

The **Whānau Māori Community and Marae Response Fund** (the Response Fund) was launched on 24 March 2020 to support whānau, communities, marae and businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The **first wave** of investments (as at 8 April 2020) supported

106

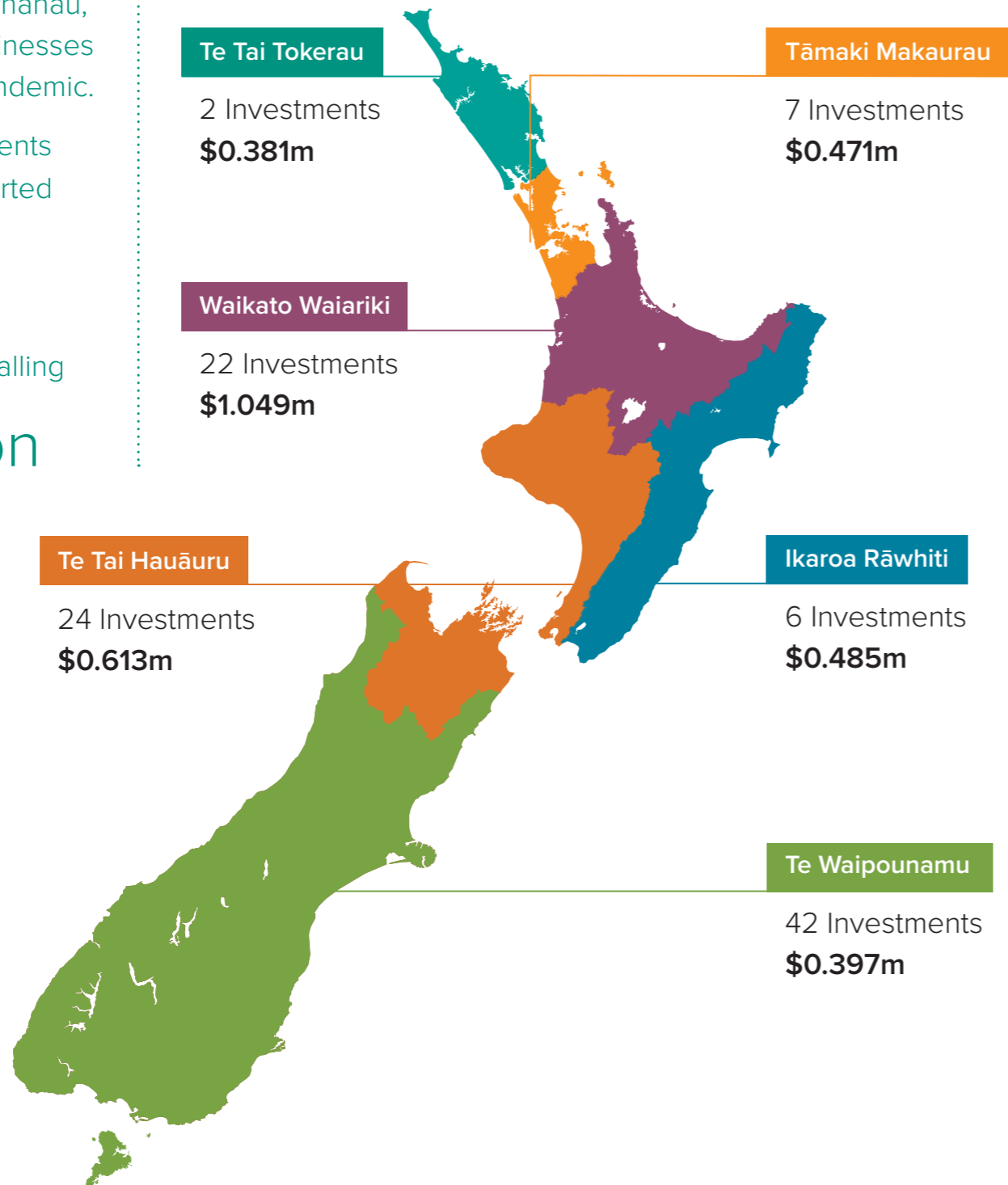
regional and national COVID-related projects totalling

\$3.9 million

of the total \$10 million Response Fund.

Where were the first wave investments?

Breakdown of first wave investments by Te Puni Kōkiri region.



Investment impacts

In April 2020 we carried out an impact evaluation of the Response Fund's first wave of investments 2019/20. Key findings include:

The Fund was essential in providing **immediate relief** to vulnerable whānau, communities, marae and businesses. A unique point of difference was our **rapid response** through Te Puni Kōkiri regional networks and trusted partners.

Immediate needs addressed by the first wave investments were:

- welfare support
- workforce capability
- co-ordination of regional efforts
- technology and business support.

“Having the money straight away allowed us to help [whānau] straight away when the lockdown happened” (Kaitono)



Flexible fund criteria supported a broad range of needs and requirements



“We started planning in our community before lockdown. The immediate funding allowed us to put our plan into action... With the broad definition of support, we were able to help whānau in all kinds of ways, kai, medication and transport to our local community-based assessment centres. The flexibility was great” (Kaitono)

Business continuity and resilience

The support included providing organisations with IT equipment necessary to continue to operate under lockdown so that they could provide health or social services to their communities, and establish communication systems and business mentor services.

“We are fortunate to have a close connection to [a radio station] as a platform to communicate... This has allowed us to extend our reach into homes, along with social media and other methods of communication, to tell our community ‘we are here for you!’” (Kaitono)



Supporting Māori organisations to continue to operate under lockdown and reach vulnerable whānau, pakeke, kaumātua and kuia



“We have combined our [provider] databases to identify vulnerable whānau who require support, including whānau who are likely to lose their jobs during lockdown” (Kaitono)

Enabling Kaitono to meet the needs of their own communities

This included establishing:

- community-based assessment centres
- community safe zones
- community communication systems
- distribution hubs for kai, care packs, personal protection equipment, IT equipment and medication.

Collaboration between Māori providers, government agencies and local authorities

“We have been able to work alongside the police and social workers to ensure that the needs of our most vulnerable are being met.” (Kaitono)



Long-term collaboration and mutually beneficial operating models



“We are working as a community and not working in silos. Maybe we will continue to work like this post-COVID.... There has been huge mind shifts during this vulnerable period.” (Kaitono)



Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust staff members Rachael Owen and Donna Tilyard-Davies prepare kai packs for kaumātua during lockdown.



Tia Taiaroa supports kaumātua to navigate technology and order kai online during the pandemic.



Angela Anderson (left) and Sarah Galvin, Minginui/Te Whaiti welfare responders supporting whānau in need.

Future focus of the Response Fund

Suggestions from kaitono on what future support the Response Fund could provide for whānau, marae, communities or businesses going forward.

Suggestion	Rationale
Support for vulnerable whānau	There will continue to be a high need for support for vulnerable whānau and communities during the recovery phase. Innovative ways to engage with whānau may be necessary to target hard to reach communities.
Support for community collaboration, coordination and continuity planning	The findings suggest community collaboration and coordination is required for an effective response. Recovery and future resilience planning are more relevant now at a community, business, marae and whānau level as we emerge from lockdown and look to the recovery phase.
Support for businesses	Many Māori businesses are affected by loss of income, redundancies and downturn in trade. Increased focus on employment and training (or re-training) opportunities will be required. Other support including mentoring, professional advice or financial stimulus may also assist in the recovery phase.
Support a co-ordinated cross-agency approach to funding service providers	The interviews and reports revealed that many government agencies are funding the same organisations to achieve the same outcomes. Given this, there could be an opportunity to have a co-ordinated approach to funding kaitono.

