

## 6.2 Policy and Planning<sup>1</sup>

There is a great deal of debate about whether policy guides action in an organisation or merely reflects what is occurring already. Many people are aware of organisations that have a Treaty policy 'for show' that is not resourced or put into practice. Others would argue that getting the policy adopted reflects change. Sometimes the discussion about policy has itself generated a shift of awareness and an openness to action. A good example of this is the number of workshops generated by the government's requirement that schools include the Treaty in their Charters.

Certainly, external policy requiring consideration of the Treaty has prompted action by some organisations, and many have adopted Treaty policy as a statement of intent if nothing else. Not surprisingly, it is more likely to have an impact where there is an associated plan and review process.

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

## Reflecting on Experiences<sup>2</sup>

- **All agree that policy is important**

The Treaty is embedded in policy and is evident right throughout the organisation's documents.

(participant from Family Planning Association of New Zealand - FPA NZ)

The Treaty issue needs to be addressed from the organisational point of view, not just the domestic point of view. There is definite relevance to the domestic work but we are also an organisation based in New Zealand that should have a responsibility. So that has taken it to that policy level.

(participant from Save the Children New Zealand - SCNZ)

It had to be at an operational level if we were wanting to engage with service providers working with Maori. The Treaty is such an underpinning document in government policy in the way in which it connects with those communities that it made sense for us as an organisation to also have an understanding and a level of reflection on what that might mean for us.

(participant from SCNZ)

It was important to get the Treaty in there somewhere because maybe if somebody came along who had no interest or commitment then at least it is there as a hook to hang some things on.

(participant from VSA)

- **but it requires a lot of commitment to create it**

A far more difficult dimension is in the area of policy. Basic Treaty training for social service deliverers is fine but working with boards and senior managers in various sectors in terms of policy work is much harder.

(participant from Christian World Service - CWS)

We tried to come out with some Treaty principles in one day. We had another go at the principles during the evening and still didn't quite get there. So we brought it back into this little group and someone said, 'Why don't we tie these back to the values that we already have in the organisation?' So we weren't inventing something new and laying it on but we're looking at what we already had, what we could enhance.

(participant from Development Resource Centre - DRC)

- **Some see it as on-going process**

We need to keep reflecting on our policies. In the affiliation agreement between the national and local associations one of the standards of good management and accountability concerns the Treaty. Each association, including the national association review these statements annually. They might be acknowledging that they're not doing a lot, but now it's written into the standards of good management each organisation must reflect and evaluate its movement on the Treaty journey.

(participant from YWCA)

- **while others think it evolves from practice**

It's what you do that matters. Policy, in this area anyway, is what evolves later.

(participant from Council for International Development - CID)

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<sup>2</sup> 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.