

## Food Secure Communities Programme and KickStart Breakfast funding

### Initiative Sponsors: Ministry of Social Development

#### Description:

This initiative provides \$38 million over four years to support the continuation of the Food Secure Communities (FSC) and the Kickstart Breakfast (KSB) in schools programmes.

#### Food Secure Communities

Budget 2026 provides ongoing funding of \$8 million per year to support national and regional food distribution infrastructure to distribute purchased and rescued bulk food to community providers at low or no cost. The national and regional food distribution infrastructure and community food providers jointly distribute more than 4.5 million meals a month.

In addition, \$7 million is being reprioritised from the 2025/26 year to continue funding community food support and food security initiatives for one year in 2026/27 (bringing total funding to \$15 million in that year):

- food providers and hubs to purchase and/or distribute food through foodbanks and community centres to meet the increased demand for food support (\$6 million)
- food security initiatives which increase community food resilience and self-sufficiency (\$1 million).

Demand has remained elevated, largely driven by ongoing cost of living pressures. Funding for the programme was due to expire at the end of June 2026, and this continuation recognises the ongoing need for additional support across communities.

#### *What is the funding for?*

The \$15 million investment for 2026/27 will support and maintain national and regional food distribution infrastructure, food security initiatives, and food providers and hubs. The table below provides a more detailed overview of the investment:

Amount of Funding	Purpose of Funding	Description
\$8 million	Infrastructure	Maintain a national and regional food distribution infrastructure to cost-effectively

		distribute purchased and rescued bulk food to community providers at low or no cost and during emergencies and disruptive events. This funding is baselined, i.e. ongoing.
\$1.0 million	Food Security Initiatives	Maintain and invest in food security initiatives that increase community food resilience and self-sufficiency. This funding is time-limited for one year.
\$6.0 million	Community Food Support	Continue to support food providers and hubs to purchase and/or distribute food via foodbanks and community centres to meet the increased demand for food support. This funding is time-limited for one year.

#### *Who will receive the funding?*

The investment is to maintain existing food providers, hubs, and partners. In 2026/27, the funding will be supporting up to 50 food hubs, 60 community food providers, such as food banks, and 13 food initiatives.

The investment will also continue support for our three national partners:

- New Zealand Food Network (NZFN) supports over 60 permanent food hubs and over 100 other food hubs that experience increased demand
- Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance (AFRA) and Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective that support food rescue, capability building, and data and information sharing efforts.

#### *Evaluation of the FSC investment*

MSD commissioned Allen + Clarke to conduct an independent evaluation to assess the effectiveness of FSC investment in food distribution infrastructure and community food provision.

Evaluation findings indicate that the FSC investment has been effective in building a functioning food distribution infrastructure at national, regional, and local levels.

Key findings show that the FSC programme and investment:

- is achieving its intended short- and medium-term outcomes.
- has enhanced the efficiency of food distribution at scale.
- has demonstrated efficacy in achieving household food security outcomes.
- supports filling gaps in reaching food insecure households.
- has been effective in building provider capacity to meet diverse household needs.
- has been effective in building system capacity and strengthening emergency response capability.
- has strengthened the food security system's ability to respond in emergency situations.
- works as an integrated system, with capacity at each of national, regional and local levels required to move food through the system to households.
- is only partially sustainable without continued funding.

MSD has released the findings of this evaluation on their website:

<https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/evaluation/evaluation-of-the-food-secure-communities-programme/evaluation-of-the-food-secure-communities-programme.html>

### **Kickstart Breakfasts programme**

The KickStart Breakfasts programme (KSB) supports families with the greatest need – providing a healthy, nutritious breakfast so that children can fully participate in the learning environment. The government is increasing its commitment to KickStart with ongoing funding of \$1.5 million per year.

This programme is a unique partnership between Government, Fonterra, Sanitarium, and school communities that helps young people achieve their best at school by providing healthy and nutritious breakfasts. KSB provides food and guidance to help schools to run a successful, sustainable breakfast club to meet their needs.

Since it started in 2008, the programme has provided more than 80 million breakfasts. Currently KSB delivers breakfasts to approximately 46,000 children, with participation expected to increase to around 49,000 children by December 2027.

Government funding for the programme was due to expire at the end of June 2026, but will now continue on an ongoing basis. Government funding contributes to product and administration costs for the programme.

**Financial Impact:****Vote Social Development Opex:**

(\$m)		2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30 & outyears	Total
FSC – distribution infrastructure	-	8.000	8.000	8.000	8.000	<b>32.000</b>
Reprioritised funding	(7.000)	-	-	-	-	<b>(7.000)</b>
FSC – food security initiatives and community food support	-	7.000	-	-	-	<b>7.000</b>
KickStart Breakfasts	-	1.500	1.500	1.500	1.500	<b>6.000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>(7.000)</b>	<b>16.500</b>	<b>9.500</b>	<b>9.500</b>	<b>9.500</b>	<b>38.000</b>