the aftermath of the landslide has been a testament to the family's resilience, underscoring the importance of community support, mental health resources, and personal preparedness in navigating the challenges posed by natural disasters.

Participant 14: Auckland Māori

Anxiety and Vigilance Amidst Weather Events:

- The respondent experienced significant anxiety due to the rising waters, fearing direct impact on their property. This led to a night of minimal sleep, constant monitoring, and efforts to prevent water intrusion, despite the property ultimately remaining safe.
- An unexpected leak in the roof discovered months later, caused by displaced tiles during strong winds, heightened the respondent's anxiety towards weather events, fostering a vigilant attitude towards home maintenance and weather forecasts.

Family Support and Community Coordination:

- The flooding significantly affected the respondent's parents, prompting a family-wide response to assist with cleanup and repairs. This situation brought the respondent closer geographically to their parents, intensifying their involvement in their parents' recovery and resilience strategies.
- The respondent played a key role in monitoring and supporting their extended family and friends, including financial guidance and physical help, demonstrating a heightened sense of responsibility and community coordination.

Preparedness and Long-term Concerns:

- Following the initial flood, the respondent and their family took proactive steps to enhance their preparedness for future weather events, including sourcing additional sandbags. This readiness reflects a broader anxiety and awareness around the implications of climate change and its unpredictable nature.

- The parents' decision to keep sandbags in place, partly out of convenience and partly as a precaution, illustrates a resigned acceptance of recurring weather threats and the practical adjustments families make to cope with these challenges.

Navigating Financial and Emotional Recovery:

- Despite the availability of financial support from institutions and insurance claims, the respondent observed a reluctance within their family to pursue these avenues fully. This hesitance was attributed to the perceived hassle of administrative processes and a preference to manage independently unless absolutely necessary.
- This situation highlights a broader theme of resilience and self-reliance, even in the face of significant challenges, and raises questions about the balance between seeking external assistance and relying on personal resources to recover from natural disasters.

Reflections on Community and Personal Resilience:

- The respondent's experiences with flooding, both personally and within their wider network, underscore the ongoing stress and logistical challenges of recovery, particularly in terms of insurance and repair work. Such experiences reflect a shared vulnerability within the community and a collective endeavour to rebuild and prepare for future uncertainties.
- Personal and community resilience emerges as a central theme, with a focus on the importance of preparedness, support networks, and the ability to adapt to and overcome the challenges posed by increasingly unpredictable weather patterns.

Participant 15: Auckland Māori

Challenges Faced by Family and Community:

- The respondent recounts minor flooding in her garage, juxtaposed with her family's more severe experience of flooding down the coast, which highlighted financial struggles, especially under the constraints of receiving a benefit.
- The family's ordeal is situated within a broader community context affected by recent weather events, which disrupted normal life and infrastructure, particularly noting the vulnerability of roads to rain damage and the creation of potholes.

Community Response and Resilience:

- The marae played a crucial role in sheltering both locals and visitors stranded by the weather, illustrating the strength and adaptability of the community in times of need. The respondent praises the community's functional solidarity under pressure, with around ten marae in the township stepping up to support.
- Despite diverse backgrounds, the community's inclusive attitude ensured that everyone received support, reinforcing bonds and mutual respect among residents.

Personal Reflections on Community Ties:

- The respondent experiences a sense of being an outsider when returning home due to her relocation, which has altered her access to familiar community support like doctor visits, highlighting the nuances of belonging and distance in community relationships.
- Anticipation for a 150-year school reunion provides a positive focal point for the respondent and others to reconnect with their roots and celebrate community history, offering a respite from recent adversities.

Impact of Flooding on Personal Space:

- The respondent details the immediate impact of flooding on her living space, including water intrusion into her garage and near her room, underscoring the tangible disruptions caused by such events on personal environments and belongings.
- The response to property damage, including insurance delays and remediation efforts, sheds light on the logistical and emotional challenges of recovering from flood damage.

Ongoing Concerns and Support Networks:

- The narrative reveals ongoing anxiety related to rain, shared between the respondent and her landlady, highlighting a communal sense of vulnerability to weather events and the importance of supportive relationships in navigating these anxieties.
- The conversation with the mental health professional underscores the widespread and perhaps under-recognised emotional toll of natural disasters, prompting a reflection on the need for broader awareness and support for affected individuals.

Conclusion:

- The respondent's story weaves together themes of personal and community resilience, the challenges of physical and emotional recovery from natural disasters, and the importance of support networks in fostering a sense of safety and normalcy amidst ongoing vulnerabilities.

Participant 16: Auckland Pasifika

Personal and Community Experience

- The respondent resides in Rānui, Auckland, which experienced significant flooding. The area's geography, with a creek running through and a dip in the landscape, contributed to the severity of the flooding, particularly affecting the respondent's auntie's home at the lowest point.

Family and Housing Challenges

- The respondent faced a uniquely challenging year due to their house burning down during the last Auckland lockdown, preceding the flooding. The rebuilding process was slow, taking three years, with the family only returning home in October of the previous year. The flooding added to the stress and sense of hopelessness, especially as insurance and rebuilding efforts were already strained.

Community Response

- Despite personal losses, the community's solidarity was evident, with neighbours, family, and local organisations coming together to support each other. The floods brought the community closer, emphasising the importance of collective resilience and mutual aid.

Insurance and Financial Struggles

- Dealing with insurance was a major challenge, with delays and complications in claims processing. The flooding exacerbated these difficulties, adding to the financial and emotional toll on affected families.

Mental Health and Support Networks

- The respondent highlighted the importance of mental health support during such crises. While their immediate network provided significant support, there was a recognition of the need for broader community and professional mental health resources to help cope with the aftermath of such events.

Reflections on Preparedness and Resilience

- The experience has led to a greater awareness of disaster preparedness and the need for community support mechanisms. The respondent expressed gratitude for the support received and emphasised the resilience shown by their children and the wider community in facing these challenges.

Conclusions:

- This summary captures the experiences of a resident in Rānui, Auckland, who navigated the aftermath of significant flooding in their community. Amid personal challenges, including recovering from a house fire, the respondent and their family faced additional trials due to the floods. The narrative underscores the community's collective effort to overcome adversity, the critical role of support networks, and the importance of mental health resources in rebuilding and healing. It also reflects on the lessons learned about preparedness, resilience, and the value of community solidarity in times of crisis.

Participant 17: Auckland Māori

Experiencing Multiple Floods

Sequence of Flood Events

- The respondent mentioned experiencing a series of flood events, not just two but around four or five, leading to a non-existent summer. The significant floods noted were Cyclone Gabrielle and another shortly after Christmas, marking a period of continuous struggle against water damage.

Impact on Home and Neighbourhood

- The respondent's home and street turned into a river due to the floods, with the backyard resembling a flowing water body. Despite being situated on a slight slope, which theoretically could have offered some protection, the surrounding area was heavily affected, with neighbours' trees falling down, although, fortunately, none caused direct damage to the respondent's property.

Emotional and Physical Toll

- The continuous flooding caused immense stress and a feeling of shock among the respondent and their family. Efforts to organise and protect the property were challenging amidst the chaos. Debris was a notable issue, though the respondent's property miraculously escaped major damage thanks to its positioning between two taller houses with larger trees.

Garden and Outdoor Areas Destroyed

- The respondent's recreational garden and vegetable garden, including tomatoes and pot plants, were completely destroyed, with only the netting remaining. This loss contributed to the overall sense of shock and devastation felt by the family.

Family Response and Coping Strategies

- Three generations of the respondent's extended family were present during the floods, with measures taken to protect the home and provide emotional support to the younger family

members. Despite the terrifying conditions, including the loud noise of the storm and the family dog's distress, the respondent tried to maintain a brave front, engaging in activities to distract and comfort the family.

Observations and Concerns About Water Management

- The respondent expressed concern over the management of surface water and the impact of housing and building consents on water flow. They highlighted the need for better planning to accommodate the increased volume of water due to construction and urban development.

Reflections and Future Preparedness

- The experience has led the respondent to pay more attention to weather forecasts and take preparatory measures against future floods. There is a resigned anticipation that flooding may worsen, prompting a shift in focus from aesthetics to securing the property against potential water damage.

Community and Government Response

- While the respondent and their family did not seek external assistance, they emphasised the importance of community support, particularly for older and vulnerable neighbours. Post-flood, there has been an increase in communication and preparedness within the community, including sharing phone numbers and discussing protective measures.

Personal and Community Recovery

- The conversation reflects a journey from immediate crisis response through recovery and towards a cautious eye on the future. Despite the personal and communal challenges faced, there is a sense of resilience and a commitment to better preparedness for whatever weather-related challenges may come next.

Participant 18: Auckland Māori

Initial Experience with Flooding

- The respondent and their family experienced significant flooding in their home during the first flood event. Despite their efforts to mitigate the damage by redirecting water, the flooding reached knee height, causing stress and loss of property.

Repeated Flooding and Preparedness

- With subsequent flooding events, the respondent's family became more prepared by setting up sandbags and pumps. Although they managed to reduce damage, the repeated incidents led to mental fatigue and a sense of dread with every forecast of rain.

Community Response and Assistance

- The local community banded together during the floods, with neighbours assisting each other. Despite this, emergency services were overwhelmed, and the family struggled to receive timely help. A neighbour played a crucial role in securing grants for damaged goods.

Insurance and Financial Strain

- The process of claiming insurance was lengthy and complicated, taking almost a year to settle. The financial burden of repairs and replacements was significant, even with insurance coverage.

Mental Health Concerns

- The repeated flooding events took a toll on the respondent's mental health, leading to a desire for support. However, accessing mental health services proved challenging, with the system overwhelmed and not prioritising their situation as urgent.

Call for Better Mental Health Support

- The respondent emphasises the importance of mental health support over financial assistance, expressing a preference for online resources for ease of access. The lack of focused mental health support during the crisis was a significant gap.

Conclusions

- This summary outlines the experiences of a family in Auckland affected by multiple flooding events. It highlights the challenges of preparing for and recovering from such disasters, the community's role in providing immediate assistance, and the financial and emotional impact of the floods. The respondent's narrative underscores the critical need for accessible mental health support during natural disasters, pointing out the shortcomings in the current system and expressing a need for services that cater to the modern preference for online access.

Participant 19: Auckland Māori

Initial Experience and Immediate Response

- The respondent was away at a festival when their home in Kelston, Auckland, was flooded during the Auckland Anniversary flood. Despite being out of town, they faced the distress of knowing their home was affected while their children dealt with the situation.
- The flooding damaged the lower level of their two-story house, affecting bedrooms, a kitchenette, the lounge area, and the garage. Efforts by the respondent's family to divert water were unsuccessful, leading to significant damage.

Family and Community Effort

- The respondent's family, consisting of young and adult children, worked together to mitigate the flooding impact, using bricks to divert water and protect the house as much as possible. Personal items and parts of the house were damaged or destroyed, prompting a focus on salvage and cleanup.

Insurance Challenges and Property Loss

- The flood led to a lengthy and frustrating insurance claim process, compounded by the need to document damaged items and wait for available resources, like skip bins, for disposal. The bureaucratic hurdles added to the stress of recovery.

Displacement and Housing Challenges

- One of the respondent's sons was displaced due to the flood damage, leading to months of inconvenience and adjustment. Eventually, the family received a short-notice eviction from their

rental property due to required repairs, exacerbating the difficulty of finding new accommodation amidst widespread displacement.

Mental and Emotional Toll

- The flood events and subsequent challenges, including an eviction notice and the loss of a family member, took a significant mental and emotional toll on the respondent. The process of recovery was marred by dissatisfaction with the local government's response and a sense of lingering injustice for those affected.

Community Support and Preparedness for Future Events

- In the aftermath, the respondent's family became more prepared for potential future floods, ensuring they had necessary supplies and plans, especially for their pets. Despite moving to a new home, concerns about flooding persist due to previous experiences and knowledge of the area's vulnerability.

Conclusion

- This narrative provides a detailed account of the challenges faced by a family in Kelston, Auckland, following significant flooding events. It highlights the physical damage to their home, the emotional strain of dealing with displacement and insurance, and the broader implications of community and governmental response to such disasters. The story underscores the resilience of the affected individuals and the importance of support networks in overcoming the adversities presented by natural disasters.

Participant 20: Auckland Māori

Impact on Local Community

- The respondent was not directly affected but shared stories from friends in the Bay of Plenty area, describing the significant emotional and physical damage caused by flooding. The whole community, including marae and local townships, rallied together to support those affected.

Response and Assistance

- Utilising their professional network, the respondent coordinated with civil engineering contacts to provide assistance in the region, highlighting the collective effort of the whānau community. Recovery was ongoing, with notable improvements a month prior to the conversation, yet considerable cleanup work remained.

Challenges with Insurance

- A major concern for the affected residents was dealing with insurance companies, particularly the difficulty in claims processing and the subsequent spike in premiums. The structural damage and loss of household items compounded the financial strain on the families.

Community Solidarity

- The solidarity extended beyond individual efforts, involving local businesses, marae, and the broader community in the recovery process. Friends, family, and even MPs contributed to the relief efforts, underscoring the collective approach to overcoming the challenges posed by the flooding.

Conclusion

- This summary captures the efforts and challenges faced by the Bay of Plenty community in the wake of significant flooding. Through the accounts shared by the respondent, the narrative reflects a strong sense of community resilience, with various groups and individuals coming together to aid those impacted. While the physical and emotional toll was evident, the unified response highlighted the community's determination to rebuild and recover. Insurance-related difficulties emerged as a critical concern, underscoring the need for more supportive measures in the aftermath of natural disasters.

Participant 21: Auckland Māori

Respondent's Role and Initial Observations

- The respondent, involved with Māori wardens, detailed their experience assisting the community during Cyclone Gabrielle, focusing on mental health and wellbeing.
- They noted the profound despair and loss of hope among community members, some of whom lost everything.

Personal and Family Challenges

- Concurrently, the respondent managed personal grief with the passing of their mother, alongside coordinating with the New Zealand Army and police for safe travel arrangements due to the cyclone's impact.
- This period was marked by heightened anxiety and mental health struggles, both personally and across the community.

Mental Health Struggles and Support

- The respondent emphasised the varied impacts of mental health challenges, including depression and anxiety, exacerbated by the cyclone's aftermath.
- Their work with Te Whatu Ora and as a Māori warden highlighted the importance of early departure from work to ensure safety and manage stress.

Observations on Community and Housing Impact

- Despite the respondent's household being relatively unaffected due to its elevated location, the devastation in nearby areas and the broader community was shocking, especially as viewed through social media.

Historical Context and Mental Health Concerns

- The respondent compared Cyclone Gabrielle's impact to their childhood experience of Cyclone Bola in 1987, noting the

significant difference in perception and impact on mental health today.

- They stressed the increasing issues surrounding mental distress in the community, exacerbated by natural disasters and societal pressures.

Training and Emotional Management

- Highlighting their training with the Auckland Emergency Management Team, the respondent shared how preparedness helped them manage their emotional response while supporting others in distress.
- They also discussed the challenges of maintaining emotional strength when facing personal and communal struggles, including financial stress and the psychological impact on their children.

Support Systems and Community Efforts

- The respondent detailed their efforts to support not only their immediate family but also the wider community, including vulnerable elders and those directly affected by the floods.
- They advocated for community unity and the importance of self-preparation and mutual assistance in times of crisis, emphasising the value of knowledge sharing for future resilience.

Reflections on Training, Support, and Future Preparedness

- The respondent's involvement in emergency response and mental health support showcases a deep commitment to community welfare, despite the personal toll.
- They underscored the necessity of ongoing training, community collaboration, and a proactive approach to disaster preparedness and mental health support, aiming for a stronger, more resilient community fabric.



QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

Mā te whakarongo, ka mōhio. Mā te mōhio, ka mātau. Mā te mātau, ka ora.

Through listening comes awareness, through awareness comes understanding, through understanding comes knowledge, through knowledge comes life and wellbeing.

Welcome to the Community Wellbeing Survey!

We appreciate your participation in this important survey conducted by SIL Research on behalf of the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand.

This research is about community wellbeing, particularly in the aftermath of the extreme weather events in 2023. It explores challenges faced by communities, factors contributing to community resilience, and various other aspects. Additionally, the study highlights communities' inherent strengths and their perspectives on community recovery.

This survey takes approximately 10-15 minutes. As a token of our appreciation for your participation, at the end of the survey, you have the option to enter a draw to win one of three \$200 Prezzy cards.

The survey is anonymous, and you won't be personally identified in any feedback or results presented. SIL Research is a Napier based research

company and, as a member of the Research Association of New Zealand, we strictly adhere to industry privacy and confidentiality practices.

About you

This short initial set of questions provides us with some demographic information about you. We collect this to make sure we survey a range of people from different backgrounds.

1. **What area do you live in?** (select from list)
2. **You mentioned you live in {{Q1}}, which suburb (or township if rural) do you live in?** (please type in response)
3. **Which of the following age groups do you fit into?** (please select your answer)
 - 18-24
 - 25-39
 - 40-54
 - 55-64
 - 65+
4. **I am a...** (please select your answer)
 - Female
 - Male
 - Another gender
5. **Which ethnic group(s) do you identify with** (select all that apply)
 - NZ European/ Pākehā
 - European
 - Māori
 - Pacific Peoples
 - Asian
 - Middle Eastern/Latin American/African
 - Other (please specify)
6. **Which best describes your household?** (please select your answer)
 - Live alone
 - Couple no children

- Parent(s) children at home
- Other family members
- Flatmates
- Empty nesters
- Other (please specify)

Your community

7. **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about you and your community?** (please rate each)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I know my closest neighbours by their first name	1	2	3	4	5
I know I have friends or relatives I can count on in times of trouble	1	2	3	4	5
I know people in my community take care of, or provide help for, one another	1	2	3	4	5
I spend enough time with the people I love most	1	2	3	4	5
I have felt lonely at least some of the time in the past two weeks	1	2	3	4	5

8. People in New Zealand have different lifestyles, cultures and beliefs, that express who they are. How easy or hard is it for you to be yourself in the area you live in? (please select your answer)

Very hard	Somewhat hard	Neither hard nor easy	Somewhat easy	Very easy
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Your safety

9. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about safety? (please rate each)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Overall, I feel safe in the area I live	1	2	3	4	5
I feel safe walking alone in my neighbourhood after dark	1	2	3	4	5

10. Compared to before the extreme weather events in 2023, how do you now feel? (please select your answer)

Definitely less safe	Somewhat less safe	About the same	Somewhat more safe	Definitely more safe
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The place you live in

11. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (please rate each)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree

			nor disagree		
My neighbourhood is a good place to live	1	2	3	4	5
I see myself living in the area in the next 5 year	1	2	3	4	5

12. In the last three months, have you personally experienced, or seen someone else experience, prejudice or intolerance, being treated unfairly or excluded? (for example, when online or out and about in the area you live) (select one)

- Yes – myself
- Yes – someone else
- Yes – myself and someone else
- No – not experienced or seen this
- Unsure

13. [If Yes], You mentioned you and/or someone else have experienced prejudice or intolerance. Was this because of... ? (select all that apply)

- Gender
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Physical health condition or impairment
- Mental health condition
- Religious beliefs
- Sexual orientation
- Or something else (please specify) _____
- Prefer not to say

Your health

14. How would you rate your own personal health at the moment?
(please select your answer)

Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good
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15. Over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems? (please rate each)

	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge	0	1	2	3
Not being able to stop or control worrying	0	1	2	3
Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	0	1	2	3

2023 extreme weather events and Cyclone Gabrielle

16. Overall, what impact, if any, have extreme weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle) had on you (or your family)? (please select your answer)

Very negative	Somewhat negative	No impact	Somewhat positive	Very positive
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17. If negative or positive, if you feel OK with talking about it, what was that? (please type your response)

18. After the extreme weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle), have you or someone in your household experienced any of the following? (please select all that apply)

Potential or actual loss of employment or income	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional work pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional financial burden	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loss of sentimental items	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns about health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeling worry if there is a red or orange weather warning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeling anxious when it rains	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dealing with insurance issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having to move home permanently or temporarily	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relationship problems (eg arguing with partner/friends/children)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loss of social activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns about the value of your house	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult decisions concerning pets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeling sad about changed landscape as a result of flooding	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeling sad because other people were affected	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>

Or something else (please specify)

19. Thinking about things you do differently as a result of the extreme weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle), what, if anything, do you do differently? (please type your response) *Note: for example, being more prepared for emergencies, adjusting your daily routines, modifying travel plans, or any other adaptation you've made.*

20. What do you believe are the key factors that helped (please type your response)

- your community cope with the extreme weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle)?
- yourself or your family/ whānau?

21. And what, if anything, made it challenging or difficult for your community to respond to the extreme weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle)? (please type your response)

Your wellbeing

22. In your own words, what does 'wellbeing' mean? (please type your response)

23. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (please rate each)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I have many words I can think of to communicate about wellbeing	1	2	3	4	5
I know a lot about wellbeing	1	2	3	4	5
I know how to improve my wellbeing	1	2	3	4	5
I have the skills to understand information about wellbeing	1	2	3	4	5
I have the skills to express myself about wellbeing	1	2	3	4	5
I can communicate about wellbeing in multiple ways (e.g., writing, listening, drawing) to suit	1	2	3	4	5

the needs of people I talk to					
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24. How do you prefer to seek information about wellbeing? (select all that apply)

- Search online (e.g. google or other)
- Talk to a friend or family member
- See my GP or health professional
- See a counsellor
- Ring a helpline
- Social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, or other)
- Buy a book or magazine on the topic
- Find a booklet or pamphlet
- Visit church or talk to a spiritual advisor
- Other (please specify)

25. Are there any barriers you face in finding information about wellbeing? (please type your response)

26. In your opinion, what could be done to improve awareness of wellbeing in your community? (please type your response)

Your life overall

28. , how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life as a whole at the moment? (please select your answer)

Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
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29. Would you say your life is better or worse than before the extreme weather events in 2023 (including Cyclone Gabrielle)? (please select your answer)

Much worse	Somewhat worse	No change	Somewhat better	Much better
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30. Please indicate for each of the five statements which is closest to how you have been feeling over the past two weeks? (please rate each)

	At no time	Some of the time	Less than half the time	More than half the time	Most of the time	All of the time
I have felt cheerful and in good spirits	0	1	2	3	4	5
I have felt calm and relaxed	0	1	2	3	4	5
I have felt active and vigorous	0	1	2	3	4	5
I woke up feeling fresh and rested	0	1	2	3	4	5
My daily life has been filled with things that interest me	0	1	2	3	4	5

27. Overall

Your education and work

31. Which of the following best describes your highest academic qualification? (please select your answer)

- No formal education
- NCEA Level 1 or school certificate
- Sixth form / NCEA Level 2
- Seventh form / NCEA Level 3
- Certificate - e.g. Pre-trade Certificate, Trade Certificate, National or New Zealand Certificate
- Undergraduate Diploma
- Bachelors degree
- Postgraduate qualification (Masters or PHD)

32. What is your current employment situation? (please select your answer)

- Full-time employee
- Part-time employee
- Business owner / director
- Casual
- Unemployed, actively looking for work
- Unemployed and not looking for work
- Parenting
- Retired
- Beneficiary
- Education and training
- Other (please specify)

33. Which of the following best describes your household's annual income before tax? (please select your answer)

- \$20,000 or less
- \$20,001-\$30,000
- \$30,001-\$50,000
- \$50,001-\$70,000
- \$70,001-\$100,000
- More than \$100,001
- I'd rather not say
- Other (please specify)

34. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (please rate each)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I have enough money to meet everyday needs	1	2	3	4	5

Survey end

In January 2024, we will host a series of online meetings to discuss the impacts of extreme weather events on communities and overall well-being. Our goal is to explore how the Mental Health Foundation can contribute to recovery by actively listening to and reflecting the experiences of New Zealanders. All selected focus group participants will receive a \$50 Visa Prezzy card for participating. Are you interested in attending one of these meetings?

- No
- Yes (please provide your name and email address) _____

Would you like to go to the draw to win 1 of 3 \$200 Prezzy cards for completing this survey?

- No
- Yes* (please provide your name and a phone number)

For quality control purposes you may get a call from us to check some of the details collected are accurate, is this ok?

- No
- Yes* (please provide your name and a phone number)

*Note: Your personal information is protected by privacy legislation (Privacy Act 2020) and the Unsolicited Electronic Messages Act 2007.

Your information is also protected under the Code of Practice of the European Society for Opinion and Market Research (ESOMAR).

This information (e.g. name and contact number) is collected for quality control and/or prize draw only. As soon as these processes are completed, we will remove your name and contact details from your personal survey/interview results.

If you choose not to enter your contact information, we might be unable to include your response in the analysis.

Your personal information is kept confidential. It is not released to our clients or to third parties.

If you have any questions, please contact us at nataliya.rik@silresearch.co.nz, or 068341996, or PO Box 264, Napier.

Thank you for completing the survey.

The survey is anonymous. All responses will be aggregated, and you won't be personally identified in any feedback or results presented. SIL Research is a Napier based research company and member of the Research Association of New Zealand; we strictly adhere to industry privacy and confidentiality practices.

If you would like to contact someone at Mental Health Foundation regarding this survey, please contact Tihana Babic, at tihana.babic@mentalhealth.org.nz.