

4.2 Increasing Maori role in decision-making¹

The central aspect of the Treaty is the guarantee, in Article 2, that hapū would retain their authority:

Ko te Kuini o Ingarangi ka wakarite ka wakaae ki nga rangatira, ki nga hapu, ki nga tangata katoa o Nu Tirani, te tino rangatiratanga o ratou wenua o ratou kainga me o ratou taonga katoa. Otiia ko nga rangatira o te Wakaminenga me nga rangatira katoa atu, ka tuku ki te Kuini te hokonga o era wahi wenua e pai ai te tanga nona te wenua, ki te ritenga o te utu e whakaritea ai e ratou ko te kaihoko e meatia nei e te Kuini hei kaihoko mona

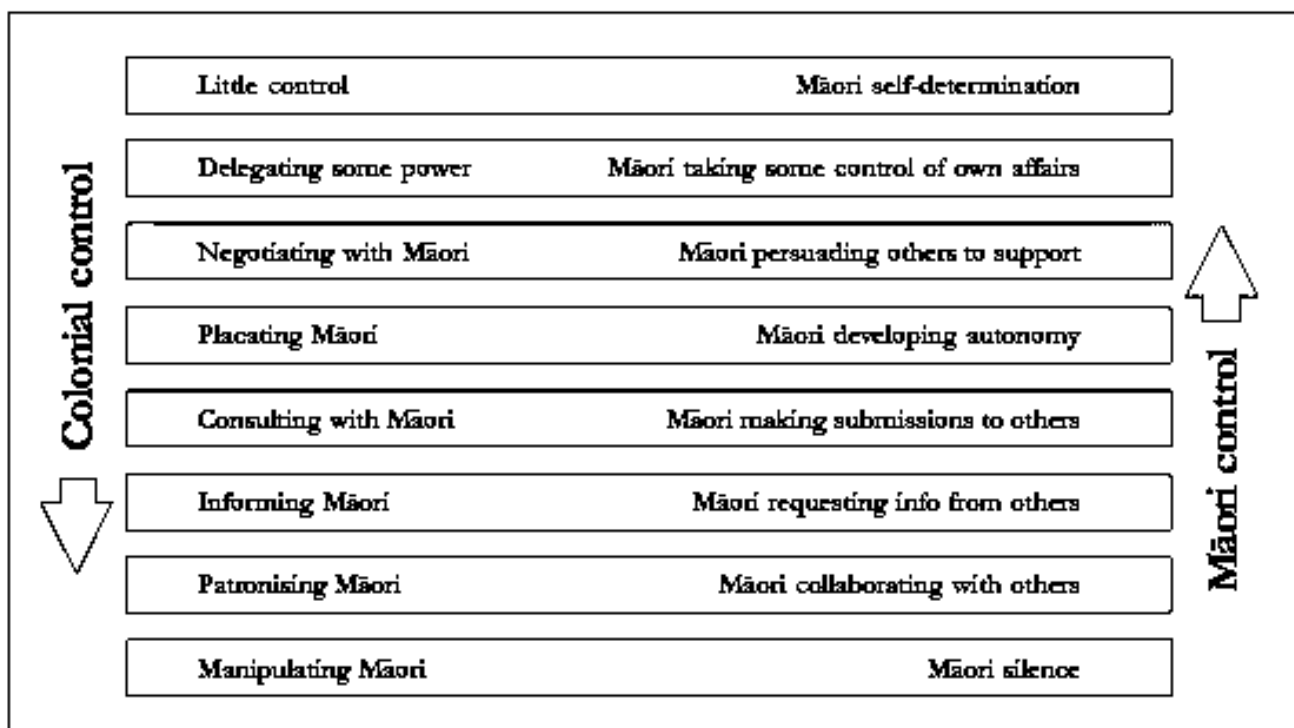
(The Queen of England agrees to protect the Chiefs, the subtribes and all the people of New Zealand in the unqualified exercise of their chieftainship (rangatiratanga) over their lands, villages and all their treasures.)

Because a treaty is a political arrangement it is inherently about power. Power issues are often neglected in favour of responses that focus on Māori culture.

A classic Treaty response has been to 'consult' with Māori. This is preferable to not consulting, but many groups have moved beyond this to recognising the right of hapū/Māori to be making decisions, through structural and/or other arrangements. Redistribution of power may take the form of a commitment to negotiated decisions, delegated authority, and/or recognised rights of self-determination. The terms of the Māori Text go even further in that tangata tiriti organisations would be accountable to hapū.

Organisations which have begun the Treaty journey will find themselves somewhere in the middle of the following diagram in relation to increasing Māori control over issues of concern to Māori.

Diagram 5: Levels of Power-sharing



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

Reflecting on Experiences²

- **Several organisations have structures which formally involve Māori in decision-making.**

At governance level there are places for two Māori representatives on our board. They are appointed by the board. Currently four of the eleven Council members are Māori and the two youth representatives are Māori at this time. We want to be sure to include a Māori youth perspective.

(participant from Family Planning Association of New Zealand - FPANZ)

We try to have representation from all the regions we work in, the Pacific, Africa, Asia - so having a tangata whenua representative is seen as really important. Again the whole issue of cultural safety comes into it because one person can't speak for everybody.

(participant from Volunter Service Abroad - VSA)

We've struggled to get the second Māori place on the National Council filled because Māori people are so overly-committed – there's so much draw on their time, and being in a mainstream organisation, and being on a board.

(participants from FPANZ)

We have guidelines, a discussion paper that we're using as policy on funding in Aotearoa, with Māori at the top to enable them to work on issues that are a priority for them. We had Māori representation on our committees until Māori said, 'There's no need for this, we don't need to appoint to a structure because you carry your own responsibility for the Treaty and we don't have to be present for that. Share information and we'll let you know if you're on the wrong lines, or if there's something we want to say to you'. So that was a maturing of our perception and a recognition that we have no right to draw on so much energy from Māori for our needs. We have a permanent place on our board for representation from Te Runanga Whakawhanuanga - it's never been taken up but it's there. At certain points we officially come together but most of the time we get on and do our work and keep people informed.

(participant from Christian World Service - CWS)

- **but some are more informal.**

We're doing this whole sort of cultural reflection and in many senses that's our journey now because it depends on who is in governance at the time, and it is dependent on that, there is this imbued institutional cultural awareness that you don't do anything without consulting Māori, or without considering Māori and the impact or consequences for Māori, especially young women, both within and external to the organisation.

(participant from YWCA)

- **It's particularly difficult in relation to resources.**

It's hardest where real power sharing, resource sharing has to occur. Within the Methodist churches, we've had 20 to 25 years now of being committed to a Treaty pathway but it has made many just smarter in their footwork because when it comes to the real issues of resources and power sharing it has been incredibly difficult.

(participant from CWS)

We had a big debate in the working group because the committee had great difficulty with the fact that we were expecting partners to report to us. We were uneasy because we were asking people to report to us on resources that had been obtained by the utilisation of their land and resources. We give it to them and then we want them to account back to us who took it from them in the first place. It became too complicated, so we settled for a receipt to say that it had at least got there. And sometimes there was major accountability. Sometimes we got masses of paper and sometimes we didn't get anything very much except verbal exchanges.

(participant from CWS)

One of the issues was that if the asset base of tauiwi, and Pākehā in particular, was built on an unjust achievement of land and resources, then who had the primary right to decide what happened to the economic surplus that those economic models produced? Who had the right to determine what resources we gave where?

(participant from CWS)

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.