

# **STRENGTHENING PACIFIC LABOUR MOBILITY**

## **RSE REINTEGRATION SUPPORT**

**Taking Stock of employer support for RSE worker  
development priorities at home in the Pacific**



**TOSO  
VAKA  
O MANU**

# Key findings from the survey “Taking stock of employer support for RSE worker development priorities at home in the Pacific”

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## Abstract

Toso Vaka O Manū’s (TVOM) team in the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) has recently conducted a survey of Recognised Seasonal Employers (RSEs) seeking information on the support they have provided, voluntarily, to assist their seasonal workers from the Pacific to achieve their development goals. The survey was conducted on-line using a Survey Monkey questionnaire between late August and early October 2025.

The survey generated 44 responses from a diverse group of RSEs in terms of the main focus of their business, their experience as accredited employers for the RSE scheme, the numbers of recruits from the Pacific they had in 2024/25 and the number of source countries the workers they supported came from. While the survey population was reasonably representative of the 174 RSEs recruiting seasonal workers from the Pacific in 2024/25, the 44 respondents (25%) should not be treated as a representative sample in a statistical sense.

The fact that the purpose of the survey was “to understand the scope, type, scale, and location of employer contributions towards helping RSE workers and their communities achieve their economic goals and development priorities at home in the Pacific” meant that RSEs who could respond positively to the questions were much more likely to participate than those who had not made such voluntary contributions.

The responses to the survey, that are the subject of this report, provide useful insights into the kinds of voluntary contributions RSEs have been making over the past decade. Responses were sought to four groups of questions addressing:

- 1) support during the past 10 years to help Pacific RSE workers to achieve a specific goal or initiative at home;
- 2) disaster recovery support to help Pacific RSE workers and/or the communities they come from following a cyclone, earthquake, tsunami or some other type of event;
- 3) facilitating RSE worker voluntary contributions to their retirement savings scheme;
- 4) seeking information about future opportunities to help RSE workers, their families, and communities achieve their development goal in the Pacific.

Responses to these questions by different groups of RSEs are discussed in five sections each of which concludes with an assessment of the level of consistency in responses:

- 1) The groups of RSEs that responded to the survey (pp. 3-4)
- 2) Responses to the four groups of questions (pp. 4-8)
- 3) Responses to the questions relating to types of support provided (pp. 8-15)
- 4) Responses to questions relating to superannuation schemes (pp. 15-17)
- 5) Responses to questions on future opportunities to support workers (pp. 17-19).

## The survey

During August and September 2025 approximately 170 Recognised Seasonal Employers were invited to participate in a short survey “to understand the scope, type, scale, and location of employer contributions towards helping RSE workers and their communities achieve their economic goals and development priorities at home in the Pacific” (see Appendix 1). The survey was designed by Toso Vaka O Manū’s team in the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and administered in collaboration with Horticulture New Zealand. The objective of the survey is summarised in Appendix 1 which also includes the topics of questions that were used to capture responses from RSEs using an on-line Survey Monkey questionnaire.

Between 28 August and 6 October 44 responses to the Survey Monkey questionnaire were received. A summary of responses to each question was provided to TVOM by Survey Monkey by mid-October. The full database on which Survey Monkey’s summary analysis is based was requested by TVOM to enable more detailed analysis to see if there were differences between groups of RSEs in their responses to the questions. This detailed database was received in late October, and it forms the basis for this summary of key findings from the survey.

## Focus of the report

The key findings from the survey are presented for respondents grouped on the basis of four descriptive characteristics of their RSEs: type of business, years as an accredited RSE, numbers of RSE recruits in 2024/25, and numbers of source countries whose RSE workers have been supported. An initial confidential report on the information reported in the Survey Money database was sent to TVOM on 31 October.<sup>1</sup> In this report it was noted that two of the responses contained no information that enabled them to be identified as accredited RSEs in their own right. There were also duplicate responses for two of the RSEs.

The number of RSEs included in the analysis presented in this report is 40 and they represent 23% of the 174 RSEs who recruited seasonal labour under the scheme in 2024/25. The responses are not a statistical sample of the 174 RSEs because they are heavily weighted in favour of those who have provided support to their workers. Of the 44 responses received, 38 (86%) indicated that their company had “provided support to help Pacific RSE workers employed [by them] to achieve a specific goal or initiative at home?”. Only five (11%) stated their company had not provided such support.

Given that the focus of the survey is on such support it is highly likely that the great majority of RSEs that did respond to the survey would have given “yes” as their answer to this question. It needs to be kept in mind that RSEs are not required to provide the various types of support covered by the survey – such assistance is entirely voluntary. Notwithstanding an inevitable bias towards RSEs providing support in the responses, the range of RSEs, in terms of type, experience, and size amongst those who responded, is reasonably representative of the larger community of accredited RSEs in 2024/25. This is demonstrated in the next section.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Bedford (2025) Preliminary analysis of the data collected in the survey: “Taking stock of employer support for RSE worker development priorities at home in the Pacific”. Confidential Report to the TVOM Team, MBIE, 31 October, 11 pages.

## **The groups of RSEs that responded to the survey**

The 40 RSEs that responded to the survey can be grouped in several ways using information obtained from the Survey Monkey questionnaire, supplemented by some additional data from Immigration New Zealand on RSEs that recruited seasonal workers during the 2024/25 financial year. Four possible groupings are reviewed briefly in this section.

### ***Type of RSE (39 responses)***

RSEs can be identified using information contained in responses to the survey's questions about names of respondents and their email addresses. One response did not contain sufficient information to enable this identification and it is not included in the analysis relating to RSE type. However, this RSE provided responses to most of the survey's questions and this has enabled it to be included in other groups.

For the purposes of this report, RSEs have been classified as either growers, contractors, packhouses or cooperatives. It is acknowledged that some growers also have packhouses, and some contractors also grow particular crops. But the classification has to be kept simple given the small numbers of respondents to the survey.

For convenience, the small numbers of packhouse operators and cooperatives have been combined with the other two groups:

27 RSEs – Growers (25) and packhouses (2) recruiting their own labour

12 RSEs – Contractors (11) and cooperatives (1) recruiting labour for a range of clients

1 RSE that did not provide information that enabled it to be classified on the basis of type.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of the 39 RSEs that could be classified by type were growers – a smaller share of the accredited RSEs that were growers recruiting seasonal labour in 2024/25 (76%).

When growers and packhouses are combined they account for 70% of the survey respondents compared with 81% of the RSEs that recruited seasonal labour in 2024/25.

### ***Years as an RSE (40 responses)***

The classification of RSEs on the basis of their years of accreditation to recruit seasonal workers comes directly from responses to a question in the survey. The response categories were:

7 RSEs – 1-3 years

5 RSEs – 4-6 years

4 RSEs – 7-9 years

27 RSEs – 10+ years

For ease of analysis, two of the categories (4-6 and 7-9 years) have been combined (4-9 years).

The 27 long-established RSEs (68%) clearly dominate the 40 companies that responded to this question in the survey. In the case of the 174 RSEs that participated in the scheme in 2024/25, 45% were in the 10+ years category with a higher percentage in the combined 4-6 and 7-9 year categories (46% compared with 23% of the survey respondents). Similar percentages were in the group of RSEs that had been accredited for 3 or fewer years: 18% of survey respondents and 19% of those recruiting seasonal labour in 2024/25.

### **Size of RSE (39 responses)**

The grouping of RSE by size is based on information drawn from Immigration New Zealand's data on arrivals of workers on RSE visas during the 2024/25 financial year. Four categories of RSEs that responded have been identified on the basis of the numbers of workers they recruited in that year:

17 RSEs – under 50 recruits

9 RSEs – 50-99 recruits

6 RSEs – 100-299 recruits

7 RSEs – 300 or more recruits

One RSE could not be identified and classified accordingly.

The share of RSEs that recruited 300+ recruits (18%) was higher amongst the survey respondents than amongst the RSEs recruiting in 2024/25 (7%). There was a correspondingly smaller share of survey respondents in the under 50 recruits category (44%) compared with 59% of all RSEs recruiting in 2024/25. But the reverse applied in the 50-99 recruit category where 23% of survey respondents and 19% of the 2024/25 RSEs were located. Similar percentages of RSEs were in the 100-299 worker category: 15% of survey respondents and 16% of those recruiting seasonal labour in 2024/25.

### **Number of sources of labour whose workers have been supported (34 responses)**

Only those RSEs that have provided support for their workers are included in this group. By definition, these are the only RSEs that can be assigned a category on the basis of sources of workers supported by the company.

There are three categories of RSEs in this grouping:

17 RSEs – workers from one source country supported

12 RSEs – workers from 2-3 source countries supported

5 RSEs – workers from 3 or more countries supported

The source countries for supported workers have been identified in responses to the Survey Monkey questionnaire. They are not necessarily the only sources of workers recruited by the 34 RSE in 2024/25 or in earlier years. There is no information available from another source that can be compared with this particular grouping of RSEs responding to the survey.

### **Responses to the four groups of questions**

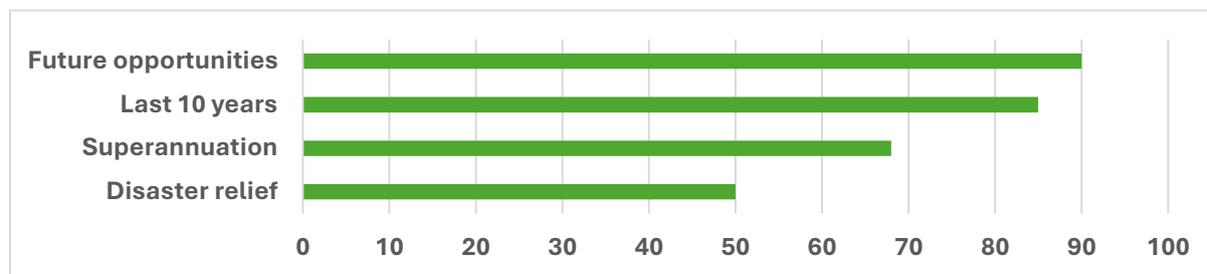
Responses to the four groups of questions in the survey are examined with reference to the different groups of RSEs in this section.

The groups of questions address:

- 1) support during the past 10 years to help Pacific RSE workers to achieve a specific goal or initiative at home;
- 2) disaster recovery support to help Pacific RSE workers and/or the communities they come from following a cyclone, earthquake, tsunami or some other type of event;

- 3) facilitating RSE worker voluntary contributions to their retirement savings scheme in the Pacific;
- 4) seeking information about future opportunities to help RSE workers, their families, and communities achieve their development goal in the Pacific.

**Figure 1** below shows the percentages of 40 RSEs giving positive responses to the questions relating to each of these categories of support. The percentages are shown in descending order.



The distributions of “yes” responses across these types of support in the four groups of RSEs are summarised briefly below.

### RSEs by type of business

There is not a lot of difference between the grower-packhouse (GP) group and the contractor-cooperative (CC) group in terms of the percentages giving yes responses to the four support categories (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: RSEs, by type, giving positive responses to the four support categories (%)**

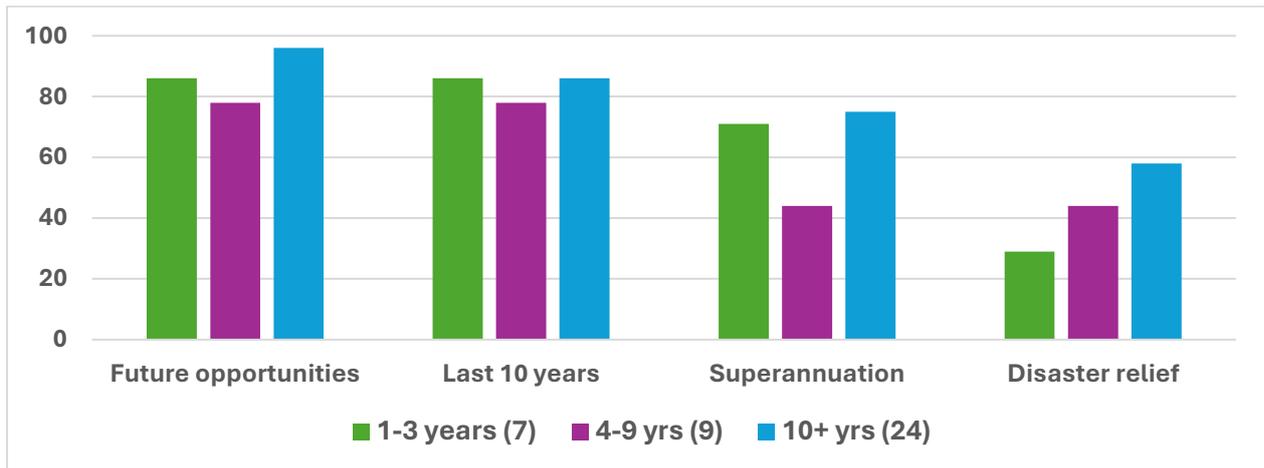


All of the CC group wanted information about future opportunities to help RSE workers, their families and communities compared with 90% of the GP group. Higher percentages of growers and packhouses (89%) had provided support to help their RSE workers achieve their goals during the past decade than contractors and cooperatives (75%), and were assisting their workers contribute to superannuation schemes (90% compared with 67%) (Figure 2). There was little difference in the percentages of RSEs in the two groups that had provided support with disaster relief (48% GP and 50% CC).

### ***RSEs by years of participation in the scheme***

The largest percentages giving positive responses to the questions relating to the four support categories were the RSEs with 10 or more years experience of recruiting seasonal labour from the Pacific (the blue bars in Figure 3).

**Figure 3: RSEs, by experience, giving positive responses to support categories (%)**



There was not much difference between the three groups in terms of support provided to their workers in achieving their goals over the past 10 years, or their interest in having more information about future opportunities to help their workers (Figure 3). The patterns were more variable in the cases of facilitating superannuation schemes and providing support with disaster relief. The RSEs with 10 or more years of participation in the scheme had had more opportunities than those in the other two groups to provide the latter support.

### ***RSEs by size of their seasonal Pacific workforce***

There is little difference between RSEs grouped on the basis of the number of recruits from the Pacific that they had in 2024/25 and the percentages providing support to their workers to assist them achieve their goals during the past decade (Figure 4). There is also a lot of similarity between the four size groups in the percentages expressing interest in receiving information about future opportunities to help RSE workers, their families, and communities achieve their development goal in the Pacific.

The differences are more pronounced in the percentages of RSEs providing assistance to workers wishing to participate in superannuation schemes, and there is a clear pattern of increasing support with disaster relief by size of RSE workforce (Figure 4). The percentage of RSEs with under 50 seasonal workers in 2024/15 (35%) providing such support was just under half the percentage of RSEs with workforces of 300 or more (71%). But it must be kept in mind, that there are only 7 RSEs in the latter group compared with 17 RSEs with under 50 workers (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: RSEs, by size groups, giving positive responses to support categories (%)**



### *RSEs by numbers of source countries of workers receiving support*

Half (17) of the 34 RSEs that had provided some support during the last 10 years to help their recruits from the Pacific to achieve a specific goal or initiative at home had assisted workers from one source country. Vanuatu was the single source for 11 (65%) of the 17 RSEs in this group, with Samoa the single source of workers they supported for 4 of the RSEs, and Tonga the single source of supported workers for the remaining 2 RSEs.

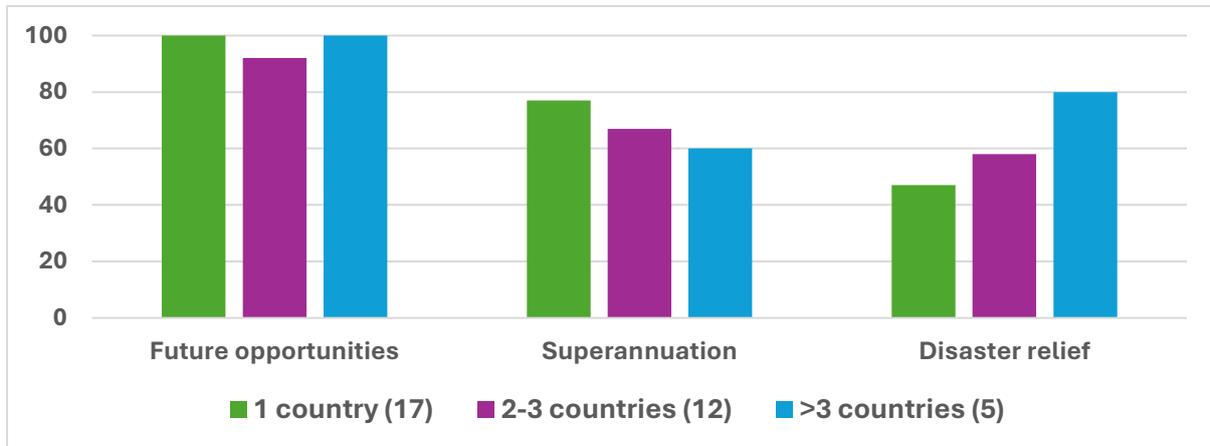
Twelve RSEs, 35% of the total, had supported workers from two or three countries. A much wider range of countries featured in the list of sources of the workers who received support from this group of RSEs. The list below shows the number of RSEs in this group that provided some support to workers from each country:

- Samoa – 7 RSEs
- Vanuatu – 6 RSEs
- Solomon Islands – 4 RSEs
- Kiribati and Fiji – 3 RSEs each
- Tonga, Tuvalu and Papua New Guinea – 1 RSE each

A group of 5 RSEs (15% of the 34) had provided some support for workers over the decade from four or more source countries. Samoa and the Solomon Islands were two of the source countries for workers supported by all of the RSEs in this group. Fiji’s workers received support from 4 of the RSEs; Kiribati’s workers were supported by 2 RSEs, while some workers from Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, Nauru and Indonesia each gained support from 1 RSE.

What about the other categories of support – disaster relief, facilitating superannuation payments and information about future opportunities to help RSE workers? Figure 5 shows the percentages of the three groups RSEs that provided positive responses to these categories.

**Figure 5: RSEs, by source country groups, giving positive responses to support categories (%)**



There was very little difference between the three groups of RSEs in the percentages wanting information about future opportunities to help workers. The percentage of RSEs facilitating superannuation payments by their workers declined by number of source countries of the workers they supported, while the converse was true for support with disaster relief.

Given the distribution of cyclones, major earthquakes and volcanic eruptions in recent years in the region, including Cyclone Gabrielle that caused major damage to New Zealand’s horticulture industry in February 2023, it is not surprising that 4 of the 5 RSEs providing support to workers from three or more source countries responded positively to the question about disaster relief.

### **Consistent patterns?**

The most consistent pattern in the responses by the different groups of RSEs to the four questions dealing with types of support was for disaster relief. It is clear from Figures 3, 4 and 5 that the percentages of positive responses to the question on disaster relief were consistently higher for RSEs with 10 or more years experience of the scheme, 300 or more Pacific workers in 2024/25, and support for workers from 3 or more sources, than for other groups.

It is also evident from Figure 2 that disaster relief was the only category of support where there was no difference between the two key types of RSE – growers/packhouses and contractors/cooperatives. The question on disaster relief attracted consistently fewer positive responses regarding their support for workers to date from the 40 RSEs (49%) than the questions relating to the other three categories: further opportunities (92% of the total), support in achieving goals in last 10 years (88%) and superannuation (67%).

### **Responses to questions relating to the types of support provided**

Information was also requested on the types of support that RSEs provided their workers during the last 10 years and in the form of disaster relief. RSEs were asked to respond to eight specific types of support in the questionnaire, and in the case of four of them to include a comment

specifying what had been provided. There was also an opportunity to provide a comment on any other ways they assisted workers.

The types of support and number of RSEs responding to each one as shown in Survey Monkey's summary of responses to the questions, are listed below. The types with asterisks are the ones where further detail was requested:

17 RSEs – Full shipping container

16 RSEs – Part container (including barrels and boses to go inside shipping container)

6 RSEs – Labour

20 RSEs – Cash contribution

12 RSEs – Equipment\*

16 RSEs – Material/equipment\*

12 RSEs – Knowledge\*

11 RSEs – Skills transfer\*

7 RSEs – Something else\*

For ease of analysis, and because of significant overlap in responses, six of the types of support listed above have been collapsed as follows: 1) full shipping container and part containers to “containers”, 2) equipment and material/equipment to “materials/equipment” or “M/E” in the graphs, 3) knowledge and skills transfer to “knowledge/skills” or “K/S” in the graphs.<sup>2</sup>

In the next four sections the types of support provided over the last 10 years, and support with disaster relief, are compared for the different groups of RSEs. All graphs have the same scale of percentages (0-100) for ease of comparison of responses.

### ***RSEs by type of business***

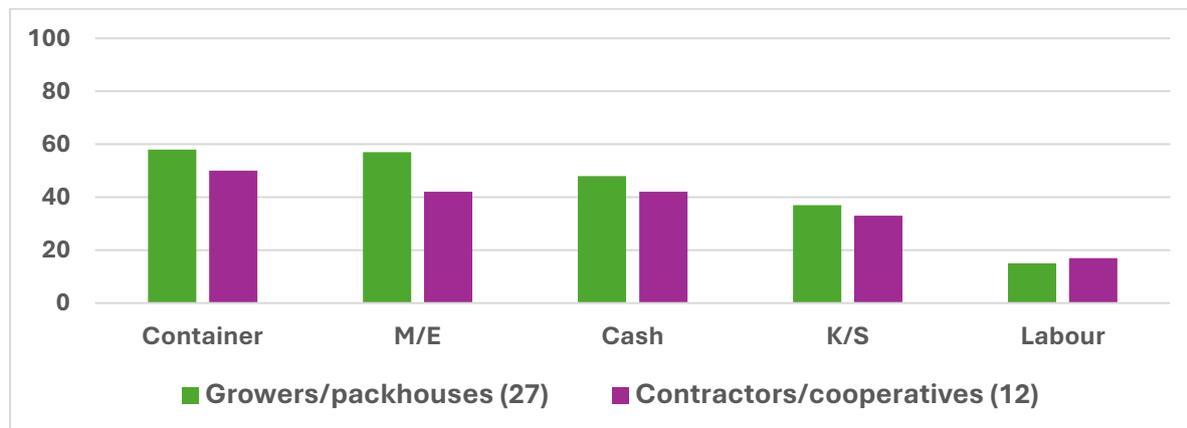
The most frequently cited type of support provided by both the grower-packhouse (GP) group and the contractor-cooperative (GP) group over the past decade has been with containers. Although no further explanation was requested relating to containers, the support ranged from assisting with hiring containers to ship goods back to source countries, to contributing goods for inclusion in containers, and covering their transport costs to the destination.

Of the 39 RSEs that could be identified by type of business, 22 (56%) provided support with containers – 16 (58%) of the GP group and 6 (50%) of the CC group (Figure 6). Just behind this, in terms of numbers of RSEs providing support, was materials/equipment (20 or 51%) including 57% of the GP group and 42% of the CC group.

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<sup>2</sup> This rationalisation of types of support is discussed further in Richard Bedford (2025) Preliminary analysis of the data collected in the survey: “Taking stock of employer support for RSE worker development priorities at home in the Pacific”. Confidential Report to the TVOM Team, MBIE, 31 October, pp. 4-5.

**Figure 6: Types of support provided over the past decade by the GP and CC groups (%)**



Some substantive examples of support with materials and equipment were provided in the “comments” section. The most comprehensive response was from an RSE in Hawke’s Bay who noted in the comments section:

“XXX has supplied funding for the following projects on top of supplying containers each year to Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

- Fiji - Installation of water tanks for a village
- Fiji - Construction of 5 new bridges for a village
- Fiji - Construction of hall/classrooms for a village
- Fiji - Construction of ablution block for village hall
- Fiji - Construction of ablution block for village hall/medical centre
- Samoa - Funeral Fund
- Samoa - Funding of chairs and tables for Church Community Hall
- Samoa - Funding of organ
- Samoa - Funding of sound system for Community Youth Centre”

Two RSEs from the Bay of Plenty elaborated on their materials/equipment support by noting:

- 1) “XXX have contributed part containers, labour, cash, equipment and materials to the villages on Erromango Island [Vanuatu] to put power on. Drums for water storage, solar panels, yearly school stationery, white boards, laptop, paid for a 40-horse outboard motor for the community boat, 24 life jackets.”
- 2) “School materials, educational supplies (books, notebooks, etc.), water pump for villages without water supply. Construction skills, irrigation and dental care [Kiribati]”

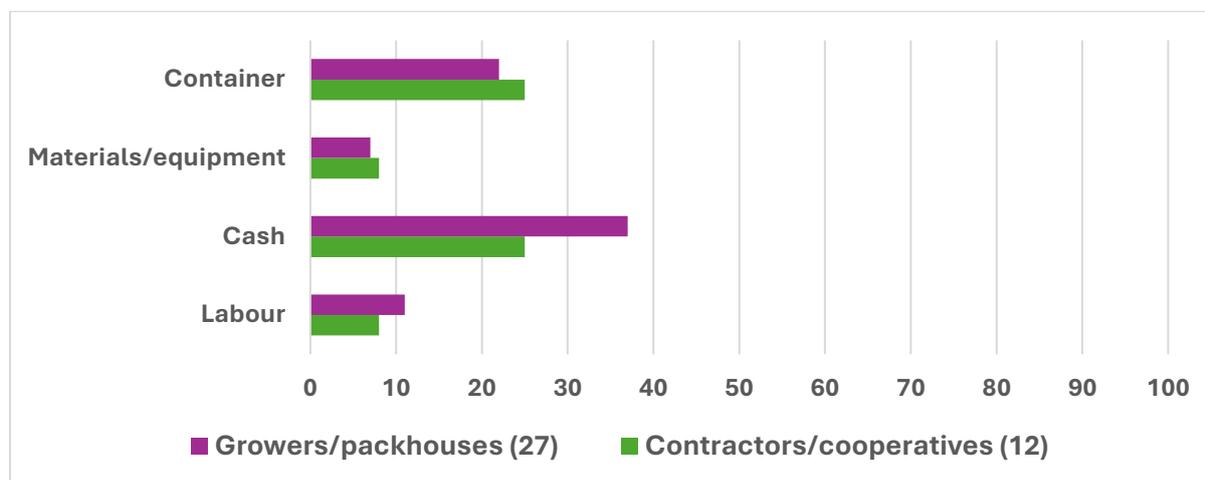
An RSE in Nelson noted with regard to materials/equipment: “Helping to purchase gear for shipping home on our trade accounts - outboard boat motors, corrugated iron, weed eaters, lawn mowers, generators, welders, chainsaws, grinders, solar panels and batteries.”

The GP group also edged the CC group in terms of support with cash and with knowledge and skills but the reverse applied in the very small share of RSEs that indicated that they provided support to RSE workers in the form of labour with particular skills.

A rather different pattern emerges for the GP and CC groups when the types of support provided as disaster relief are examined. The responses relating to disaster relief are presented using horizontal rather than vertical bars in Figure 7 to make it easier to keep track of differences

between graphs showing types of support over the decade and those showing support with disaster relief. The scales in both graphs are the same as is the order of the types of support. It must be kept in mind that there is overlap between the responses by RSEs to these questions.

**Figure 7: Types of disaster relief provided by the GP and CC groups (%)**



It has already been noted that just under 50% of the 39 RSEs provided some disaster relief to their workers. Cash was provided by 37% of RSEs in the GP group compared with 25% of RSEs in the CC group.

Support with containers was the second ranked type of disaster relief for growers and packhouses and 22% indicated they had provided this assistance for workers from disaster-affected areas. A slightly higher share of RSEs in the CC group (25%) had covered some or all of the container costs.

Less than 10% of the RSEs in both groups indicated that they had provided materials/equipment and/or labour to assist their workers affected by disaster. One of the growers from the Horowhenua had provided both materials/equipment and labour to assist with recovery from a cyclone:

“Team of 7 volunteers rebuilding 3 x fales in Samoa after 2012 cyclone. Fundraised for all equipment/building materials in NZ prior- sent a shipping container to Samoa and built [the fales] over 3 weeks.”

Other types of support provided by RSEs in the GP and CC groups included:

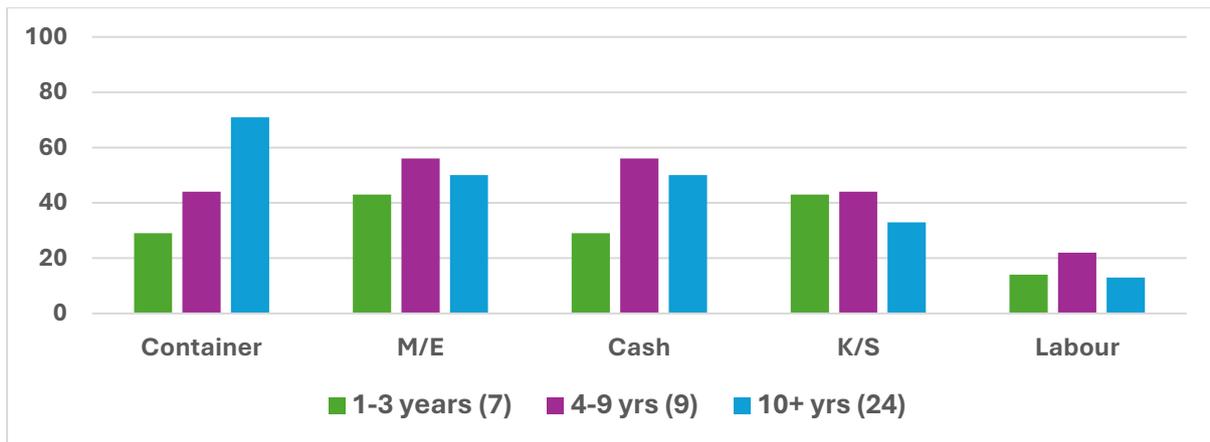
- “Food (rice, chicken, vegetables)”
- “Opening up international calling on company phones so that workers might make contact with families back home until services could be restored”
- “Holding a fundraiser for the hospital”
- “Provided tarpaulins and food”
- “A lot of communication support both domestic and international”
- “Targeting employing workers from areas affected by disasters”

### ***RSEs by years of participation in the scheme***

There is quite a bit of variation in the types of support provided to workers over the past decade when RSEs are grouped on the basis of their years of participation in the scheme (Figure 8).

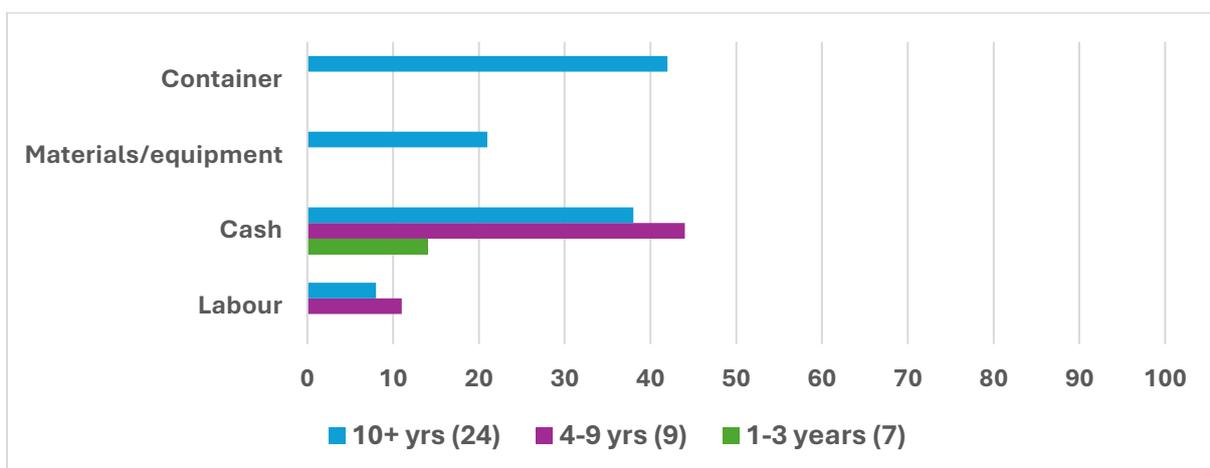
More than double the percentage (71%) of the 24 RSEs that have been recruiting from the Pacific for 10 or more years had provided assistance with containers compared with 29% of the 7 RSEs that had been with the scheme for between 1 and 3 years. RSEs with the highest percentages providing support with materials/equipment (56%), cash (56%), knowledge and skills (44%) and labour (22%) were the 9 companies which had been accredited for between 4 and 9 years (Figure 8).

**Figure 8: Types of support provided over the past decade by years of participation in the scheme (%)**



In the case of disaster relief, only the 24 long-established RSEs featured in all of the types of support listed in Figure 9. Just over 40% of these had assisted with containers, 38% provided support with materials/equipment, 21% contributed cash and 8% had made available labour to assist with relief activities.

**Figure 9: Types of disaster relief provided by years of participation in the scheme (%)**

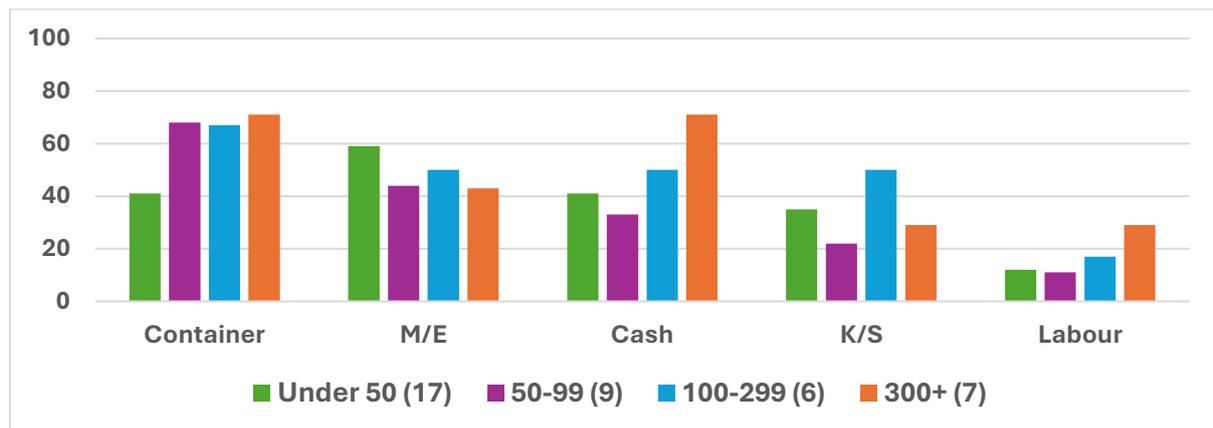


Cash was the only type of support specified by 14% of the recently established RSEs while RSEs that had been with the scheme for between 4 and 9 years provided cash (44%) and labour (11%) to support workers and their families that had been affected by disasters.

### RSEs by size of their seasonal Pacific workforce

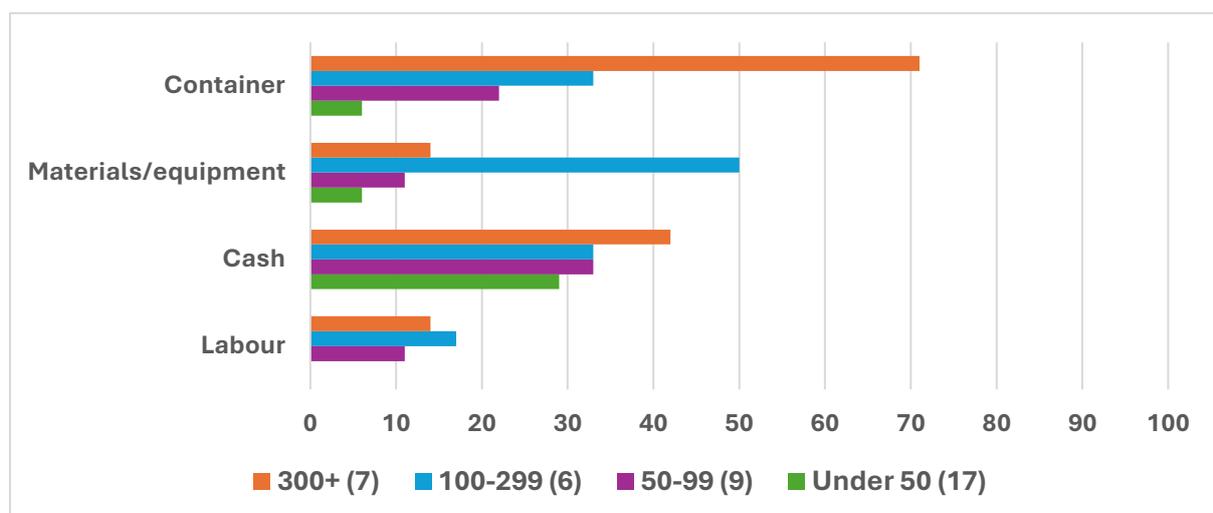
Most (71%) of the small number of large RSEs (300+ recruits in 2024/25) that responded to the survey had supported their workers with cash as well as contributions to containers. Smaller percentages had provided materials/equipment (43%) and knowledge/skills and labour (29% each) (Figure 10).

**Figure 10: Types of support provided over the past decade by size of RSE (%)**



The group with the largest percentage (59%) assisting their workers with materials and equipment over the past decade was the 17 RSEs employing under 50 workers. This was not for disaster relief, however. As can be seen from Figure 11, only small share (6%) of the RSEs in this group indicated they had provided M/E support to workers in response to disasters. The largest percentage (50% in this case) was found amongst RSEs with 100-299 Pacific workers in 2024/25, the group that also had the highest percentage (17%) that contributed labour as a form of disaster relief support (Figure 11).

**Figure 11: Types of disaster relief provided by size of RSE (%)**

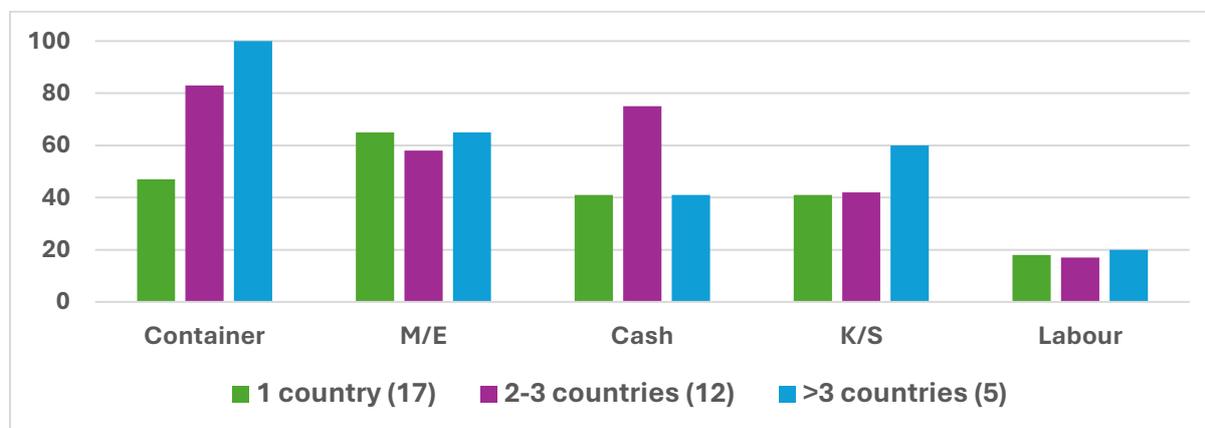


The large RSEs retained their position as the most prominent providers of support with containers (71%) and cash (42%) as forms of disaster relief (Figure 11).

### RSEs by numbers of source countries of workers receiving support

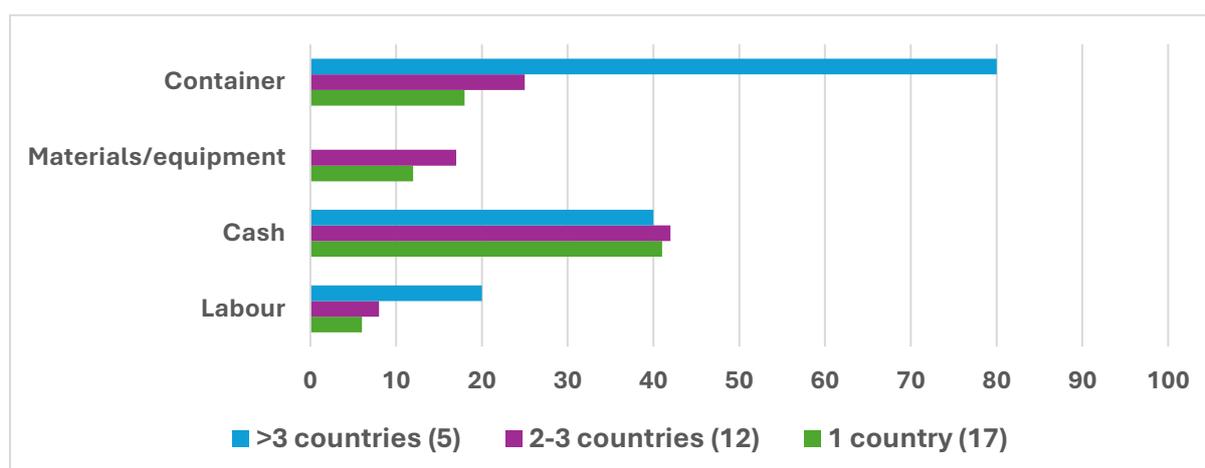
There was considerable variation in the types of support provided by the 34 RSEs when they are grouped on the basis of the number of countries workers they supported came from (Figure 12).

**Figure 12: Types of support provided over the past decade by source country groups (%)**



All of the small group of RSEs who said they were supporting workers from three or more source countries provided support with containers compared with 47% of the RSEs with workers from one country. There was little difference between the three groups when it came to percentages providing support with materials and equipment (around 60%) and with labour (around 20%). In the case of cash support, the two source country group clearly dominated with 75% of the RSEs giving positive responses compared with 41% each for the other two groups (Figure 12). This dominance disappeared, however, when it came to cash for disaster relief. As Figure 13 shows, the three groups had very similar percentages of RSEs (40%) providing cash support.

**Figure 13: Types of disaster relief provided by source country groups (%)**



### Consistent patterns?

There is little consistency in the patterns of the different types of support provided to workers across the different classifications of RSEs. The only exception is in the case of support with containers, both during the past 10 years as well as in times of disaster, where the long-

established, large RSEs supporting workers from more than three source countries consistently have the largest percentages making this contribution. The only other type of support that has a reasonably consistent set of patterns, especially in the case of disaster relief, is contributions of cash. Shares of the RSEs in all of the different groups supported their workers with cash both to achieve their goals during the ten years or as a form of disaster relief.

### Responses to questions relating to superannuation schemes

Just under two thirds (26 or 65%) of the 40 RSEs that responded to the survey indicated they were “currently helping to facilitate RSE voluntary contributions to their retirement savings scheme in the Pacific”. Of the remaining 14 RSEs, 13 (33% of the 40) said they were not facilitating such contributions and 1 did not answer this question.

Just over half (14 or 54%) of the 26 providing this support are using the Seasonal Worker Superannuation Administration System (SWSAS) to facilitate contributions, 5 RSEs (19%) are facilitating contributions to National Provident Funds for their workers while 7 (27%) of the 26 RSEs are supporting workers to contribute to both of these schemes.

In the next four sections the schemes that RSEs in the different groups are supporting their workers to make retirement savings to are compared. As before, all graphs have the same scale, in this case from 0-50%, for ease of comparison of responses between groups. No scheme had more than 50% of the RSEs in the group facilitating these voluntary contributions.

### RSEs by type of business

The Seasonal Worker Superannuation Administration System (SWSAS), administered by Appello Services, is the most popular option selected by workers to make contributions to their retirement savings scheme. This is the case for both the grower-packhouse group (37%) and the contractor-cooperative group (33%) (Figure 14). The percentages of RSEs in both groups facilitating contributions directly to National Provident Funds were much smaller than the percentages supporting contributions to SWSAS (11% for the GP group and 17% for the CC group). Around 18% of both groups of RSEs were providing support for workers contributing to SWSAS and NPF schemes (Figure 14).

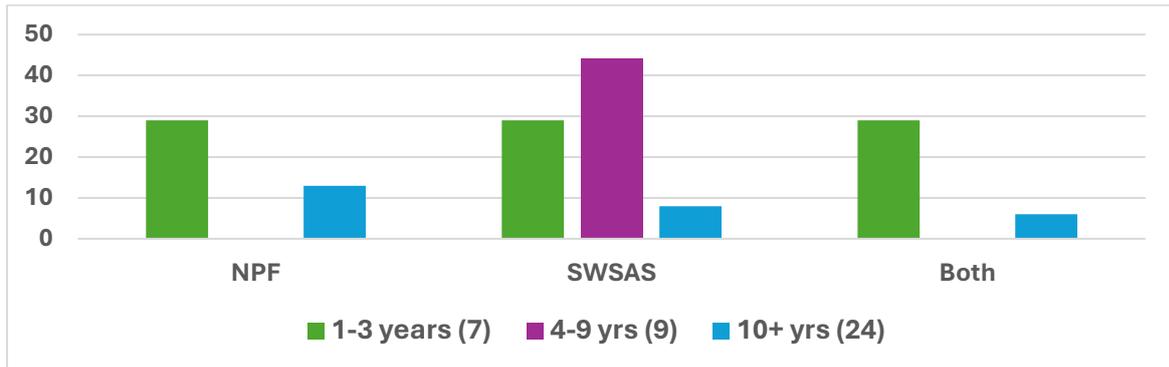
**Figure 14: Voluntary savings support provided by the GP and CC groups (%)**



### RSEs by years of participation in the scheme

The seven recent additions to the RSE scheme (1-3 years of accreditation) have the same percentage (29%) in the three voluntary savings options, and this percentage is much higher than those for the long-established (10+ years) RSEs (13% NPF, 8% SWSAS, 7% both schemes) (Figure 15). The nine RSEs in the group with 4-9 years of RSE experience only facilitated contributions to SWSAS (44%).

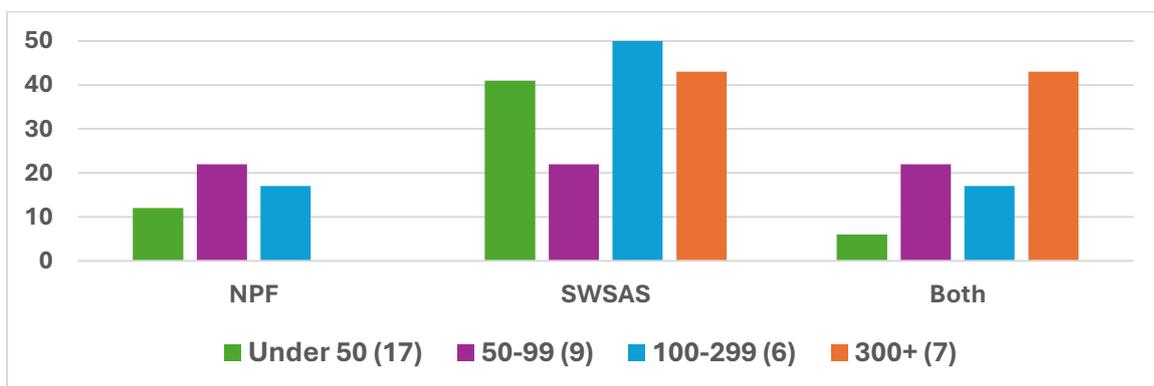
**Figure 15: Voluntary savings support provided by years of participation in the scheme (%)**



### RSEs by size of their seasonal Pacific workforce

More than 40% of the two groups of RSEs that had 100 or more workers from Pacific countries in 2024/25 were facilitating voluntary worker contributions to retirement funds via SWSAS and, in the case of the large RSEs, to both the NPF and SWSAS (Figure 16). SWSAS was also the preferred system for the largest share of RSEs with under 50 workers (41%) and for 22% of the RSEs with between 50 and 99 Pacific workers. Smaller percentages of RSEs in under 50 worker category (12%) and the 100-299 worker category (17%) were facilitating transfers just to National Provident Funds than just to SWSAS (Figure 16).

**Figure 16: Voluntary savings support provided by size of RSE (%)**

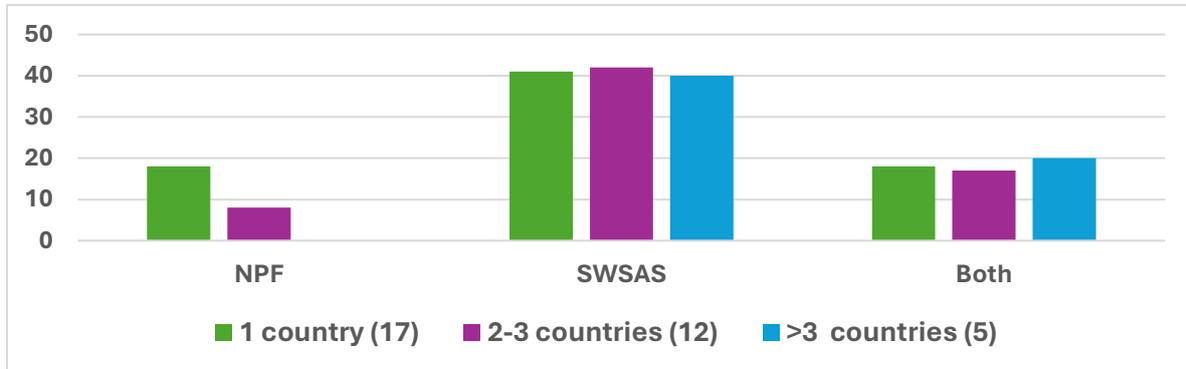


### RSEs by numbers of source countries of workers receiving support

The most consistent patterns in RSE facilitation of voluntary contributions to retirement schemes were found in the three source country groups (Figure 17). Around 40% of RSEs in the

three groups were supporting workers make contributions via SWSAS. Just under 20% of RSEs in the three groups helped workers make contributions to both their NFPs as well as to SWSAS.

**Figure 17: Voluntary savings support provided by source country groups (%)**



### Consistent patterns?

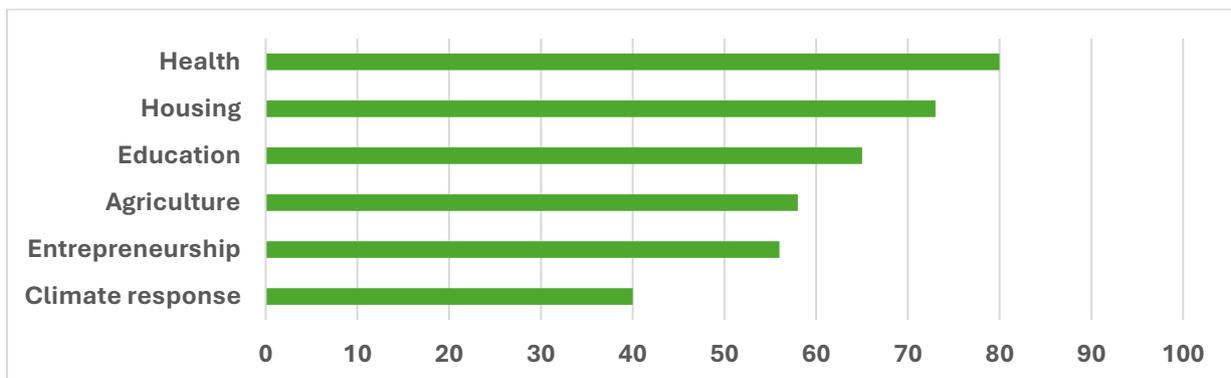
Across the four ways of grouping RSEs, the Seasonal Worker Superannuation Administration System was consistently the option that is being used by the largest share of companies to facilitate voluntary contributions by workers to their retirement savings. There was not much difference in the shares of RSEs facilitating contributions to National Provident Funds, and the shares assisting workers with their retirement contributions to both SWSAS and NPF.

### Responses relating to questions on future opportunities to support workers

All but one of the 38 RSEs that answered the question “Is your company interested in learning more about future opportunities to help RSE workers, their families, and communities achieve their development goal in the Pacific” gave a positive response. There was a great deal of consistency in their responses to the follow-up question: “What type of development topics would your company be interested in learning more about? (select all that apply)”.

In Figure 18 the six topics listed in the survey are ranked in terms of percentages of RSEs that selected them.

**Figure 18: Topics RSEs requested information about relating to support for workers (%)**

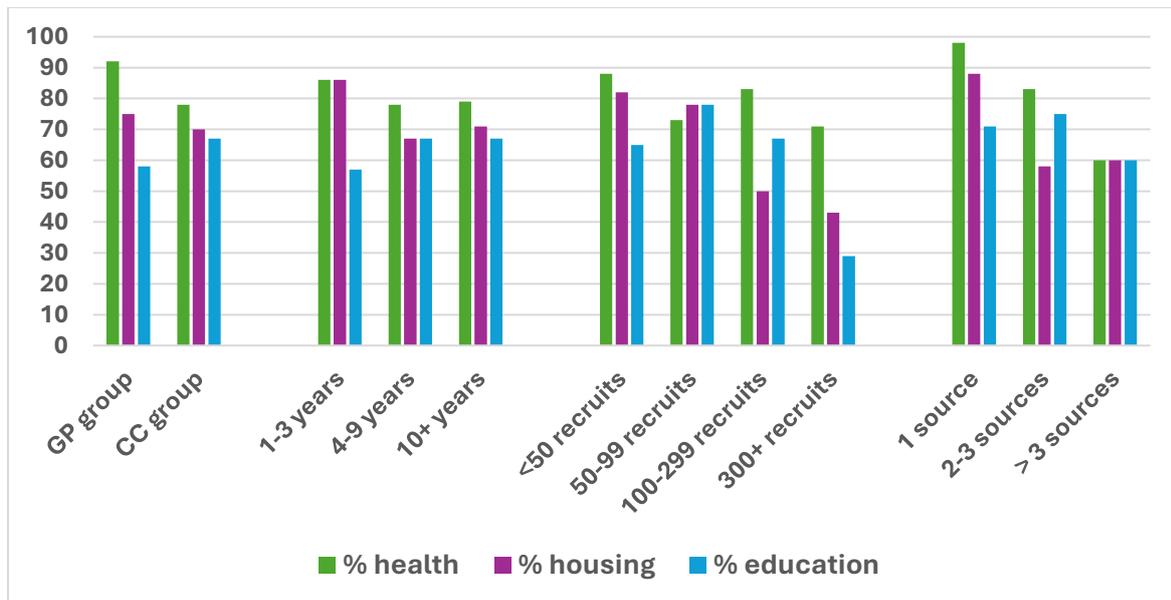


Health was the most frequently selected topic with 80% of RSEs having this as one of their choices for further information. The lowest ranked of the six, overall, was information on responses to climate change – only 40% of the RSEs selected this topic.

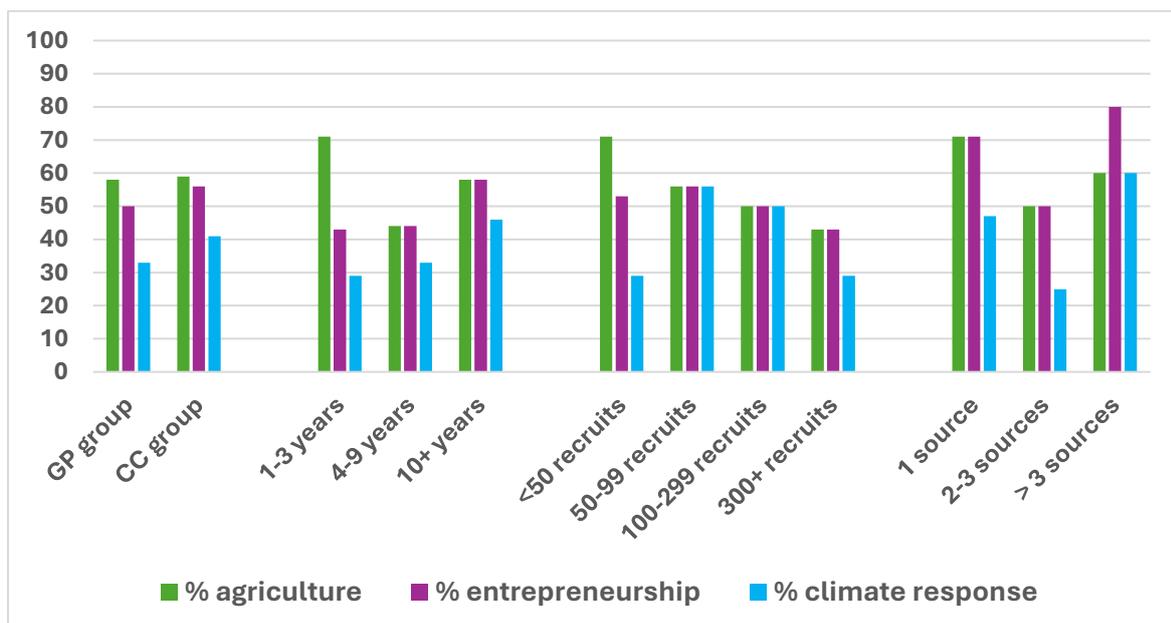
**The groups compared**

Figures 19 and 20 show the responses by the four groups of RSEs to the six topics: health, housing and education in Figure 19 and agriculture, entrepreneurship and climate response in Figure 20.

**Figure 19: RSEs interested in information on health, housing and education opportunities to support their workers (%)**



**Figure 20: RSEs interested in information about agriculture, entrepreneurship and climate response opportunities to support their workers (%)**



While there is quite a bit of within and between group variability in the percentages selecting specific topics there is a lot of consistency in the importance of information on health and housing opportunities to support workers for nearly all of the sub-groups mentioned in Figure 19. These are the two top ranked topics in 10 of the 12 sub-groups.

In Figure 20, agriculture and entrepreneurship stand out as the topics of choice by over 40% of all RSEs. The percentage of RSEs interested in information on possible responses to climate change never exceeds the percentage interested in any of the other five topics and is the lowest ranked topic in 8 of the 12 sub-groups shown in Figures 19 and 20.

### **A concluding comment**

Useful insights into the ways RSEs have been supporting seasonal workers to achieve their development goals have been obtained from responses to TVOM's survey "Taking stock of employer support for RSE worker development priorities at home in the Pacific". While only a quarter of all of the RSEs recruiting seasonal labour in 2024/25 responded to the survey, the great majority of the respondents indicated that they had supported RSEs in one or more of the following ways:

- 1) support during the past 10 years to help Pacific RSE workers to achieve a specific goal or initiative at home;
- 2) disaster recovery support to help Pacific RSE workers and/or the communities they come from following a cyclone, earthquake, tsunami or some other type of event;
- 3) facilitating RSE worker voluntary contributions to their retirement savings scheme in the Pacific.

In addition, the great majority of respondents (80%) wanted further information on opportunities to provide support, on a voluntary basis, to assist their workers achieve their development goals. Bearing in mind that such support is not required or expected as part of the contract obligations of employers of seasonal workers from the Pacific, the positive responses to questions in the survey is an encouraging indication of efforts by RSEs to support their workers achieve wins at home from participation in the scheme.