



Volunteering

BAY OF PLENTY

Summary Regional Social Impact Bay of Plenty



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

**WAIKATO
MANAGEMENT SCHOOL**
TE RAUPAPA

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Executive Summary

Volunteering Bay of Plenty (Volbop) is a not-for-profit organisation focused on providing volunteering resources, consulting services and information to individuals and organisations. Volbop actively engage volunteers through the creation of volunteering opportunities and quality experiences, alongside helping organisations to recruit and retain volunteers. To ensure value is being delivered to their stakeholders and the districts within the Bay of Plenty, Volbop have requested an in-depth investigation into the social needs and issues prevalent within the Bay's seven districts. This information will also be useful in gaining funding for volunteering initiatives and creating strategies to encourage volunteering throughout the Bay of Plenty.

The main findings indicated that all seven districts experience similar social issues but at varying levels. Issues found rampant throughout the Bay of Plenty include drug and alcohol abuse, higher than national levels of social deprivation, high cost of living, mental health, violence and abuse, gangs, environmental destruction caused by littering, and a general fear of resuming life as normal due to Covid-19. Akin to the social issues uncovered throughout the districts, common themes were identified regarding societal needs required by each district. The main needs include a stronger focus on youth development programmes, support, and activities, as well as an increase in community and family-oriented events that promote each districts culture and encourage community spirit.

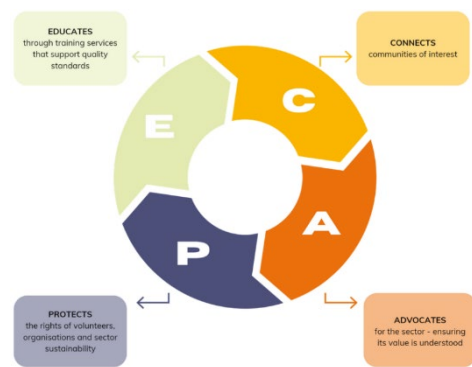
From these findings' recommendations were created that focused on four key areas and included suggested strategies to assist Volbop in providing added value for their stakeholders and the Bay of Plenty's districts. The four key areas highlighted within recommendations included: Youth Focus, Community and Family Events, Training and Cultural Packages, and Marketing Campaigns.

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Company Background

Volunteering Bay of Plenty (Volbop) is a registered charity established in 2001. One of eighteen volunteer centres found across New Zealand and a member of Volunteering New Zealand, Volbop is headquartered in Bethlehem, Tauranga and serves the Bay of Plenty (BOP) region. Volbop strives to nurture and elevate volunteering throughout the BOP through extensive collaborations with individuals, not-for-profit organisations, and businesses to create connected communities and encourage active engagement within the volunteering sector (Volunteering Bay of Plenty, n.d.). Volbop's purpose is to empower organisations to create quality and engaging volunteering experiences through collaboration, advocacy, and events, along with providing organisations with consulting and training services (Volunteering Bay of Plenty, n.d.).

Their strategic framework as displayed in Figure 1.1 is founded on the principals of Connect, Advocate, Protect, and Educate; or CAPE because “Every volunteer is a superhero. Every superhero needs a CAPE” (Volunteering Bay of Plenty, n.d., para 5). These principals guide Volbop and ensure that their current and future strategies align with their values, and purpose.



Volbop's values are:

- **Authenticity:** *Honesty and mutual respect underpin everything we do.*
- **Inclusivity:** *Everyone, regardless of background, is valued for their contribution.*
- **Understanding first:** *We listen as we seek to understand how each situation is different.*
- **Collaboration:** *We work closely with our clients and partners to build strong communities together.*
- **Growth Mindset:** *We constantly seek ways to improve and extend our reach and impact* (Volunteering Bay of Plenty, n.d.).

Chapter 2. Summary Findings

Tauranga

Tauranga, a metropolitan hub, is the largest and fastest growing city in the BOP. Home to one of the world's best shipping ports and New Zealand's biggest, Tauranga has seen enormous growth over the years with no signs of slowing down (Tauranga NZ, n.d.). With beautiful beaches and coastal vista's Tauranga attracts many tourists, particularly in Mount Maunganui and Papamoa beach.

Table 1. summaries Tauranga's needs and issues, see full document for more detail.

TABLE 1. Tauranga's key issues and needs	
Issues	Needs
Homelessness	Litter & stream clean-up's, environmental effort
High cost of living	Housing, and alternative options
Transport & roading networks	Mental health
Gang's & violence	Family friendly, affordable community events
Drug & alcohol abuse	Autism friendly spaces/events (sensory shelters)

Western Bay of Plenty

The Western Bay is one of New Zealand's fastest growing districts covering 212,000 hectares of coastal, rural, and urban land (Western Bay of Plenty District Council, n.d.) that surrounds Tauranga City. Locations within the Western Bay include Katikati, Maketu, Matakana Island, Omokora, Oropi, Paengaroa, Pongakawa, Pukehina, Te Puke, Te Puna, Upper Pyes Pa, and Waihi Beach. The Western Bay has become an increasingly popular place for people from other regions to move to for retirement, family, and business purposes adding to this district's rapid growth.

Table 1.2 summaries Western Bay's needs and issues, see full document for more detail.

TABLE 1.2 Western Bay of Plenty Issues and Needs	
Issues	Needs
Family harm	Mental health support & youth mentors
Drug & alcohol abuse	Employment opportunities
Gangs & violence	Creation of youth hubs
Underage & irresponsible drinking	Rural community support & neighbour watch
Mental Illness	Community & family events & connections
Poverty	Environments safe from feeling of fear produced by Covid-19

Whakatane

Crowned the Niwa Sunshine Capital of 2020 making Whakatane the sunniest place in New Zealand they are also the Kiwi Capital of the World thanks to the large number of wild kiwis found close to urban centres (Whakatane District, n.d.). The Whakatane district encompassing Ohope famous for its stunning coastal vistas has long since been a huge attraction for tourists and kiwi's looking for a fun day in the sun.

Table 1.3 summaries Whakatane's needs and issues, see full document for more detail.

TABLE 1.3 Whakatane Issues and Needs	
Issues	Needs
Aging population	Training and work opportunities
Ethnic disparities	Youth development programmes and facilities
High proportion of population on low income	Community support
Gang related issues	Create community spirit and celebrate success
Drug & alcohol abuse	Open spaces creation & maintenance
Family violence	Litter collection & coastal clean-up's
Destruction of property	Affordable family & community events
General poor health of district	Youth mentoring

Rotorua

Rotorua is an international tourism icon and renown as the heartland of Maori culture, a place where people can gain a true experience of the unique Maori culture from both the past and the present, Rotorua captures the spirit of manaakitanga (hospitality) (100% Pure New Zealand, n.d.). Alongside Rotorua's rich culture their geothermic parks and hot pools have long been a strong tourist attraction for both international and local visitors with Rotorua boasting 10,000 daily visitors and over 3 million visitors per annum (Rotorua Lakes Council, n.d.).

Table 1.4 summaries Rotorua's needs and issues, see full document for more detail.

TABLE 1.4 Rotorua Issues and Needs	
Issues	Needs
Obesity rates	Volunteer wellbeing support
Unemployment & crime among youth	Safe volunteer activities for the elderly
Homeless solo parents	Higher access to mental health services
Drug & alcohol abuse	More community events
High living costs	Multicultural support

High unemployment, homelessness, overcrowding, & poverty	Sports coaches & mentors
Low job availability	Healthy living campaigns
Mental health & access to services	Volunteer training packages
Gambling	Volunteers to sit on committee boards

Opotiki

The Opotiki district encompasses 50 percent of the BOP's coastline and contains 11,200 hectares of native bush attracting many visitors in the summer months. The district's main economy driver is agriculture with farms accounting for over 75,660 hectares of land. With just over half of the population living outside Opotiki town in smaller outlying communities the Opotiki District boasts several strong rural communities with 20 Marae in the district posing as the focal point for local communities (Opotiki District Council, n.d.).

Table 1.5 summaries Opotiki's needs and issues, see full document for more detail.

TABLE 1.5 Opotiki Issues and Needs	
Issues	Needs
Cemetery maintenance	Community development initiatives that embody Opotiki's history and community spirit.
Violence & domestic violence	Community support activities
Desensitization of children towards killing through the encouragement of hunting	Animal Welfare
Gangs	Providing access to facilities and services to smaller remote communities within the district
Unemployment	Youth support
Crime	Events that encourage community spirit
Reputation for homicides	

Taupo

The Taupo District is located at the very centre of the North Island and is home to the largest fresh-water lake in Australasia. This district also boasts a dual World Heritage national park that plays host to the Tongariro Alpine Crossing and the mighty Huka Falls, one of the most visited natural attractions (Taupo District Council, n.d.). Taupo is a well-known tourist destination for both winter and summer outdoor activities from geothermal attractions to adrenaline pumping activities such as white river rafting.

Table 1.6 summaries Taupo's needs and issues, see full document for more detail.

TABLE 1.6 Taupo Issues and Needs	
Issues	Needs
Job availability	'Get to know your neighbour' programmes
Cost of living	Youth support programmes and activities
Drug & alcohol abuse	Increased opportunities to get involved in community activities
Violence and domestic abuse	Turangi area lacking in facilities.
Supporting young adults	Improved access to affordable, quality childcare
Lack of community engagement or activities in Turangi area	Trade's training centres
Environment care	Age friendly events and activities

Kawerau

Kawerau is a small community and one of the youngest towns in New Zealand founded in 1953. They are a well-established wood processing centre with access to energy from geothermal fields found within the district contributing towards the success of the wood processing industry in Kawerau (Kawerau NZ, n.d.). They also pride themselves on being the site for sustainable industrial development with the ability to deliver effective and efficient solutions to companies wishing to become more environmentally friendly.

Table 1.7 summaries Kawerau's needs and issues, see full document for more detail.

TABLE 1.7 Kawerau Issues and Needs	
Issues	Needs
High Cost of living	Rehabilitation centres
Unemployment	Mental health services & better access
Few job opportunities	Social and mental health workers in schools
Drug and alcohol abuse	Youth development and activities
Gangs	Strong volunteering marketing campaign
Physical abuse & violence	Skilled volunteers for emergency response roles
Overcrowding	Youth hub
Housing & emergency housing shortages	Community activities & events

Chapter 3. Conclusions and Recommendations

The BOP is a beautiful place filled with white sandy beaches, acres of native bushland, and plenty of features. Among so much beauty it is difficult to imagine any hardships involved with living in this stunning area, unfortunately this report has uncovered the harsh reality that many live in. For starters, the BOP experiences higher than national levels of deprivation particularly within employment, income, access to education, health, and overall socioeconomic deprivation (EHINZ, 2018). Drug and alcohol problems have been identified with the BOP reaching higher rates of hazardous drinking than the national average and more than 30% of youth within the BOP have been reported to be hazardous drinkers. Furthermore 30% of people living in the area were reported to be addicted to methamphetamine (Socialink, 2019). Further issues rampant throughout the BOP region were found to be high costs of living and unaffordable housing, gang violence, family violence, mental illness, and environmental destruction due to littering. Lastly, a huge issue relevant to all districts is the fear of Covid-19. Although New Zealand has done exceptionally with the management of the pandemic, many people living in the BOP, particularly elderly people, are still restricting their lives due to the fear of another outbreak.

Recommendations

1. Youth Focus

All districts within the BOP were found in need of youth development programmes, engagement opportunities, hubs, mentors, and healthy activities that provide upskilling opportunities. Volunteering activities and engaging youth to work within this sector would provide many opportunities to address these needs. Recommended strategies to address this are contained within Table 6.1 found within the full document.

2. Community & Family Events

Community and family-oriented events were found to be lacking throughout the BOP, with many districts reporting the need for more community spirit building activities to help overcome the fears of Covid-19, create community pride, and help overcome the loneliness that more people are coping with. Celebrating each districts culture and history through community events will create healthy connections and be an opportunity to promote volunteering activities like Volfest, an event already hosted by Volbop, but more tailored to each districts culture and heritage. Strategies found within Table 6.2 found within the full document.

3. Training & Culture Packages

Another area of concern regards the need for specific volunteer role training packages and volunteering packages that are culturally tailored to individual district. There is concern that there are not enough skilled volunteers to fulfil roles or training that supports volunteer's wellbeing. Training packages would encourage the retention of volunteers and ensure those in need of volunteers are receiving quality

service and valuable interactions. This also has the advantage of providing individuals with upskilling opportunities and provide pathways to employment. Strategies found within Table 6.3 found within the full document.

4. Marketing Campaign

Last, it was discovered that not many people understand the true value of volunteering or how easy it is to get involved with the local community. A strong marketing campaign to educate individuals about the benefits of volunteering and the opportunities volunteering can provide would combat this and encourage more to get involved with giving back to their communities. Suggestions detailed within Table 6.4 found within the full document.

For a copy of the full in-depth research work and findings, please contact Volunteering Bay of Plenty for the complete white paper document which will include all References.

Please request via [email](#) or please call 07 571 3714

