

Rotorua | Johnsonville | Queenstown 2020



Te Ope Whakaora

Social Policy & Parliamentary Unit

Working for the eradication of poverty in New Zealand

www.salvationarmy.org.nz/socialpolicy

THE
STATE
OF
OUR
COMMUNITIES



- The State of our Communities (SOOC) 2020 is a snapshot view of Rotorua, Johnsonville and Queenstown.
- The aim of SOOC 2020 is capture the voices of the community. The questions in the survey included;
 - What do you like about your community
 - What are your concerns or fears about your community?
 - How were you impacted by COVID-19?
 - What are the key social issues for you with Election 2020 coming up?
 - What changes would you like to see in your community in 5 years?
- Key informants are also interviewed from the community to offer a different perspective on the community. SOOC 2020 key informants included teachers, local iwi, local council, social service providers, business representatives and a police officer.

The Salvation Army released our own Covid-19 Social Impact Dashboards to measure, monitor and assess the social impact of this pandemic in our communities.



Food Security

The massive surge and then spike in our food parcel provision in early to mid-April shows clearly the immediate hardship families continue to face.



Financial Hardship

The financial hardship indicators we monitored increased steadily and then spiking in March and April, and then settling over the more recent months.



Addictions

Lockdown made it harder for people to access both the addictive substances and habits they used. Following lockdown increases in the numbers of existing and new clients coming to our services.



Housing

The social housing register as of June 2020 had 18,520 families waiting. This is a 67% increase from June 2019 which had 11,067 families.



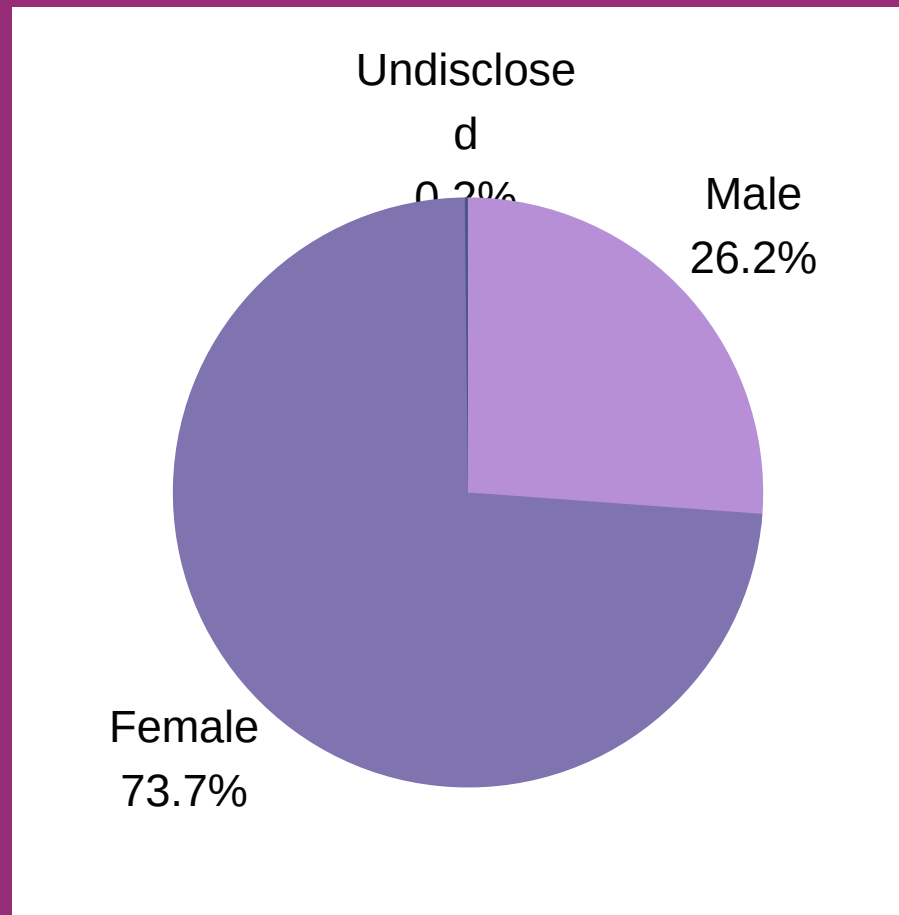
Employment & Income

The numbers of those receiving the Main Benefits have generally increased over the last year, and especially since the beginning of 2020.

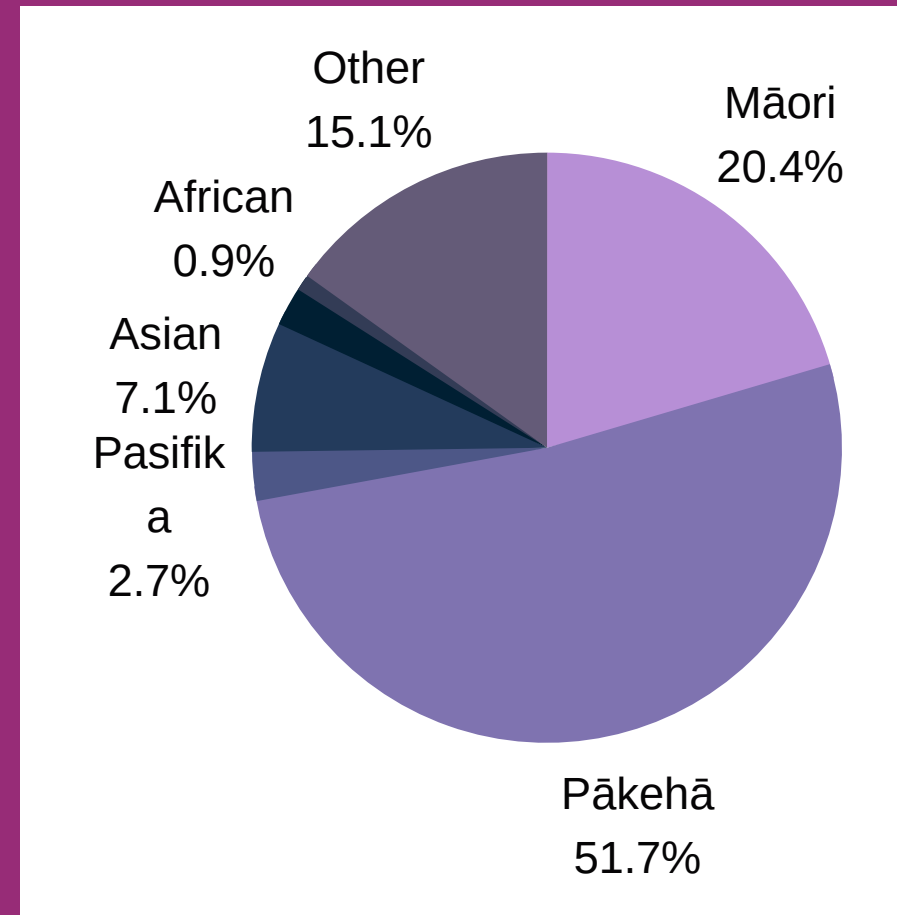
SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS



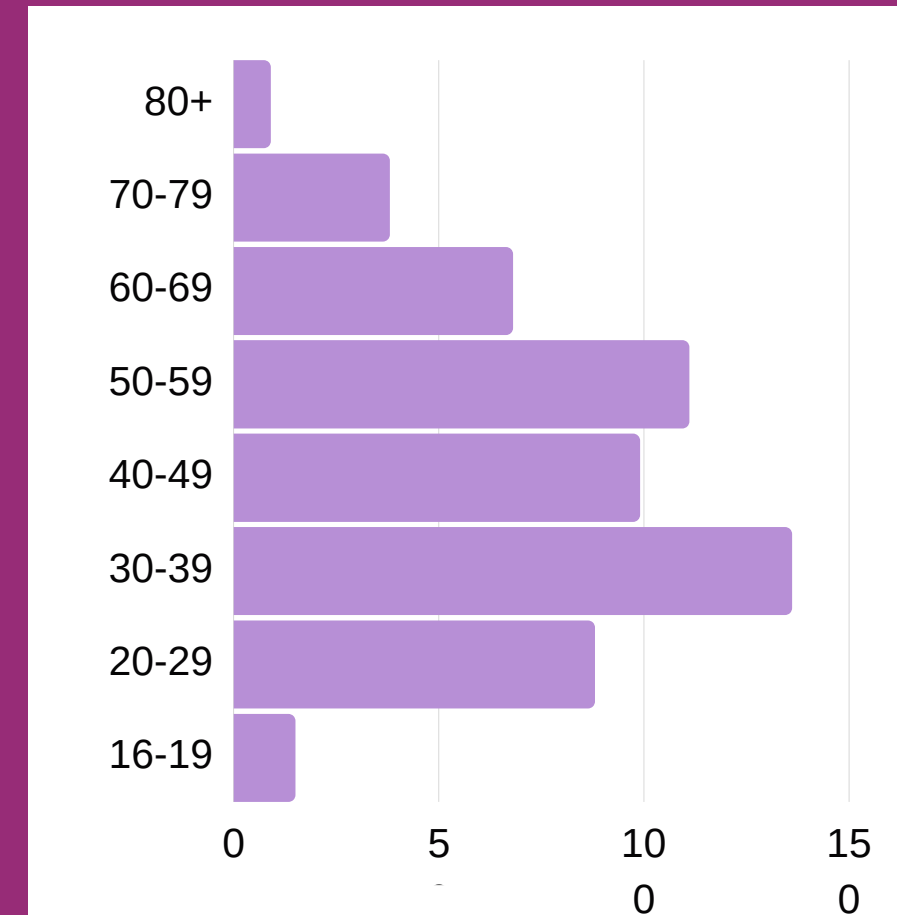
There were 564 community surveys and 14 key informant interviews completed



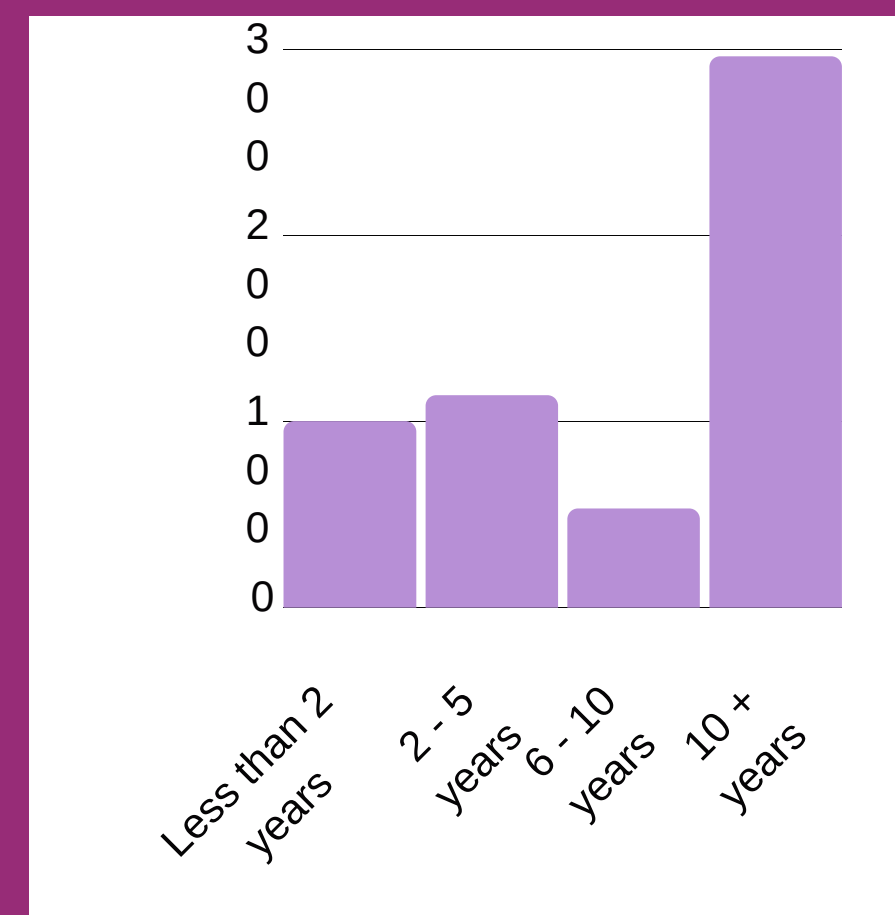
GENDER



ETHNICITY



AGE GROUPS



LENGTH OF RESIDENCY

- There were 300 face to face surveys and 264 surveys completed online
- The highest ethnic population were Pakeha followed by Maori and Other.
- The highest participation rates were from locals aged 30-39 years old and locals who have lived in the area for more than 10 years.

HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

Locals want more affordable housing and more emergency or transitional housing to support the growing homeless population.

DRUGS & GANGS

Locals talked about drugs in their communities. Locals also attribute the increase in drugs to gangs in the area. Locals want more addiction support.

EMPLOYMENT & INCOME

More than a third of participants had lost employment or income. Locals want more job opportunities and a living wage.

MENTAL HEALTH

Loss of employment and isolation during lock down impacted the mental wellbeing of many. Locals are calling for more mental health services.

Rotorua surveys showed the significance of the local iwi Te Arawa and Maori-led initiatives. Recovery from this much talked about recession from a Maori perspective in Rotorua could help model what recovery should look like in other communities with large Maori populations.

HOUSING

Locals want more affordable and quality housing. Locals are also calling for housing developments in the area to reflect the infrastructure.

POVERTY

Covid has highlighted the pockets of poverty in the community. Locals are calling for more support for children in poverty and equality.

MENTAL HEALTH

Locals talked about a decline in mental health particularly for youth. Locals are calling for more funding to healthcare.

EMPLOYMENT & INCOME

Over 38% of participants had lost employment or income due to Covid. The most pressing issue was the redevelopment of the mall.

Johnsonville is a relatively small community that is rapidly changing and very diverse. These led us to questions around how small communities like this can handle, adjust to and push through major national changes like Covid-19 and a recession.



EMPLOYMENT & INCOME

More than 50% of locals had lost employment or income. Locals want to diversify their economy to create resilience.

MIGRANTS

The plight of the migrants was a key theme in Queenstown. Employment and income loss for migrants were compounded by inability receive financial support from the government.

HOUSING

The living cost in Queenstown driven by the cost housing is a key concern for locals. Locals also talked about quality homes and overcrowding.

MENTAL HEALTH

The increased stress and anxiety from job and income losses has created stress and anxiety. The decline in mental health and inadequate services to address those need.

Queenstown as a tourism mecca will have long lasting economic effects. Job losses are forecasted to increase and will double the national rate in March 2021. recovery for Queenstown must prioritise economic stimulation and increasing mental health services.



HOUSING

"More Social Housing needed for those in need and non permanent accommodation for rough sleepers"
-Rotorua Local

"Over priced housing which leads to less money for food and essential services"
-Queenstown Local

"The housing prices continue to climb baking it less and less affordable for families."
-Johnsonville Local

The existing housing problems in each community were magnified during and even since the lockdowns began. Each community focussed on different areas of the housing spectrum.





"Our business lost a lot of work. We are still trying to come back from that. After such a long time off our teenage son decided school wasn't for him and didn't return. Mentally it took a toll because we stressed so much about our business and children and we are still trying to come back from that."

-Rotorua Local

"Widespread job losses and resulting mental health, family violence issues that come with loss of income, providing for families, paying high mortgages."

-Queenstown Local

MENTAL HEALTH

"I am struggling to get a job. My mental health is on the line. Benefit is not enough to help cover food. I pay rent, expenses and daycare. When it's raining my kid and I take uber to go to his daycare. I feel like I have failed."

-Johnsonville Local

- All three of these communities raised some major concerns around access to mental health services.
- Locals consistently made reports of increased stress, anxiety and hardship that affected peoples' mental health. They also connected this to the job losses, social isolation, lack of income and other social challenges that came with the lockdowns.
- Locals in the three areas also pointed to specific mental health issues for children and youth emerging from Covid.



EMPLOYMENT & INCOME

"My husband had no work, and we couldn't meet our needs. We used our savings."

-Rotorua Local

"Everyone in my family lost their jobs. So not able to live longer in Q Town. Need to move."

-Queenstown Local

"Partner couldn't find a job. Living off one income and didn't get any govt help. Having to now move back to Auckland because we can't find any work."

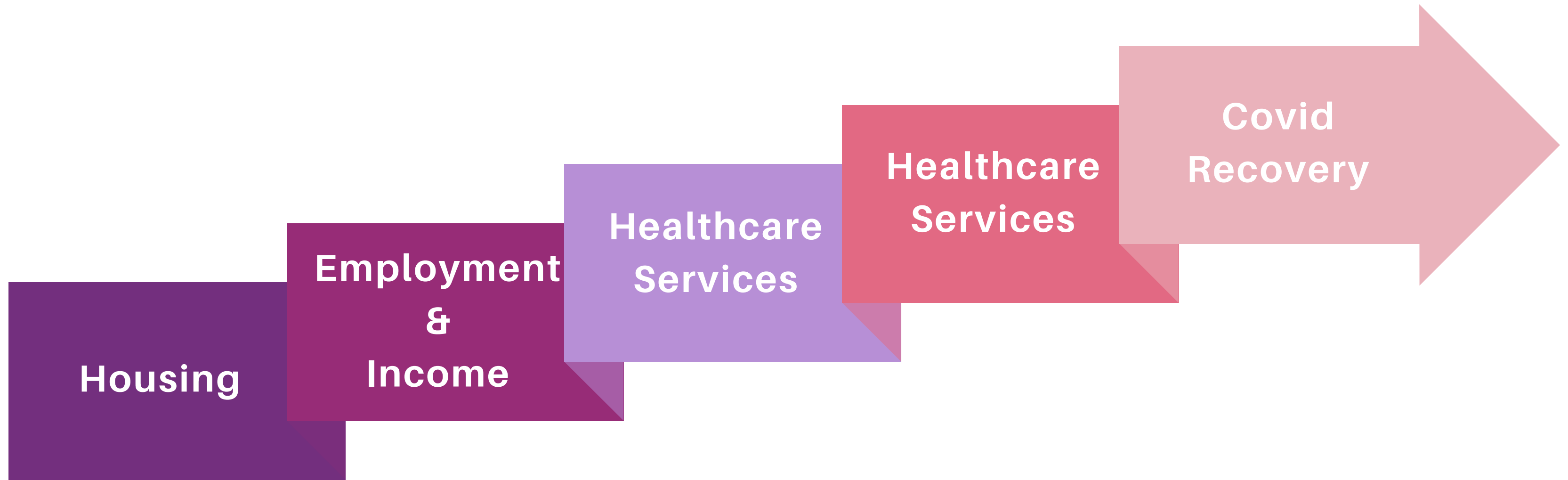
-Johnsonville Local

- The primary and most direct impact of Covid was job losses, income problems and downturns in the local economies.
- For Rotorua and Queenstown who are heavily reliant on tourism, this economic impact was substantial and long-lasting. Again, these financial stresses contributed to the heightened mental health stress and anxiety during this pandemic.

COVID RECOVERY

- What does recovery look like from this much-talked about recession moving forward?
 - **Queenstown** - Diversity the economy and innovate tourism away from mass tourism.
 - **Rotorua** - Iwi led solutions by the people for the people
 - **Johnsonville** -revitalising the Johnsonville Mall
- Recovery for each community needs to take into consideration the context of the community pre-Covid and now.
- In our view, any talk of recovery at a national level must properly account for recovery at these unique local community levels.

ELECTION 2020



When asked for their priorities for Election 2020, the locals responded with a variety of answers. But some generally their Election priorities were naturally linked to the current social issues they were facing before, or because of, Covid.

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Thank You



Ana Ika

Social Policy Analyst

ana.ika@salvationarmy.org.nz

021 659 041

Ronji Tanielu

Senior Social Policy Analyst

ronji.tanielu@salvationarmy.org.nz

021 536 892



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