

7.4 The Treaty in Practice is good for us all ¹

The work of the organisations involved in this resource shows that there are challenges encountered on the journeys toward Treaty relationships. There are tremendous rewards as well: developing trust which enables the parties to work separately with a sense of common purpose, feeling safe enough to agree to disagree, developing the robust and mutually beneficial relationships that the Treaty intended.

Treaty work in Aotearoa can provide models of addressing inter-community relationships that are of value throughout the world, especially relationships with peoples of First Nations. The organisations, through their contributions to this resource, are a source of inspiration to others engaged on similar journeys.

Reflecting on Experiences²

While the work is challenging, it is also rewarding. It does feel like it's very possible. Starting off in this very awkward place and will we or won't we, and having this tentative 'yes we will', and now a real commitment. You get the feeling any group of people could do it really.

(participant from Development Resource Centre - DRC)

That's what's so encouraging – you can come together as a group of people and really talk and work with this stuff and it can be positive. At this level we can work and talk, but as a country there are still challenges to come together over these issues and talk sensibly.

(participant from DRC)

We allowed the Pākehā women to talk of feeling frustrated but we also talked to them and said, 'So are you going to be the victims in this? You know, don't do the 'poor me' bit, acknowledge that you're having a problem and keep going and keep looking at it. How can you establish partnerships if you don't examine your own position and roles?

(participant from YWCA)

There were some significant moments along the way for me and I think for the whole board. I remember voicing that moment for myself and feeling the board settle as well. It was going to be all right. We were going to be dealing with other human beings who are doing their work and there'll be places where we can work together. And it may mean we'll do some things differently – I would hope it would mean that we do some things differently – but it was going to be ordinary as well. It's going to be an ordinary thing in New Zealand to do this.

(participant from DRC)

¹ From: *Treaty Journeys: International Aid Agencies respond to the Treaty of Waitangi*. Council for International Development. 2007. Used by permission.

² NOTE: The views expressed here are the participants' own, at the time of the interview, and do not necessarily represent their current views or those of their agencies.